



Middle School ELA Long-Term Sub Plans, 4 Weeks

Four complete week binders of middle school ELA, grades 6 to 8. Every day has individual work and a team task, and every task has a "say this" script.

PREVIEW

What is included

- Four week binders (89, 92, 94, 93 pages): 368 pages
- 54 front pages: binder cover, important information, note to the sub, the week plan filled in, schedule, set index, class list, how it went, Monday opener
- 60 solo blocks (20 reading sets, 20 writing sets, 20 calm blocks) and 20 team tasks for groups of four
- A "say this to the class" script for all 104 tasks: 2 or 3 sentences the sub reads out
- A core task and a ★ challenge in every reading set, writing set and team task
- 20 optional games, each on that day's reading and writing, a fun way to end the class
- Answer keys for everything; color and ink-saver B&W, US Letter and A4

How it works

1. Leave the four binders out. Each has its own filled-in plan with page numbers.
2. The sub reads the "say this" box out, then runs the day's reading set and writing set; students work on their own. Everyone does the core task, early finishers go on to the ★ challenge.
3. The calm block fits any gap, the team task fills a block period or extra time, the game the last 15 minutes.
4. No prep and no tech: print and go.

The 20 days: a reading, a writing set, a team task and a game

- **Week 1, days 1 to 5. Read:** The Day It Rained Molasses; The Spare Key; Marie Curie and the Invisible Rays; The Tiny Workers Inside Bread; Let Middle Schoolers Sleep. **Write:** Show, Don't Tell; Paragraph Structure; Persuasive Letter; Descriptive Writing; Narrative. **Team:** Rank the Bee Sources, The Class Magazine, The Six Sentence Story, The Coverless Book, Graphic Novel Debate.
- **Week 2, days 6 to 10. Read:** The Static Hour; Three Poems; Why the Monarchs Move; Why the River Bends; The Understudy. **Write:** Writing a Summary; Write a Poem; Informative Paragraph; Write a Myth; Write a Dialogue Scene. **Team:** Theme Match-Up, Poem Remix, Chain Reaction, Plot Mountain Puzzle, Readers Theater Rehearsal.
- **Week 3, days 11 to 15. Read:** The Case of the Golden Brush; A News Article; Keep the Doors Open on Sundays; Water Bears: Tiny but Tough; The Bell With No Tongue. **Write:** Write the Story Ending; Write a News Article; Claim, Evidence, Reasoning; How-To Writing; Retell from Another Point of View. **Team:** Alibi Grid, Front Page Decision, Rhetoric Detectives, Root Builder, Hot Seat Interviews.
- **Week 4, days 16 to 20. Read:** The Last Lock Before Dark; Mae Jemison's Long Road to Orbit; Two Texts About One Shelter Day; Three Poems; Give the Old Rail Line a Second Life. **Write:** Diary Entry from the Past; Research Notes and Paraphrasing; Compare and Contrast Paragraph; Personal Narrative Vignette; Counterargument Paragraph. **Team:** Canal Boat Supply Run, Paraphrase Check, Shelter Schedule, Mood Swap, Town Council Hearing.

Optional game every day, on that day's reading and writing: Mon **Whiteboard Quiz Game** Tue **Paper Password**
Wed **Class Feud** Thu **Classroom Millionaire** Fri **Mystery Box**

What this preview shows: the note to the sub, the Week 1 plan, more front pages, one page of every daily part, a full reading set and writing set with their key, a calm block, a team task, the game types and one ink-saver page. Every product page is watermarked. The full product has 368 pages.



Note to the Substitute

Grades 6 to 8 · five days · every set runs from the printout alone

Thank you for covering my classes this week

Everything you need is in this binder. The front pages (important information, weekly schedule, class list) are filled in for this week. After them come the work sets, one per day: **Reading 1** and **Writing 1** are Monday's sets, **Reading 2** and **Writing 2** Tuesday's, and so on. Run the day's set in every period you teach that day. Each set is one period (45 to 55 minutes), stands alone, and has its own answer key at the back of the binder, so you never have to make anything up or know the subject. Every task starts with a short **Say this to the class** box under its title: read it out, and the class knows what to do and how to start.

Every student page has a core task first, then a ★ challenge. Every student does the core task. Students who finish early go on to the ★ challenge; it fills a few extra minutes, and nobody has to finish it.

After the subject sets come the shared blocks, one of each per day. The **calm block** is always allowed: for a period that runs short, a loud class, or anyone who finishes early. The **team task** fills a period on its own. The **game** is optional: a fun way to end the class, or something for extra time. Fifteen minutes, from the script.

Each day has

- One reading and writing set each (one period, core task + ★ challenge on every page)
- A calm and quiet block: a word puzzle and a self-checking word hunt on the day's reading and writing
- A team task for groups of four
- A paper game from the script

If the class is loud

- Set a voice level with a number, 0 to 3, and use it all week (the Day 1 opener explains it).
- Switch to the calm block. Nobody needs to move.
- Every student page has a ★ challenge, so fast finishers always have something.
- If a set is not working, stop it and use the calm block or the team task. Every set starts cold.

