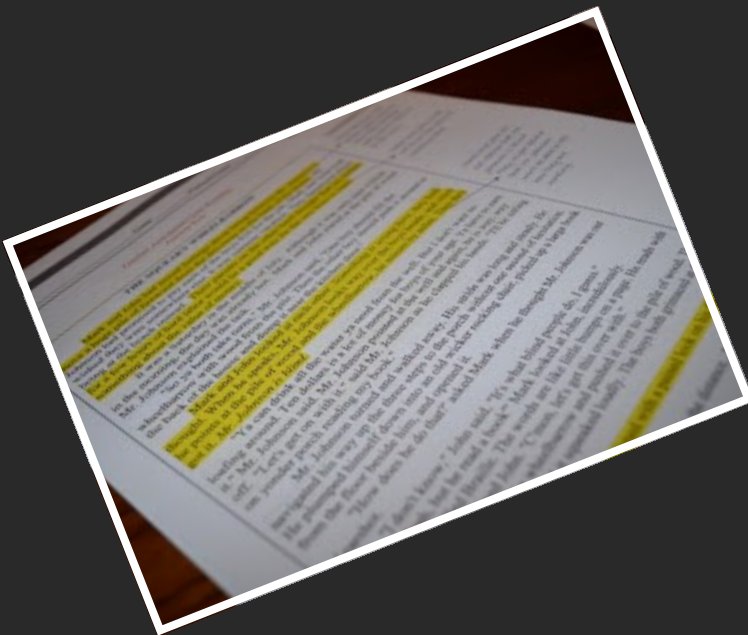


# Common Core Close Reading Literature Passages

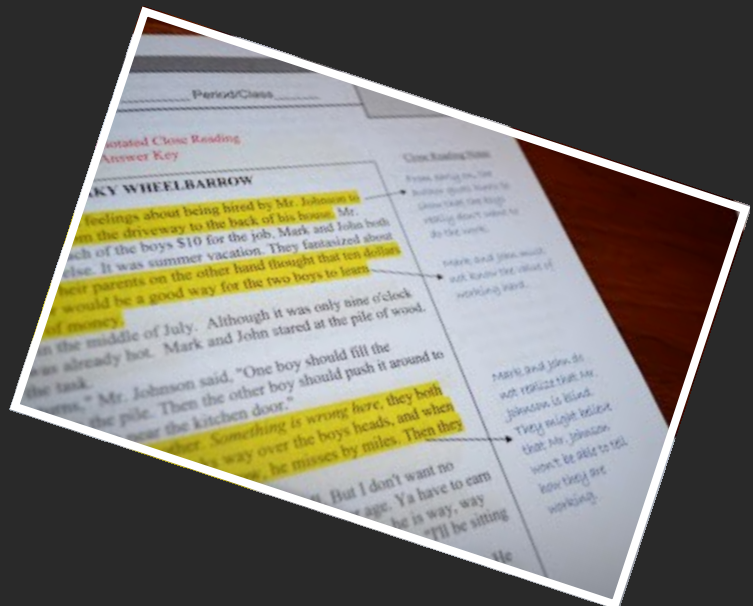
Middle School

Features Include:

- Original Literature
- A Close Reading Rubric
- Annotated Teaching Notes
- Longer Passages



Analyze Literature  
Build Close Reading  
Skills



## Thank You

Thank you very much for this purchase. Literacy and Math Ideas' goal is to create fun, affordable, and enjoyable resources and activities to make learning accessible to students. Visit Literacy and Math Ideas' store and blog.

<http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Literacy-And-Math-Ideas>

[www.literacymathideas.blogspot.com](http://www.literacymathideas.blogspot.com)

Visit Literacy and Math Ideas for Additional Middle School and  
Common Core Resources

# Table of Contents

| <u>Short Story</u>   | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| The Squeaky Wheelbarrow<br>Common Core Standard RL.2 Theme         | Page 4      |
| The Pool Party<br>Common Core Standard RL.2 Theme                  | Page 13     |
| Miranda's Lesson<br>Common Core Standard RL.3 Character & Plot     | Page 21     |
| Flat<br>Common Core Standard RL.4 Vocabulary & Fig. Language       | Page 31     |
| The Storm<br>Common Core Standard RL.4 Vocabulary & Fig. Language  | Page 38     |
| The Train Ride<br>Common Core Standard RL.6 Point of View          | Page 47     |
| Other People's Children<br>Common Core Standard RL.6 Point of View | Page 56     |

## **How to Use**

The new Common Core Standards requires students to read text more closely. The reading passages that are included in this document provide topical practice based on specific Common Core Standards and still integrates the Writing, Language, plus Speaking and Listening Standards to help students understand the connection these standards have with understanding literature.

These worksheets are unique because they enable educators to track student thinking and identify barriers to comprehension as students read. The highlighted text and annotations show the important points that students should identify as they do a close reading. The written response at the end of each passage enables students to demonstrate their understanding through a free response. These passages can be used to accompany any reading/literature text, as homework, or even as an assessment.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**THE SQUEAKY WHEELBARROW**Close Reading Notes

Mark and John had mixed feelings about being hired by Mr. Johnson to move a huge pile of firewood from the driveway to the back of his house. Mr. Johnson had promised to pay each of the boys \$10 for the job. Mark and John both wished they were somewhere else. It was summer vacation. They fantasized about being at the beach instead. Their parents on the other hand thought that ten dollars for a few hours of hard labor would be a good way for the two boys to learn something about the value of money.

It was a Saturday in the middle of July. Although it was only nine o'clock in the morning, the day was already hot. Mark and John stared at the pile of wood. Mr. Johnson explained the task.

"So ya both take turns," Mr. Johnson said, "One boy should fill the wheelbarrow with wood from the pile. Then the other boy should push it around to the back of the house and dump it near the kitchen door."

Mark and John looked at each other. *Something is wrong here*, they both thought. When he speaks, Mr. Johnson looks way over the boys heads, and when he points at the pile of wood and the wheelbarrow, he misses by miles. Then they got it. *Mr. Johnson is blind*.

"Ya can drink all the water ya need from the well. But I don't want no loafing around. Ten dollars is a lot of money for boys of your age. Ya have to earn it." Mr. Johnson said. Mr. Johnson pointed at the well and again, he is way, way off. "Let's get on with it." said Mr. Johnson as he clapped his hands. "I'll be sitting on yonder porch reading my book."

Mr. Johnson turned and walked away. His stride was long and steady. He navigated his way up the three steps to the porch without one second of hesitation. He plumped himself down into an old wicker rocking chair, picked up a large book from the floor beside him, and opened it.

"How does he do that?" asked Mark when he thought Mr. Johnson was out of earshot.

"I don't know," John said, "It's what blind people do, I guess."

"Yeah, but he read a book!" Mark looked at John, incredulously.

"It's called Braille. The words are like little bumps on a page. He reads with his fingers," explained John. "C'mon, let's get this over with."

John grabbed the wheelbarrow and pushed it over to the pile of wood. The wheel badly needed oil, and it squeaked loudly. The boys both grimaced at the sound.

"Oh, like ouch," Mark exclaimed with a pained look on his face. John just shrugged his shoulders.

"Fill'er up," yelled Mr. Johnson from the distance. "And, watch out for splinters!"

