

# KEY IDEAS AND TEXTUAL SUPPORT

described by Lester Laminack

Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by identifying, describing, and making inferences about literacy elements and themes.

## KINDERGARTEN

Identify important elements of the text (e.g. characters, settings, or events). (K.RL2.3)

### Unpacking the Standard

As you read aloud to kindergarten students, it is important to scaffold opportunities for them to recognize who the story is about (the main character), where the story happens (setting: place/time/weather), and basic aspects of the plot (What was the problem/conflict? What happened in the beginning, middle, and end?)

### Considerations for Lessons and Assessment

In this kindergarten video, Lester demonstrates how to use a fiction read-aloud to help students learn to identify the elements of character, setting, and plot.

## GRADE 1

Using key details, identify and describe the elements of plot, character, and setting. (1.RL2.3)

### Unpacking the Standard

When reading or being read to, first grade students build on understandings from kindergarten and are expected to use key details from the text to both identify and describe who the story is about (the main character), where the story happens (setting: place/time/weather), and basic aspects of the plot (What was the problem/conflict? What happened in the beginning, middle, and end?)

### Considerations for Lessons and Assessment

In this first-grade video, Lester demonstrates how to use a fiction read-aloud to help students lift key details to both identify and describe the elements of character, setting, and plot.

**GRADE 2**

Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and how characters affect the plot. (2.RL.2.3)

**Unpacking the Standard**

Prior to second grade, students are expected to use key details to identify and describe the elements of plot, character, and setting. The second-grade standard extends the facility with literary elements to include describing how characters respond to major events and how they affect the plot.

**Considerations for Lessons and Assessment**

In this second-grade video Lester demonstrates how to use a fiction read-aloud to review the expectations of kindergarten and first grade. He also demonstrates how to focus on the elements of plot, character, and setting.

**GRADE 3**

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the plot. (3.RL.2.3)

**Unpacking the Standard**

In second grade students extend previous understandings to describe how characters respond to major events in a story and how they affect the plot. The third-grade standard refines these abilities and insights with specificity in the descriptions of characters to include such details as traits, motivations, or feelings.

**Considerations for Lessons and Assessment**

In this third-grade video Lester provides examples of what students should be able to do with the elements of plot, character, and setting as they enter third grade and suggests ways to refresh students' insights. He demonstrates how the expectations escalate from previous grades. In addition, he shows how you may check or extend understanding using both a less complex and more complex text in a read-aloud.

**GRADE 4**

Describe a character, setting, or event in a story or play, drawing on specific details in the text, and how that impacts the plot. (4.RL.2.3)

**Unpacking the Standard**

In third grade students refine their abilities and insights with the elements of plot, character, and setting with attention to specific details to describe characters. The fourth-grade standard extends these insights, expecting the student to draw upon specific details in the text to describe not only character, but also setting, or an event in a story or play, and how that impacts the plot.

**Considerations for Lessons and Assessment**

In this fourth-grade video Lester demonstrates how to delve into the interplay of characters, setting, and plot. He shows how the expectations continue to escalate from previous grades and the subtle but important shifts in student response and insight. He also demonstrates how to review or introduce these ideas with both a less complex and a more complex text.

**GRADE 5**

Describe two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or play, drawing on specific details in the text, and how that impacts the plot. (5.RL.2.3)

**Unpacking the Standard**

In third and fourth grades students have refined their ability to apply their knowledge of the elements of plot, character, and setting to more fully understand the text. The fifth-grade standard builds on those understandings by expecting the student to describe two or more (rather than one) characters, settings, or events.

**Considerations for Lessons and Assessment**

In this fifth-grade video Lester again demonstrates how the expectations escalate from previous grades. Using a simple text, he demonstrates the subtle but significant shifts in teacher expectation for student insight and response. He also demonstrates how to review or introduce these ideas first with a simple text and then with a more complex text.

**GRADE 6**

Explain how a plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the narrative advances and moves toward a resolution. (6.RL.2.3)

**Unpacking the Standard**

In Grades 4 and 5 students have refined the ability to identify and describe specific aspects of the elements of literature with the nuance of how those details affect the plot. The sixth-grade standard extends these insights, expecting students to describe the overall plot as a series of episodes and scenes unfolding over time and to note how the characters react or change as a result.

**Considerations for Lessons and Assessment**

In this sixth-grade video, Lester demonstrates how to use a fiction read-aloud to refresh earlier learning and shows how the expectations slowly escalate from the work of previous grades. He also demonstrates how you may use a less complex text as a read-aloud for a quick assessment of student understanding before moving into more complex texts.

**GRADE 7**

Analyze the interaction of elements in a work of literature (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot). (7.RL.2.3)

**Unpacking the Standard**

In Grade 6 students extend previous insights to describe how the overall plot is a series of episodes and scenes unfolding over time and must explain how the characters react or change as a result. The seventh-grade standard extends this understanding, expecting the student to show insights about how elements of literature work together to make the story. For example, students are expected to explain how a character's actions/decisions advance the plot, how the setting impacts the character's decisions, whether the character's conflict is internal or external, etc.

### Considerations for Lessons and Assessment

In this seventh-grade video, Lester demonstrates how to use a fiction read-aloud to revisit earlier learning and shows how the expectations slowly escalate from the work of previous grades. He also demonstrates how you may use a less complex text as a read-aloud for a quick assessment of student understanding before moving into more complex texts. Using a more complex picture book, he demonstrates the subtle shift in expectations from Grade 5 to Grade 7.

## GRADE 8

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a work of literature propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (8.RL.2.3)

### Unpacking the Standard

In Grade 7 students refine their insights to explain how elements of literature work together to make the story. In eighth grade the rise in expectation is that students will focus on specific moments of dialogue or specific events and explain how those move the story forward, reveal something more about the character, or serve as the prompt for a decision.

### Considerations for Lessons and Assessment

In this eighth-grade video, Lester uses a fiction read-aloud to revisit earlier learning and demonstrates how previous learning is woven into these developing insights. He demonstrates how a more complex picture book can be used to model and try out this new thinking.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Laminack, L. (2019). *The ultimate read-aloud resource* (2nd ed.). Scholastic.  
 Laminack, L. (2019). *The ultimate read-aloud collection fiction/nonfiction*. Scholastic.  
 Partnership for Inquiry Learning. (n.d.). <http://partnershipforinquirylearning.org>.

#### Children's literature featured in the videos:

- Johnson, A. (1990). *Do like Kyla*. Orchard Books.  
 Johnston, T. (2004). *The harmonica*. Charlesbridge.  
 Keats, E. J. (1967). *Peter's chair*. Viking Children's Book. (Republished 2000. Scholastic.)  
 Keats, E. J. (1971). *Apt.3*. Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers. (Republished 1999. Scholastic.)  
 Keats, E. J. (1964). *Whistle for Willie*. Viking. ( Republished 1999. Scholastic.)  
 Laminack, L. (2004). *Saturdays and teacakes*. Peachtree.  
 Laminack, L. (2011). *Three hens and a peacock*. Peachtree. (Republished 2013. Scholastic.)  
 Lowry, L. (2009). *Crow call*. Scholastic.  
 Munson, D. (2000). *Enemy pie*. Scholastic.  
 Tonatiuh, D. (2014). *Separate is never equal*. Abrams Books for Young Readers.  
 Weatherford, C. B. (2005). *Freedom on the menu*. Dial Books for Young Readers. (Republished 2005. Scholastic.)  
 Wells, R. (1997). *Bunny cakes*. Dial Books for Young Readers. (Republished 2000. Scholastic.)

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