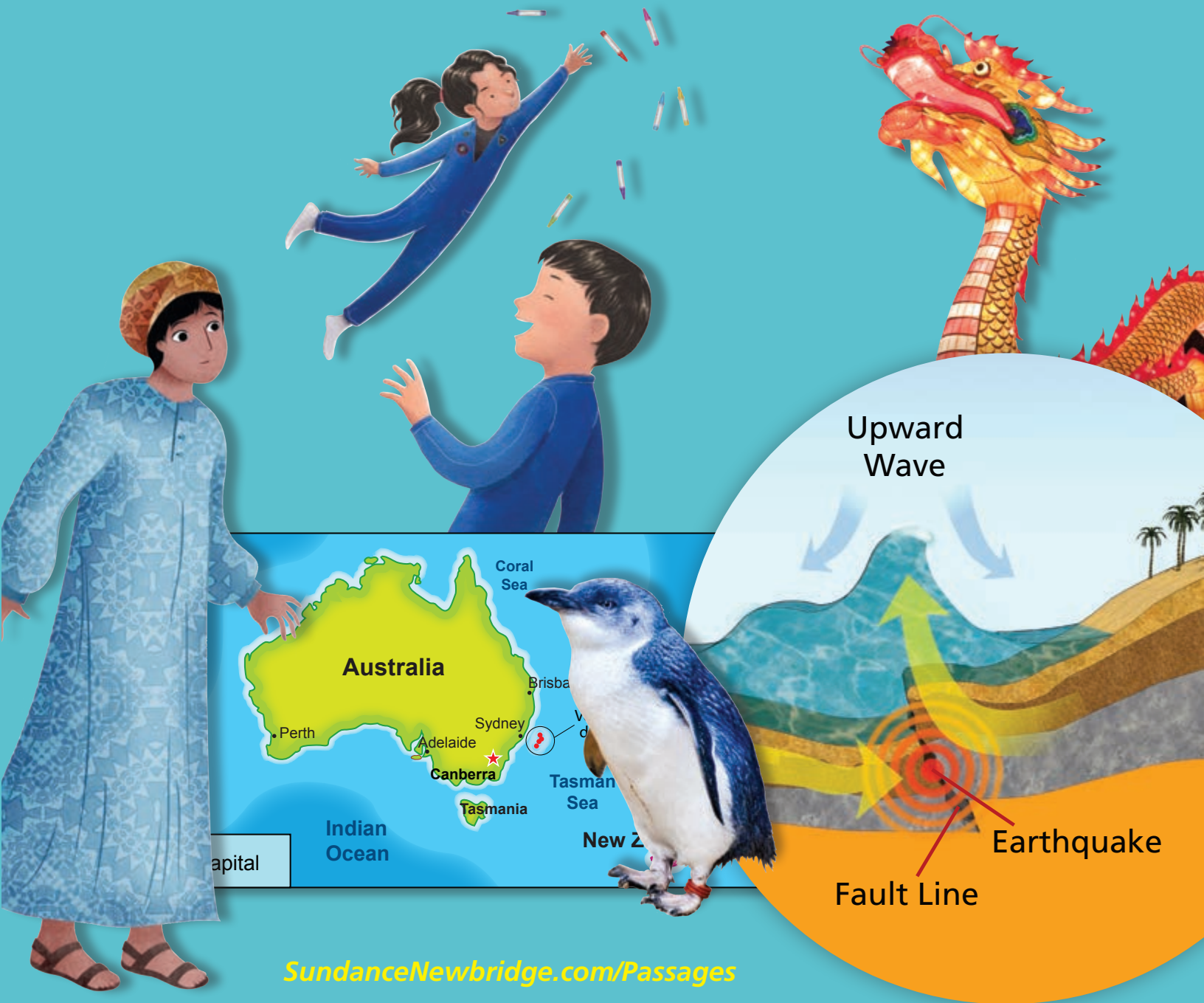


# Passages to Comprehension

Grades 2-5

A Standards-Based Assessment and Practice Kit



# Passages to Comprehension

Grades 2-5

## Components

- Laminated Fiction and Nonfiction Leveled Passage cards, each written to teach a specific Reading Standard, with 25 markers
- Multiple-Choice and Short-Answer Questions for every Passage in the Student Blackline Masters Book
- Pretest and Posttest cards monitor students' progress. Each Pretest and Posttest assesses all 5 standards.
- Teacher Guide with individual Lesson Plans for every Passage



# Overview



is a systematic program made up of short Passages that cover a variety of text types that gradually increase in text complexity. Each Passage has been written to teach a specific Reading Standard.

**The Reading Standards** are taught and applied using the laminated Fiction and Nonfiction Passage cards, Multiple-Choice and Short-Answer Questions, and Standard-Specific Graphic Organizers that foster students' ability to extract, and then analyze evidence from a text.

**The easy-to-use teaching materials** contain Guided Reading Lesson Plans for each Passage, and strategies for differentiating instruction and working with ELL students. Pretest and Posttest cards and Standard-specific test questions support the assessment of students' progress. Each test assesses all five standards.

# Connecting the Standards and Skills

The Standards in this program derive from the Common Core anchor standards and state-specific ELA standards. These five standards are essential for reading comprehension and are linked to the short passages that comprise these kits. They provide the foundation students need for analyzing longer texts that the additional Common Core anchor standards require.