At the end of each day

Please fill in that day's line on the "How it went" page. It takes two minutes and I read every word.

Did this kit work well for your class? A quick review helps other teachers find it and earns you TpT credits. Thank you!



This Week's Plan

Filled in for you: every day has a reading set and a writing set, one period each. Keep it as it is, or use the blank schedule on the next page.

WHEN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Start of class	Meet Your Sub p. 12 · 15 min, every period	Attendance, voice level	Attendance, voice level	Attendance, voice level	Attendance, voice level
Reading set (one period)	Reading 1 The Day It Rained Molasses p. 15	Reading 2 The Spare Key p. 27	Reading 3 Marie Curie and the Invisible Rays p. 40	Reading 4 The Tiny Workers Inside Bread p. 53	Reading 5 Let Middle Schoolers Sleep p. 66
Writing set (one period)	Writing 1 Show, Don't Tell p. 18	Writing 2 Paragraph Structure p. 30	Writing 3 Persuasive Letter p. 43	Writing 4 Descriptive Writing p. 56	Writing 5 Narrative p. 69
Early finishers or a loud moment	Word Search and Quiet Practice p. 21	Term Match and Quiet Practice p. 34	Secret Codes and Quiet Practice p. 47	Word Scramble and Quiet Practice p. 60	Word Ladders and Quiet Practice p. 73
Block period or extra time	Rank the Bee Sources p. 23	The Class Magazine p. 36	The Six Sentence Story p. 49	The Coverless Book p. 62	Graphic Novel Debate p. 75
Last 15 minutes (optional): a fun way to end the class, or for extra time	Whiteboard Quiz Game p. 25	Paper Password p. 38	Class Feud p. 51	Classroom Millionaire p. 64	Mystery Box p. 77

How to use this plan

- Page numbers point to the first page of each set. Copy one per student.
- The calm block is always allowed: a period that runs short, a loud class, or anyone who finishes early.
- The game is optional: a fun way to end the class, or something for extra time.
- A double block or two periods: the reading set, then the writing set. One period only: run the reading set; the writing set fills extra time. The game reviews that day's reading, writing and team task; if the class skipped the team task, skip the game questions about it.

ELA SUB PLANS WEEK 1

Middle School ELA, 5 Days of Print and Go Work

Teacher _____
Room _____
Grade and classes _____
Week of _____

Everything a sub needs for five days is in this binder: a filled-in weekly plan, a blank schedule, the class list, and for every day one reading and writing set each, a calm block, a team task and a paper game. Each set is one period, stands alone, and has its own answer key. Nothing needs subject knowledge, a login or a projector.



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ELA Sub Plans Week 1: Middle School ELA, 5 Days of Print and Go Work

Important Information

The page the sub reads first. Fill it in once you keep it current.

People to call

Office _____
Teacher next door _____
Nurse _____
Principal / admin _____
Tech help _____

Emergency procedures

Fire: exit and meeting point _____
Lockdown _____
Severe weather _____
Medical _____
Where the first aid kit is _____

Helpful students

Students who need extra support

Where things are

Attendance / how to take it _____
Paper, pencils, supplies _____
Hall passes _____
Copier, if the sub may use it _____

Class routines

Start of class _____
Bathroom _____
Phones _____
End of class _____

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Important Information

Weekly Schedule (Blank)

Put out order, write the set for each period (Monday: Reading 1, Tuesday: Reading 2, and so on) and the class next to each period. Cross out or remove periods to match the school day.

PERIOD / CLASS	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Period 1					
Class					
Period 2					
Class					
Period 3					
Class					
Period 4					
Class					
Period 5					
Class					
Period 6					
Class					
Period 7					
Class					

How to fill it in

- One set per period. Each set runs 45 to 55 minutes. If a period runs longer, the 30 challenges fit a few minutes, or add that day's team task.
- Same subject all day? Write the day's set in every period you teach. Planning, lunch and duty periods: cross them out.
- On Monday the opener (15 minutes) comes first in every period, then the set.
- The game is optional: put it in the last period as a fun way to end the class, or use it for extra time. The calm block goes in any gap.

Set naming

Sets are named by subject and day. Reading 1 and Writing 1 are Monday's sets. Reading 2 and Writing 2 Tuesday's, and so on. The set index lists every set with its minutes and page.

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Weekly schedule, blank

Class List and Dismissal

Names, what a sub must know, and how every student gets home. Copy one per class.

☐ bus (write the number) ☐ walks ☐ picked up (write who) ☐ after-school program ☐ other

★ in the notes, a student who finds the core task essay may start with the challenge.

	STUDENT NAME	NOTES (ALLERGIES, NEEDS, HELPFUL, LEAVES EARLY)	HOME	BUS # / PICKED UP BY / PROGRAM
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				

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Class list and dismissal

How It Went

For the substitute. One line per day, two minutes at the end of each day. Check the boxes and go.

