

## **Guthrie Public Schools**

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Distance Learning Lessons      April-May, 2020**

**Directions:** Read the material in each lesson and answer the questions. Examples for how to answer the questions are included in the “tips” sections of each lesson. An answer key has been provided so that you can check your work. The Exercises papers all have multiple choice questions similar to what you would find on the end of year state test.

**April 6: Lesson 2 Main Idea and Theme**

**April 7: Lesson 3 Details and Organization**

**April 8: Lesson 4 Inferences and Conclusions    Complete tips 1-6**

**April 9: Lesson 4 Inferences and Conclusions continued    *Navajo Code-Talkers* & Focus Lesson 11**

**April 10: Lesson 5 Author’s Purpose    Complete tips 1-6**

**April 13: Lesson 5 Author’s Purpose continued    *Save Our Summers* & Focus Lesson 12**

**April 14: Lesson 6 Genre**

**April 15: Lesson 7 Literary Elements    Complete tips 1-3**

**April 16: Lesson 7 Literary Elements continued    Complete tips 4-10**

**April 17: Lesson 7 Literary Elements continued    *Into the Void* & Focus Lesson 1**

**April 20: Lesson 7 Literary Elements continued    Focus Lessons 3-4-5**

**April 21: Lesson 8 Author’s Craft    Complete tips 1-5**

**April 22: Lesson 8 Author’s Craft continued    Complete tips 6-7 & *Wolf Song***

**April 23: Lesson 8 Author’s Craft continued    Complete Focus lessons 6-7-9**

**April 24: Lesson 9 Comparing Texts    Complete tips 1-7**

**April 27: Lesson 9 Comparing Texts continued    Complete tip 8 & *The Red Badge of Courage***

**April 28: Lesson 10 Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Tech Subjects    Complete tips 1-5**

**April 29: Lesson 10 Literacy continued    Complete tips 6-10**

**April 30: Lesson 10 Literacy continued    *Gettysburg Address* & *The Ocean and the Water Cycle***

**May 1:    Complete any unfinished work and review the lessons**

**May 4:    Complete Exercises 1 & 3**

**May 5:    Complete Exercises 4 & 5**

**May 6:    Complete Exercises 8 & 9**

**May 7:    Complete Exercise 10**

**May 8:    Complete any unfinished work and review Exercises 1,3,4,5,8,9,10**

**Directions:** This passage is about summer vacation. Read the passage. Then answer Numbers 1 through 8.

## Save Our Summers!

by Charles Wilton

Summer is every child's favorite season. It's like a nice dream where days go on forever, the grass is thick and green, and the world is yours to explore with your friends. Even the air smells better. For children, summer has always meant freedom. But now, some people want to take that freedom away. They believe kids should stay in school year-round, with just a few weeks of vacation now and then. To them, I say, "No, thanks!" There are too many reasons to keep summer vacations.

From a very young age, children are forced to march around, follow teachers' instructions, perform little tasks, and do work. This is not a bad thing. Kids need to learn how to read, do math, and all the rest. But kids are still kids. They also need time to run, play, and discover the world on their own. They need to have fun, which means they need time to be carefree. They will have plenty of time to take orders all day, every day, when they are grown up. Summer vacation is the perfect chance—the only chance—for kids to be themselves and enjoy their childhood.

Older children and teenagers need this freedom just as much as younger children do. From this freedom, they develop independence, which they need in order to mature into adults. Teenagers rebel when they feel like their parents and teachers are taking away their freedom and independence. If teenagers have even less unmanaged time, then they will rebel even more. Students who already feel trapped by the strict schedule of school will be even more tempted to drop out if they have to keep the same schedule when the sun is hot, swimming pools are open, and people drive convertibles with the top down.

Summer is also the only time many students are able to get a job. And, while working may not always be fun, it still provides teenagers with the freedom to choose what to do with their time. Many parents don't allow their children to work while they are in school and for good reasons: Students need plenty of time to study and enjoy after-school activities, such as music and sports. Summertime is the only chance many students have to earn their own money and to get some work experience. Taking away summer vacations means taking away that chance and many other opportunities, as well.

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Teachers will also suffer if the school year is longer. Of course, most full-time jobs are year-round. And, in most professions, working year-round makes sense. Working year-round does not make sense for teachers. Most teachers work more than full time during the school year. They teach all day and then make lesson plans and correct papers at night. Some even coach sports teams or other school groups. After months of a schedule like this, teachers deserve a long vacation. In fact, summer vacation is one of the few things that keep many good teachers from changing jobs. Summer vacation gives teachers the same thing it gives students: the freedom to choose what to do with their time. Like their students, many teachers choose to work during the summer, to earn extra money. Teachers also use summers to go back to school, to learn how to become better teachers. If the school year is year-round, our best teachers will probably quit.

Year-round school is not the answer to our educational problems. Kids will lose the chance to be kids, enjoy their freedom, and earn their own money. Teachers will lose one of the few advantages of their job, and then we may lose the best teachers to other vocations. Instead, let's find a solution in which nobody loses. I urge you to help save our summers.

1. What is the author's **main** purpose for writing this passage?
  - A. to inform
  - B. to persuade
  - C. to entertain
  - D. to explain
  
2. How could the author more convincingly support his opinion that the "best teachers will probably quit" if the school year is extended?
  - A. by explaining what makes these great teachers so good at their job
  - B. by including quotations from teachers opposed to teaching in the summer
  - C. by providing statistics that show an extended school year will improve grades
  - D. by pointing out that people in other professions quit their jobs due to workload

3. How does the author illustrate in paragraph 1 that children should be free in the summer?
- A. by comparing summer to other seasons
  - B. by quoting someone who shares this view
  - C. by providing statistics that support his opinion
  - D. by reminding the reader of summer's special qualities
4. Words like *trapped* and *strict* show that the author
- A. is unbiased toward year-round schooling.
  - B. has neutral feelings toward year-round schooling.
  - C. has positive feelings toward year-round schooling.
  - D. has negative feelings toward year-round schooling.
5. The author believes that
- A. a longer school year will improve students' grades.
  - B. students do not want to find jobs in the summer.
  - C. children do not want to be in school in the summer.
  - D. education is not necessarily a good thing.

6. What does the author say will happen if school is year-round?

- A. Students will be more likely to drop out.
- B. Teenagers will stay out of trouble.
- C. Teachers will get more valuable practice.
- D. States will run out of money to fund school programs.

7. How does the author support his statement that teachers will suffer if the school year is extended?

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8. Is the author's argument effective? Explain your response using details from the passage.

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## Focus Lessons

### Lesson 12: Determining Author's Purpose

A writer's intent when writing text is called the **author's purpose**. For example, the writer may intend to entertain, to persuade, to amuse, or to instruct. By paying attention to the style, word choices, and details in a passage, the reader can determine the **author's purpose**.

**DIRECTIONS:** *Read the following introduction to an office furniture catalog. As you read, try to determine the author's purpose. Then answer the questions that follow.*

Versatile, beautiful, and pleasing in every way! Once you have owned a piece of our sturdy yet handsome, practical yet decorative furniture, you will never buy from any other manufacturer! Our *2000 Modular Line* is designed to capture your attention with its sleek lines and muted earth tones. Seventeen pieces, each with its own function and shape, interlock to create your own, unique workspace. Elegantly thin and streamlined, these pieces are made of pure hardwood and show off the natural grains in the wood. Unlike commonly used particleboard, our all-wood pieces are remarkably strong, as well! Browse through the pages of our catalog and imagine your own custom set. The combinations and possibilities are virtually endless! Then make the phone call. It's as simple as that. And tomorrow, you could be reveling in the office of your dreams...





## Focus Lessons

1. What images do you think of when you read the words *sturdy* and *practical*? What about the words *handsome* and *decorative*?

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2. How do you think the writer is trying to portray the *2000 Modular Line*? For what reason is the writer trying to create a specific image? Explain.

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3. In the space below, tell what you think the author's purpose is in this passage.

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For more information on determining author's purpose, see *Glencoe Literature, Course 2*, pp. 32, 830, and R1.