After about an hour, the boys traded places. John filled the wheelbarrow and Mark pushed it around the back. He dumped the wood by the kitchen door. Sweat dripped down the boy's faces. They helped themselves to water from the well, but it seemed the more they drank, the more they sweat. And all the time, the squeaking of the wheelbarrow penetrated the hot, musky air like background music accompanies a singer. Mark began to slow down. His hands started to hurt. He tried to tell John not to fill the barrow so high but John was adamant to complete the job exactly the way that Mr. Johnson requested. John too was in pain, but he was so determined to complete the task that he ignored his pain and kept on moving. After four hours, the job was done and the exhausted boys called over Mr. Johnson to see their work .

"So ya all done?" asked Mr. Johnson.

The boys nodded. They were too tired to even speak. Then John realized Mr. Johnson did not see their nods. "Yes," he said, "All done sir."

"Well thank ya boys." Mr. Johnson said, as he reached into his back pocket and pulled out his wallet. "Now, which of ya is Mark?"

"That's me." said Mark, as he held out a blistered hand.

"Good job, son" said Mr. Johnson, as he handed him a crisp, new ten dollar bill. He turned to John, his gaze fixed just a couple of inches past John's left shoulder. "So ya must be the other one," Mr Johnson smiled and gave John not one but two ten dollar bills.

"Umm, I think you made a mistake, "John said "Sir, this is twenty."

Mr. Johnson laughed.

"Ya deserve it," he told John, "Ya worked a lot harder than this other boy."

Mark, who by now had become totally indignant, raised his voice.

"Excuse me Mr. Johnson!" he shouted. "Just how do you figure John worked harder than me?" Mr. Johnson turned toward the sound of Mark's voice.

"I may be blind, son," Mr. Johnson said. "But there ain't nothing wrong with my ears." He burst into laughter.

"All day long I heard you boys moaning and groaning, and I heard that wheelbarrow squeaking and squeaking. The only difference is, when you push the barrow, it squeaks a lot slower than when John pushes it."

"You boys go on home now," Mr. Johnson turned and went back to his porch and chuckled to himself. The boys walked off down the road that leads back into town.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**The Squeaky Wheelbarrow**  
**Common Core Standard RL.2**

**Do a close reading of 'The Squeaky Wheelbarrow' to determine the theme, and analyze how the author develops this theme over the course of the text. Your completed task should include highlighted or underlined details with annotations within the reading passage and a full analysis of the theme and the details that show how the author develops (reveals this theme through the plot) on the blank lines below.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

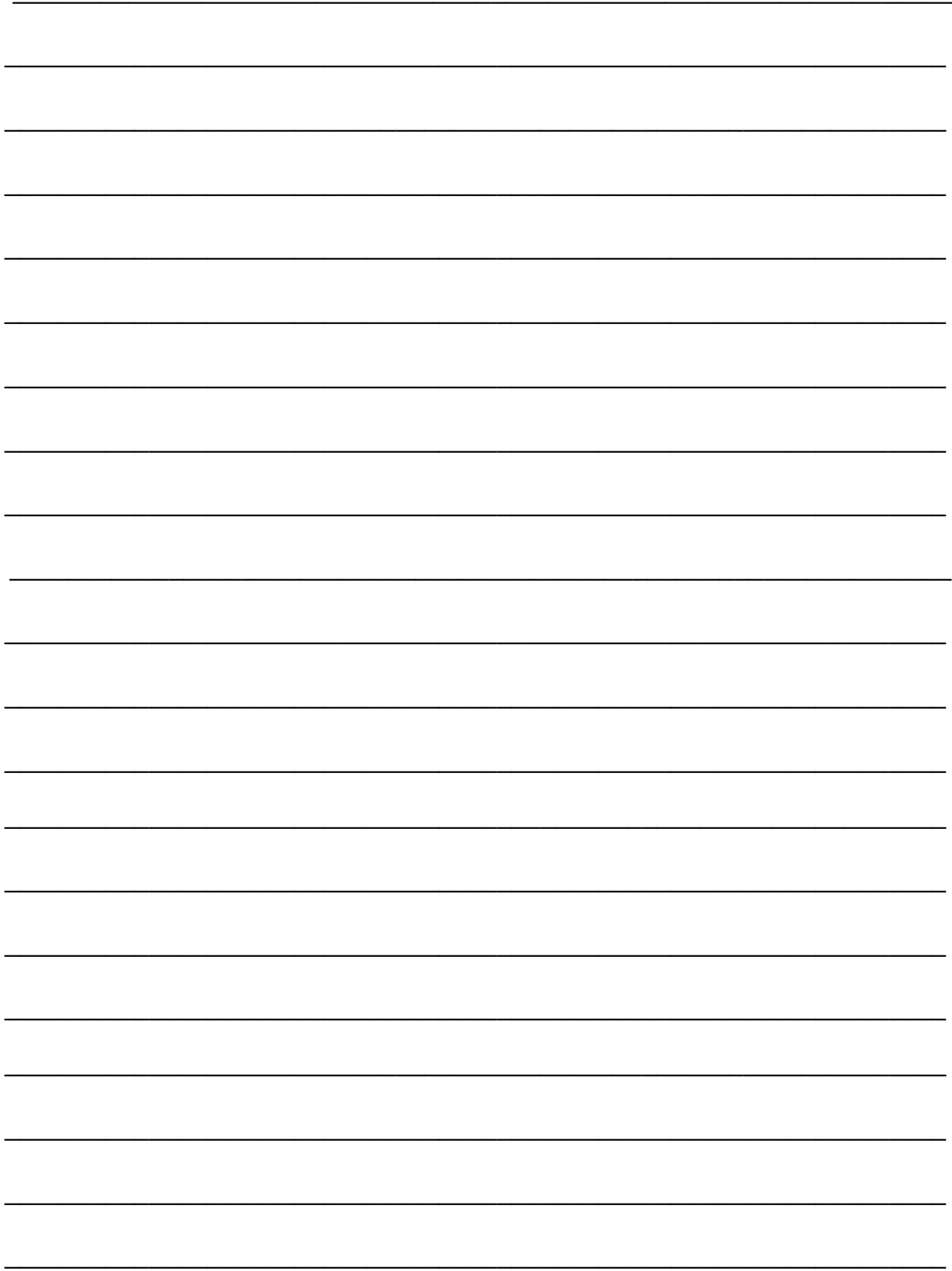
---

---

---

---

---





Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### Close Reading and Written Response Rubric