Monday

Sets done: _____ Class was: ☐ Great ☐ Fine ☐ Hard, see notes

Notes / stars of the day: _____

Tuesday

Sets done: _____ Class was: ☐ Great ☐ Fine ☐ Hard, see notes

Notes / stars of the day: _____

Wednesday

Sets done: _____ Class was: ☐ Great ☐ Fine ☐ Hard, see notes

Notes / stars of the day: _____

Thursday

Sets done: _____ Class was: ☐ Great ☐ Fine ☐ Hard, see notes

Notes / stars of the day: _____

Friday

Sets done: _____ Class was: ☐ Great ☐ Fine ☐ Hard, see notes

Notes / stars of the day: _____

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How it went

Meet Your Sub

Day 1 opener. 15 minutes at the start of every period on Monday, before the set. Nothing to prepare.

★ **SAY YES TO THE CLASS** "To everyone, I am your sub for English this week, and every day has a reading set and a writing set. First I will tell you a little about me and take three questions, then we read the class agreement together. Every page has a core task and a star challenge, so start with the core task and keep going when you finish."

Sub script (same routine for every class)

- Before first period, fill in the introduction sheet (next page) once. Keep it honest and short. Students read a sub in ten seconds, give them something real to read.
- Introduce yourself from the sheet, two minutes. Then hold up the "Ask the Sub" list and take three questions from hands. Three, not ten.
- Read the class agreement out loud. Ask the class to add one line of their own and write it on the board for that period. That line is theirs, they will keep it better than yours.
- Set the voice level with a number, 0 to 3 (bottom of the sheet). Say which level the set needs. Use the numbers all week.
- Start the set. "This is today's reading. Do the core task first. When you finish, try the star challenge, and the calm block is always allowed."

If the class is loud

- Skip the questions, keep the agreement and the voice level.
- Start the set sooner. Leave the voice level number on the board for the whole period.

If a period has ten minutes left

- Play Two Truths and a Lie. Show it edition (rules on the class page), in groups of six. Each group picks one to share.
- Or hand out the quiet practice page from the calm block.

Monday morning checklist (before first period)

- ☐ Read the Important Information page: office number, emergency exits, the nurse.
- ☐ Check the class list for allergies, medical needs and students who leave early.
- ☐ Find today's set on the weekly schedule and count copies for every period.
- ☐ Fill in the About Your Sub sheet and pin it where the class can see it.
- ☐ Write the voice levels 0 to 3 on the board.
- ☐ Put the answer keys somewhere students cannot reach them.

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Day 1 opener, sub script

[illegible]

Writing set: the lesson, Week 3 (solo)



Team Talk, Day 5: Hot Seat Interviews

(Works for 2nd–5th Grade • 20–45 min.)

Team Goals

“Today is team hot seat interview. For groups of four, there will be four questions. Each of you takes one turn in the hot seat as a character from the text, *Isabella*, and the others interview you, *interview* as your character, and only with what your character knows.”

How to Use This Page

1. Each person plays one character: *Fernando*, *Donnan*, *Hector*, or *Emil*. Keep the *Isabella* open.

2. The player in the hot seat answers first person’s I, me, my, and the character, with no notes.

3. The others write each one question from the character’s point of view. The person holding page 2 is the checker for that turn and scores each answer.

4. Switch for the next: first question asks something the character could NOT know. The best answer says so, and says why and how.

Fernando, the fishkeeper, fourteen

- 1. Where did you live before the lake came?
- 2. Where exactly did you hang the hat?

PLAYED BY

Genaro, the miller

- 1. Why did you sleep using a clever strap?
- 2. What did you do with the dead sheep?
- 3. Why did the best answer be sound when you walked past?

PLAYED BY

Hector, the baker

- 1. How did you test out your socks were deep?
- 2. What happened when you weighed your flour after the best went?
- 3. What did Genaro do with the dead sheep?

PLAYED BY

Emil, Fernando’s younger brother, the narrator

- 1. How did you see that you starved?
- 2. How did you see other Fernos take the best?
- 3. How did Ferno playing brother after he went quiet?

PLAYED BY

Time plan (40 minutes)

- Read aloud and pick who plays what when 5 min
- Hot seat 1 7 min
- Hot seat 2 7 min
- Hot seat 3 7 min
- Group talk: who knew the most? 6 min

Write a play (a play for *Isabella* that is different from the one on her card.

Explore what she should do with the animals.

Own one question

Write one question for any character that the *Isabella* CAN answer, and the paragraph that answers it.

PARAGRAPH

★ Challenge

Write a play for *Isabella* that is different from the one on her card.

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Team Talk, Day 5

Team Talk, Day 5

Team task, Week 3 (groups of four)



Game, Day 5: The Boxes

Tape this up, where a team opens a box, cross it off and write the team number on it.

5th Grade

1

TEAM

2

TEAM

3

TEAM

4

TEAM

5

TEAM

6

TEAM

7

TEAM

8

TEAM

9

TEAM

10

TEAM

11

TEAM

12

TEAM

Scores

Team 1

Team 2

Team 3

Team 4

Team 5

Team 6

Game: Mystery Box (whole class)



Reading Set 1: The Last Lock Before Dark

Read the story twice. The second time, notice the time and the place, and how they make trouble for Lem.