## Lesson 5: Author's Purpose (Answer Key)

### *A World made Beautiful by Dzine*

1. "A:"
2. Success, celebrate, impressive, successful, positive point of view
3. "B"
4. "D"
5. "B"
6. "A"

Practice Activity: 1. Fact 2. Opinion 3. Fact 4. Fact

7. "D"

### *Save Our Summers!*

1. "B"
2. "B"
3. "D"
4. "D"
5. "C"
6. "A"
7. Information in paragraph 5
8. Effective: His argument is organized and gives many reasons and examples to support his point of view. Not effective: His argument does not consider opposing points of view, and it needs to include stronger evidence such as statistics.

## Focus Lesson 12: Determining Author's Purpose Introduction to an office furniture catalog

1. The words "sturdy" and "strong" bring to mind things that are functional, lasting, and strong. The words "handsome" and "decorative" brings to mind things that are pleasing to the eye, add beauty to space, and will aesthetically enhance an area or a room.
2. The writer is trying to portray the *2000 Modular Line* as a line of office furniture that meets high standards in the areas of functionality and appearance. The writer is trying to create an image that makes the furniture more appealing to the reader.
3. The author's purpose is to convince the reader that the *2000 Modular Line* is a superior line of furniture and to persuade the reader to purchase it. The author emphasizes the furniture's versatility to make it appealing to a wide variety of readers.





## Lesson 6: Genre

What is the first thing you can tell about what you read? You might be tempted to say “the title,” but that might not tell you very much about what’s to come. The next thing you will probably notice is what type of writing it is. Is it a story? A poem? A play? Something else? Knowing the type of writing you’re reading can help you understand the text and know what to expect as you read.

A **genre** is a type of writing. Authors choose different genres to express themselves depending on the ideas they want to explore and the way they want their audience to experience the writing. The first thing you must do to understand what you are about to read is to decide what genre it belongs to. There are four basic genres into which almost all writing fits: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.

**Subgenres** are more specific categories within each of these main genres. In this lesson, you will review the major genres as well as several common subgenres of writing. You’ll also learn about how the author’s choice of genre affects the final text.



### TIP 1: Fiction is a made-up story written in prose.

**Fiction** is a genre of writing that comes from the author’s imagination. It is written in prose. **Prose** is writing that generally uses standard sentence and paragraph structure. Plays and poems may be made up, too, but they are not written in prose.

Fiction is usually written as a narrative. A **narrative** is a story that is mostly told in the order in which events happen. Fiction comes in a few different forms, depending on the length. The two most common forms are short stories and novels. **Short stories** usually have a single, relatively simple plot which focuses on a small number of characters.

**Novels** are longer, more developed stories that may contain many characters and events.

There are many subgenres within the genre of fiction. Here are a few of them.

Fiction Subgenre	Characteristics
fable	a story that teaches about human nature by showing what happens to characters who are greedy, selfish, proud, and so on; fables usually feature animals as main characters
fantasy	an imaginative story in which characters and settings are different from those in the real world; often deals with magic and sometimes portrays heroic battles between good and evil
folktale	a story that is handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth, revealing the values and beliefs of the culture that produced it; folktales can contain magical characters and events
historical fiction	a story that takes place during a particular historical time, often with characters taking part in historic events; characters' beliefs and dialogue are true to the period
mystery	a story in which the main character spends most of the plot looking for clues to solve a problem or crime
myth	an ancient story created to explain the workings of the world, featuring gods or god-like heroes and sometimes involving battles of good versus evil
parable	a story that teaches about human nature by showing the results of different ways of acting and thinking; unlike fables, the characters in parables are usually people
realistic fiction	a story about situations that could happen in real life, with familiar character types and settings
science fiction	a story with scientific or technological problems—such as a malfunctioning robot, a meteor shower, or an unfriendly alien—that is often set in the future or somewhere else in the universe

Use what you know about fiction to answer Numbers 1 and 2.

1. What is the title of your favorite fictional story?

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2. What subgenre of fiction does it belong to?

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## TIP 2: Nonfiction describes real events and people, and discusses ideas.

**Nonfiction** depicts actual people, places, things, and events. Anything factual is nonfiction, from ideas about how the universe was created to descriptions of what the author had for breakfast this morning. Authors of nonfiction may write about things that happened long ago based on research, or they may describe their own experiences. Authors may talk about an event and explain what may have caused it, what impact it had, or what it meant.

Like fiction, nonfiction can be written as a narrative, but it also includes discussions of ideas. An author might propose a solution to a problem or consider the meaning of life. Also like fiction, nonfiction is written in prose form.

The following chart lists some common subgenres of nonfiction.

Nonfiction Subgenre	Characteristics
autobiography	the life story of the author
biography	the true story of someone's life written by another person
essay	a short nonfiction work that describes, discusses, or analyzes a single topic from the author's point of view; essays often reveal the author's bias
historical document or speech	an official statement that records the social and political beliefs of groups of people and individuals in history and exposes readers to the language and attitudes of the time
informational book or article	a text written to give facts about a particular subject, such as history, science, or culture
interview	a series of questions asked by the author and answered by the subject, who may be an expert in a certain field or a participant in an important event
journal or letter	a personal account of life experiences
newspaper or newsmagazine	a collection of unbiased reports of current events, along with editorials (editors' opinions about important issues), reviews (writers' opinions about books, films, music, or other artistic works), and features ("human interest" stories that reflect people's lifestyles and concerns)

Now answer Numbers 3 and 4.

3. Which of the following titles is most likely nonfiction?
- A. *Battling the Dragon*
  - B. *Mission to Planet Zyfone*
  - C. *How to Become Invisible*
  - D. *The Story of My Childhood*

4. Identify the subgenre of the answer you chose for Number 3. Explain how you know.

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**TIP 3: Poetry uses precise language that carries special meaning.**

Poetry is an artful arrangement of language, often used to illustrate an idea. Poetry is difficult to define, since it is the most flexible of genres. Poems are not governed by the same rules of form as other kinds of writing. Poets use language in whatever manner best expresses their thoughts and feelings. But there are a few basic elements that most poems share. For example, poems are usually divided into lines and stanzas. **Lines** are rows of words. **Stanzas** are groups of lines—the “paragraphs” of the poem. Sometimes, poets play with structure to add to a poem’s meaning.

In general, authors write poems to concentrate their ideas or feelings about a subject into a short work that is packed with meaning. Gifted poets sometimes say more about a topic in a few lines than fiction writers do in a few pages.

Type of Poem	Characteristics
ballad	a poem with a very musical rhyme and rhythm pattern that usually tells about a single event dealing with love, tragedy, or heroism
concrete	a poem in which words are arranged to create an image of what the poem is about
epic	a poem that tells a long story about a hero, often to illustrate the ideals of the culture in which it is written
free verse	a poem with no set rhyme or rhythm pattern
haiku	a poem that consists of three lines in which the number of syllables alternates in a pattern of 5-7-5; usually describes the poet's feelings about nature
limerick	a comical poem with first, second, and fifth lines rhyming and shorter third and fourth lines rhyming; often ends with a surprise twist
lyric	a short, musical kind of poetry that deals with emotions
narrative	poetry that tells a story
sonnet	a poem of 14 lines, often with 10 syllables each, and various rhyme schemes



**TIP 4: Drama is written for actors to perform for an audience.**

**Drama** is writing that is intended to be performed by actors for an audience. It can take the form of a film, a television or radio program, a skit, or a stage play. Most of the story is told through dialogue. **Dialogue** consists of the words the characters say to each other. The rest of the story in a drama is told through the characters' actions. In some plays, a narrator describes the setting or the action, but this is rare.

Since dramatic text is meant to be performed, it appears in a unique format. The format of dramatic text includes dialogue and stage directions. **Stage directions** are statements that are not read to the audience, but that tell the actors what to do or how to speak.

Plays are divided into scenes and acts. **Scenes** are limited to what happens in a specific time and place in the story. **Acts** are groups of scenes. The passage on the following page is part of a scene from a play.