|   | <b>Emerging<br/>1</b>   | <b>Developing<br/>2</b>  | <b>Proficient<br/>3</b>  | <b>Exemplary<br/>4</b>  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>CCSS.W.1a, 1b<br/>CCSS.RL.1<br/>Write an argument to support a claim.</b>                          | The claim that is made is incorrect. Very few details are provided to support this incorrect viewpoint.   | The claim that is made incorrectly answers the written response question, but several text details are provided to support this viewpoint.             | The claim of the written response must be implied by the reader, but it correctly answers the written response question.   | The claim of the written response is clearly stated and is the correct answer to the written response question.   |
| <b>CCSS.SL.4<br/>Present text claims and findings.</b>  | Details are not provided to support the claim of the written response. If details are provided, they are unclear and/or show a misinterpretation of what is stated in the text. | Just a few details are provided to support the claim that is made in the written response. The response may include a few misinterpreted text details. | Some details are provided to support the claim of the written response. A few key details that could have strengthened the written response are not highlighted or included in the response.                                     | Many well-chosen details are provided to effectively support the claim of the written response. All of the details are relevant and show valid reasoning.   |
| <b>CCSS.RL.4,<br/>RL.10<br/>Interpret and comprehend literal and figurative language in the text.</b> | Details were not highlighted or underlined during the close reading. No analysis was provided.  | A few details were highlighted or underlined during the close reading. A partial analysis and partial interpretation has been provided.                | Some details and/or figurative language have been highlighted or underlined to support the claim of the written response. A few key details were not identified. An interpretation of most of the key details has been provided. | During the close reading, several details were highlighted or underlined in the text to support the claim of the written response. An interpretation of key details and figurative language has also been provided. |
| <b>CCSS.L.2<br/>Punctuation, Grammar, Conventions</b>   | There are many major grammatical errors throughout the text. There may also be punctuation errors. Some of the written response is unclear.                                     | There are several grammatical and punctuation errors in the text. Some parts of the written response are unclear.                                      | There are a few punctuation and/or grammar errors. Most ideas are clear.   | Sentences are effectively put together and nearly all use proper grammar and punctuation. Ideas are clear and are easy to read and understand.  |

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Annotated Close Reading  
Answer Key

**THE SQUEAKY WHEELBARROW**

Mark and John had mixed feelings about being hired by Mr. Johnson to move a huge pile of firewood from the driveway to the back of his house. Mr. Johnson had promised to pay each of the boys \$10 for the job. Mark and John both wished they were somewhere else. It was summer vacation. They fantasized about being at the beach instead. Their parents on the other hand thought that ten dollars for a few hours of hard labor would be a good way for the two boys to learn something about the value of money.

It was a Saturday in the middle of July. Although it was only nine o'clock in the morning, the day was already hot. Mark and John stared at the pile of wood. Mr. Johnson explained the task.

"So ya both take turns," Mr. Johnson said, "One boy should fill the wheelbarrow with wood from the pile. Then the other boy should push it around to the back of the house and dump it near the kitchen door."

Mark and John looked at each other. *Something is wrong here, they both thought.* When he speaks, Mr. Johnson looks way over the boys heads, and when he points at the pile of wood and the wheelbarrow, he misses by miles. Then they got it. *Mr. Johnson is blind.*

"Ya can drink all the water ya need from the well. But I don't want no loafing around. Ten dollars is a lot of money for boys of your age. Ya have to earn it." Mr. Johnson said. Mr. Johnson pointed at the well and again, he is way, way off. "Let's get on with it." said Mr. Johnson as he clapped his hands. "I'll be sitting on yonder porch reading my book."

Mr. Johnson turned and walked away. His stride was long and steady. He navigated his way up the three steps to the porch without one second of hesitation. He plumped himself down into an old wicker rocking chair, picked up a large book from the floor beside him, and opened it.

"How does he do that?" asked Mark when he thought Mr. Johnson was out of earshot.

"I don't know," John said, "It's what blind people do, I guess."

"Yeah, but he read a book!" Mark looked at John, incredulously.

"It's called Braille. The words are like little bumps on a page. He reads with his fingers," explained John. "C'mon, let's get this over with."

John grabbed the wheelbarrow and pushed it over to the pile of wood. The wheel badly needed oil, and it squeaked loudly. The boys both grimaced at the sound.

"Oh, like ouch," Mark exclaimed with a pained look on his face. John just shrugged his shoulders.

"Fill'er up," yelled Mr. Johnson from the distance. "And, watch out for splinters!"

Close Reading Notes

From early on, the author gives hints to show that the boys really don't want to do the work.

Mark and John must not know the value of working hard.

Mark and John do not realize that Mr. Johnson is blind.

They might believe that Mr. Johnson won't be able to tell how they are working.

John decides to do the job and not complain. Mark seems to be complaining.

After about an hour, the boys traded places. John filled the wheelbarrow and Mark pushed it around the back. He dumped the wood by the kitchen door. Sweat dripped down the boy's faces. They helped themselves to water from the well, but it seemed the more they drank, the more they sweat. And all the time, the squeaking of the wheelbarrow penetrated the hot, musky air like background music accompanies a singer. Mark began to slow down. His hands started to hurt. He tried to tell John not to fill the barrow so high but John is adamant. John too was in pain, but he was so determined to complete the task that he ignored his pain and kept on moving. After four hours, the job was done and the exhausted boys called over Mr. Johnson to see their work .

"So ya all done?" asked Mr. Johnson.

The boys nodded. They were too tired to even speak. Then John realized Mr. Johnson did not see their nods. "Yes," he said, "All done sir."

"Well thank ya boys." Mr. Johnson said, as he reached into his back pocket and pulled out his wallet. "Now, which of ya is Mark?"

"That's me." said Mark, as he held out a blistered hand.

"Good job, son" said Mr. Johnson, as he handed him a crisp, new ten dollar bill. He turned to John, his gaze fixed just a couple of inches past John's left shoulder. "So ya must be the other one," Mr Johnson smiled and gave John not one but two ten dollar bills.

"Umm, I think you made a mistake, "John said "Sir, this is twenty."

Mr. Johnson laughed.

"Ya deserve it," he told John, "Ya worked a lot harder than this other boy."

Mark, who by now had become totally indignant, raised his voice.

"Excuse me Mr. Johnson!" he shouted. "Just how do you figure John worked harder than me?" Mr. Johnson turned toward the sound of Mark's voice.

"I may be blind, son," Mr. Johnson said. "But there ain't nothing wrong with my ears." He burst into laughter.

"All day long I heard you boys moaning and groaning, and I heard that wheelbarrow squeaking and squeaking. The only difference is, when you push the barrow, it squeaks a lot slower than when John pushes it."

"You boys go on home now," Mr. Johnson turned and went back to his porch and chuckled to himself. The boys walked off down the road that leads back into town.

This confirms my earlier belief that John is a hard worker and that Mark is not putting forth as much effort. Instead, he just complains.

Both of the boys are surprised to get paid different amounts of money because of their effort. Mr. Johnson is trying to teach them to work hard.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Exemplary Response

### **The Squeaky Wheelbarrow Common Core Standard RL.2**

**Do a close reading of 'The Squeaky Wheelbarrow' to determine the theme, and analyze how the author develops this theme over the course of the text. Your completed task should include highlighted or underlined details with annotations within the reading passage and a full analysis of the theme and the details that show how the author develops (reveals this theme through the plot) on the blank lines below.**

I believe the theme of the text is to work hard. The author conveys and develops this theme early on in the text by showing how John and Mark do not want to accept the task of helping Mr. Johnson pick up the wood. The text states, "Mark and John had mixed feelings about helping..." The author is trying to say that neither boy really wanted to do the job. It was actually their parents' ideas for them to accept it. Although the boys initially preferred to spend their summer day at the beach or doing something else that they thought was more fun, their ideas about how to handle the job diverged. John decided not to complain and to do the best job that he could possibly do. On the other hand, Mark constantly complained. The text states that Mark screamed ouch and John just shrugged off the pain. Later in the text, Mark even tried to convince John not to fill up the wheelbarrow so high with wood. The text states "John ignored his pain" and kept on working. He was determined to finish the task that he had started. Both of the boys were surprised at the end of the text when John received more money than Mark for his effort. Neither John nor Mark expected this and they really did not know that Mr. Johnson was aware of how hard they were working because he was

blind. They did not know that Mr. Johnson relied on hearing the squeaky wheel of the wheelbarrow to help him know how much effort was used. By using characters that contrasted in how they approached hard work, the author makes it clear that in the end working hard will be rewarded. By highlighting the negative viewpoint and behavior of one character, the positive outlook of the hardworking character makes the virtues of hard work very clear to any reader.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**THE POOL PARTY**Close Reading Notes

“I’m going to Emily’s, mom,” Sandy yelled as she was going out of the door.