Reading • Day 1

This set reviews: setting (time and place) and how it shapes the conflict, types of conflict, historical details, evidence and vocabulary in context



SAY THIS TO THE CLASS

"Today's reading is a historical fiction story set on the Erie Canal in 1830, and you work alone for the period. Read it once for the story, then again to notice the time and place, and how they cause the problem. Historical fiction mixes real history with invented characters, so watch for both."

- ① In the summer of 1830, the Erie Canal was only five years old, but to twelve-year-old Lem Mosley it felt as if it had always been there. The canal had opened in 1825, and it ran about 363 miles across New York, from Albany on the Hudson River to Buffalo on Lake Erie. Lem knew one small piece of it better than anyone: the stretch of towpath between the village of Marrow Hill and the stone lock two miles to the east.
- ② Lem was a driver. From sunrise until dark, he walked beside two mules, Juniper and Mack, and kept them moving at a steady pace along the towpath, the packed dirt road that ran beside the water. A long rope called the towline stretched from their harness to the freight boat Kestrel, which glided along behind them with no sail and no oars. Mules or horses pulled the boats on the canal, and many of the drivers were boys no older than Lem.
- ③ Today the Kestrel carried two hundred barrels of flour bound for Albany. Captain Mercer had promised the merchant there that every barrel would arrive dry, and he had promised Lem an extra quarter dollar if they reached the lock before nightfall. "I do not want to be caught on the open stretch after dark," the captain said.
- ④ All afternoon the air had felt thick and heavy, like the steam above a kettle. By four o'clock, the clouds in the west had piled up as dark as wet slate. Captain Mercer stood on the cabin roof with one hand shading his eyes. "Keep them moving, Lem!" he called. "If that storm catches us out here, the flour is ruined, and so is my good name."
- ⑤ The first thunder rolled across the wheat fields like empty barrels tumbling down a cellar stair. Then the rain came in sheets, so heavy that Lem could barely see the mules' ears. In minutes the towpath turned to soup. His boots sank to the ankles with every step, and the towline went slack, then snapped tight, then slack again as the mules slipped and caught themselves.
- ⑥ Lem had been afraid of thunder for as long as he could remember. On his family's farm, he used to wait out storms under the kitchen table with his hands over his ears. Now every crack made his shoulders jump up toward his chin. But the mules were even more frightened than he was. Mack threw his head high and rolled his eyes until the whites showed, and Juniper's ears lay flat against her neck.

While you read: which paragraph?

1. Which paragraph tells you both the time (the year) and the place of the story?

★ Challenge

Find one detail in paragraphs 1 to 6 that would be different today. Explain why in a few words.

.....

.....



Reading Set 1: Questions

Circle one letter for questions 1 to 8. Answer 9 and 10 in two or three sentences, using details from the story.

Reading • Day 1

1. When and where does the story take place?

- (A) On Lake Erie, in 1825
- (B) On the Erie Canal in New York, in 1830
- (C) On the Hudson River, in the 1930s
- (D) On a farm near Albany, in 1830

2. How does the setting create the main problem in the story?

- (A) Lem gets lost in a city he does not know
- (B) A thief steals the flour at the lock
- (C) Captain Mercer refuses to pay Lem
- (D) A storm turns the towpath to mud and frightens the mules near the lock

3. Lem's struggle against the storm is mainly which type of conflict?

- (A) Character vs. character
- (B) Character vs. society
- (C) Character vs. nature
- (D) Character vs. technology

4. Which sentence best shows that the storm makes Lem's job harder?

- (A) In minutes the towpath turned to soup.
- (B) Lem was a driver.
- (C) Mrs. Kell had the upper gates open and waiting.
- (D) He was not sure whether he was talking to the mule or to himself.

5. Which sentence best shows Lem's conflict with himself (character vs. self)?

- (A) Today the Kestrel carried two hundred barrels of flour bound for Albany.
- (B) The towline sagged into the water.
- (C) Captain Mercer lifted the oilcloth and checked the barrels, and every one was dry.
- (D) Every part of Lem wanted to run for the ditch.

6. According to the story, what pulled the boats along the Erie Canal?

- (A) Steam engines on the boats
- (B) Mules or horses walking on a towpath
- (C) Large sails that caught the wind
- (D) Teams of men rowing with oars

7. In paragraph 5, the towline "went slack." What does slack mean here?

- (A) Loose, not pulled tight
- (B) Wet and heavy
- (C) Broken in two
- (D) Tied in a knot

8. What does the last sentence of the story show about Lem?

- (A) He is too tired to fall asleep
- (B) He is still afraid of the mules
- (C) He has grown braver during the storm
- (D) He wants to leave the canal for good

9. Imagine the same story set today, with a truck driver on a highway in a summer storm. How would the new setting change the problem? Give two changes.

.....

.....

10. Name one real historical fact from the story and one part the author invented. How can you tell which is which?

.....

.....



Challenge

Question 5 is about Lem's conflict with himself. Find one MORE sentence in paragraph 6 that shows it, and copy its first five words.

.....