Standard	Grade/Fiction Skill	Grade/Nonfiction Skill
<b>Read Closely</b> CCSS Anchor Standard 1		
Read Closely and use text evidence to understand the literal meaning of the text; draw inferences.	G2–3: Ask & Answer Questions G4–5: Identify & Use Text Evidence	G2–3: Ask & Answer Questions G4–5: Identify & Use Text Evidence
<b>Determine Key Concepts</b> CCSS Anchor Standard 2		
Identify Key Concepts in a text—either central ideas or themes; Summarize Main Ideas and Supporting Details.	G2–3: Recount Stories & Identify Morals G4–5: Determine Theme & Summarize	G2: Identify Topics G3: Identify Main Ideas G4: Identify Main Idea & Summarize G5: Identify Main Ideas & Summarize
<b>Analyze Text Elements</b> CCSS Anchor Standard 3		
Analyze the development and interactions of text elements, including characters or people, events, and ideas.	G2–3: Describe Characters G4: Describe Story Elements G5: Compare Story Elements	G2–3: Describe Text Connections G4–5: Explain Text Connections
<b>Interpret Word Choice</b> CCSS Anchor Standard 4		
Analyze the words an author chooses and recognize how they affect the text.	G2–5: Define Vocabulary	G2–5: Define Vocabulary
<b>Assess Point of View &amp; Purpose</b> CCSS Anchor Standard 6		
Develop an understanding of point of view and purpose in texts and consider the way these impact a story or an informational article.	G2: Distinguish Points of View G3: Distinguish Points of View G4: Compare Points of View G5: Analyze Points of View	G2: Identify Purpose G3: Distinguish Points of View G4: Compare Points of View G5: Analyze Points of View

[SundanceNewbridge.com/Passages](http://SundanceNewbridge.com/Passages)

# SKILLS Gradually Increase in Difficulty to Meet the STANDARDS for Each Grade

The grade-specific skills in each kit support their related standard and target the key concepts of that standard for the grade level. The skills gradually increase in cognitive difficulty as the grades progress to meet the standard requirements.



**Grade 2**  
 39 Passages/BLMs  
 21 Fiction/18 Nonfiction  
 8 Test Passages/BLMs  
 GRLs K–M  
 LEX 420L–560L



**Grade 3**  
 39 Passages/BLMs  
 21 Fiction/18 Nonfiction  
 8 Test Passages/BLMs  
 GRLs N–P  
 LEX 570L–700L



**Grade 4**  
 45 Passages/BLMs  
 24 Fiction/21 Nonfiction  
 8 Test Passages/BLMs  
 GRLs Q–S  
 LEX 720L–850L



**Grade 5**  
 43 Passages/BLMs  
 22 Fiction/21 Nonfiction  
 8 Test Passages/BLMs  
 GRLs T–V  
 LEX 870–990L

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## Ocean Partners

Grade 2

NONFICTION/Science

1

Standard: Assess Point of View & Purpose Skill: Identify Purpose

2

Grade 2  
470L

1

Standard/Skill Focus

2

Grade Level, Guided Reading Level, Lexile measure

3

Numbered paragraphs for easy reference

4

Assess Point of View & Purpose/Identify Purpose

In this sample, students identify the topic of the entire text and the focus of individual paragraphs.

# Ocean Partners

- 1 In nature, many animals compete for food. And many animals eat other animals. But some animals help each other.

## Partners in Nature

- 2 Partners work together to do something. Sometimes, living things need partners. Many plants need bees to move pollen from flower to flower. Without the bees, the plants could not make new plants. The bees also need the plants. The plants make nectar. Nectar is a sweet drink that bees drink.



This clownfish stays safe among an anemone's tentacles.

## Ocean Friends

3

- 3 Sea anemones (uh-NEM-uh-nees) are animals in the ocean. They live attached to rocks or coral. They don't move around much. Anemones have tentacles that look like arms. The tentacles have stingers. Anemones use their tentacles to catch food. They eat things that swim by.

4

- 4 Anemones have partners called clownfish. Clownfish are small, brightly colored fish. They live in the tentacles of anemones. They have a special slime on their skin. The slime protects them from an anemone's stingers.

View Samples of the Passages and Blackline Masters at [SundanceNewbridge.com/Passages](http://SundanceNewbridge.com/Passages)

## Clownfish Help Anemones

- ⑤ Clownfish clean anemones. They eat an anemone's dead tentacles. Clownfish scare off butterfly fish that want to eat an anemone. Clownfish also help an anemone to breathe by moving more water through the tentacles. Anemones absorb food from clownfish waste. Doing so helps anemones to grow faster.

## Anemones Help Clownfish

- ⑥ An anemone's tentacles protect clownfish. Other fish cannot eat the clownfish without getting stung. Clownfish also eat the anemone's leftover food and dead tentacles.
- ⑦ Thanks to their partnership, anemones and clownfish are safer. Both are healthier. This is a partnership that works!



This butterfly fish is trying to eat an anemone's tentacles. Clownfish help protect anemones from butterfly fish that may eat them.