Read the following scene.

adapted from  
*Hamlet*  
by William Shakespeare

CAST OF CHARACTERS

HAMLET, son of the dead king, nephew of the present king

HORATIO, friend to Hamlet

MARCELLUS, an officer

GHOST, of Hamlet's father

ACT ONE, Scene 4

(A guard platform. Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.)

HAMLET: The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

HORATIO: It is a nipping and an eager air.

HAMLET: What hour is it now?

HORATIO: I think it is just short of twelve.

MARCELLUS: No, twelve has struck.

HORATIO: Indeed? I heard it not. It then draws near the season wherein the spirit has walked before.

(Enter GHOST.)

HORATIO: Look, my lord, it comes.

HAMLET: Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

Now compare the scene from the play *Hamlet* to this version, written as prose.

Prince Hamlet followed his good friend Horatio up the long staircase to the top of the guard's tower. The night air was biting cold, and Hamlet wondered aloud how late an hour it was. Horatio said it was almost midnight, but the guard, Marcellus, told them twelve had already struck.

Horatio looked gravely at Hamlet and said, "Then it draws near the time when the spirit usually appears." The two friends began looking around for the ghost that Horatio had told Hamlet about.

Suddenly, Horatio grabbed Hamlet's arm and pointed. "Look, my lord, it comes," he cried.

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us!" gasped Hamlet. Though he had wanted to believe Horatio, he had not been able to do anything but doubt his closest friend's words. And yet, there it was: his father's ghost.

5. How is the dramatic version different from the prose fiction version?

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### Other Drama Terms

**cast of characters**—a list of characters, often with a brief description of each

**curtain**—a large cloth wide enough to conceal the set; the curtain may be opened to indicate the beginning of an act or scene, and closed to indicate the end of an act or scene

**monologue**—a long speech given by a single character

**narrator**—a character who addresses the audience to introduce or comment about the story; this character may or may not be part of the action

**prop**—any object used by the actors, such as a book, a sword, or a telephone

**soliloquy**—a speech given by a character to directly communicate thoughts and feelings to the audience

**TIP 5: The author's choice of genre shapes the meaning of the text.**

After identifying the genre of a passage, it is important to decide how the genre affects the meaning of the text. Authors have many choices to make when they set out to express their feelings about a subject. One of those choices is to decide which genre will best present the feelings or themes they want to explore. Each genre brings a different set of possibilities to the material.

As you read the work below, notice how the author's choice of genre affects the text's meaning. You may need to read the work more than once to make sure you fully understand it.

### *“Hope” Is the Thing with Feathers*

by Emily Dickinson

“Hope” is the thing with feathers—  
That perches in the soul—  
And sings the tune without the words—  
And never stops—at all—

And sweetest—in the Gale<sup>1</sup>—is heard—  
And sore must be the storm—  
That could abash<sup>2</sup> the little Bird  
That kept so many warm—

I've heard it in the chillest land—  
And on the strangest Sea—  
Yet, never, in Extremity,<sup>3</sup>  
It asked a crumb—of Me.

<sup>1</sup>gale: howling wind

<sup>2</sup>abash: silence

<sup>3</sup>Extremity: great need

6. This work is an example of which genre?
- A. fiction
  - B. nonfiction
  - C. drama
  - D. poetry

7. How does the author's choice of genre affect the meaning of the work?
- A. The author expresses her feelings in just a few lines using careful language.
  - B. The author is able to shape events to illustrate her thoughts perfectly.
  - C. A real-life situation reveals the way hope sustains the human spirit.
  - D. The audience can easily identify with the actors in the scene.



**TIP 6: Subgenre elements help you know what to expect.**

As mentioned earlier, within each major genre, such as fiction, there are many subgenres, such as mystery, historical fiction, and so on. We are able to place pieces of literature into subgenres because they share certain common elements. For instance, if a fictional story or play is set on another planet, it is reasonable to say that it is science fiction, and it will have a few things in common with other science fiction stories and plays.

Of course, there aren't hard and fast rules that literature of every subgenre must follow. But knowing a little bit of what to expect from a story—even if you turn out to be surprised—will help you be more comfortable as you begin reading.

8. Choose a subgenre from one of the lists in this lesson. Name one expectation you have when starting to read a story in this subgenre.

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9. An epic poem is similar to a myth in that they both
- A. may try to explain a scientific idea.
  - B. may be written in fourteen lines.
  - C. may tell the story of a hero.
  - D. may contain stage directions.



**LESSON PRACTICE BEGINS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.**

Unit 1 – Reading

**Directions:** This passage is about two sisters on a shopping trip. Read the passage. Then answer Numbers 1 through 5.

*The Gift*

by Jesse St. Clair

CAST OF CHARACTERS

HAILEY, 13-year-old girl

LISA, her 9-year-old sister

ACT ONE, Scene 1

*(HAILEY and LISA walk through the doll aisle in the toy store. LISA squeals with excitement each time she picks up a doll. HAILEY is more calm, but she smiles at LISA's childish enthusiasm.)*

HAILEY: So, have you decided which one you want, birthday girl?

LISA: I want them all!

HAILEY: *(laughing)* You can only have one. I've only got fifteen dollars.

LISA: *(pouting)* Why didn't Mom give you more money?

HAILEY: Because she doesn't have any more money. This is actually a big sacrifice for her, and you should be grateful. How about this one?

*(HAILEY holds up a doll with curly blonde hair wearing a pea soup-green dress. LISA scrunches up her nose in disgust. She spots another doll and grabs it off the shelf.)*

LISA: Ooh! This one! P-l-e-e-e-e-a-s-e! She's beautiful!

*(LISA holds up a doll with long brown hair. The doll is dressed in a red jumpsuit and matching cap. HAILEY examines the price tag and shakes her head.)*

HAILEY: Sorry, Lisa. She costs twenty-five dollars. We're ten dollars short.

LISA: *(scowling)* Why couldn't Mom come with us today? I'm sure she wouldn't mind spending ten more dollars.

HAILEY: I told you. She has to work late at the hospital. That's why she asked me to bring you here to pick out your gift. But you have to pick one we can afford.

*(LISA watches silently as HAILEY returns the doll to the shelf. They turn the corner and enter the next aisle. This one is filled with board games and crafts activities. LISA spots a board game and pulls it off the shelf.)*

LISA: Hey, didn't you say you like this game?

HAILEY: *(looking over LISA's shoulder)* I do! It looks like a lot of fun in the commercial. But this is *your* gift, not mine.

LISA: *(smiling)* It'll be just as much fun to play if we think of it as *our* gift.

*(HAILEY stares at LISA with a new appreciation and respect.)*

HAILEY: I guess you really are growing up.

*(The girls head for the cashier's line and exit.)*

1. This passage is an example of which genre?
  - A. nonfiction
  - B. fiction
  - C. poetry
  - D. drama
  
2. Which sentence from the passage is a stage direction?
  - A. Why didn't Mom give you more money?
  - B. Lisa holds up a doll with long brown hair.
  - C. I'm sure she wouldn't mind spending ten more dollars.
  - D. It looks like a lot of fun in the commercial.

Unit 1 - Reading

3. Which of the following is a theme of this passage?

- A. Gifts aren't as important as the people who give them.
- B. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.
- C. If at first you don't succeed, try again.
- D. Hard work and patience pay off in the end.

4. Where does the passage take place?

- A. a hospital
- B. a department store
- C. a toy store
- D. the girls' house

5. What does the dialogue reveal about the characters?

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**Directions:** This passage is about a boy's unforgettable trip. Read the passage. Then answer Numbers 6 through 10.

## *Into the Void*

by Arianna Fernandez

Jian grinned with excitement as the shuttle approached for a landing. He turned to his dad, sitting on the orange leather seat beside him.

"I can't believe we're actually here!"

Jian's father smiled. The round-trip tickets had cost him 12,000 Earth units, but the look on his son's face made the sacrifice worthwhile.

"You earned it, son. You're at the top of the class at Solar Rays Academy, and that's no easy feat."