“Okay, take care,” her mom called back. “Be back by seven.”

“I will!”

But Sandy wasn’t going to Emily’s. Instead, they were both going to a pool party in Allison’s house. Allison Laurent was the most popular girl in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Just about everybody wanted to be Allison’s friend. Including Sandy and Emily. Allison’s parent loved throwing parties for her on special occasions, and this was one. It was her birthday party, and it also happened to be the first party in which both Sandy and Emily were invited to attend.

“I’m so excited!” Sandy said, her eyes twinkling.

“Me too! Did you bring a gift for her?” Emily asked her friend nervously. Sandy answered that she did. She told her parents that she needed the money for a school project, and used that to buy Allison the cutest pair of earrings she found.

“Wow, won’t you get caught?” Emily said, in awe at her friend’s daring.

“No, not really. My parents don’t really care much about what I do. They’re too busy with whatever it is they’re doing.”

2

They reached Allison’s house around 5 pm. There were cars all up the driveway, and loud speakers boomed out Justin Bieber’s latest songs. Hand in hand, they walked up toward the house, all grins and too excited to talk. Allison’s older sister Agnes was at the door, greeting the visitors.

“Hi! Glad you could come,” she greeted, sounding bored.

“Hi!” the girls answered in unison. “Where should we leave this?” Sandy indicated the gift she was carrying. Agnes pointed to the table where numerous colorful boxes were stacked. She then showed the girls to the backyard where the pool was.

The party was in full swing when they reached the backyard. The party girl was pretty in pink, and was obviously enjoying all the attention. Shyly, the two friends tried to get as close as they can to greet Allison a happy birthday.

Halfway toward Alli, someone accidentally bumped against Sandy. She lost her balance and fell into the pool. Emily screamed. Sandy was flailing helplessly in the water. She did not know how to swim at all. Panic was overwhelming her. She can barely keep her head up the water, swallowing it as she fought for breath. Slowly she tired of flailing. Darkness was burying her. She distantly heard someone screaming her name, and a splash somewhere beside her before she closed her eyes and knew nothing more.

Emily woke up in a room filled with blurry shapes that looked human. Her

head was hurting so much. In the distance, she could hear someone sobbing. She tried to sit up but the world slipped sideways, so Sandy laid back down and slept. When she woke up a while later, Sandy could see her mother in a chair sleeping.

"Mom?" Sandy asked through a groggy voice.

Her mother woke up and worry was clearly visible in her eyes. She reassured her mother that she was feeling fine and not to worry about her.

"Why didn't you tell me that you wanted to go to Emily's party?" her mom asked. Although she was angry, she tried to restrain her anger.

Tears streamed down Sandy's eyes. She rarely saw her mother worried about her. "I thought you wouldn't let me go to the party," said Sandy.

"Oh Honey..." responded Sandy's mother as she rubbed her daughter's head.

Sandy was put on punishment for a week once she fully recovered and made it home from the hospital. A change came over her and her family. They spent more time together. There were never any more incidents like what happened at the pool party again.







Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### Close Reading and Written Response Rubric

|   | <b>Emerging<br/>1</b>   | <b>Developing<br/>2</b>  | <b>Proficient<br/>3</b>  | <b>Exemplary<br/>4</b>  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>CCSS.W.1a, 1b<br/>CCSS.RL.1<br/>Write an argument to support a claim.</b>                          | The claim that is made is incorrect. Very few details are provided to support this incorrect viewpoint.   | The claim that is made incorrectly answers the written response question, but several text details are provided to support this viewpoint.             | The claim of the written response must be implied by the reader, but it correctly answers the written response question.   | The claim of the written response is clearly stated and is the correct answer to the written response question.   |
| <b>CCSS.SL.4<br/>Present text claims and findings.</b>  | Details are not provided to support the claim of the written response. If details are provided, they are unclear and/or show a misinterpretation of what is stated in the text. | Just a few details are provided to support the claim that is made in the written response. The response may include a few misinterpreted text details. | Some details are provided to support the claim of the written response. A few key details that could have strengthened the written response are not highlighted or included in the response.                                     | Many well-chosen details are provided to effectively support the claim of the written response. All of the details are relevant and show valid reasoning.   |
| <b>CCSS.RL.4,<br/>RL.10<br/>Interpret and comprehend literal and figurative language in the text.</b> | Details were not highlighted or underlined during the close reading. No analysis was provided.  | A few details were highlighted or underlined during the close reading. A partial analysis and partial interpretation has been provided.                | Some details and/or figurative language have been highlighted or underlined to support the claim of the written response. A few key details were not identified. An interpretation of most of the key details has been provided. | During the close reading, several details were highlighted or underlined in the text to support the claim of the written response. An interpretation of key details and figurative language has also been provided. |
| <b>CCSS.L.2<br/>Punctuation,<br/>Grammar,<br/>Conventions</b>   | There are many major grammatical errors throughout the text. There may also be punctuation errors. Some of the written response is unclear.                                     | There are several grammatical and punctuation errors in the text. Some parts of the written response are unclear.                                      | There are a few punctuation and/or grammar errors. Most ideas are clear.   | Sentences are effectively put together and nearly all use proper grammar and punctuation. Ideas are clear and are easy to read and understand.  |

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Annotated Close Reading  
Answer Key**

**THE POOL PARTY**

“I’m going to Emily’s, mom,” Sandy yelled as she was going out of the door.

“Okay, take care,” her mom called back. “Be back by seven.”

“I will!”

But Sandy wasn’t going to Emily’s. Instead, they were both going to a pool party in Allison’s house. Allison Laurent was the most popular girl in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Just about everybody wanted to be Allison’s friend. Including Sandy and Emily. Allison’s parent loved throwing parties for her on special occasions, and this was one. It was her birthday party, and it also happened to be the first party that both Sandy and Emily were invited to attend.

“I’m so excited!” Sandy said, her eyes twinkling.

“Me too! Did you bring a gift for her?” Emily asked her friend nervously. Sandy answered that she did. She told her parents that she needed the money for a school project, and used that to buy Allison the cutest pair of earrings she found.

“Wow, won’t you get caught?” Emily said, in awe at her friend’s daring.

“No, not really. My parents don’t really care much about what I do. They’re too busy with whatever it is they’re doing.”

2

They reached Allison’s house around 5 pm. There were cars all up the driveway, and loud speakers boomed out Justin Bieber’s latest songs. Hand in hand, they walked up toward the house, all grins and too excited to talk. Allison’s older sister Agnes was at the door, greeting the visitors.

“Hi! Glad you could come,” she greeted, sounding bored.