⑤ Multi-paragraph complex, short texts written so students can apply the skill without being distracted by a longer text.

⑥ Photos, captions, and other informational text features, including maps and diagrams, support and enhance the text.

⑦ Mark up the Passages: 25 markers for annotating the laminated Passage cards



# Focus On: Lesson Plan

## Ocean Partners Grade 2

1 At-a-glance information about the passage, standard, skill, Guided Reading Level, Lexile measure, and word count

2 Pre-reading support for building background knowledge, making predictions, and introducing vocabulary

3 Step-by-step instruction for reading the passage in guided reading settings with modeling and text annotation suggestions

4 Scripted prompts for applying the skill to the text and to encourage in-depth analysis of the text


Lesson Plan

### "Ocean Partners"

▶ **Standard:** Assess Point of View & Purpose ▶ **Skill:** Identify Purpose

**CCSS RI.2.6:** Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

Nonfiction/Science	GRL L
Word Count: 265	LEX 470L



1 BEFORE READING

**1 Build Background** (2–5 minutes)

Display the word *partners*. Ask students to share what they know about working with a partner. Say: *In this text, you will read about animals that work together as partners.*

Distribute the card "Ocean Partners" and preview the passage with students. Read aloud the title, "Ocean Partners." Point out the headings. Have students predict what they will read about in the "Ocean Friends" section.

2 DURING READING

**2 Assess Point of View & Purpose** (5–10 minutes)

Have students read the passage in small groups, pairs, or independently. Read aloud the passage with students who need additional support. Model for students how to write on the passage card to take notes as they read.

Discuss the standard, assess point of view and purpose. Explain that students should think about the author's point of view, or opinion, about the topic and the author's purpose, or reason for writing. To identify the point of view and purpose of a text, they can:

- Identify the most important information that the author includes.
- Ask themselves: *What words does the author use to tell about the topic? What is the author's opinion about the topic?*
- Consider why the author wrote the passage. An author's purpose for writing may include to inform, to entertain, or to persuade readers of an opinion.

3 AFTER READING

**3 Identify Purpose** (10–15 minutes)

Use the following support to help students practice the target skill, identify purpose. Review that authors have a purpose, or reason, for writing. An author's purpose may be to answer a question or to describe a topic.

**Paragraph 1**  
Read paragraph 1. Model how to identify a purpose. Say: *The paragraph introduces the topic, animals that help each other in nature. This helps me know that the author's purpose has to do with describing animals that help each other.* Have students write a note about the purpose in the margin.

**Paragraph 2**  
**ASK:** *Using the heading, what is the author's purpose for writing paragraph 2?* (to describe some animal partners in nature) Encourage students to circle examples, which are details that support this purpose.

**Paragraphs 3–4**  
Discuss the heading, "Ocean Friends." Ask students to underline the names of the ocean friends that this section is about. ("sea anemones" and "clownfish")

**Paragraphs 5–7**  
Ask students to circle key details in paragraphs 5–7.  
**ASK:** *Using the details you circled, why do you think the author wrote these sections?* (Possible response: to describe the ways clownfish help anemones and the ways anemones help clownfish)

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## Practice and Quick Check

(10–15 minutes)

5

### YOU WILL NEED:



Copies of the "Ocean Partners" blackline master (BLM Book pages 151–152)



Copies of the *Author's Purpose Chart* graphic organizer (BLM Book page 182)

7

### BLM Multiple-Choice and Short-Answer Questions

Ask students to answer items 2–5 on the blackline master. Provide the following support for each question as needed.

**2. Explain that the author's intended audience is the group of readers that an author wants to read his or her text.** Read answer choice A. Ask: *Do you think the author wrote this text for people who swim in the ocean?* (no) Discuss that people who swim in the ocean may learn from this text, but they may or may not be interested in the topic. Repeat with the other choices.

**3. Guide students to read each answer choice.** Have them eliminate the choices that do not relate to ideas in the passage. Have them use the headings to help them.

**4. Review different reasons an author might write a passage.** For example, they may write to describe or to answer a question. Then have students answer question 4 in pairs before writing their response.

**5. Discuss that the question asks students to make a prediction.** Then ask students to suggest details about clownfish that the author would need to include to answer whether clownfish make good pets.

5

Easy reference to Blackline Masters Book pages that accompany the Passage card

6

Instructional support for using the skill-specific Graphic Organizer to practice the skill

7

Detailed scaffolding strategies for every response item when students' understanding breaks down

8

Specific activities for supporting English Language Learners with English acquisition and comprehension skill practice

9

Complete answer key with sample responses for every short-answer question that also may be provided as model answers when students need extra support.

6

### OPTIONAL:

Have students correct their own work using the Student Answer Key (BLM Book pages 153–154).



### Graphic Organizer

1. Direct attention to the *Author's Purpose Chart*. Review examples of an author's purpose. Then review that ideas or events and details about them support the author's purpose.

Then read aloud the directions to item 1 on the blackline master. Point out that students will use the passage ideas and details to identify the author's purpose. Have students complete the graphic organizer independently or in pairs. If students need additional support, guide them to use the headings to fill in the "Ideas or Events" and "Details" boxes. Then ask: *Why does the author include these ideas and details?*

9

### ANSWER KEY

1. Possible responses:

Author's Purpose: to describe the relationship between clownfish and anemones

Ideas: Anemones and clownfish are "partners in nature." Details: Anemones are animals that lived attached to rocks or coral. They have stinging tentacles they use to catch food. / Clownfish live in anemones. They have a special slime that protects them from an anemone's sting.

