



Close reading plan

A Sudden Slice of Summer, Author Unknown

Created by Kelly Bouchard, 2014 Connecticut Dream Team teacher

What makes this text complex			
Text and Author	A Sudden Slice of Summer, Author Unknown	Where to Access Text	https://www.readworks.org/sites/default/files/passages/810_a_sudden_slice_of_summer_0.pdf
Text Description			
<p>This is a fictional passage that is highly relatable for many students. This is a longer complex text for students to read in order to build stamina. The author describes Susannah who changes greatly in the text. Students are forced to dig deeply in the text to understand the theme by closely looking at the language and the author's word choices.</p>			
Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	810- 4 th Grade	Text Length	1119 words
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
<p>Meaning and central idea of the text (it is better to preserve through situations as a family than enjoy ideal situations on your own) is somewhat explicitly stated throughout the story as Susannah discovers she is not enjoying her sudden slice of summer alone, even though she has been longing for warm weather.</p>		<p>No graphics. Story is told in sequence with one short unclear time lapse from one day to the next at the end. Theme is not explicit but can be discovered by thinking about the metaphor the author creates between cold vs. warm and together vs. alone.</p>	

Prior Knowledge Demands	Language Features
Knowledge of the differences and traits of seasons is somewhat necessary to understand Susannah’s feelings about winter/cold. No references to other text or ideas.	Familiar and easy to understand. Tricky words are easy to figure out through use of context.
Vocabulary	
Tier Two Words (General academic vocabulary)	Tier Three Words (Domain-specific words)
<i>“Words that are far more likely to appear in written texts than in speech. [They] often represent subtle or precise ways to say relatively simple things—saunter instead of walk, for example.” (CCSS ELA Appendix A)</i>	<i>“[Tier Three words]...are specific to a domain or field of study (lava, carburetor, legislature, circumference, aorta) and key to understanding a new concept within a text.” (CCSS ELA Appendix A)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despised • Confetti • Trudge • Giddily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apparently • unrelenting • moat • three-dimensional
Potential Reader/Task Challenges	
Understanding the theme may be difficult for students since it is not explicitly stated.	

Text-dependent questions		
Question	Standard alignment	Page of this document
What kinds of memories does Susannah have of spending time with her family in Florida? How did she feel while doing those things?	RL.4.1 RL. 4.3	5-8
<i>Why are Susannah's siblings surprised to see her playing outside with them at the end of the story?</i>	RL.4.1 RL. 4.3	9-14
<i>What does it mean when the author says "she was warm enough" at the end of the story while Susannah was playing in the snow?</i>	R.L. 4.4	15-17
<i>How did Susannah change in the story?</i>	R. L. 4.3	18-22
<i>What lesson did Susannah learn in the story? Use evidence from the text to support your thinking.</i>	R.L.4.2	23-25
Target Standards		
<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1</p> <p>Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2</p> <p>Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3</p> <p>Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4</p> <p>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).</p>		

Question 1

Question #1	What kinds of memories does Susannah have of spending time with her family in Florida? How did she feel while doing those things?	
Standard(s) covered:	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1</u> Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3</u> Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).	
	Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
	<i>When Susannah was in Florida with her family, she made sand castles with her brothers and sisters. She also drank orange juice that her mom squeezed from Florida oranges. She felt joyful and content because she despised the snow and enjoyed spending time with her family in the sun and sand. She wishes that she could live in Florida all the time.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately identifies the activities/memories of things Susannah did with her family in Florida • Cites specific examples from the text of Susannah's memories of Florida that show her fond feelings • Cites specific memories related to her family • Identifies that Susannah felt happy while with her family in FL
If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:		
Objective	In this lesson, you will learn how to draw inferences about a character by locating specific details about the character's actions and feelings and considering what they show about the character.	
Prior knowledge to review	Students should feel comfortable rereading text, and referring to examples in their answers. Students should be able to determine importance when given a variety of details. (RL. 3.1)	

Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction
1) Reread the text looking for words that describe the character's actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hmm...I wonder what part of the text will help me answer this question. • First I will reread the question.(Reread question) • The first part of this question specifically says, what memories she has in Florida with her family, so I know I need to look for words like family, or siblings, or mom. • I'll start by rereading the part of the text that describes Susannah's vacation in Florida while looking for those key words. • (Reread section of text that describes Susannah's Florida trip.) • I am going to underline all the key words in this section. A few key words that stand out are: family, mother, brother and sister, because they refer to her family, as described in the question. • There are a lot of details in this section that talk about Susannah's Florida trip. But remember the question asked me about memories with her family, so I only want to focus on the details that talk about Susannah's memory with her family. • Okay I'm rereading and I see the part where it says Susannah was bobbing and floating in the ocean waves. I don't think that answers the question because she wasn't doing that with her family. • It says that in the morning her mom would make fresh orange juice. That seems important because it has to do with her mom who is part of her family • Let's see what other details seem important. It also says she made a sand castle with her brother and sister. This is also significant because they are part of her family. I'm going to underline this as well.
2) Review the details again, looking for words or phrases that show how the character feels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common mistake that many students make it only paying attention to one part of the question. As I look at this question, I have answered the first part by finding details that describe Susannah's time in Florida. However, it would be a big mistake if I stopped there! There is a second question that I need to address. It asks me to describe how she felt while she did these activities in Florida. • Now I need to think about how Susannah was feeling while she did those two things, which is the second part of the question. • I need to reread this section of the text again, this time I am looking for words that describe how she felt or her mood. • I am rereading and noticing words like despised and hated. These words make it clear that Susannah REALLY hates the snow. As I keep reading, I am seeing phrases like magnificent, she "wished she could live there," and "liked feeling the sand." These words are so different from the way the author described her feelings about snow. I'm going to jot these down because they may help us answer the question. (Continue reading and jotting down words or phrases like wished she could live there, magnificent sand castle, liked feeling the sand, didn't make your teeth chatter). • These words describe Susannah's feelings about warm, sun and time with her family.

<p>3) Ask, “What can I learn about the character from these actions and feelings?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So now I need to think about all of these phrases and decide how Susannah felt while she was in Florida with her family. I know the author says she despised snow and hated winter, and when she talks about Susannah in Florida she uses words like magnificent and liked and says she wished she could live there all the time. • So I know Susannah was really happy and content when she was in Florida with her family. I can tell she prefers the sunshine and warmth over cold and snowy weather. • Now I have found all the key details and thought closely about what they are telling me, I am ready to answer the question. “Susannah remembers...”
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Extension and practice

- If students are having difficulty locating specific examples in the text, have them reread with a small group or partner. Go line by line or paragraph by paragraph. At each stopping point have the child ask them self, “are there any details in this part that can help me answer the question?” The students can keep a list of these details as they go. Make sure the child keeps rereading/ referring to the question.
- If students are having difficulty figuring out how the character feels have them locate specific information that shows what the character is saying or doing to show their feelings. They can also imagine themselves in the character’s shoes. If time, have kids act out their feeling word or read it the way the character might say it. They can then describe the way they performed it using feeling words.

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to other right there questions that require students to supply specific evidence.

See more examples of how to teach determining importance and referring to specific details

Objective: In this lesson, you will learn how to draw inferences about a character by locating specific details about the character's actions and feelings and considering what they show about the character.

1) Reread the text looking for words that describe the character's actions.

2) Review the details again, looking for words or phrases that show how the character feels.

3) Ask, "What can I learn about the character from these actions and feelings?"

[Locate Evidence to Answer Questions](#)

Question 2

Question #2

Why are Susannah's siblings surprised to see her playing outside with them at the end of the story?

Standard(s) covered:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.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.

Example response that meets standard

Susannah's siblings are surprised to see her playing outside in the snow with them because she hates the snow. She doesn't go on the ski trip with them because she does not like the cold and snow. The text says she refuses to go on the trip with them because she "wanted nothing to do with that thick, white, powdery stuff." Susannah says that she despises the snow and hates everything about winter. They probably didn't expect to see her outside playing because she didn't want to go on the ski trip and hates the snow.

Look-fors

- Look for inclusion of at least one or more of the following specific phrases in bold: Such as "Susannah **despised** the snow", "she **refused** to go with them to ski" "she **wanted nothing to do with that thick, white, powdery stuff**"
- Look for an inference as to why the siblings are surprised because Susannah hated anything to do with winter for example, she didn't want to go on the ski trip.