“Hi!” the girls answered in unison. “Where should we leave this?” Sandy indicated the gift she was carrying. Agnes pointed to the table where numerous colorful boxes were stacked. She then showed the girls to the backyard where the pool was.

The party was in full swing when they reached the backyard. The party girl was pretty in pink, and was obviously enjoying all the attention. Shyly, the two friends tried to get as close as they can to greet Allison a happy birthday.

Halfway toward Alli, someone accidentally bumped against Sandy. She lost her balance and fell into the pool. Emily screamed. Sandy was flailing helplessly in the water. She did not know how to swim at all. Panic was overwhelming her. She can barely keep her head up the water, swallowing it as she fought for breath. Slowly she tired of flailing. Darkness was burying her. She distantly heard someone screaming her name, and a splash somewhere beside her before she closed her eyes and knew nothing more.

Emily woke up in a room filled with blurry shapes that looked human. Her

Close Reading Notes

From early on, the author shows that Emily was eager to attend this party.

Sandy is not being honest with her parents.

This subtle foreshadowing provides a hint that things are not going to work out as planned.

Sandy cannot swim. She did not expect this to happen.

head was hurting so much. In the distance, she could hear someone sobbing. She tried to sit up but the world slipped sideways, so Sandy laid back down and slept. When she woke up a while later, Sandy could see her mother in a chair sleeping.

"Mom?" Sandy asked through a groggy voice.

Her mother woke up and worry was clearly visible in her eyes. She reassured her mother that she was feeling fine and not to worry about her.

"Why didn't you tell me that you wanted to go to Emily's party?" her mom asked. Although she was angry, she tried to restrain her anger.

Tears streamed down Sandy's eyes. She rarely saw her mother worried about her. "I thought you wouldn't let me go to the party," said Sandy.

"Oh Honey..." responded Sandy's mother as she rubbed her daughter's head.

Sandy was put on punishment for a week once she fully recovered and made it home from the hospital. A change came over her and her family. They spent more time together. There were never any more incidents like what happened at the pool party again.

Sandy now realizes what happened. She also now knows that she made a terrible mistake.

Sandy learned from this unfortunate mistake.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Exemplary Response

### **The Pool Party** **Common Core Standard RL.2**

**Do a close reading of 'The Pool Party' to determine the theme, and analyze how the author develops this theme over the course of the text. Your completed task should include highlighted or underlined details with annotations within the reading passage and a full analysis of the theme and the details that show how the author develops (reveals this theme through the plot) on the blank lines below.**

I believe the theme of the text is to be honest. The theme of the text is revealed through a terrible pool accident that occurred with Sandy, the central character in the story. The story began with a lie. The text states that Sandy lied to her parents about her whereabouts and stated that she was going over to a Allison's house. She was so excited about being invited to the same party as her friend Allison that she was untruthful to her mother. Unfortunately Sandy was pushed into the pool and she was unable to swim. Once Sandy woke up in the hospital and saw how much she had upset her mother, she understand the situation from her mother's point of view. The text stated the fact that "Worry was clearly visible in [Sandy's Mother's] eyes. Since the situation could have ended up worse and because of the worry that was caused, Sandy learned her lesson and the text states in the end that "A change came over her and her family." The central idea that the author is trying to convey in the reading passage is be honest. Lying can result in unfortunate and unplanned results.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**MIRANDA'S LESSON**Close Reading Notes

“Go, Hornets! Way to go, Miranda!” Miranda could hear the crowd cheering for her from the bleachers. It echoed off the gym walls and filled her ears as she got ready to serve the volleyball again. “You’re the star!”

Miranda gave everyone a “thumbs up,” and served the ball. It sailed over the net, right between two players. They both missed it on the other team. The Hornets scored another point.

“Yesssss!” Miranda said under her breath. She was getting so good at serving. The ball always went where she wanted it to go.

The crowd cheered again, and she could hear her dad’s voice above everyone else’s. “You go, girl! You’re the best!”

Miranda smiled to herself as her team exited the gym. She *was* the best. She would never say that to her teammates, but they all knew it anyway. In the locker room, she blew her bangs up off of her face as she waited for the coach to come in.

“Good game, Miranda,” Inez said. “You put so much power behind your serves.”

“Yeah, I know. I just seem to be getting better every time I serve,” replied Miranda.

Inez looked at her oddly. “Well, I’m sure we’ll get to go to the championships if we keep winning. That will be so fun!” continued Inez.

“We will go to the championships. I’ll make sure of it,” Miranda said.

Practice the next afternoon was awesome. The team split into two practice teams to scrimmage each other. Miranda was in excellent form. She jumped higher than she had ever jumped. Every ball that came her way, she slammed over the net, scoring a point. When she served, no one could return it.

“You are really on this week, Miranda,” her coach said to her. “But you need to remember that playing volleyball is a team effort.”

Miranda nodded. She knew the other girls were good, too. But they weren’t as good as she was. Still, the next time the other team served, she stepped back to let Denise get it, even though she knew Denise would probably miss it.

Denise missed it.

Miranda rolled her eyes. That was such an easy serve. “You should have gotten that!” she yelled at Denise.

Tears welled up in Denise’s eyes, and her face got all red.

“You need to practice more,” Miranda said. “We’re supposed to be going to the championships and you’re going to make us lose.”

Denise walked away.

“Whatever,” Miranda muttered. *Why did Denise play volleyball if she was so terrible at it?* Miranda thought.

At the next home game, Miranda could hear the crowd yelling her name. She scanned the bleachers, and saw that some little kids had made a banner that said “MIRANDA IS #1” in big glittery letters. She nudged Inez. “Did you see that?”

Inez glanced at the banner, then back at Miranda. She shrugged. "So? They're probably your little sister's friends. You're not *that* good, you know," said Inez.

She turned to jog out onto the court and left Miranda standing by herself.

Miranda shrugged, waved at the little kids, and followed Inez onto the court. The Hornets only had two more games to win, and then they would be in the championships. And Miranda James was going to make sure they got there.

She flipped her ponytail over her shoulder and smoothed her jersey. She had heard that this team was pretty tough to beat. But they hadn't played against Miranda yet. She jumped in place, trying to keep her muscles loose. It was almost time.

"Miranda!"

She heard the coach calling her name and jogged over to the bench.

"Miranda, I need to give you a warning," the coach said.

"Why? What have I done?" Miranda asked. Why would the coach be warning her about anything? She was the best player on the team.

"I know that you are one of our best players, Miranda," Coach started.

"One of the best? I am the best, Coach!" Miranda said.

Her coach frowned. "That's what I wanted to speak with you about. I've noticed that you think you are better than the other players."

"Well, I am," Miranda said. "But I've never said that to any of the other girls."

"You don't have to say it to them in words, Miranda. Your actions are showing them that you think you're better than them." Coach paused. "I need you to give that some serious thought."

Miranda squirmed a little. What had she done that was so wrong? Wasn't she just helping her team?

"One more thing, Miranda. If I see you hogging the ball and show-boating on the floor today, you won't play in the next game."

Miranda felt her face get hot. How could the coach say that to her? Miranda stomped away and found her place on the court. *I'll show her some showboating*, Miranda thought.

The Hornets played great defense, and with Miranda's power serves, they were soon in the lead. The crowd roared with every point scored, and Miranda smiled and waved. There were only a few serves left when Stacy missed a volley. Miranda whirled on her. "What do you think you're doing?" she screamed.