Reading Set 1: Vocabulary, Setting and Conflict

Work out each word from the words around it. Then fill in the setting and conflict chart.

Reading • Day 1

Vocabulary in context

WORD	WHERE IT APPEARS	WHAT IT MEANS HERE (YOUR WORDS)
glided	<i>which glided along behind them with no sail and no oars</i>	
merchant	<i>Captain Mercer had promised the merchant there</i>	
slate	<i>the clouds in the west had piled up as dark as wet slate</i>	
reared	<i>Juniper reared and planted all four hooves in the mud</i>	
drift	<i>the Kestrel began to drift sideways</i>	
bridle	<i>held her bridle with both hands</i>	

Setting and conflict chart

The **setting** is the time and the place of a story. The **conflict** is the problem a character struggles against: another character, nature (weather, animals, the land), society (rules, a whole group), or the character's own self (a fear, a hard choice).

Time (year, season, time of day)

Place

How the setting causes the problem

Main conflict type + one detail

Second conflict type + one detail

★ Challenge

Move the story to a modern ferry on a river in a storm. Which type of conflict stays the same, and which 1830 detail would disappear?

Stays the same: _____

Disappears: _____



Writing Set 1: Diary Entry from the Past

Sub: read the lesson box aloud, then students work alone. About fifteen minutes for Tasks A to C, the rest for the plan and the entry.

Writing • Day 1

This set reviews: a dated first-person diary entry from 1830, details true to the time, showing a feeling, past tense and dates, capital letters



SAY THIS TO THE CLASS

"Today's writing set is a diary entry from the past, written as a person living in 1830, and you work alone. I will read the lesson box aloud, then you fix capital letters, sort old and new details, plan, and write. Write as I, with a date line, and show your feelings instead of naming them."

The lesson (3 minutes)

A **diary entry from the past** is written as if you were a real person living long ago. You are not writing ABOUT that person; you ARE that person, writing at the end of a day.

- **Date line and place first:** Tuesday, June 8, 1830. A comma goes after the day of the week and after the day of the month (Tuesday, June 8, 1830).
- **First person:** I, me, my, we. **Past tense** for what happened today: we rode, I saw, the rain began.
- **Details true to the time:** mules, lanterns, barrels, wagons. Nothing that runs on electricity or batteries.
- **Show a feeling,** do not name it: not I was scared, but my hands would not stop shaking.
- **Capital letters** for every proper noun: names (Mrs. Kell), places (Albany, the Erie Canal), days and months.

A model entry

Tuesday, June 8, 1830

Aboard the packet boat Swallow, near Syracuse

This morning Papa paid our fare, and we carried our two trunks and Mother's sewing basket aboard. The cabin is so low that Papa has to bend his head. All day two horses walked ahead of us on the towpath, and their driver whistled the same tune for hours. Tonight I am writing by the light of a tin lantern while the other passengers snore in their bunks. Every time I think of the farm we left behind, my stomach flips over, so I count the holes in the lantern until it settles. Julia

Notice the model

Copy one detail from the model that is true to 1830, and one verb in the past tense.

1830 DETAIL

PAST TENSE VERB



Challenge

In the model entry, which sentence shows a feeling without naming it? What is the feeling?

Sentence:

Feeling:



Writing Set 1: Write Your Entry

Task E. Start with the date line and the place. Write at least two paragraphs. Check every line of the list when you finish.

Writing • Day 1

DATE LINE

PLACE

Checklist

- ☐ My entry starts with a date line and a place.
- ☐ I wrote in the first person (I, me, my) and in the past tense for what happened today.
- ☐ I used at least three details that are true to 1830.
- ☐ I showed one feeling through actions or the body, without naming it.
- ☐ I capitalized every name, place, day and month.

★ Challenge

Write a short second entry for the same day by someone else who saw the same events (another person on the boat, or even one of the mules).



Answer Keys (1 of 10)

Teacher copy. Keep these pages out of the student sets.

Reading Set 1: The Last Lock Before Dark

While you read: 1. paragraph 1; 2. paragraph 9 (accept paragraph 10 for item 2 only if the student explains that Lem turns the danger around there). **Star (page 1):** answers vary; accept a detail tied to the time, for example: mules pull a boat along a towpath (today engines move cargo); a quarter dollar is a big extra pay for a day's work; a boy of twelve works all day as a driver; flour travels in barrels by canal boat. **Star (page 2):** any two: he steps in front of Juniper instead of running for the ditch; he holds the bridle without pulling; he breathes slowly so she can watch him; he counts out loud to ten.

Multiple choice: 1. B; 2. D; 3. C; 4. A; 5. D; 6. B; 7. A; 8. C

9. Answers vary; accept two real changes, for example: there are no mules to calm, so the danger is slippery roads or poor sight through the rain; the driver could check a weather radar or a phone and pull over at a rest stop; the cargo rides in a closed trailer, so rain is less of a threat. The conflict can still be character vs. nature.

10. Real (any one): the Erie Canal opened in 1825; it ran about 363 miles from Albany to Buffalo; mules or horses pulled the boats on a towpath; many drivers were boys; locks raised or lowered boats. Invented (any one): Lem, Captain Mercer, Mrs. Kell, the mules, the Kestrel, Marrow Hill, the storm. Facts can be checked in a history book or museum; the characters and events exist only in this story.