If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:

Objective	In this lesson you will learn how to infer what led to an event by collecting details that happened before the event.
Prior knowledge to review	<p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1</u> Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3</u> Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events</p>
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction
1) Reread the text, looking for sections where the author describes the effects or end results of a character's actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First I need to reread the part of the text where Susannah's siblings are surprised. I'm going to reread this because it directly refers to what the question is asking me. I remember it was towards the end of the text so I am going to start scanning about in the middle and keep going until I find it. (Reread section of text aloud) • Hmm, so I know that Susannah's siblings feel surprised to see her outside playing. I really need to think about what this section of the text is telling me. It almost seems like Susannah is waiting for her family to get home and play outside because it says she was up with a start and charged downstairs as soon as she heard their car. • It says, "She was up with a start and CHARGED downstairs." Not only did she go OUTSIDE in the cold that I know she hates, but she seems really excited here! Then, she pulled on her snowsuit and joined her siblings in n the backyard. • I'm thinking that this doesn't seem like something she would usually do. Then, she just jumps right in and starts helping them make snow animals and the author says her siblings were surprised to see her there. In order to figure out what made Susannah's siblings feel surprised to see her there I need to scan the text, looking backwards at the events that led up to this point. • I need to figure out what caused them to feel that way. To do that I am going to think about what led or caused the end result of them feeling surprised. I need to think backwards about all the things that happened before they felt surprised. I know there were several events where the author describes how Susannah feels about the snow and being outdoors during winter. I already know she dislikes the snow and winter. There are also several spots where the author talks about Susannah's feelings about her family. Let's see if I can find some evidence that shows me what caused the siblings to be surprised.

<p>2) Ask yourself, "What events happened before this event?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am going to start where the author talks about the siblings feeling surprised and go backwards from there. So am going to quickly reread the paragraph above where her siblings are surprised. When I think about all of that information I need to decide what might help me answer the question. At the end Susannah is thinking about her brother and sister coming home in the morning and how badly she wants to play with them, even if it meant she would be chilly. I'm going to put these key details in the box above where Susannah's siblings felt surprised. • Now I am going to keep going backwards and look at the paragraph before that. (Reread paragraph) After reading that one, I see that Susannah is starting to miss her siblings and even thinks it would be fun to ski with her family and race her siblings. It even says she misses them. I'll add those details to my chart. • Hmm when I reread the next paragraph above that it seems like she is having fun in the snow but by the end she is missing her siblings. I want to think about which details I should add to my graphic organizer which may help me answer the question. I think the part about the beach not being so fun when you're alone is really important. I'm going to add this part on my graphic organizer..."apparently, the pleasures of the warm sandy beach were a lot less fun when there was no one around to share them with." • I'm quickly scanning the next two paragraphs above that one and I don't really see any information in that section that can help me. So I'll keep going backwards. As I read this one, it says that Susannah refuses to go on the ski trip with her family because she wanted "nothing to do with that thick, white, powdery stuff. I'm going to add these key details to my graphic organizer. • Finally, it says right in the second paragraph that Susannah despised the snow and hated everything about winter time. This also seems important because now she is playing outside in the snow which she never would have done before. • Now I have all the events that happened leading up to the siblings feeling surprised.
<p>3) Review your notes, asking, "How do these events cause the end result?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So if I want to think about why her siblings look so surprised to see her playing outside with them, I need to think about all the events that led up to them being surprised so far. I need to look closely at all the events I wrote on my graphic organizer and ask myself how they helped to lead to the siblings feeling surprised. • Okay, so let's reread everything in forwards order now. • They must be so surprised to see her because she hates winter and snow so much that she stayed home from a family trip. This action might have made her siblings feel like she didn't want to spend time with them, if it meant she had to be in the cold snow. They do not expect to see her playing outside in the snow with them because she talks about how much she despises winter and snow. She starts to feel lonely even when she is playing in her sunny spot, and she starts to miss them. Also, she can't wait for them to come home so she can play with them, even if it means she will be chilly. I think these feelings motivated her to get over hatred of the snow so she could have the company of her siblings. • Now I can use all of my key details on my graphic organizer to help me write my response. I will want to use everything I put in my organizer as my key details in my response. I will start with restating the question and then I will add all my details as evidence.