Stacy stared at her. "Stop it, Miranda. You're acting like a jerk."

Miranda turned around to get into position before the whistle blew. "I will not let stupid people make us lose this game!" Miranda yelled.

The Hornets won the game. If they won the game tomorrow, they would go to the championships.

Miranda's coach stopped her on her way out of the gym. "Miranda, I'm sorry to have to do this, but you will not be playing in tomorrow's game."

"What? Why? I'm the best player!" Miranda was stunned.

"I talked to you before the game and you still chose to show off. And screaming at your teammates is unacceptable. You know that," said the coach. Miranda crossed her arms and glared at her coach.

"I will expect you to be at the game to support your team. But they will play without you."

Miranda couldn't believe it. The team would lose without her.

The next afternoon, Miranda slumped down on the bench while her teammates ran out onto the court. This was so unfair.

She tried not to watch the game, but she couldn't help it. Inez served, and the

volleyball landed right between two members of the other team. The Hornets scored a point! Then Stacy made a great move and they scored again! When had the other girls gotten so good?

Miranda thought about how she had treated her friends lately, and felt sad. She *was* good at volleyball. But by being snooty about it, she had started to lose all of her friends. Maybe it was time she told her teammates how good *they* were, for a change. “Go, Hornets!” she yelled. “You’re the best! Take it to the championships!”







Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### Close Reading and Written Response Rubric

|   | <b>Emerging<br/>1</b>   | <b>Developing<br/>2</b>  | <b>Proficient<br/>3</b>  | <b>Exemplary<br/>4</b>  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>CCSS.W.1a, 1b<br/>CCSS.RL.1<br/>Write an argument to support a claim.</b>                          | The claim that is made is incorrect. Very few details are provided to support this incorrect viewpoint.   | The claim that is made incorrectly answers the written response question, but several text details are provided to support this viewpoint.             | The claim of the written response must be implied by the reader, but it correctly answers the written response question.   | The claim of the written response is clearly stated and is the correct answer to the written response question.   |
| <b>CCSS.SL.4<br/>Present text claims and findings.</b>  | Details are not provided to support the claim of the written response. If details are provided, they are unclear and/or show a misinterpretation of what is stated in the text. | Just a few details are provided to support the claim that is made in the written response. The response may include a few misinterpreted text details. | Some details are provided to support the claim of the written response. A few key details that could have strengthened the written response are not highlighted or included in the response.                                     | Many well-chosen details are provided to effectively support the claim of the written response. All of the details are relevant and show valid reasoning.   |
| <b>CCSS.RL.4,<br/>RL.10<br/>Interpret and comprehend literal and figurative language in the text.</b> | Details were not highlighted or underlined during the close reading. No analysis was provided.  | A few details were highlighted or underlined during the close reading. A partial analysis and partial interpretation has been provided.                | Some details and/or figurative language have been highlighted or underlined to support the claim of the written response. A few key details were not identified. An interpretation of most of the key details has been provided. | During the close reading, several details were highlighted or underlined in the text to support the claim of the written response. An interpretation of key details and figurative language has also been provided. |
| <b>CCSS.L.2<br/>Punctuation, Grammar, Conventions</b>   | There are many major grammatical errors throughout the text. There may also be punctuation errors. Some of the written response is unclear.                                     | There are several grammatical and punctuation errors in the text. Some parts of the written response are unclear.                                      | There are a few punctuation and/or grammar errors. Most ideas are clear.   | Sentences are effectively put together and nearly all use proper grammar and punctuation. Ideas are clear and are easy to read and understand.  |

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Annotated Close Reading**

**MIRANDA'S LESSON**

“Go, Hornets! Way to go, Miranda!” Miranda could hear the crowd cheering for her from the bleachers. It echoed off the gym walls and filled her ears as she got ready to serve the volleyball again. “You’re the star!”

Miranda gave everyone a “thumbs up,” and served the ball. It sailed over the net, right between two players. They both missed it and her team, the Hornets, scored another point.

“Yessssss!” Miranda said under her breath. She was getting so good at serving. The ball always went where she wanted it to go.

The crowd cheered again, and she could hear her dad’s voice above everyone else’s. “You go, girl! You’re the best!”

Miranda smiled to herself as her team exited the gym. She was the best. She would never say that to her teammates, but they all knew it anyway. In the locker room, she blew her bangs up off of her face as she waited for the coach to come in.

“Good game, Miranda,” Inez said. “You put so much power behind your serves.”

“Yeah, I know. I just seem to be getting better every time I serve.”

Inez looked at her oddly. “Well, I’m sure we’ll get to go to the championships if we keep winning. That will be so fun!”

“We will go to the championships. I’ll make sure of it,” Miranda said.

Practice the next afternoon was awesome. The team split into two practice teams to scrimmage each other. Miranda was in excellent form. She jumped higher than she had ever jumped. Every ball that came her way, she slammed over the net, scoring a point. When she served, no one could return it.

“You are really on this week, Miranda,” her coach said to her. “But you need to remember that playing volleyball is a team effort.”

Miranda nodded. She knew the other girls were good, too. But they weren’t as good as she was. Still, the next time the other team served, she stepped back to let Denise get it, even though she knew Denise would probably miss it.

Denise missed it.

Miranda rolled her eyes. That was such an easy serve. “You should have gotten that!” she yelled at Denise.

Tears welled up in Denise’s eyes and her face got all red.

“You need to practice more,” Miranda said. “We’re supposed to be going to the championships and you’re going to make us lose.”

Denise walked away.

“Whatever,” Miranda muttered. Why did Denise play volleyball if she was so terrible at it?

At the next home game, Miranda could hear the crowd yelling her name. She scanned the bleachers, and saw that some little kids had made a banner that said “MIRANDA IS #1” in big glittery letters. She nudged Inez. “Did you see that?”

Close Reading Notes

As the plot progresses Miranda becomes more prideful about her sports skills at the dismay of her friends.

All of the compliments are getting to Miranda's head.

Miranda's pride is starting to annoy her teammates.

Miranda's behavior is growing increasingly more rude.

Inez glanced at the banner, then back at Miranda. She shrugged. "So? They're probably your little sister's friends. You're not *that* good, you know," said Inez. She turned to jog out onto the court and left Miranda standing by herself.

The bragging is annoying Inez.

Miranda shrugged, waved at the little kids, and followed Inez onto the court. The Hornets only had two more games to win, and then they would be in the championships. And Miranda James was going to make sure they got there.

She flipped her ponytail over her shoulder and smoothed her jersey. She had heard that this team was pretty tough to beat. But they hadn't played against Miranda yet. She jumped in place, trying to keep her muscles loose. It was almost time.

"Miranda!"

She heard the coach calling her name and jogged over to the bench.

"Miranda, I need to give you a warning," the coach said.

"Why? What have I done?" Miranda asked. Why would the coach be warning her about anything? She was the best player on the team.

"I know that you are one of our best players, Miranda," Coach started.

"One of the best? I am the best, Coach!" Miranda said.

Her coach frowned. "That's what I wanted to speak with you about. I've noticed that you think you are better than the other players."

"Well, I am," Miranda said. "But I've never said that to any of the other girls."