Star (page 3): either "Lem had been afraid of..." (his old fear of thunder) or "Now every crack made his..." (his body still jumps at each crack) or "On his family's farm, he..." (he used to hide from storms). Accept any one.

Vocabulary: glided = moved smoothly and quietly; merchant = a person who buys and sells goods; slate = a dark gray stone; reared = rose up on her back legs; drift = float slowly with nothing steering it; bridle = the straps around an animal's head used to guide it.

Chart: Time: the summer of 1830, from about four o'clock in the afternoon into the night. Place: the towpath of the Erie Canal in New York, between the village of Marrow Hill and a stone lock. How the setting causes the problem: the summer thunderstorm turns the towpath to mud and frightens the mules, so the boat drifts toward the lock wall and the flour could be ruined. Main conflict: character vs. nature (the storm, the lightning, the mud). Second conflict: character vs. self (Lem's fear of thunder: Every part of Lem wanted to run for the ditch). **Star (page 4):** the character vs. nature conflict stays (a storm against a ferry crew); also accept character vs. self (fear of the storm) with a reason; details that disappear: the mules, the towpath, the towline, the lock tender with a lantern, the quarter dollar pay (accept any one).

Writing Set 1: Diary Entry from the Past

Notice the model: 1830 detail (any one): the packet boat, horses on the towpath, the driver, a tin lantern, trunks, bunks. Past tense verb (any one): paid, carried, walked, whistled. **Star (page 1):** "Every time I think of the farm we left behind, my stomach flips over" (and she counts the lantern holes until it settles). The feeling: homesick, nervous or sad about leaving home (accept any of these).

Task A (8 fixes): June, Rochester, Buffalo, Saturday, Mrs., Lane, Lake, Erie. Corrected: Wednesday, June 9, 1830. This morning our boat stopped at Rochester, and Papa bought apples from a farmer at the dock. He says we will reach Buffalo by Saturday. At supper a woman named Mrs. Lane told me she once watched a storm roll across Lake Erie. I would like to see it someday, but on a calm afternoon.

Task B: Y (true to 1830): 2, 3, 5, 7. N (not): 1, 4, 6, 8. **Task C:** Monday, July 12, 1830. 1. rode; 2. bought; 3. saw; 4. began. **Star (page 2):** any one: flashlight: a candle lantern or a torch; plastic raincoat: an oilcloth or wool cape; photo on a phone: a drawing or a painted picture; electric fan: a paper or hand fan, or an open window.

Tasks D and E: score with the five-line checklist, one point for each line. Look for the date line, I and we, past tense verbs, three 1830 details (mules, lanterns, barrels, wagons, coins, candles), one feeling shown through the body or actions, and capitals on every name, place, day and month. **Star (page 3):** answers vary; for example: Naming: I was scared of the storm. Showing: When the thunder cracked, I grabbed the rail so hard my knuckles turned white. **Star (page 4):** answers vary; accept a dated, first-person entry from a different point of view that tells the same events with at least one detail true to 1830.



Calm Block, Day 1: Word Search

Find all 12 words from today's mystery and writing lesson. Every direction, including backward. Pencils only, voices at 0.

Calm • Day 1



SAY THIS TO THE CLASS

"Quiet time now: work alone with voices at zero for this calm block. Find twelve mystery words in the grid on page 1, then hunt for eight words in the Golden Brush story on page 2. The word bank at the bottom of page 2 lets you check your own answers."

L	N	I	R	F	I	M	V	G	C	W	D	R	T
V	T	E	B	A	O	O	S	N	A	I	K	M	B
A	Q	J	D	I	J	O	T	I	H	S	U	R	B
R	R	Y	E	L	L	T	A	R	T	A	C	K	Y
T	F	E	D	G	O	A	N	R	U	B	S	D	B
I	Q	O	F	O	R	G	D	E	C	V	I	T	T
R	A	D	M	N	T	G	U	H	S	V	R	G	B
P	Z	O	Y	F	I	R	V	E	F	Y	G	T	E
L	C	P	B	R	I	S	T	L	E	S	C	W	V
U	Q	X	J	C	I	K	Y	U	Z	E	Q	A	P
C	K	E	B	G	P	O	L	T	P	T	T	R	H
D	E	T	U	D	Y	O	Y	S	L	Z	W	V	E
E	Y	M	C	L	N	H	U	A	X	L	X	I	Y
Y	E	P	H	Y	C	S	L	M	T	S	O	Y	S

SUSPECT

TACKY

ALIBI

CLUE

INFER

HERRING

BRUSH

HOOKS

BRISTLES

CULPRIT

STAND

GOLDEN

Done early?

Pick three of the words. Use each one in a sentence of your own about today's reading or writing.

.....

.....



Team Task, Day 2: The Editors' Sheet

One sheet per group. Check the boxes first, add the points, then rank. No rank goes down until all four agree.