The speakers above the passengers' seats suddenly sprung to life as the pilot's voice filled the passenger cabin. "Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. We will be arriving on the moon in two minutes. Be sure to activate your gravity boots in the antechamber of the shuttle terminal. A shuttle attendant will now distribute your oxygen masks. Please wear these at all times, unless you are in specially designated OxyZone areas."

A door slid open at the front of the shuttle. A uniformed android emerged, carrying oxygen masks attached to small metal canisters.

"They look more and more human every day, don't they?" Jian's father noted.

Jian nodded, but he said nothing. Something about the android seemed strange. Androids were part of everyday life on Earth. They assembled rocket cars and repaired them at Zoom Stations. They worked in restaurants and retail stores. But this android moved as if it were being controlled by someone else. Jian wondered if it was a circuitry problem as the android reached his row.

Jian held out his hand, but instead of handing over the mask, the android grabbed Jian's wrist and held on to it with a viselike grip.

"Dad! What's going on?" Jian shouted. He fought in vain to free himself while his dad stood by, helpless. Then, the android leaned down, his face inches from Jian's. He spoke in an all-too-human voice.

"Welcome to your destiny, Jian Li. Only you can save us."



Unit 1 - Reading

6. Why is Jian's achievement at Solar Rays Academy most likely important to the passage?
- A. It helps the reader figure out why Jian wants to travel through space.
  - B. It is may be the reason why Jian has been selected by the android.
  - C. It teaches the reader that hard work is rewarded.
  - D. It emphasizes the importance of obtaining a good education.
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7. Which detail best helps establish the time period of the passage?
- A. space shuttle
  - B. rocket car
  - C. circuitry problem
  - D. retail store
8. Based on the passage so far, which character type will most likely describe Jian by the end of the passage?
- A. detective
  - B. monster
  - C. villain
  - D. hero

9. Which subgenre does this passage belong to?

- A. science fiction
- B. realistic fiction
- C. fable
- D. myth

10. Which details in the passage help you identify the subgenre?

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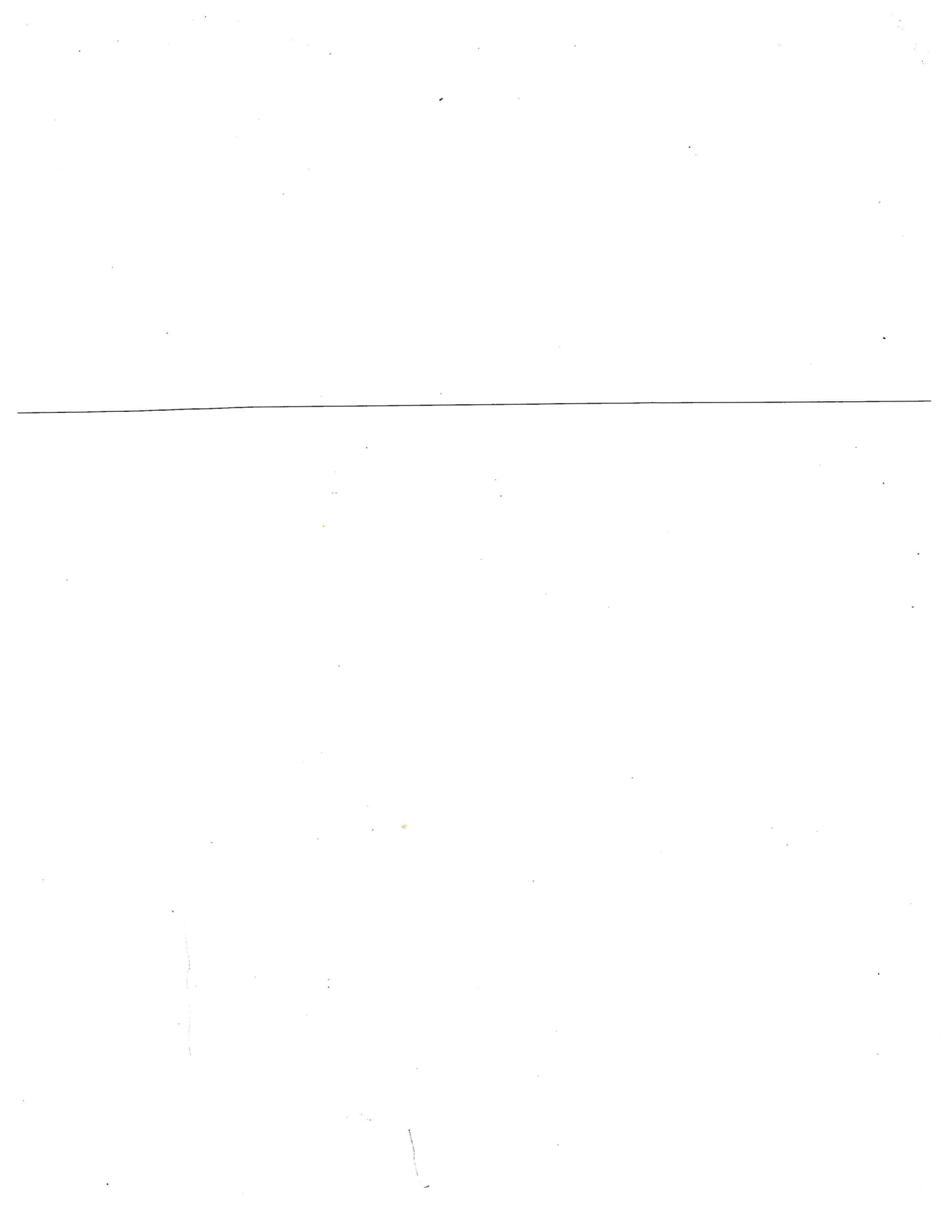
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## Lesson 6: Genre (Answer Key)

1. Answers will vary
2. Answers will vary
3. "D"
4. Autobiography
5. In the prose version, the reader is given written descriptions of details and character actions. In the dramatic version, the actions are performed and details are not written out.
6. "D"
7. "A"
8. Answers will vary
9. "C"

### *The Gift*

1. "D"
2. "B"
3. "A"
4. "C"
5. Hailey is mature and responsible. Lisa is younger and immature.

### *Into the Void*

6. "B"
7. "B"
8. "D"
9. "A"
10. We will be arriving on the moon. A uniformed android emerged. Rocket cars.





## Lesson 7: Literary Elements

At its simplest level, a story is just this: *Something happens to someone, somewhere.* Sounds easy, right? Well, let's examine this definition a little closer and break it into three very important parts of every well-written story.

The "something happens" part of the story is called the **plot**. The plot might involve having a fight with your sister, taking a trip to an amusement park, or finding a million dollars. The "someone" part of the story has to do with **characters**. The main character may be you, your teacher, or your cat, Mr. Boots. The "somewhere" of the story is called the **setting**. Maybe the setting of your story is your home in a quiet suburban neighborhood. Or maybe you want a setting that is more exciting and less ordinary. So, you choose a galaxy far, far away, two thousand years into the future, for your setting. That's just fine, because setting also refers to *when* a story takes place.

In a good story, the plot, characters, and setting work together to create an interesting tale. In this lesson, you will review these three story elements, along with point of view.



### TIP 1: Identify the narrator's point of view.

The **narrator** is the person telling a story. Every story has one. And every reader should be able to identify who the narrator is. After all, you can't completely understand a story unless you know who is telling it.

Every narrator has a point of view. In fiction, **point of view** is the relationship between the narrator and the story. Sometimes the point of view is easy to spot. For example, if you read the opening sentence, "My name is Gustavo; I am twelve years old, and I want to tell you about the time my pet snake got loose in my seventh-grade class."

From the very first sentence, we know that the story is told from the point of view of a twelve-year-old boy named Gustavo who goes to school and likes snakes. We learn all of this very quickly, and we are interested right away.

Some narrators are characters within the story. When an actual character is telling the story, his or her point of view is described as **first person**. **First-person** narrators use personal pronouns such as *I*, *me*, *myself*, *we*, and *our*. They tell the story based on how they think and feel about the events. A first-person point of view can include only events that the narrator sees, is a part of, or learns about.