"You don't have to say it to them in words, Miranda. Your actions are showing them that you think you're better than them." Coach paused. "I need you to give that some serious thought."

Miranda squirmed a little. What had she done that was so wrong? Wasn't she just helping her team?

"One more thing, Miranda. If I see you hogging the ball and show-boating on the floor today, you won't play in the next game."

Miranda felt her face get hot. How could the coach say that to her? Miranda stomped away and found her place on the court. *I'll show her some showboating*, Miranda thought.

The Hornets played great defense, and with Miranda's power serves, they were soon in the lead. The crowd roared with every point scored, and Miranda smiled and waved. There were only a few serves left when Stacy missed a volley. Miranda whirled on her. "What do you think you're doing?" she screamed.

Stacy stared at her. "Stop it, Miranda. You're acting like a jerk."

Miranda turned around to get into position before the whistle blew. "I will not let stupid people make us lose this game!" Miranda yelled.

The Hornets won the game. If they won the game tomorrow, they would go to the championships.

Miranda's coach stopped her on her way out of the gym. "Miranda, I'm sorry to have to do this, but you will not be playing in tomorrow's game."

"What? Why? I'm the best player!" Miranda was stunned.

"I talked to you before the game and you still chose to show off. And screaming at your teammates is unacceptable. You know that," said the coach. Miranda crossed her arms and glared at her coach.

"I will expect you to be at the game to support your team. But they will play without you."

Miranda couldn't believe it. The team would lose without her.

The next afternoon, Miranda slumped down on the bench while her teammates ran out onto the court. This was so unfair.

She tried not to watch the game, but she couldn't help it. Inez served, and the

The coach is losing patience.

Miranda still does not understand how her words impact others.

volleyball landed right between two members of the other team. The Hornets scored a point! Then Stacy made a great move and they scored again! When had the other girls gotten so good?

Miranda thought about how she had treated her friends lately, and felt sad. She *was* good at volleyball. But by being snooty about it, she had started to lose all of her friends. Maybe it was time she told her teammates how good *they* were, for a change. “Go, Hornets!” she yelled. “You’re the best! Take it to the championships!”

Now that Miranda is unable to play the game and sees that the team does well without her, she realizes how impolite her behavior was to her teammates.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Exemplary Response

**Miranda's Lesson**  
**Common Core Standard RL.3**

**Do a close reading of 'Miranda's Lesson'. How does Miranda change as the plot progresses? Identify and explain particular lines of dialogue or incidents in the story to support your ideas.**

Miranda changes in a variety of ways as the story 'Miranda's Lesson' progresses. At the beginning of the story, Miranda's prideful personality emerges. When the crowd cheered for her in the beginning of the story, all of the accolades began to get to Miranda's head. Miranda smiled and thought to herself "I am the best". She did not credit her teammates for the successful game. This prideful attitude became apparent to Inez, her teammate as well. At first Inez shrugged off Miranda's vain comments. When Miranda stated that "[ I ] get better each time that I serve", Inez ignored her. After Miranda continued to speak in this manner for a while, Inez became more irritated. Miranda progressed from being prideful to being blatantly rude. When Denise missed the ball, Miranda yelled at her. Even when the coach tried to get Miranda to realize how her words and behavior affected the rest of the team members, Miranda continued to act the same way. She later yelled at Stacey. It wasn't until Miranda was not allowed to play at one of the volleyball games that Miranda began to realize that her teammates were skillful at volleyball and did not need her in order to win. The reader sees this marked change when Miranda begins to cheer for her team from the sidelines at the big game.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### FLAT

#### Close Reading Notes

My sister's hair lays flat. You could comb it, come back two hours later, and every strand would still be obediently in the same place. On the other hand, my hair has something to do and places to go. It twists and turns confused walking in all directions. And for extra measure, it is brazen red which commands attention. My hair brings back many memories. Sometimes it reminds me about when I was a child.

"What a pretty little girl," a lady said as she stroked every slick curl on my sister's head. My mother gave her usual wide-mouthed grin and went back to looking through the clothes on the discount rack of the department store.

"What's your name?" the lady asked. My sister contorted her body and said Cara. The woman continued to talk to Cara and acted as though I wasn't even there. There was no, "Hello little girl, or You are just as cute as you want to be." Nor did she compliment my mother to say that she had two of the most beautiful girls that she had ever seen.

I just stood there and pretended not to hear the woman. I began swinging on the thirty percent off rack. I imagined that I was King Kong and that I was making buildings fall except this lady wouldn't be Jane. This lady would be the building that I would make fall down.

My mother smiled as though she was proud of the beautiful specimen that came out of her named Cara. The woman continued to fawn over my sister like she was a feat of nature.

"What did you say? How old are you?" The lady repeated. My sister who sounded as though she was three when she was really six swung her body and grabbed her arms like a confused merry-go-round.

Again, I dangled on the loop of the rack only this time I pretended to be a tree squirrel that was gathering nuts and was throwing them at this lady's head. But when I tried to rotate on the bar, my hand didn't do what I wanted it to and the whole rack came down and hit the lady and sent a tornado of clothes and hangers in the air. My mother whirled apologies like the lady had been hit by a bus. I just picked myself up and smiled.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**Flat**  
**Common Core Standard RL.4**

**Do a close reading of 'Flat'. Determine the meanings of words and phrases in the reading passage and the impact that figurative language and word choice has on the theme of the text.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### Close Reading and Written Response Rubric

|   | <b>Emerging<br/>1</b>   | <b>Developing<br/>2</b>  | <b>Proficient<br/>3</b>  | <b>Exemplary<br/>4</b>  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>CCSS.W.1a, 1b<br/>CCSS.RL.1<br/>Write an argument to support a claim.</b>                          | The claim that is made is incorrect. Very few details are provided to support this incorrect viewpoint.   | The claim that is made incorrectly answers the written response question, but several text details are provided to support this viewpoint.             | The claim of the written response must be implied by the reader, but it correctly answers the written response question.   | The claim of the written response is clearly stated and is the correct answer to the written response question.   |
| <b>CCSS.SL.4<br/>Present text claims and findings.</b>  | Details are not provided to support the claim of the written response. If details are provided, they are unclear and/or show a misinterpretation of what is stated in the text. | Just a few details are provided to support the claim that is made in the written response. The response may include a few misinterpreted text details. | Some details are provided to support the claim of the written response. A few key details that could have strengthened the written response are not highlighted or included in the response.                                     | Many well-chosen details are provided to effectively support the claim of the written response. All of the details are relevant and show valid reasoning.   |
| <b>CCSS.RL.4,<br/>RL.10<br/>Interpret and comprehend literal and figurative language in the text.</b> | Details were not highlighted or underlined during the close reading. No analysis was provided.  | A few details were highlighted or underlined during the close reading. A partial analysis and partial interpretation has been provided.                | Some details and/or figurative language have been highlighted or underlined to support the claim of the written response. A few key details were not identified. An interpretation of most of the key details has been provided. | During the close reading, several details were highlighted or underlined in the text to support the claim of the written response. An interpretation of key details and figurative language has also been provided. |
| <b>CCSS.L.2<br/>Punctuation, Grammar, Conventions</b>   | There are many major grammatical errors throughout the text. There may also be punctuation errors. Some of the written response is unclear.                                     | There are several grammatical and punctuation errors in the text. Some parts of the written response are unclear.                                      | There are a few punctuation and/or grammar errors. Most ideas are clear.   | Sentences are effectively put together and nearly all use proper grammar and punctuation. Ideas are clear and are easy to read and understand.  |

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Annotated Close Reading  
Answer Key**

**FLAT**

My sister's hair lays flat. You could comb it, come back two hours later, and every strand would still be obediently in the same place. On the other hand, my hair has something to do and places to go. It twists and turns confused walking in all directions. And for extra measure, it is brazen red which commands attention. My hair brings back many memories. Sometimes it reminds me about when I was a child.