Extension and practice

- Make sure children understand cause and effect cards that require children to make inferences. Give simple scenarios where children can fill in or explain cause and effect. For example: a picture of a broken floor vase and a child playing basketball in the face For example: hold the cause and effect cards up and ask, “How could this event shape or cause this event to happen?” Have the kids talk through each card. For other kids that are struggling, you can put some tape strips down in lines, leading up to the effect. They could literally walk backwards from the end result, identifying the event that came before and talk through its relevance to the effect.
- If students are having trouble making evidence-supported inferences, conduct a mini “investigation.” Explain that readers are like detectives, as they read, they put together clues from the text to understand new ideas, people, or stories. Consider reading aloud a familiar or easier text like “If you Give a Mouse a Cookie” stopping to have students use clues from the illustrations and text to infer what will happen next and infer the characters’ feelings. As a group, list the things that students did to make an inference (i.e. used the illustrations as clues, noticed the repeating structure, used what they knew about characters from earlier part in the story, etc.), then go back to “A Sudden Slice of Summer” and working in pairs, have students make an inference about a character.

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to literature requiring students to determine why a character feels a certain way.

See more examples of how to teach character feelings about an event, or another character.

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to infer what led to an event by collecting details that happened before the event.

- 1) Reread the text, looking for sections where the author describes the effects or end results of a character’s actions.
- 2) Ask yourself, “What events happened before this event?”
- 3) Review your notes, asking, “How do these events cause the end result?”

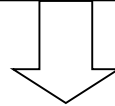
[Use evidence from what the character says or thinks](#)

[Describe how one character feels about another](#)

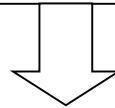
Name: Key

Cause and Effect Map

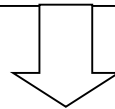
Susannah despised the snow and hated everything about winter. Susannah refuses to go on the ski trip with her family because she wanted "nothing to do with that thick, white, powdery stuff. "



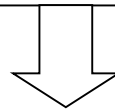
Susannah realizes it isn't fun to play in the sun when her siblings aren't there. She thinks "apparently, the pleasures of the warm sandy beach were a lot less fun when there was no one around to share them with."



Susannah is starting to miss her siblings and even thinks it would be fun to ski with her family and race her siblings. It even says she misses them.



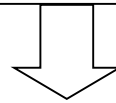
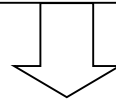
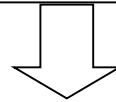
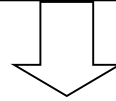
Susannah is thinking about her brother and sister coming home in the morning and how badly she wants to play with them, even if it meant she would be chilly.



Susannah's siblings are surprised to see her playing outside with them.

Name: _____

Cause and Effect Map



Susannah's siblings are surprised to see her playing outside with them.

Question 3

Question #3	<i>What does it mean when the author says “she was warm enough” at the end of the story while Susannah was playing in the snow?</i>	
Standard(s) covered:	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).	
	Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
	<i>When the author says “she was warm enough” she doesn’t mean that Susannah actually is warm. Susannah feels warm because she’s having fun spending time with her siblings. The author says “her sister’s hand was over hers, helping to smooth out the fish’s curved tail.” Susannah is so happy to have the company of her family that she doesn’t care if it is cold out. This is very different for Susannah because in the beginning of the story the author tells how much Susannah despises cold and winter. She never wants to be outside in the winter so the author uses the phrase to show that she feels warm when she is around her family, even though it’s cold outside.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure children understand that the author doesn’t literally mean Susannah feels warm • Look for a figurative explanation of Susannah feeling warm • Look for details to support why Susannah feels warm for example, her sister puts her hand on hers, she wants to be with her family even though it’s cold
If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:		
Objective	In this lesson you will learn how to determine the meaning of a nonliteral phrase by looking for details in the context to support your understanding.	
Prior knowledge to review	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.	
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction	