Consider the following example of first-person narration:

It had never occurred to me that Amber might like me that way. She was beautiful and funny, and I was just . . . well, me. And yet somehow, by the end of the day, we were holding hands. All I could think was that I must have been dreaming. And that my palms were pretty sweaty.

An author might choose to use a first-person point of view because it's fun to get to know a character by being inside his or her head.

A **third-person** narrator describes the characters and events in a story *without* being a part of the action. This narrator acts more like an invisible observer who sees and hears everything that takes place. One reason authors use a third-person point of view is because it lets them include information that the characters do not know about each other or their situation.

Here is an example of third-person narration:

Andy held Amber's hand lightly, believing the moment—if not the hand itself—might shatter if he squeezed any harder. Amber flashed a gentle smile at him, and Andy felt his heart melt. He hoped she didn't notice his palms were getting sweaty. Amber was hoping the same thing. Her palms were sweaty, too.

Obviously, the above paragraph is describing the same story you just read. But how does the third-person point of view change it? We still know what Andy is thinking. We still know what Andy is doing. So what do we learn that the first-person point of view cannot teach us? The answer is in the last two sentences:

Amber was hoping the same thing. Her palms were sweaty, too.

If Andy is telling us the story, there is no way that he could know how Amber is feeling, unless she told him (which she didn't). Only by using a third-person point of view can a writer tell the reader what each character is thinking.

There are actually two different kinds of third-person narration. The first kind, **third-person limited**, tells the reader only the thoughts and feelings of one character. The following paragraph uses third-person-limited narration.

David was walking along the riverbank when he suddenly found himself on the ground. He must have tripped and fallen over a stone. He figured his mother would be angry about his new jeans getting dirty. But the worry quickly vanished when he got a closer look at what put him on the ground. *That's no rock, he thought, that's gold!*

The other kind of third-person narration is called omniscient. **Omniscient** means “all-knowing.” This type of narrator can tell the reader the thoughts and feelings of a number of different characters. This point of view puts readers at a greater distance from the characters, but allows them to see a bigger picture. Here's an example of third-person-omniscient narration.

David was lost in his own thoughts, his hands casually slipped into the pockets of a pair of new-looking jeans. He was paying little attention to the soft riverbank ground and so missed the object that caught his foot and sent him sprawling. He jumped up and brushed himself off. Immediately, he crouched down to look more closely at the large, golden stone that had tripped him.

Notice the difference? The limited view acts like a microscope on the world of the story, focusing on things closely. In the first example, readers get to know the inside of David's head. The omniscient view, on the other hand, is like looking at the world through a big plate-glass window. We can take in a bigger view, but might miss some of the smaller details. We see what David looks like, where his hands are, the rock before he trips over it, and so on. If other characters were present on that riverbank, the narrator could also tell us how they reacted to David's fall.

There is another kind of point of view that is used less often than first and third person. **Second-person** point of view uses what is called a direct address. This means “you” are a character in the story. Writers create a sense that the things he or she is describing are actually happening to the reader.



Now, read the following passage about a pair of kidnappers who make the mistake of grabbing the wrong kid. This passage will help you understand the rest of the tips in this lesson.

### *The Ransom*

adapted from the short story “The Ransom of Red Chief” by O. Henry

It looked like a good thing: but wait till I tell you. We were down South, in Alabama—Bill Driscoll and myself—when this kidnapping idea struck us. It was, as Bill put it afterward, “during a moment of temporary insanity”; but we didn’t find that out till later.

There was a town down there, as flat as a pancake, called Summit, of course. It contained as harmless and happy a class of folk that ever celebrated life.

Bill and me had about six hundred dollars between the two of us, and we needed just two thousand more to pull off a scam up in western Illinois. We talked it over on the front steps of the hotel. Love of children, says we, is strong in little towns. Plus, a kidnapping would go off more easily away from the big-city newspapers and reporters that can stir up pots of trouble. We knew Summit couldn’t get after us with anything stronger than part-time peace officers and, maybe, some lazy bloodhounds and an editorial in the farm report. So, it looked good.

We selected for our victim the child of a well-known banker named Ebenezer Dorset. Ebenezer, we’d learn, was an uptight kind of guy. Real straight-edge. His kid was a boy of about ten, with blended freckles, and hair the color of an apple you swipe from a seller’s cart as you pass. Bill and me figured that Ebenezer would melt down for a ransom of two thousand dollars to a cent. But wait till I tell you.

About two miles from Summit was a little mountain, covered in a thick forest. On the far side was a cave. We set up camp there and stored our stuff.

One evening after sundown, we drove into town in a buggy. The kid was in the street, throwing rocks at a kitten near the fence.

“Hey, little boy!” said Bill, “would you like to have a bag of candy and go for a nice ride?”

The boy hit Bill square in the eye with a piece of brick.

“That will cost the old man an extra five hundred dollars,” said Bill.

*(To be continued . . .)*

1. What is the point of view of the narrator of “The Ransom”? How do you know?

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2. How might this story be different if it were told from Ebenezer's first-person point of view?

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**TIP 2: Ask yourself about the characters and how they act.**

A good writer will find ways to reveal things about characters to the reader. We may learn about characters from what they look like and how they act, sound, think, or feel. Sometimes we can learn about characters from their names. For example, what can we say about a character named “Big Biff the Bully”? Probably that Biff isn’t anyone you’d want to invite over to play.

Here are other types of questions you can ask when it comes to character and some examples of each type.

- **What is the character like?** Is the character kind and gentle? Rough and tough? Brave most of the time, but with a terrible fear of spiders? How does he or she speak and act with other characters in the story? Is he or she patient with some and not with others?
- **What does the character want most and why?** Is the character looking for love, money, revenge, or something else? Why does he or she want one thing and not another?
- **What is the main problem the character faces?** Is the character in physical danger? Does he or she have a secret? Is he or she looking for something? (If you can answer this question about the main character in a story, you will be very close to the main idea of the story.)
- **How does the character react to the situation he or she or she is in?** Is the character worried? Is he or she confused or frightened? Does he or she think it’s funny?
- **How do other characters feel about this character?** What do they think and say about him or her? Do they like him or her? Are they afraid of him or her? Do they want the same things?
- **How does the character change throughout the story?** Does the character get what he or she wants? Does what he or she wants change? Why does it change? Do all the characters in a story change in the same way?

Using the answers to the questions on the previous page, you should be able to determine whether a character is round or flat. A **round** character is one that presents a full picture of his or her qualities: what he or she looks like, what he is thinking or feeling, and so on. A **flat** character is less interesting or filled out by details.

You can also identify a character as static or dynamic. A **static** character changes very little from beginning to end. A **dynamic** character changes, often in a major way, by the end of the story, usually because of his or her choices throughout the story.

Think carefully about character traits as you answer Numbers 3 and 4.

3. Go back to the passage and circle details about the kid.
4. Based on what you have read so far, which statement about the kid is true?
  - A. He has one brother.
  - B. His father is unemployed.
  - C. He has red hair.
  - D. He is 13 years old.

Read the next part of "The Ransom." Then answer the questions that follow.

adapted from  
*The Ransom*  
(Continued)

*The narrator, Sam, and Bill grab the kid and drive back to their cave in the mountain. Sam leaves to go hide the buggy. When he returns to the cave, he finds Bill and the kid playing a game. The kid is pretending to have kidnapped Bill. Bill complains to Sam that the kid "can kick hard."*

Yes, sir, that boy seemed to be having the time of his life. The fun of camping out in a cave had made him forget that he was a captive himself. He immediately named me Snake-eye and announced that when his friends returned to camp, I was to be burned at the stake.

Then we had supper, and the kid filled his mouth full of bacon (more bacon than I even got to eat!) and bread and gravy, too. Then he began to talk. He made a speech something like this:

“I like this fine. I never camped out before; but I had a pet possum once, and I was nine last birthday. I hate to go to school. Rats ate up sixteen of Jimmy Talbot’s aunt’s speckled hen’s eggs. Are there any real Indians in these woods? I want some more gravy. Does the trees moving make the wind blow? We had five puppies. What makes your nose so red, Sam? My father has lots of money. Are the stars hot? I don’t like girls. You can’t catch toads unless you got a string. Do oxen make any noise? Why are oranges round? Have you got beds to sleep on in this cave? Amox Murray has got six toes. A parrot can talk, but a monkey or a fish can’t. How many does it take to make twelve?”