Ideas: Clownfish help anemones. Details: Clownfish clean anemones and help move water through them. / They scare away other fish that may eat an anemone's tentacles.

Ideas: Anemones help clownfish. Details: An anemone's tentacles help to protect clownfish from predators. / Clownfish eat an anemone's leftover food.

2. D

3. C

4. Possible response: The author wrote this passage to describe a partnership in nature. The author describes how clownfish live in anemones and how the animals help one another. By working together, clownfish and anemones are able to stay safer and healthier.

5. Possible response: If the author's purpose was to answer "Do clownfish make good pets?" the author would likely include information about what it is like to own a clownfish as a pet. The author would probably give reasons to explain why clownfish do or do not make good pets.

8

### ELL Strategies

- Tell students that many common words, such as *drink*, can be both a noun and a verb. In the last sentence in paragraph 2, *drink* is used as a noun (a liquid that is swallowed) and as a verb (the act of swallowing a liquid). Discuss other examples of words students know that can be used as a noun or a verb, such as *plant*, *fish*, and *water*.
- Have student pairs take turns stating in their own words the author's purpose for writing each section.



# Focus On: Blackline Master

## Ocean Partners

Grade 2

1

Skill-specific Graphic Organizers for every passage and test introduce students to the skill.

2

Students demonstrate their comprehension and record their notes in a clear format.

3

2 multiple-choice questions that focus on the skill

### "Ocean Partners"

Standard: Assess Point of View & Purpose Skill: Identify Purpose

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1

1. Complete the *Author's Purpose Chart* on page 182 to tell about the author's purpose.

Answer questions 2–5.

3

2. Which of the following is MOST LIKELY the author's intended audience?

- A. people who swim in the ocean
- B. people who want to set up a fish aquarium
- C. people who want to plant flowers that attract bees
- D. people who want to learn more about animal relationships

3. The author would like to add more information to the passage. What information would BEST fit the author's purpose?

- A. jokes about why clownfish have that name
- B. opinions about why people should not buy tropical fish
- C. details about how a clownfish's movements affect an anemone
- D. reasons why people should not dump garbage in the ocean

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2

### Author's Purpose Chart

Standard: Assess Point of View & Purpose Skill: Identify Purpose

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Author's Purpose	Ideas or Events	Details
	Ideas or Events	Details
Author's Purpose	Ideas or Events	Details
	Ideas or Events	Details
Author's Purpose	Ideas or Events	Details
	Ideas or Events	Details

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4. Why did the author write this passage? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

4

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5. How might the passage be different if the author's purpose was to answer the question "Do clownfish make good pets?"

5

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### "Ocean Partners"

#### Answer Key

1. Possible responses:

Author's Purpose: to describe how clownfish and anemones are the same and different

Idea: Anemones and clownfish are "partners in nature."

Detail: Anemones are animals that live attached to rocks or coral. They have stinging tentacles they use to catch food. Clownfish live in anemones. They have a special slime that protects them from an anemone's sting.

Idea: Clownfish help anemones. Detail: Clownfish clean anemones and help move water through them. They scare away other fish that may eat an anemone's tentacles.

Idea: Anemones help clownfish. Detail: An anemone's tentacles help to protect clownfish from predators. Clownfish eat an anemone's leftover food.

2. D

3. C

4. Possible response: The author wrote this passage to describe how animals and fish can help each other. The author describes how clownfish live in anemones and how the animals help one another. By working together, clownfish and anemones are able to stay safer and healthier.

5. Possible response: If the author's purpose was to answer "Do clownfish make good pets?" the author would include information about what it is like to own a clownfish as a pet. The author would probably give reasons to explain why clownfish do or do not make good pets.

4

2 short-answer items for each passage card assess the target skill.

5

Questions increase in difficulty to check students' depth of comprehension.

6

A mix of literal, inferential, and evaluative questions challenge students, preparing them for standardized tests.

7

The Student Answer Key allows students to correct their own answers when working independently.

7



# Focus On: Fiction Passage

## The Wall Falls Down

Grade 4

FICTION/Historical Fiction

1

Standard: Read Closely Skill: Identify & Use Text Evidence

2

Grade 4  
5  
810L

Grade 4

1

Standard/Skill Focus

2

Grade Level, Guided Reading Level, Lexile measure

3

Numbered paragraphs for easy reference.

# The Wall Falls Down

*Historical note: After World War II, Germany and its largest city, Berlin, were divided into parts occupied by the Allies (the United States, Great Britain, and France) and the Soviet Union. The Western half was democratic; the Eastern half was Communist. From 1945 to 1961, people from East Berlin escaped to the West. So, in 1961, the government on the eastern side constructed a large wall to completely separate East Berlin from West Berlin.*

November 10th, 1989

Dear Peter,

- 1 I need to tell you a story that feels like a dream to me even though I saw it with my own eyes: last night the Berlin Wall started to come down.
- 2 For years, the concrete monster divided the Germans of East and West Berlin. In a way, it seemed to separate my city just as much as the Atlantic Ocean separates the two of us.
- 3 I had never known life on the wall's eastern side, though my parents assured me it existed. They were able to travel there to visit relatives, but our East German relatives could never follow them back. Crossing the wall was not something they considered. Armed guards stationed above at all times made sure of it.



