

Spider®

ISSUE THEME

Use these texts to help your students appreciate the many ways our lives are connected to nature.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do humans and the natural world interact?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact
- Students will summarize key supporting details and ideas
- Students will observe plant life cycles and stages
- Students will plan and carry out investigations
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core English Language Arts skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

SELECTIONS

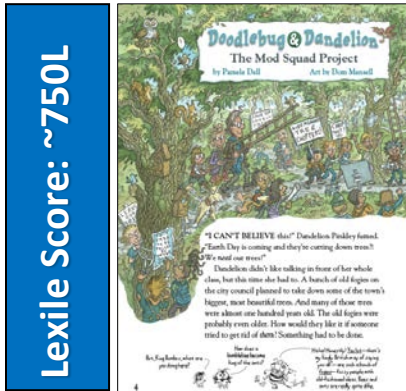
- **Doodlebug & Dandelion**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~750L
- **Fungi, Fungi, Everywhere!**
Expository Nonfiction, ~850L
- **The Very, Very, Very Long Hike**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~650L

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Doodlebug & Dandelion

pp. 4–8, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Use this story about a group of students who try to save trees to teach character perspectives.



RESOURCES

- Character Perspectives Chart

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact
- Students will observe plant life cycles and stages

KEY VOCABULARY

- **fumed** (p. 4) said something in an angry way
- **council** (p. 6) a group of people who are chosen to make rules, laws, or decisions about something
- **encircling** (p. 7) forming a circle around something
- **fell** (p. 7) to cut down

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do humans and the natural world interact?

Ask students to tell about their favorite trees—ones they like to climb, sit under, swing from, or just look at. Then tell students to imagine that all the trees around the school or in their favorite park were cut down. How would this change their enjoyment of the place? Explain that this story is about two groups who have different ideas about trees.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Have students work in pairs to write sentences that use these words and show their meanings. Invite partners to share their sentences by reading them aloud without the vocabulary words to another pair. Other pairs should guess which vocabulary words belong in the sentences. Remind students to review predictions after they read.

READ & DISCUSS

After students have read the story, use the questions below to prompt discussion:

1. Dandelion says she's "mad as a hornet." What does a mad hornet do? How does Dandelion do something similar?
2. Why did the kids decorate the trees with ribbons, balloons, and knitted hearts?
3. Did the city council members have a good reason to cut down the trees? Why or why not?
4. Why does one of the council members say, "what fools we were"?

SKILL FOCUS: Character Perspectives

INSTRUCT: Explain that a perspective is a way of thinking about something. Remind students that this story is about two groups with very different perspectives about the trees in their local park. Briefly discuss these perspectives. Then tell students that thinking about the perspectives of the different characters in a story will help them better understand the story. Tell students they are going to analyze perspectives in this story.

ASSESS: Distribute the *Character Perspectives* worksheet to all students and have them work in pairs to complete it. Then have students work in groups to discuss the questions at the bottom of the page.

EXTEND

Science Hold an Earth Day planting activity with your class. Consider planting a small tree or bush, or creating a small garden bed for students to plan and care for. Have students observe the plants regularly and keep a garden journal to record in words and pictures what they notice.

Name _____

Analyze Perspectives

	What problem does the group have?	What does the group want?	What actions does the group take to get what it wants?	What happens because of the group's actions?	How do group members feel about the outcome of events?
City Council					
Mod Squad					

WRITE: Sometimes the theme of a story is a lesson that the characters learn. What lessons do the characters in this story learn? Turn these lessons into theme statements.

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Fungi, Fungi, Everywhere!

pp. 18–20, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about the wonders of fungi to give students practice in identifying supporting details.



RESOURCES

- Supporting Details Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a science article
- Students will summarize key supporting details and ideas
- Students will plan and carry out investigations

KEY VOCABULARY

- kingdom (p. 18)** one of the three main divisions into which natural objects are classified
- organism (p. 18)** an individual living thing
- spore (p. 18)** a cell made by some plants that is like a seed and can produce a new plant
- mildew (p. 19)** a usually white substance that grows on the surface of things in wet, warm conditions

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do humans and the natural world interact?