And what are we supposed to say to all that?

Well, every few minutes he would remember his game, and pick up his stick rifle and tiptoe to the mouth of the cave to look for any pretend enemies. Now and then he let out a war-cry that made Bill shiver. That boy had Bill scared from the start.

“Hey, kid,” said I, “would you like to go home?”

“Aw, what for?” said he. “I don’t have any fun at home. I hate to go to school. I like to camp out. Don’t you, Snake-eye?”

I told him I most certainly did, though I hadn’t thought about it in a while.

“You won’t take me back home again, Snake-eye, will you?”

“Not right away,” said I. “We’ll stay here in the cave a while.”

“All right!” said he. “That’ll be fine. I never had such fun in all my life.”

We went to bed about eleven o’clock. We spread down some wide blankets and quilts and put the kid between us. We weren’t afraid he would run away. He kept us awake for three hours, jumping up and reaching for his rifle and screeching. Every slight sound to him was the warning of some made-up enemy. At last, I fell into a troubled sleep and dreamed that I had been kidnapped and chained to a tree by a terrible pirate with red hair.

At dawn, I was woken by a series of awful screams from Bill. They weren’t yells, or howls, or shouts, or whoops, or yawps, like you might expect from a man’s lungs—they were simply terrifying, embarrassing, high-pitched screams, like a small child might make when he or she gets splashed with cold water or sees a mouse or a spider. It’s an awful thing to hear a strong adult man scream in a cave at daybreak.

I jumped up to see what the matter was. The kid was sitting on Bill’s chest, attempting to tie him up. I got the kid away from Bill and made him lie down again. But, from that moment, Bill’s spirit was broken.

*(To be continued . . .)*

5. Reread what the kid says when asked if he wants to go home. What does this say about his character?

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Now that you know what the kid's actions are, use that information to get a bigger picture of his personality.

6. Which word best describes the kid?

- A. stubborn
- B. obedient
- C. adventurous
- D. scared

7. How do you know?

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8. From what we know, how is the narrator similar to the kid?

- A. They both do not enjoy going to school.
- B. They both do not trust Bill Driscoll.
- C. They both enjoy camping.
- D. They both think Ebenezer is nice.



**TIP 3: Look for indirect information about characters.**

When characters are introduced, we usually learn the basics: their names, what they look like, how old they are, and so on. This information is often given directly, meaning, it's simply told to us. In "The Ransom," for example, we know that Ebenezer is uptight because the narrator says, "Ebenezer, we'd learn, was an uptight kind of guy."

Authors may not give us every piece of information directly, however. That's why we need to make inferences to complete our understanding of characters. Remember that an **inference** is a guess based on details we're given. Inferences about characters are based on what the character says and the way that he or she says it. They are also based on what the character does, how he or she treats others, and how others treat him or her.

In the excerpt from "The Ransom" that you just read, the author gives only a few details that describe the kid directly. But from these details, we can get some idea of the kind of person he is.

- 9. Which statement best describes how the kid feels about being kidnapped?
  - A. He is afraid that Bill and Sam will hurt him.
  - B. He misses his father and wants to go home.
  - C. He knows that he can escape when he wants.
  - D. He thinks that he is not in any danger at all.

10. How do you know?

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**Talk of the Town**

Much of what we learn about characters comes not only from what they say but also from the way that they say it. A character's language and style of speaking may tell us where he or she is from, how educated he or she is, and whether he or she is trying to impress or affect others.

Pay attention to the ways characters speak. Do they use simple words or fancy ones? Do they use slang or formal speech? These clues may tell you a lot about a character.

Duplicating any part of this book is prohibited by law.

Indirect information can also be revealed through dialogue. Dialogue is what characters say to each other in a story. Sometimes the information you learn about characters from their words is pretty straightforward. For example, the kid in “The Ransom” says, “I hate to go to school.” There’s no reason to doubt that this is exactly how he feels.

Other times, what you learn about characters is not directly stated in the dialogue, but you can infer it by interpreting their words. Read the following excerpt from “The Ransom.”

“I like this fine. I never camped out before; but I had a pet possum once, and I was nine last birthday. I hate to go to school. Rats ate up sixteen of Jimmy Talbot’s aunt’s speckled hen’s eggs. Are there any real Indians in these woods? I want some more gravy. Does the trees moving make the wind blow? We had five puppies. What makes your nose so red, Sam? My father has lots of money. Are the stars hot? I don’t like girls. You can’t catch toads unless you got a string. Do oxen make any noise? Why are oranges round? Have you got beds to sleep on in this cave? Amox Murray has got six toes. A parrot can talk, but a monkey or a fish can’t. How many does it take to make twelve?”

What the kid says and how he says it is like a window into the kid’s nature. He jumps from one idea to the next, suggesting that his mind is always working a mile a minute. He throws in one question after another, which reveals that he has an immense curiosity but no patience to wait for the answers. His dialogue is fast-paced—a whirlwind of observations and questions that reflects the kid’s boundless energy.



**TIP 4:** Look for details that describe the setting.

The setting of a story may include the time period in history, the season, the time of day, the weather, the landscape, the color of the walls, and so on. Authors usually sprinkle details about the setting throughout the story. Those are the details that help you picture where these characters you’re studying are.

Read the next excerpt from the story. Pay attention to the clues that reveal the story’s setting. Then answer the questions that follow.

adapted from  
*The Ransom*  
(Continued)

The following morning, I went up on the peak of the little mountain and scanned the surrounding area. Over toward Summit I expected to see the sturdy villagers armed with pitchforks and torches beating the countryside for us awful kidnapers. But what I saw was a peaceful summer landscape. I saw a man guiding a plow pulled by a grayish-brown mule. No messengers dashed back and forth, bringing word of no news to worried parents. There was a pleasant air of warm and comfortable sleepiness hanging over the homes and shops in my view. "Perhaps," says I to myself, "it has not yet been discovered that the wolves have made off with the tender lamb from the flock. Heaven help the wolves!" says I, and I went down the mountain to breakfast.

(To be continued . . .)

11. In the blanks that follow, fill in as many setting details as you can, based on information from this excerpt from "The Ransom."

location: \_\_\_\_\_  
objects: \_\_\_\_\_  
buildings: \_\_\_\_\_  
other: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Where do most of the events in this passage take place?
- A. a town
  - B. a side street
  - C. a large city
  - D. on a mountain





**TIP 5:** Notice how the setting affects the story.

The setting may also help determine how characters handle the problems that come up in the story. For example, part of Sam and Bill's kidnapping plan (stated in the first excerpt you read) depends on the fact that Summit is a small town without a large police force. If this story's setting was in a more modern time or in a more populated area, these kidnapers might have had a harder time pulling off their scheme—not that they have a very easy time of it as it is!

Read this next section from "The Ransom." Note how the setting details help guide the choices that the kidnapers have to make. Then answer the question that follows.

adapted from

*The Ransom*

(Continued)

After breakfast the kid took out a piece of leather with strings wrapped around, and he went outside the cave, unwinding it.

"What's he up to now?" said Bill anxiously. "You don't think he'll run away, do you, Sam?"

"No fear of it," said I. "He don't seem to be much of a homebody. But we've got to fix up some plan about the ransom. There don't seem to be much excitement around Summit on account of his disappearance, but maybe they haven't realized yet that he's gone. His folks may think he's spending the night with Aunt Jane or one of the neighbors. Anyhow, he'll be missed today. Tonight we must get a message to his father demanding the two thousand dollars for his return."

Just then we heard a kind of war-cry, the kind that David might have made when he knocked out the champion Goliath. It was the sling that the kid pulled from his pocket, and he was whirling it around his head. The kid was out of control, a plain nuisance!