Team • Day 2

PITCH	A	B	C	D	POINTS	GROUP RANK	EDITOR RANK	DIFFERENCE
1. Ducks in the office	☐	☐	☐	☐				
2. Chess final	☐	☐	☐	☐				
3. New lockers	☐	☐	☐	☐				
4. Turtle race	☐	☐	☐	☐				
5. Burst pipe	☐	☐	☐	☐				
6. Lost painting	☐	☐	☐	☐				
7. State recess law	☐	☐	☐	☐				
8. Planners	☐	☐	☐	☐				
9. Meteorite	☐	☐	☐	☐				
10. Rooftop garden	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Total difference (lower is better)								

Scoring

For each pitch: group rank minus editor rank, and drop the minus sign. Add the ten numbers.

- **0 to 6:** sharp editors
- **7 to 14:** good editors
- **15 or more:** read the checks again with the editor's ranking

Time plan (40 minutes)

- Read the ten pitches together: 8 min
- Mark the checks and add the points: 10 min
- Agree on the group ranking: 8 min
- The chief editor's ranking and scoring: 7 min
- Write the front page headline: 7 min

Group of three: one person reads and checks. Group of five: add a timekeeper.

Our front page

Write a headline for your number 1 story (eight words or fewer), and one sentence that explains why it beat your number 2.

★ Challenge

The chief editor changes the rule: Unusual is now worth 8 points and Affects many only 1 (Timely and Local stay the same). Which pitch is now ranked second?



Game, Day 1: The Board

Tape this to the whiteboard or copy it. Cross squares off as they are played.

Game • Day 1

THE CANAL	CONFLICT	CAPITALS	DIARY	WILD CARD
100	100	100	100	100
200	200	200	200	200
300	300	300	300	300
400	400	400	400	400
500	500	500	500	500

Scores

Team 1

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Team 2

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Team 3

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Team 4

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Team 5

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Team 6

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Game, Day 2: Paper Password

Sub script and English word list. 15 minutes at the end of the period, or for extra time. Optional.

Game • Day 2



SAY THIS TO THE CLASS

"Paper Password is an optional word game for pairs, a fun way to finish the class. Your partner gives one-word clues for secret words from the rain garden article, the news lesson and the front page task."

Set up (2 minutes)

1. Pairs sit face to face. Give each pair one card page, cut into the four round cards (or folded so one card shows).
2. Partner A is the clue giver in rounds 1 and 3, Partner B in rounds 2 and 4. The guesser never sees the card.
3. Each round lasts 2 minutes. The clue giver says ONE word. The guesser gets ONE guess. Wrong: give another one-word clue.
4. After five clues without a right guess, the word scores 0 and the pair moves on. Say "Go" and "Stop" for each round.

Read this out

"Your clue is one word only. You may not say the secret word or any part of it. If the word is snowman, you cannot say snow or man. No gestures, no spelling, no rhymes. Break a rule and that word scores zero."

Scoring: guessed on clue 1 = 5 points, clue 2 = 4, clue 3 = 3, clue 4 = 2, clue 5 = 1. The clue giver circles the number on the card. After round 4, pairs add their four round totals. Highest total wins; ask pairs to call out totals over 60.

Referee calls

Two words glued together ("hotdog") count as one clue only if they make a real single word. Plurals and "-ing" forms of the secret word are not allowed. If two pairs argue about a clue, the word scores zero and they move on. The example clues below are allowed and show students what a good first clue sounds like.

Timing (15 minutes)

0:00

Set up, rules

2:00

Round 1, Partner A

4:30

Round 2, Partner B

7:00

Round 3, Partner A

9:30

Round 4, Partner B

12:00

Add totals, winners

Round 1: Partner A gives clues

NATIVE	example clue: local
PARKING	example clue: cars
POND	example clue: lake
MOSQUITO	example clue: itch
SPONGE	example clue: soak

Round 3: Partner A gives clues

HEADLINE	example clue: title
QUOTE	example clue: said
REPORTER	example clue: news
CHORUS	example clue: singers
OPINION	example clue: belief

Round 2: Partner B gives clues

SHOVEL	example clue: dig
GRANT	example clue: money
COMPOST	example clue: rotting
STORM	example clue: thunder
DRAIN	example clue: sink

Round 4: Partner B gives clues

BYLINE	example clue: author
PYRAMID	example clue: triangle
LEAD	example clue: opening
EDITOR	example clue: boss
TIMELY	example clue: fresh



Game, Day 4: Classroom Millionaire

Sub script and the 12 questions. 15 minutes at the end of the period, or for extra time. Optional.

Game • Day 4



"If there is time left, we can play Classroom Millionaire, an optional game where the whole class climbs twelve questions together. Every question is about today's three poems, the vignette lesson and the Mood Swap cards."

How it works

1. Tape up the ladder sheet. The whole class is one player. Pick a student for the hot seat (a new student for every question).
2. Read the question and the four options, then read the options again. The hot seat may listen to quiet advice, then says "final answer" and a letter.
3. Right: the class climbs one rung. Before hearing the next question, the class may vote to walk away and keep what it has.
4. Wrong: the climb ends. Rungs 4 and 8 are safe: the class keeps the last safe amount it passed.
5. Time left over? Play the questions again as a team quiz.