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Passages to Comprehension

1

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FICTION/Historical Fiction

④ But as the years went on, we heard whispers that someday things would change. Yesterday, that day finally came. It started with a broadcast—a government official said that people could cross, effective immediately. East Germans swarmed the border and demanded the gates be opened. From the western side, we cheered them on. At first, the border guards tried to shoot water from giant hoses at the East Germans, but the people kept coming. There were just too many. The guards were soon overwhelmed and gave up.

④

⑤ People grabbed the hoses and used them to climb the wall instead. At the top, they danced and shouted as we cheered. Soon, to prevent a stampede, the guards opened the massive gates. Everywhere, reunited friends and families hugged and shouted in the street. But going through the gates wasn't enough.

⑥ Soon, people from both sides grabbed hammers. Joyfully, East and West Germans swung at the wall, breaking chunks off the concrete barrier that had separated us for so long. The East Germans had never seen our side of the wall. Now they could see we had painted it over the years. It was covered in colorful graffiti and hopeful messages. They could finally see how much we had longed to see them, just as they had longed to see us. I've heard the whole scene was captured on TV—did you see it in New York?

⑤

⑥



⑦ I hope one day you can come visit our reunited city!

Your Cousin,  
Alexander

④

Read Closely/Identify & Use Text Evidence

In this sample, students read closely by identifying and using text evidence to understand the literal meaning of the text and draw inferences.

⑤

Multi-paragraph complex, short text written so students can apply the skill without being distracted by a longer text.

⑥

Original illustrations created to support and enhance the text.

⑦

Mark up the Passages: 25 markers for annotating the laminated Passage cards





# Focus On: Lesson Plan

## The Wall Falls Down

Grade 4

1

At-a-glance information about the passage, standard, and skill, Guided Reading Level, Lexile measure, and word count

2

Pre-reading support for building background knowledge, making predictions, and introducing vocabulary

3

Step-by-step instruction for reading the passage in guided reading settings with modeling and text annotation suggestions

4

Scripted prompts for applying the skill to the text and to encourage in-depth analysis of the text


Lesson Plan

### "The Wall Falls Down"

▶ **Standard:** Read Closely ▶ **Skill:** Identify & Use Text Evidence

**CCSS RL.4.1:** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Fiction/Historical Fiction	GRL 5
Word Count: 440	LEX 810L



1 BEFORE READING

**Build Background** (2–5 minutes)

Ask students to share what they know about historical fiction. Say: *Historical fiction stories take place in the past. Parts of the stories are based on real people and events.* Ask volunteers to give examples of historical fiction they have read.

Distribute the card "The Wall Falls Down" and preview the passage with students. Read aloud the title. Then discuss the information in the historical note.

3 AFTER READING

**Identify & Use Text Evidence** (10–15 minutes)

Use the following support during the first or subsequent readings of the passage to help students practice the target skill, identify and use text evidence. Review that when you use text evidence, you use specific information from the text, including details and examples.

**Paragraphs 1–3**  
Read paragraph 1. Model for students how to identify text evidence. Say: *I wonder what the Berlin Wall was like. The narrator describes the Berlin Wall as a "concrete monster." He says, "it seemed to separate my city just as much as the Atlantic Ocean separates the two of us." These comparisons help me understand more about the wall. I'll circle those details.*

**Paragraph 4**  
Ask students to underline events and circle details.  
**ASK:** *What were the events that led to the guards giving up?* Ask students to number the events on their card.

**Paragraphs 5–7**  
As students continue to underline events and circle details, ask them how the picture helps support the ideas in the text. Have them write notes on their card.  
**ASK:** *What can you infer about what the rest of the world thought about the wall coming down?* (Possible response: The rest of the world thought it was important. The text says the event was shown on TV. I know important events are shown on TV.) Have students underline the text evidence that supports their answer.

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1

2

3

4

## Practice and Quick Check

(10–15 minutes)

5

### YOU WILL NEED:



Copies of the "The Wall Falls Down" blackline master (BLM Book pages 19–20)



Copies of the Questions Chart graphic organizer (BLM Book page 185)

6

### OPTIONAL:

Have students correct their own work using the Student Answer Key (BLM Book pages 21–22).



### Graphic Organizer

1. Direct attention to the Questions Chart. Invite volunteers to share an example of an answer to the question "Who?" about a familiar story. Then read aloud the directions to item 1 on the blackline master. Point out that students will use the passage to write answers to each question. Have students complete the graphic organizer independently or in pairs. If students need additional support, review the meaning of each question word. Then guide them to reread the passage with each question in mind.



### Multiple-Choice and Short-Answer Questions

Ask students to answer items 2–6 on the blackline master. Provide the following support for each question as needed.

2. **Model for students how to determine the answer to this question.** Say: *I'll read each answer choice and think about whether it supports the idea that the events feel like a dream to Alexander.*

3. **Review that an inference is an idea that is not stated directly in the passage.** Ask students to eliminate choices that the details in the passage do not support.