<p>1) Reread the text and ask yourself, "What does the author really mean?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, I need to find the section of the text where the author says this. I know the question says at the end of the text so I will read there. I need to decide if the author literally means that Susannah feels warm. • Hmm, as I reread the text I notice that Susannah is outside in the cold snow when the author says she is warm enough. • I need to decide if the author means Susannah is literally warm or not. • I can assume because Susannah is outside and there is no way she could actually be warm literally, the author must be speaking non-literally. • So if the author doesn't actually mean she is warm, what does she really mean? • I know that the word warm can have two meanings. For example, we know she doesn't feel warm temperature wise, like she isn't feeling hot. • Warm can also be a feeling you get inside when you feel happy. Like when we know someone loves us, we might feel warm and fuzzy inside. • The author must mean the Susannah feels happy and warm inside. Now we need to prove it.
<p>2) Ask yourself, "What evidence supports what the author is saying?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I need to find examples to show that Susannah felt happy and warm inside. I know right where I reread the section earlier it says, "Her hat was pulled low over her ears, her mittens were lined with wool, and suddenly her sisters hand was over hers, helping to smooth out the fish's curved tail. She could wait for summer. She was warm enough." • So it seems like she feels warm because she is finally spending time having fun with her family. We know from earlier how much she missed them and it seems like she wants to play with them, even if it is really cold outside. I need to put all this evidence in my answer.
<p>3) Construct your response using the evidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First I will say that I know the author did not really mean that Susannah felt warm. Then I need to include my evidence to prove that this is true. Before I state my evidence, I will introduce it with a clause such as: "for example", or "the author says". This will make my writing sound more organized and easy to follow.

Extension and practice

- If students are having trouble figuring out when the author is speaking literally or non-literally, lead them in a discussion of another idiom, such as it's raining cats and dogs. Ask, "Does the author really mean it is raining cats and dogs?" "What does she really mean?" The direct children back into text to discuss the question again. Have children think of other idioms they know, and discuss literal meaning.

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to literature to determine the meaning of words in context.

See more examples of how to teach determining meanings of words.

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to determine the meaning of a nonliteral phrase by looking for details in the context to support your understanding.

- 1) Reread the text and ask yourself, "What does the author really mean?"
- 2) Ask yourself, "What evidence supports what the author is saying?"
- 3) Construct your response using the evidence.

[Determine the meaning of words in a text](#)

Question 4

Question #4	<i>How does Susannah change in the story?</i>	
Standard(s) covered:	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).	
	Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
	<p><i>Susannah changed in the story because in the beginning she only likes to be warm and never wants to be in the snow. She had fond memories of spending time with her family in Florida. Susannah feels very excited when she finds a sunny spot in her backyard while her family is on a ski trip. After she plays in the sun for a while, Susannah starts to feel lonely and isn't enjoying herself. The author says "apparently, the pleasures of the warm sand and beach were a lot less fun when there was no one there to share them with." Susannah doesn't feel well because she ate too many oranges, and had a sun burn because her mom wasn't there to put sunscreen on her. Finally she realizes she would much rather be with her family in the cold weather, than by herself enjoying the warm. It doesn't matter where she is, as long as she is with her family.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should be able to describe that Susannah used to only want to be warm and in the sun • Students should be able to add evidence to prove that Susannah only cared about being warm in the beginning but then realizes she wants to be with her family, even if it means being cold
If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:		
Objective	In this lesson you will describe the change in a character by comparing the character's thoughts, words, or actions across the text.	
Prior knowledge to review	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events	
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction	