I dodged and heard a heavy thud and a kind of sigh from Bill, like a horse gives out when you take his saddle off. A rock the size of an egg caught Bill just behind his left ear. He went limp and fell toward the fire across the frying-pan of hot water for washing the dishes. I dragged him away and poured cold water over his head for half an hour.

By and by, Bill sat up and felt behind his ear and said, "You won't go away and leave me here alone, will you, Sam?"

I went out and caught the boy and shook him until his freckles rattled. "If you don't behave," said I, "I'll take you straight home. Now, are you going to be good, or not?"

"I was only funning," said he sourly. "I didn't mean to hurt Bill. I'll behave if you won't send me home, and if you'll let me play Hunter today."

I told him that I didn't know the game, but that he and Bill could play while I went away on . . . business. I made the two of them shake hands, and then I took Bill aside and told him I was going to Poplar Cove, a little village three miles from the cave. I wanted to find out what I could about how people in Summit were responding to the kidnapping. Also I thought it best to send a letter to Dorset that day, demanding the ransom and directing how it should be paid. Sending it from Poplar Cove would help throw any pursuit off our trail.

*(To be continued . . .)*

13. Go back to the passage and choose another example of how the setting creates a problem and offers a solution. Write your response below.

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**TIP 6: Identify the conflict.**

As you've learned already, all stories have plots. It is important to know that all plots have a conflict. The **conflict** is the main problem a character faces and eventually tries to resolve.

Think about the stories you know. For example, in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, what is Alice's main problem? She has fallen into a rabbit hole and needs to figure out her way through Wonderland. Everything that happens in the story connects to this main conflict. Think about Alice's changes in size, her confusion at the Mad Tea Party, and her trial before the Queen of Hearts. These events can be considered conflicts or problems, but they all connect to the main problem of Alice feeling lost in Wonderland.

14. What is the main conflict in "The Ransom"?
- Sam and Bill need to raise two thousand dollars so they can live happily and stop being criminals.
  - Sam wants to get a letter to Dorset without being noticed, but Sam doesn't know how to do this.
  - Bill is trying to avoid being injured by the kid's hurled rocks but gets hit with one right behind the ear.
  - Sam and Bill need to trade a kidnapped boy for money, but nobody seems to notice the boy is even missing.

**TIP 7: Identify events that move the plot forward.**

You may have heard the phrase "The plot thickens." This means that the plot just got more complicated. Some new roadblock has been put up in front of the main character. These roadblocks or hurdles make the story more dramatic. They give the story movement and keep the reader interested.

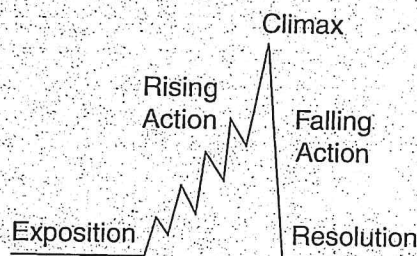
15. Which of these events is most important to the plot of "The Ransom"?
- Sam looks down at the town of Summit.
  - The kid talks a lot of nonsense at dinner.
  - Bill and Sam send the letter to Dorset.
  - Bill screams loudly and like a small child.

**External conflict** is when the problem lies with an outside force. This type of conflict can occur with a person, place, or thing. One type of external conflict is when the characters' conflict is with nature: a raging storm, a terrible flood, a tornado, or a forest fire.

**Inner conflict** is when the conflict has to do with a problem the main character has with himself or herself. For example, remember Andy, the boy with the sweaty palms? Let's say Andy really likes Amber, but he's just too shy to talk to her. Well, then the conflict is that Andy must get over his shyness if he wants to win the girl.

### The Plot Is Where the Action Is

The plot is the way the story's action is organized. Plots usually have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Most plots are organized something like this:



Now, read the following definitions. They are very important parts of a story's plot.

1. **exposition** – the characters, setting, and conflict are introduced
2. **rising action** – the main character tries to solve the problem, which grows more difficult
3. **climax** – the main character succeeds or fails; the excitement is usually greatest at this point
4. **falling action** – the characters feel the effects of the climax and the events caused by the climax
5. **resolution** – the story comes to a conclusion; the main character may learn a life lesson

**TIP 8: Watch out for plot tricks.**

In many stories, some events that occur or actions that characters perform won't immediately make sense. "Why did he do that?" you may wonder. Pay attention to what happens later on. Later events in a story often explain previous actions or events. You may find yourself slapping your forehead and saying, "Ohhh, now I get it!"

As we read, we recognize the main events of the passage, but we don't always know how the plot of the rest of the story will unfold. However, sometimes the author provides clues—called **foreshadowing**—about what to expect as the story continues. Events that occur or dialogue among characters can often hint strongly about what may happen later on. For example, if a girl walks into a dark, creepy mansion and suddenly feels a chill, you can probably guess the girl is about to see something scary, like a ghost.

If a story is interrupted by the retelling of an event that happened in the past, we call that interruption a **flashback**. If that same scared girl thinks back to her friends daring her to go into the mansion, that's a flashback. Foreshadowing and flashbacks can all work together in a complex story.

16. At the beginning of "The Ransom," the kid hits Bill in the head with a brick. Using details from the passage, explain how this early scene foreshadows later events.

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**TIP 9: Notice how characters resolve their problems.**

At the end of most stories, the conflict is resolved. To **resolve** means to find an answer or a solution. This does not mean that the conflict always ends the way a character wants it to. In some stories, characters fail to fix their problems or the resolution of the main problem creates further difficulties.

By interpreting how the resolution has affected a character, we can learn more about the character. How does he or she feel about the way the conflict ended? Has the character succeeded in improving his or her situation, or are things worse? The way a character resolves the conflict can help us get a better idea of his or her personality.

Read the last excerpt, from the end of "The Ransom," and answer the question that follows.

adapted from  
*The Ransom*  
(Continued)

*Sam sends the ransom note to Ebenezer Dorset demanding \$1,500 instead of the original \$2,000. Bill thinks \$2,000 is too much to ask for a kid who is so hard to handle. Sam leaves Bill alone with the kid one more time to watch the spot where the \$1,500 is supposed to be dropped.*

Exactly on time, a boy rides up the road on a bicycle, locates the box at the foot of the fence-post, slips a folded piece of paper into it, and pedals away back toward Summit.

I waited an hour and figured no one was going to ambush me. I slid down the tree, got the note, and was back at the cave in another half an hour. I opened the note and read it to Bill:

*Gentlemen, I received your letter today about the ransom for my son. I think you are a little high in your demands, and will make you another offer, which I think you will accept. You bring Johnny home and pay me two hundred and fifty dollars in cash, and I agree to take him off your hands.*

*Respectfully,*

*Ebenezer Dorset*

"Unbelievable!" says I, "of all the disrespectful . . ."

But I glanced at Bill, and paused. He had a happy look in his eye like I had never seen in all my years traveling with him.

"Sam," says he, "we've got the money. This is a small price to pay. We have to take him up on the offer."

We took him home that night. We knocked on Ebenezer's door about midnight. At the moment I should have been taking fifteen hundred dollars out of a box by a tree, Bill was counting two hundred and fifty dollars into Dorset's hand. Once the kid realized what was happening, he started to howl and attached himself to Bill's leg. Dorset peeled him off.

"How long can you hold him?" asks Bill.

"I'm not as strong as I used to be," says old Dorset, "but I think I can give you ten minutes."

And, as dark as it was, and as big as Bill was, and as good a runner as I am, he was a good mile and a half out of Summit before I could catch up with him.

17. How do Bill and Sam resolve their problem with the kid?
- They pay the kid's father to take him back.
  - They get less money than they first wanted.
  - They sneak back to Summit and drop him off.
  - They take the kid with them up to Illinois.



**TIP 10: Think about the story's theme.**

As you learned earlier in this unit, the **theme** of a story is the main message the author is trying to communicate to his or her readers. The theme is the idea, feeling, or important life lesson the author is trying to get the reader to think about. When the theme is common to all cultures, it can be called a **universal theme**.