4. **Review how to form questions using question words.** Guide students to use one of the five W words to begin their question.

5. **Reread paragraph 3.** Have students underline the reason why East Germans never crossed the Berlin Wall. Remind students to use this evidence in their response.

6. **Discuss that this question asks students to explain details in the story based on factual information about the events.** Ask students to review what happens in paragraph 4 after the broadcast was made.

9

### ANSWER KEY

Possible responses: Who: Alexander is writing a letter to his cousin Peter.

What: Alexander is telling Peter about his experience the night before. He witnessed the announcement that the Berlin Wall would be coming down and what happened after that.

Where: Alexander is in West Berlin. Peter lives in New York.

When?: November 10th, 1989

Why?: Alexander is excited that the Berlin Wall is coming down, and that East and West Berlin will finally be reunited.

How? People began to swing at the Berlin Wall with hammers. They broke chunks off it.

2. C

3. A

4. Possible response: What words does Alexander use to describe the Berlin Wall? Answer: He uses the words "concrete monster" and says that the wall "divided the Germans of East and West Berlin."

5. Possible response: Alexander's East German relatives never crossed the wall because armed guards guarded the wall to prevent people from crossing.

6. Possible response: The announcement affected the events because people on the eastern side of the wall immediately stormed the wall to try to cross. The officials were not ready and were overwhelmed by them. They tried to spray water on them but gave up. People grabbed the hoses and tried to climb them. To prevent a stampede, the officials opened the gates. Then, people on both sides began to hammer at the wall.

8

### ELL Strategies

- Point out the word *immediately* in paragraph 4. Tell students that some adverbs are formed when the suffix *-ly* is added to an adjective. Ask them to identify the adjective form. (*immediate*) Then talk about the meanings of *immediate* and *immediately*. Repeat with other words from the passage, such as *joyfully* and *finally*.
- Have students take turns asking questions about the story, such as "Who is writing the letter?" "Peter's cousin Alexander is writing the letter."

5

Easy reference to Blackline Masters Book pages that accompany the Passage card.

6

Instructional support for using the skill-specific Graphic Organizer to practice the skill

7

Detailed scaffolding strategies for every response item when students' understanding breaks down

8

Specific activities for supporting English Language Learners with English acquisition and comprehension skill practice

9

Complete answer key with sample responses for every short-answer question that also may be provided as model answers when students need extra support.



# Focus On: Blackline Master

## The Wall Falls Down

Grade 4

1

Skill-specific Graphic Organizers for every passage and test introduce students to the skill.

2

Students demonstrate their comprehension and record their notes in a clear format.

3

2 multiple-choice questions that focus on the skill

2

**Questions Chart**  
Standard: Read Closely Skill: Identify & Use Text Evidence

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title
Who?
What?
Where?
When?
Why?
How?

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Passages to Comprehension 185

### “The Wall Falls Down”

Standard: Read Closely Skill: Identify & Use Text Evidence

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1

1. Complete the *Questions Chart* on page 185. Use evidence from the passage to answer each question.



Answer questions 2–6.

3

2. Which information from the passage **BEST** shows why the events of the previous night feel like a dream to Alexander?
- A. The government constructed a large wall to separate East Berlin from West Berlin.
  - B. A government official made an announcement that people could cross the border immediately.
  - C. The Berlin Wall had been up for 28 years, and Alexander had never seen the other side of the wall.
  - D. People on the eastern side of the Berlin Wall grabbed water hoses and used them to climb to the top of the wall.
3. Based on the information in his letter, what can you infer about Alexander?
- A. He is excited to see the Berlin Wall come down.
  - B. He has never been to the United States of America.
  - C. He is disappointed to see the Berlin Wall come down.
  - D. He is related to people who fought during World War II.

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4. What is one question you can ask about Alexander? Use evidence from the passage to answer the question.

4

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5. Why did Alexander's East German relatives never cross the Berlin Wall? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer.

5

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6. The announcement that people could cross the wall immediately was made by mistake. How did that mistake affect the events of November 9th that Alexander tells about?

6

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**"The Wall Falls Down"**

**Answer Key**

1. Possible response: Who? Alexander is writing a letter to his cousin Peter.  
What? Alexander is telling Peter about his experience the night before. He witnessed the announcement that the Berlin Wall would be coming down.  
Where? Alexander is in West Berlin. Peter lives in New York.  
When? November 10, 1989  
Why? Alexander is excited that the Berlin Wall is coming down, and that East and West Berlin will finally be reunited.  
How? People began to swing at the Berlin Wall with hammers. They broke chunks off it.
2. C
3. A
4. Possible response: What words does Alexander use to describe the Berlin Wall? Answer: He uses the words "concrete monster" that "divided the Germans of East and West Berlin."
5. Possible response: Alexander's East German relatives never crossed the wall because armed guards guarded the wall to prevent people from crossing.
6. Possible response: The announcement affected the event because people on the eastern side of the wall immediately started the wall to try to cross. The officials were not ready and were overwhelmed by them. They tried to spray water on them but gave up. People grabbed the hoses and tried to climb them. To prevent a stampede, the officials opened the gates. Then, people on both sides began to hammer at the wall.