Three lifelines (one use each)

Ask the class: everyone shows 1, 2, 3 or 4 fingers at once for A, B, C or D. The hot seat looks, then decides.

50/50: read out the two wrong options listed under the question. Cross them off.

Phone a friend: the hot seat picks one classmate, who has 30 seconds to say what they think out loud.

"Only the hot seat's final answer counts. Shout an answer and the class loses a lifeline."

Rungs 1 to 4, rung 4 is safe

1. **\$100** Six Inches by Morning: why is there no school?
A. Snow B. A holiday C. Saturday D. A broken bus
Answer: A. Snow (50/50 removes C and D)
2. **\$250** Which sport is After the Buzzer about?
A. Soccer B. Basketball C. Hockey D. Tennis
Answer: B. Basketball (50/50 removes A and D)
3. **\$500** A vignette tells about how much time?
A. A whole year B. A whole day C. One moment D. A lifetime
Answer: C. One moment (50/50 removes A and D)
4. **\$1,000** Mood is the feeling of whom?
A. The title B. The rhyme C. The coach D. The reader
Answer: D. The reader (50/50 removes B and C)

Rungs 5 to 8, rung 8 is safe

5. **\$2,500** What did the gym scoreboard read?
A. 52 to 50 B. 50 to 48 C. 60 to 52 D. 48 to 46
Answer: A. 52 to 50 (50/50 removes C and D)
6. **\$5,000** Which word has a NEGATIVE connotation?
A. Cozy B. Small C. Cramped D. Chuckled
Answer: C. Cramped (50/50 removes A and D)
7. **\$10,000** What was the scramble's mystery word?
A. Fragment B. Attitude C. Speaker D. Vignette
Answer: B. Attitude (50/50 removes A and D)
8. **\$25,000** Party poem, last line: which word shows attitude?
A. Glorious B. Room C. This D. Tonight
Answer: A. Glorious (50/50 removes C and D)

Rungs 9 to 12

9. **\$50,000** Mood Swap: which card fits a gloomy version?
A. Skips B. Hums a tune C. Giggles D. Trudges
Answer: D. Trudges (50/50 removes A and C)
10. **\$100,000** Which is a fragment used on purpose?
A. Because of rain. B. Darkness. C. When it ended. D. Running late.
Answer: B. Darkness. (50/50 removes C and D)
11. **\$500,000** What turns the mood in After the Buzzer?
A. The crowd B. The lights C. Coach and a ball D. The score
Answer: C. Coach and a ball (50/50 removes A and D)
12. **\$1 MILLION** By the lesson, a vignette ends with what?
A. An image B. A lesson C. A question D. A list
Answer: A. An image (50/50 removes C and D)

If the class misses

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Wrong on rung 1 to 4 | class keeps \$0 |
| Wrong on rung 5 to 8 | class keeps \$1,000 |
| Wrong on rung 9 to 12 | class keeps \$25,000 |
| Walk away after rung n | class keeps rung n |



Reading Set 2: Mae Jemison's Long Road to Orbit

Reading • Day 2

Read the biography twice. The second time, ask yourself why the author wrote it.

This set reviews: author's purpose (inform, persuade, entertain), word choice that shows it, fact vs opinion, sequence, vocabulary in context



"Today's reading is a biography of the astronaut and doctor Mae Jemison, and you work alone for the period. Read it once for her life story, then again to ask why the author wrote it and which words show the author's feelings. A fact can be checked, but an opinion tells what someone thinks."

- ① On a clear night in Chicago in the 1960s, a girl could look up past the city lights and wonder what was out there. Mae Jemison did more than wonder. As a girl, she was sure that she would travel to space someday. At the time, no woman from the United States had ever flown there. Her dream must have sounded impossible to many people, but it never sounded impossible to her.
- ② Mae Jemison was born on October 17, 1956, in Decatur, Alabama. When she was a small child, her family moved to Chicago, Illinois, where she grew up. She loved science, especially astronomy, the study of stars and planets. She also loved to dance, and she took dance lessons for years. To Mae, science and art were never opposites. In her view, both came from the same curious mind.
- ③ She was a strong student. She finished high school early and started college at Stanford University in California when she was only sixteen years old. There she completed a degree in chemical engineering and a second degree in African and African American studies. She was busy outside of class, too. She danced, she choreographed shows, and she led student groups. It is hard to imagine a busier sixteen-year-old.
- ④ Next, she went to medical school at Cornell University in New York City and received her medical degree in 1981. While she was in medical school, she also traveled to other countries to study and to help give medical care.
- ⑤ Her first work as a doctor was in Los Angeles, California. She worked as a general practitioner, a doctor who treats people of all ages for everyday illnesses and injuries. It was steady, important work, the kind that rarely makes the news.

While you read: which paragraph?

1. Which paragraph tells about her first work as a doctor?



Challenge

Paragraph 1 has a sentence that is the author's opinion, not a fact. Copy its first six words.

.....

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Classroom
REVIEW GAMES