Themes sometimes reveal information about the culture and values of the historical period in which the text was written. Some themes, such as bravery, don't change, regardless of when something was written. A story can have bravery as a theme whether it takes place in ancient Greece or on a spaceship. Other themes, such as loss, will often be more closely linked to the time or place in which a story is set. You can imagine a story set in the violent years of the Civil War having loss as a theme, but it would not really fit in with a story that takes place at your little sister's birthday party.

Once you determine what the theme of a story is, try to decide what the theme tells you about the story's time.

18. What is the theme of "The Ransom"? Support your answer with details from the story.

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**Directions:** This passage is about two brothers on a hiking trip. Read the passage. Then answer Numbers 1 through 10.

## *Into the Mountains*

by Marian Cho

Martino got out of the car and stretched his arms over his head. He squinted up at the top of the mountain, tracing with his eyes the path he already knew well. Today, though, the mountain looked sharper or more dangerous somehow. He let out a long groan and touched his toes, getting loose before the climb. He looked over at his older brother, Carlos, going through the same stretching motions. They wanted to be as loose as possible for the challenge ahead.

Martino and Carlos liked to hike whenever they could. They especially liked to hike up steep, rocky paths. Until today, the boys' parents had always taken them hiking. But now that Carlos was old enough to drive, he and Martino could go hiking alone.

The reality of hiking without his parents around made Martino a little nervous. He knew all the rules, but it still felt weird to venture into the wilderness without any grown-ups. For some reason, at that moment, Martino remembered a tightrope walker he once saw at the circus. The performer had bravely walked along yards and yards of rope with no net under him. A shiver crawled up Martino's back despite the warming temperature.

This mountain was one of the brothers' favorite hikes, even though it was a popular spot. By starting early enough in the morning, they hoped to get up and down the mountain before noon. This would help them avoid most of the day's heat and the tourists.

The sun was just beginning to peek out above the horizon, but it was already a bright circle of fire in the sky. Martino could tell that the day was going to be incredibly hot. The blacktop he stood on would be unbearable in just a few hours. How much hotter would it be at the top, where the air was thinner?

"Going to be a hot one today," Carlos said, as if he had read Martino's mind. Carlos slipped his arms through his backpack, shrugging it into place. "Sure you packed enough water, little brother?"

Martino patted the two bottles strapped into the pouches on each side of his backpack. Another bottle lay at the bottom of the backpack, as well.

"Better to have too much than not enough," he said, a little defensively. "Especially on a day like today."



Carlos laughed. "Take it easy, Martino." He looked more closely at his brother. "You're not nervous, are you? We've made this climb dozens of times."

"I know," Martino said. "It's just . . ." He didn't know how to explain it to Carlos when he couldn't even explain it to himself. He knew there was nothing to be afraid of, but the chance that they would have to handle whatever happened on the trail on their own, well, that was a little scary.

Still, as Martino looked up at the mountain, he tried to rationalize away his fear. *What could happen?* he thought to himself. *Could we run into a rattlesnake? Yes, but rattlers are more afraid of us than we are of them. Could I fall? Could some loose rocks fall on me? Yes, but I just have to remember to watch my step and stay alert.* He realized that any problem he could think of was something he knew how to handle. There really was nothing to fear.

Martino put on the hat his mom had given him for his birthday. His eyes relaxed in the shadow of the hat's brim. He hooked his hands into his backpack straps and pulled it tighter to his back. He'd already beaten this climb in his head. Now, he just had to make his body do it.

Carlos adjusted his backpack as well and proceeded up the path that led to the start of the trail. He felt a slight twinge in his knee as he stepped over a log but chose to ignore it. He had hurt his knee a year ago, and every now and then he felt an echo of pain in the joint. He had decided long ago that he would not let a past injury prevent him from enjoying the here and now.

Martino fell into step with his brother and gave him a worried glance. "You OK, Carlos?"

Carlos smiled. "I'm fine. Relax. We're going to have a great time."

The brothers reached the first marked tree and rubbed it for good luck, a custom they had picked up from their father. Then, they headed into the wilderness and an unexpected adventure that would test their physical and emotional endurance.

1. Which word best describes Martino?

- A. adventurous
- B. excited
- C. reckless
- D. cautious

Unit 1 - Reading

2. This passage is an example of

- A. autobiography.
- B. folklore.
- C. realistic fiction.
- D. science fiction.

3. Which phrase best describes the setting?

- A. a cloudy morning on top of a mountain
- B. a warm morning at the foot of a mountain
- C. a long, flat stretch of desert, under a hot sun
- D. a shady, wooded area in a mountain's foothills

4. How is the setting of the passage important to the plot?

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5. Martino most likely thinks of the tightrope walker he once saw at a circus because the tightrope walker
- A. has the kind of balance Martino wants.
  - B. reminds Martino of happier times.
  - C. foreshadows Martino's future as a performer.
  - D. is like Martino taking this hike without his parents.
6. This passage is told from a
- A. first-person point of view.
  - B. second-person point of view.
  - C. third-person-limited point of view.
  - D. third-person-omniscient point of view.
7. What does the dialogue in the passage reveal about Carlos?

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Unit 1 - Reading

8. Which sentence from the passage foreshadows that the brothers may have trouble on their hike?
- A. "Martino put on the hat his mom had given him for his birthday."
  - B. "He felt a slight twinge in his knee as he stepped over a log but chose to ignore it."
  - C. "He let out a long groan and touched his toes, getting loose before the climb."
  - D. "Another bottle lay at the bottom of the backpack, as well."
9. Which sentence best describes a theme of the passage?
- A. The road to success is short and easy.
  - B. Not everyone has the determination to succeed.
  - C. Two people working together are stronger than one.
  - D. Don't waste your time trying to achieve an impossible goal.
10. What kind of relationship do Carlos and Martino have? Use details from the passage in your answer.

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## Focus Lessons

### Lesson 1: Plot, Setting, and Theme

The **plot** is the sequence of events in a story. The **setting** is the time and place in which a story happens. The **theme** is the main idea of the story. By using these elements to help the reader, the writer makes a story interesting and involving.

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the following excerpt from Michael Dorris's novel *Sees Behind Trees*, in which the blind character *Sees Behind Trees* describes the dilemma he faces when he finds himself lost with a baby and must find his way home. Then answer the questions that follow.

1 Gray Fire was no longer with me, but in some ways he was. When I became discouraged, when I lost hope, his words echoed in my memory.

2 "Your body will remember where it has been if you let it," he had told me. "It recalls what's familiar—but not as your mind does. With your mind you stand outside the world and look in. With your body you are inside already."

3 I remembered the examples he had given to explain what he meant: rain, a mouse, a bird. At the time it had seemed like a game—funny and silly. But there was nothing funny in being alone, lost in the forest in early winter, with bad strangers around and a baby depending on you. Now I needed to *truly* understand what he had been talking about.

4 "All right," I said to my body. "I hope you remember better than I do." I had made a sling of my cloak to carry Checha and he rode high between my shoulder blades. At the sound of my voice he reached out a hand to touch my left ear.

5 "So you think we should go that way?" I asked him.

6 He made a deep sigh and dropped his head against the back of my neck.

7 I thought about Gray Fire touching the sides of the trees as we had come through the woods. Why had he done that? Then the idea came to me: moss! It only grew on one side of a tree, didn't it? And I had touched it as we were leaving the village, which meant that as we returned the nearer sides of the trees and rocks should be bare but the farther sides should be mossy. It wasn't a lot to go on, but it was something. I knelt beside the nearest boulder and felt all around it until I felt the soft, spongy growth.

8 "This way," I said to Checha, and looked for the next big tree. It took a long time to pass through the forest in this manner, but at least I knew we were headed the right direction. And every few steps I would stop, stand perfectly still, and listen for any sound that would call me—or make me run away.



# Focus Lessons

1. Briefly describe the setting of this excerpt. Identify the lines in the passage that let you know the setting.

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2. Briefly list the main events of the plot represented in this excerpt.

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3. What point is the writer trying to convey in this excerpt? How does the writer use the setting and the plot to help convey this point?

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For more information on these terms, see *Glencoe Literature, Course 2*, pp. 171 and R8 (plot), 201 and R10 (setting), and 785 and R11 (theme).