7

4

3 short-answer items for each Passage card assess the target skill.

5

Questions increase in difficulty to check students' depth of comprehension.

6

A mix of literal, inferential, and evaluative questions challenge students, preparing them for standardized tests.

7

The Student Answer Key allows students to correct their own answers when working independently.



# Focus On: Test Passage

## Helen's Teacher and Hope in the Darkness

Grade 4

1

Fiction or Nonfiction, Genre, Pretest or Posttest

2

Grade Level, Guided Reading Level, Lexile measure

3

Numbered paragraphs for easy reference

FICTION/ Historical Fiction

PRETEST

2

700L

Grade 4

### Helen's Teacher

1 As the locomotive chugged into view, Kate Keller waited anxiously. Her stepson, James, paced the station. They had met every train for the past two days, unsure when Helen's teacher would arrive in Alabama from Massachusetts. Might it be today, March 3, 1887?

2 A young woman in dark glasses descended from the last train car. "Miss Anne Sullivan?" James asked her. She gave a weary nod as she climbed into the carriage to begin the next part of the journey.

3 "We are so pleased you are here!" Mrs. Keller burst out. "My daughter, Helen, has been deaf and blind since she was 19 months old. She attempts to communicate with us, but we cannot understand. We know you are an accomplished teacher, but with Helen, the task may be like Sisyphus<sup>1</sup> pushing that huge boulder uphill."

4 "And Helen may just roll back down over you!" James added with a laugh. "My little sister can throw a fit like you've never seen. She is very stubborn."

5 "I have been called stubborn, too," Anne responded. "But I like to say I'm *determined*."

6 The carriage stopped in front of a modest white house. A curly-haired girl stood on the porch steps, restlessly touching the leaves and blossoms on a honeysuckle bush. A bearded man eagerly came forward. "I am Helen's father, Captain Arthur Keller." He turned to his daughter. "And this is Helen."

7 As Anne reached her hand toward the girl, Helen rushed into her arms. That hug and that day would change both of their lives forever.



<sup>1</sup> **Sisyphus:** In Greek mythology, the gods punished Sisyphus by making him push a boulder up a hill. As soon as the boulder reached the top, it rolled back down and Sisyphus had to start over.

# Hope in the Darkness

① The train journey seemed an eternity. I was tired and my feet ached. My vision was poor, too. I wore dark glasses to protect my eyes, which still hurt from a recent operation. The glasses also hid that I had been crying for much of the trip.

② But my own distress could not compare to the hardships of my new student, Helen Keller. She could not see or hear since a tragic illness when she was just a toddler. Now she was six years old.

③ My only desire was to bring light and hope to that darkness, like Prometheus<sup>2</sup> did when he brought fire to the people on Earth. I was sure I could teach Helen about words and what they mean. Still, I felt like a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs. As I greeted Mrs. Keller and Helen's half-brother, James, they both looked as nervous as I felt! I barely said a word during the ride from the station.

④ James steered the carriage onto a tree-lined lane, stopping at a simple white house. On the porch was a little girl. Helen was not the fragile, shy child I imagined. Sturdy and alert, she was exploring a flower bush with her fingers.

⑤ Then suddenly the girl jumped into my arms. My heart leaped and my fears melted away. I vowed to do everything possible to help Helen express herself to her family and to the world.



<sup>2</sup> **Prometheus:** a hero of Greek mythology who stole fire from the gods to give warmth and light to people.



38301

*Paired Passages are Provided when Standards Require Students to Compare and Contrast Two Texts (Grades 4 and 5).*

5

Multi-paragraph text written to assess all five standards and students' depth of comprehension

6

Photos or illustrations and other text features, including maps and diagrams, support and enhance the text.



# Focus On: Test Blackline Master

1

Grades 2 and 3: 10 Multiple-Choice and Short-Answer Questions

Grades 4 and 5: 15 Multiple-Choice and Short-Answer Questions

2

Grades 2 and 3: 6 Multiple-Choice Questions

Grades 4 and 5: 9 Multiple-Choice Questions

3

A mix of literal, inferential, and evaluative questions challenge students, preparing them for standardized tests.

4

In this sample, students draw on the skills Identify & Use Text Evidence and Define Vocabulary to answer a Multiple-Choice question.

1

## "Helen's Teacher" and "Hope in the Darkness"

Fiction Pretest: GRL P

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Complete the *Character Chart* on page 105 to tell about Anne Sullivan.



Answer questions 2–15.

2. At the beginning of "Helen's Teacher," why are Kate and James Keller at the train station?  
A. to check the train schedule  
B. to take a trip to Massachusetts  
C. to wait for Helen to arrive from school  
D. to pick up Anne Sullivan and then bring her to their home

3. In "Helen's Teacher," Helen may be "l..."  
A. She believes  
B. She wants  
C. She is worried  
D. She knows

3

4. Which statement from "Helen's Teacher" BEST supports the inference that Mrs. Keller feels hopeful that Anne will be able to help Helen?  
A. "They had met every train for the past two days, unsure when Helen's teacher would arrive in Alabama from Massachusetts."  
B. "A young woman in dark glasses descended from the last train car."  
C. "She attempts to communicate with us, but we cannot understand."  
D. "That hug and that day would change both of their lives forever."