Have students preview the photos in the article and ask if they've ever noticed mushrooms, toadstools, or mold growing. Discuss where students find them and what they look like. Then display a K-W-L chart and record what students know about mold and mushrooms and what they would like to know about them.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Next, have students work in pairs to discuss how the words are related. Have partners turn to other pairs to share and explain their ideas. Finally, tell students to look for vocabulary words as they read.

READ & DISCUSS

After students have read the story, use the questions below to prompt discussion. Then return to the K-W-L chart and complete it.

- What information was especially interesting or surprising to you?
- How are fungi different from plants?
- Compare fungi and animals. How are they similar and different?
- For humans, are fungi helpful, hurtful, or both? Explain.
- How might finding new types of fungi benefit people?

SKILL FOCUS: Supporting Details

INSTRUCT: Have students identify the topic of the article (fungi). Tell students that the main idea is what a writer wants readers to understand about a topic. Remind students that the main idea of a nonfiction article is often found in the introduction. Then read aloud the first paragraph and ask if any of the sentences state a main idea. ("Fungi are amazing creatures.") Help students turn the main idea into a question. (Why are fungi amazing creatures?) Tell students that they are going to find supporting details in the body of the article. Explain that these details should answer the question, "Why are fungi amazing creatures?" Distribute the *Supporting Details* worksheet to all students and go over the supporting details in paragraph two. Explain that details should be written in complete sentences, one or two per paragraph.

ASSESS: Have students work in groups to find the key details in the remaining paragraphs. Once each group agrees on its key details, have members work individually to use them to write an article summary.

EXTEND

Science Have students choose a fungi-related project, such as researching how mushrooms grow from spores or the parts of a mushroom. Students should create an informative poster based on their research or observations.

Name _____

Supporting Details

In the chart below, list the key supporting details in each paragraph. The details you find should answer this question: Why are fungi amazing?

Paragraph 2 Fungi are their own kingdom—not plants or animals. A fungus can be microscopic or gigantic.	Paragraph 6
Paragraph 3	Paragraph 7
Paragraph 4	Paragraph 8
Paragraph 5	Paragraph 9

WRITE Use the details you recorded to write a summary of “Fungi, Fungi, Everywhere!”

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The Very, Very, Very Long Hike

pp. 24–30, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Use this story about a family hiking in the mountains to teach students to analyze how characters change in a story.



RESOURCES

- Character Change Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information

KEY VOCABULARY

- **boulders (p. 27)** very large stones or rounded pieces of rock
- **peaks (p. 29)** the pointed tops of mountains
- **glacier (p. 29)** a very large body of ice that moves slowly down a slope or valley or over a wide area of land

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do humans and the natural world interact?

Write the following quote on the board: “Let nature be your teacher” (William Wordsworth). Ask students how nature can teach people and what people can learn by studying, observing, and enjoying nature. Then explain that the next story is about a family enjoying nature.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Next, have students work in pairs to discuss how the words are related. Then have students predict where the long hike in the story will take place. Tell students to check their predictions as they read. Finally, tell students to look for the vocabulary words as they read.

READ & DISCUSS

After students have read the story, use the questions below to prompt discussion:

- Where does the story take place? Describe the setting.
- Use the information on pages 24–25 to compare Enud and her brother. How are they similar and different?
- Why does Enud want her family to play I Spy?
- How does Enud use her imagination to help her enjoy the hike?

SKILL FOCUS: Character Change

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that they can get to know and understand story characters by thinking about how and why they change in a story. Tell students that a character may feel and behave one way at the beginning of a story, but as the story moves forward, the character’s experiences and interactions may alter her feelings and behavior. Discuss examples of this in familiar books and movies.

ASSESS: Distribute a copy of the *Character Change* worksheet to each student. Have students work in pairs to complete it. Then have pairs share and discuss responses with other pairs.

EXTEND

Science Have students go through “The Very, Very, Very Long Walk” to note the names of birds, animals, plants, geographic features, and weather mentioned in the story. Then have them conduct research to see if they can figure out where in the US the story might be set, based on these elements. Have students draw a picture of the area they identify and label with the name. Then have students share and compare their drawings and explain how they concluded that the area they identified is correct.

Name _____

Character Change

In the chart below, write details from the story that explain Enud's feelings, actions, and changes in the story.

Enud's feelings and actions at the beginning of the story	Details that show how Enud changes in the story	Enud's feelings and actions at the end of the story

WRITE What made Enud change her mind about hiking in the mountains?