<p>1. Review your notes and the text, recording words that describe the characters thoughts, words, or actions at the beginning, middle, and end of the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am going to look back at my notes from the last lesson to help me figure out how Susannah changed. I need to find words that describe her thoughts, words, or actions. I am going to highlight evidence that will help me. • So looking at the beginning of the story on my organizer I am going to highlight the words despised snow, refused to go on ski trip, hated snow. These words show me how Susannah felt in the beginning of the story. I also know from reading this story a lot of times that Susannah loves warm weather and has fond memories of going to the Florida beach with her family. • Looking back at my organizer, I can see that in the middle I should highlight, she thinks "apparently, the pleasures of the warm sandy beach were a lot less fun when there was no one around to share them with." I'm highlighting this because she had her sunny spot but realized it wasn't fun without her family. • I also need to highlight that she says she misses her family and wishes she went on the ski trip with them. • Then in the end, I will highlight how she was so excited for them to come home, raced downstairs and couldn't wait for them to play outside even though it was cold and chilly.
<p>2) Look over these words and phrases, asking, "What does the main character want or care about at each part of the story?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking the important words and phrases I highlighted and thinking about what I already know about the story, I need to figure out what Susannah wants or cares about in each part of the story; I am going to put all this important information into my organizer. • In the beginning, we know that Susannah despises the snow and hates winter. However, we also know how much Susannah enjoyed spending time with her family in the sun and warm Florida, this shows she cares about her family. • In the middle, she finds her sunny, warm spot and she thinks it is going to be fantastic. However, very quickly she starts to realize it isn't too fun without her siblings and mom there. She gets sunburn and eats too many oranges. She is also bored. She says, "Apparently, the pleasures of the warm sandy beach were a lot less fun when there was no one around to share them with." She also says that she misses her family and wishes she went on the ski trip. This shows again that she wants to be with her family, and cares about them. • Finally, in the end, she can't wait for her siblings to come home and actually WANTS to play with them in the backyard in the cold and snow. Again, this shows that she wants to be with her family no matter what.

<p>3. Ask yourself, "How have those motivations, thoughts and desires changed from the beginning to end?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now, I need to think about everything I just tracked across the story to figure out how Susannah changed. • In the beginning, I know that Susannah hated snow and despised winter. She skipped a ski trip with her family because she doesn't want anything to do with that powdery white stuff. She has fond memories of spending time in the warmth and on the beach with her family in Florida. • As the story goes on I can see that Susannah is starting to change and realizes she misses her family and is lonely without them, even when she finds a sunny spot. • Finally, at the end she can't wait for her family to come home and even plays with her siblings outside in the snow, even though it is cold out. • So she changed because now she wants to play outside with her family even though it is cold because she realizes it's better to be with them than be alone. She did not have fun in the sun when they weren't there so she is willing to go in the snow, which she hates because she wants to be with her family. I can use all of this information in my response. • I will start by restating the question, "Susannah changed in the story because..." and then I will include information from my beginning, middle and end organizer to show that in the beginning she hated snow and cold, but later on she didn't care because she missed her family so much.
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Extension and practice

- If students are having trouble using evidence from the text to support their claims about the characters, have them use a T-chart to record evidence. On the left side of the T-chart, they should write the ways they see characters as the same or different, and on the right, record "Evidence from the text."
- If students are struggling to explain how evidence from the text supports their reasoning, add a third column to their T-chart titled, "What this shows me" and have students jot notes to explain specifically how each piece of evidence supports their idea. Then, in pairs or as a class, share ideas and discuss

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to literature to teach character change.

See more examples of how to teach character change

Objective: In this lesson you will describe the change in a character by **comparing** the character's thoughts, words, or actions across the text.

1. Review your notes and the text, recording words that describe the characters thoughts, words, or actions at the beginning, middle, and end of the text.
2. Look over these words and phrases, asking, "What does the main character want or care about at each part of the story?"
3. Ask yourself, "How have those motivations, thoughts and desires changed from the beginning to end?"

[Describe a Change in a Character](#)

Name: _____

Beginning: Susannah despises the snow and hates winter. However, we also know how much Susannah enjoyed spending time with her family in the sun and warm Florida.

Middle: Susannah finds her sunny, warm spot and she thinks it is going to be fantastic. However, very quickly she starts to realize it isn't too fun without her siblings and mom there. She gets sunburn and eats too many oranges. She is also bored. She says, "Apparently, the pleasures of the warm sandy beach were a lot less fun when there was no one around to share them with." She also says that she misses her family and wishes she went on the ski trip.

End: She can't wait for her siblings to come home and actually WANTS to play with them in the backyard in the cold and snow.