5. Which statement BEST describes the interaction between Helen and Anne at the end of "Helen's Teacher"?  
A. Helen and Anne are happy to meet each other.  
B. Helen and Anne are worried about each other.  
C. Anne is nervous about teaching Helen.  
D. Helen is unprofessionally nervous about Anne.

4

7. Why does Anne MOST LIKELY cry on her train journey in "Hope in the Darkness"?  
A. She is tired and in pain.  
B. She does not like trains.  
C. She does not want to teach Helen.  
D. She is worried that Helen won't like her.

8. In "Hope in the Darkness," the narrator says, "I felt like a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs." Which phrase from the passage BEST helps you understand the meaning of this statement?  
A. "tragic illness"  
B. "my only desire"  
C. "as nervous as I felt"  
D. "barely said a word"

9. Which detail from "Hope in the Darkness" is NOT mentioned in "Helen's Teacher"?  
A. Anne wears dark glasses.  
B. Helen is both deaf and blind.  
C. Helen touches a bush by the porch.  
D. Anne recently had an eye operation.



does NOT belong in  
en is stubborn.  
in Alabama.  
a hug.  
riage.

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Passages to Comprehension 121

10. Which sentence BEST describes the points of view of the passages? **5**

A. "Helen's Teacher" and "Hope in the Darkness" are both told from a first-person point of view.

B. "Helen's Teacher" and "Hope in the Darkness" are both told from a third-person point of view.

C. "Helen's Teacher" is told from a first-person point of view, and "Hope in the Darkness" is told from a third-person point of view.

D. "Helen's Teacher" is told from a third-person point of view, and "Hope in the Darkness" is told from a first-person point of view.

11. This question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

**Part A**

What is the meaning of *ivary* as it is used in paragraph 2 of "Helen's Teacher"?

A. "hopeful"  
 B. "agreeable"  
 C. "exhausted"  
 D. "suspicious"

**Part B**

Which sentence from "Helen's Teacher" BEST supports the answer to Part A?

A. "I was tired and my feet ached."  
 B. "But my own distress and the distress of my new student, Helen, were not the only things that troubled me."  
 C. "My only desire was to bring light and hope to that darkness, like Prometheus did . . ."  
 D. "Helen was not the first child I imagined."

122 Passages to Comprehension

10. Which sentence BEST describes the points of view of the passages? **6**

A. "Helen's Teacher" and "Hope in the Darkness" are both told from a first-person point of view.

B. "Helen's Teacher" and "Hope in the Darkness" are both told from a third-person point of view.

C. "Helen's Teacher" is told from a first-person point of view, and "Hope in the Darkness" is told from a third-person point of view.

D. "Helen's Teacher" is told from a third-person point of view, and "Hope in the Darkness" is told from a first-person point of view.

11. This question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

**Part A**

What is the meaning of *ivary* as it is used in paragraph 2 of "Helen's Teacher"?

A. "hopeful"

**Part B**

Which sentence from "Helen's Teacher" BEST supports the answer to Part A?

A. "I was tired and my feet ached."  
 B. "But my own distress and the distress of my new student, Helen, were not the only things that troubled me."  
 C. "My only desire was to bring light and hope to that darkness, like Prometheus did . . ."  
 D. "Helen was not the first child I imagined."

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13. What is the theme of "Hope in the Darkness"? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer. **7**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14. Why does the narrator of "Hope in the Darkness" say, "My only desire was to bring light and hope to that darkness, like Prometheus did . . ." ? Use the footnote in the passage to help you explain your answer.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

15. Which passage BEST helps you understand Anne's thoughts and feelings? Explain how the point of view affects what you learn about Anne. **8**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**5** Questions increase in difficulty to check students' depth of comprehension.

**6** 1 or 2 two-part multiple-choice questions assess students' ability to use text evidence, in addition to assessing specific skills.

**7** 2 or 3 short-answer items for each test card that assess one or more of the grade-level skills

**8** In this sample Short-Answer item, students put together information from 2 Passages to form an opinion and support it with text evidence. They demonstrate their understanding of the skill Compare Points of View as well as Identify & Use Text Evidence and Describe Story Elements.

# Benefits of Using

# Passages to Comprehension

- **FOCUS** on key Reading Standards that are central to national and state ELA requirements.
- **RETEACH** Reading Standards and comprehension skills with Passages and Text-Dependent Questions.
- **PREPARE** students for standardized tests with Multiple-Choice and Short-Answer Questions.
- **USE** the laminated Passage cards that cover a variety of text types and Guided Reading Levels to teach specific standards, and promote analytical and close reading practice.
- **ENCOURAGE** students to interact with a Passage by marking up the card, recording their ideas, and identifying text evidence. Each paragraph is numbered to make instruction easy to follow.
- **SUPPORT** students' ability to extract evidence from a text with time-saving Multiple-Choice and Short-Answer Questions, and skill-specific Graphic Organizers.
- **MONITOR** students' progress with Pretest and Posttest cards.
- **DIFFERENTIATE** instruction with easy-to-follow individual Lesson Plans that contain Answer Keys and tips for working with ELL students.

[SundanceNewbridge.com/Passages](http://SundanceNewbridge.com/Passages)



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