Name: _____

Beginning:

Middle:

End:

Question 5

Question #5	<i>What lesson does Susannah learn in the story?</i>	
Standard(s) covered:	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2</u> Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.	
	Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
	<p><i>Susannah learned that it doesn't matter where you are or what kind of weather you're in as long as you're with your family. She learned this because she thought that she loved the warm weather but she realized it wasn't as fun when her family wasn't there. Susannah thinks to herself, "She was reluctant to admit it, even to herself, but the snow looked sort of...refreshing. She imagined racing her siblings to the bottom of that frosted mountain. Perhaps skiing with her family wouldn't have been so terrible? She was flushed and bored, but most of all she missed them." This shows that she doesn't care if it is cold, she wants to be where her family is, having fun. She also thinks, "her brother and sister would be back in the morning and she badly wanted to play with them. Even if it meant be chilly." This shows that she no longer cares about the weather because it is more important to just be with family.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for Susannah realizing that family is most important, no matter what the weather • Look for evidence to support their idea such as a quote for the text.
If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:		
Objective	In this lesson you will determine the theme of the story by thinking about the main character's realizations and how they have changed.	
Prior knowledge to review	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2</u> Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.	
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction	

<p>1) Reread your notes, reviewing how the character changes across the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hmm looking at my thinking on how Susannah changed in the last lesson, I see she changed because initially she hated being outside but now she wants to play outside with her family even though it is cold because she realizes it's better to be with them than be alone. She did not have fun in the sun when they weren't there so she is willing to go in the snow which she hates because she wants to be with her family and felt warm, even though it was freezing outside.
<p>2) Reread the text, looking for words or phrases that show the character is realizing something important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know Susannah realized her family was most important no matter what the weather. I wonder if I could find more places in the text to show she realized this. I am going to scan the text again and look for words or phrases that show that Susannah has realized how important her family is. • I'm scanning the text and I think the part that will help me is the middle. I know from doing the character change that she really starts to change in the middle of the text. I'm going to reread the section where she finds her sunny spot. It says, "at first she couldn't stop smiling." So at first she is so happy because she is finally warm. Yet, as she continues to play it says, "she didn't quite know what to do. Apparently the pleasures of the warm sand beach were a lot less fun when there was no one around the share them with." As it goes on she even starts to feel sick because her mom wasn't there to put sunscreen on her. • Then, as I keep reading I see more evidence about her realizing she missed her family. It says, "She was reluctant to admit it, even to herself, but the snow looked sort of...refreshing. She imagined racing her siblings to the bottom of that frosted mountain. Perhaps skiing with her family wouldn't have been so terrible? She was flushed and bored, but most of all she missed them." • As I keep scanning the text I see at the end, it says <i>"her brother and sister would be back in the morning and she badly wanted to play with them. Even if it meant be chilly."</i>
<p>3) Looking at the character's change and realizations, ask, "What lesson did this character learn?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So thinking about everything I have found so far, I know that Susannah realizes that she wants to be with her family no matter what. She also changes because she doesn't care about being warm or cold, or in the sun or snow. She realizes her family is most important no matter what. I can prove this with all my quotes and evidence from the text.

4) Construct a response about what the theme shows about what the character learned.

- I am going to use all the quotes and evidence I found in step 2 to help me write a response.
- I can start by saying, "Susannah learned *that it doesn't matter where you are or what kind of weather you're in as long as you're with your family.*" Then I should include some of evidence and specific quotes I already found to make my response strong and prove my lesson.

Extension and practice

- Review stories read aloud in class or that are known by small group, discuss the lessons learned in each story so students can have a general understanding of common lessons learned. Perhaps create a visual anchor that includes the story, character and the lesson they learned.
- Lead a small discussion of life lessons learned, perhaps in school or 4th grade. For example, tell a story of the time you jumped off the swing when swinging so high, and broke your arm. You learned not to do that again. Let students share examples and be sure they are using the sentence started I learned _____ because_____.

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to literature to teach theme

See more examples of how to teach theme

Objective: In this lesson you will determine the theme of the story by thinking about the main character's realizations and how they have changed.

- 1) Reread your notes, reviewing how the character changes across the text.
- 2) Reread the text, looking for words or phrases that show the character is realizing something important.
- 3) Looking at the character's change and realizations, ask, "What lesson did this character learn?"
- 4) Construct a response about what the theme shows about what the character learned.

[Identifying a theme by asking what did the main character learn?](#)