"What a pretty little girl," a lady said as she stroked every slick curl on my sister's head. My mother gave her usual wide-mouthed grin and went back to looking through the clothes on the discount rack of the department store.

"What's your name?" the lady asked. My sister contorted her body and said Cara. The woman continued to talk to Cara and acted as though I wasn't even there. There was no, "Hello little girl or you are just as cute as you want to be." Nor did she compliment my mother to say that she had two of the most beautiful girls that she had ever seen.

I just stood there, and pretended not to hear the woman. I began swinging on the thirty percent off rack. I imagined that I was King Kong and that I was making buildings fall except this lady wouldn't be Jane. This lady would be the building that I would make fall down.

My mother smiled as though she was proud of the beautiful specimen that came out of her named Cara. The woman continued to fawn over my sister like she was a feat of nature.

"What did you say? How old are you?" The lady repeated. My sister who sounded as though she was three when she was really six swung her body and grabbed her arms like a confused merry-go-round.

Again, I dangled on the loop of the rack only this time I pretended to be a tree squirrel that was gathering nuts and was throwing them at this lady's head. But when I tried to rotate on the bar, my hand didn't do what I wanted it to and the whole rack came down and hit the lady which sent a tornado of clothes and hangers into the air. My mother whirled apologies like the lady had been hit by a bus. I just picked myself up and smiled.

Close Reading Notes

The narrator is comparing herself to her sister. She has unruly hair and her sister in contrast has manageable hair.

It seems as though the woman is rudely ignoring one of the sisters. The red hair of the narrator makes her easy to notice. The mother seems to enjoy the attention that she is getting for the one child.

The impolite behavior seems to be bothering the narrator. Maybe the author is making a statement about sibling rivalry or how sometimes parents or strangers affect the self-esteem of children unknowingly.

It seems as though the narrator hit the woman on purpose as a form of revenge.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Exemplary Response

**Flat**  
**Common Core Standard RL.4**

**Do a close reading of 'Flat'. Determine the meanings of words and phrases in the reading passage and the impact that figurative language and word choice has on the theme of the text.**

The author is making a statement about sibling rivalry, jealousy, and revenge in this story. This is effectively done through careful word choice and through the use of figurative language. The narrator begins by using a metaphor to describe her appearance and contrast that with the appearance of her sister. "My sister's hair lays flat." The author is really saying that her sister has easily managed hair. The narrator describes her hair as being unruly by saying that it "has places to go and things to do." The author sets this tone in the beginning of the text. Later, a stranger approaches the girls and only speaks to one. This appears to bother the narrator because she states that the woman did not compliment or even talk to her. Instead the stranger does not acknowledge the presence of the red-headed sister. This seems to occur often because the narrator describes the mother as having the usual reaction. The mother does not try to preserve her daughter's feelings or anything. Instead she just grins. The narrator's sister seems to be enjoying all of the attention that she is receiving. She "twists and turns". Plus, she acts younger than her actual age. The narrator decides to get her own justice for the rude behavior of the stranger by knocking the entire rack onto

the stranger. The author uses foreshadowing to help the reader predict that this will occur by discussing how she is King Kong. This statement serves two purposes. Not only does it help the reader predict what will happen next, it also serves as an allusion to the story of King Kong. Although the narrator is younger, she is alluding to her inner strength and ability to overcome the situation. The author relays the themes of sibling rivalry, jealousy, and revenge through the inner thoughts and behavior of a young child that attempts to process the behaviors of adults around her.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### THE STORM

Close Reading Notes

When the storm hit on Friday evening, we weren't prepared. Ralo was being his usual antagonistic self as always fussing about unimportant things.

"Children stop arguing. You both are making my head pound," said my mother as she washed the last dish, rinsed it, and placed it into the drying rack.

I knew something was going to happen that day. Earlier that morning, an uneasy feeling had churned my stomach. My Grandma used to call me "seer" because I knew about things before they happened. Like the time when my hand itched, I knew someone was going to get some money. My aunt won a contest that same day at her job. One time, I even dreamed of fish. The next day, my other aunt Lydia told the family that she was pregnant with twins. Something within my inner being knew that this time something was different, much deeper, much more wrong.

I looked out of the window at the ocean that was just twenty feet from our house. It twisted and gnarled into knots. The trees tried to hold their balance against the wind. Then rain began to fall like grapes from the sky.

"Kids, I'm heading out of the house. I will be back soon," said my mother as she grabbed an umbrella from the rack near the door.

"Okay, well be careful," I said as I closed the front door behind her. My brother sat distracted at the computer. It was just the three of us, my mother, brother, and I. It had been that way for four years since my dad died. Sometimes I could hear my mother cry in the room late at night when her door was closed.

I cried sometimes too because I missed my father so much. He used to call me his little Angelita. Although my name is Angel, he added "ita" to show that I was his little girl. His daddy's little girl. My brother developed a bad temper after my father's death. He showed his grief with frustration and sharp tones when someone talks to him.

Since years have passed, we have gotten into a groove and have adjusted to daily life without my father. Sometimes I used to see my mother stare at nothing. That's when I knew she was thinking about my father. Instead, nowadays she smiles to herself as though she is holding a secret.

I walked outside to check on the garden, and the sky had become darker. Thick gray clouds like smoke from someone's chimney thickened the air and rain was falling. Mama still hadn't made it back home, and I began to wonder if everything was okay. Then, I heard an automobile door close and figured that it was my mother finally making it back home. But then I heard a second door close. I went to the window to see who it was. A man with rosy pink skin attempted to cover his head with a jacket. Rain splashed on him with total disregard at his futile attempt to remain dry. I watched my mother stride out of her car with an umbrella.

"Ralo, some strange man is with Mama," I warned my brother. He acted indifferent and continued to play his video game. I could hear the lock turn on

the front door, and then it opened. Inside walked my mother and a man that was nearly a foot taller than her and twenty years older.

"I want to introduce you to Charles," said my mother with a school girl grin. By this time, my brother's attention was fully directed at the front door.

"Hello Charles," I said. Charles reached out his hand to shake mine. I returned the gesture. My brother stood motionless and stared at the strange man named Charles. My mother smiled as though she had just won the lottery as she introduced each one of us.

"You make yourself comfortable here on the couch Charles," said my mother. She then fussed around in the kitchen as "Charles" awkwardly found himself a seat. I didn't know what to say to him, so I avoided the living room altogether. Instead, I ran up to my bedroom and tried to distract myself with drawing and listening to music. I remembered my premonition earlier in the day, and I could not quench the uneasy feeling.

Soon my mother gathered everyone into the dining room. "Hijas, I need to talk to you," she began. She looked over at Charles and smiled. I picked up a lump of potatoes from my plate and forced myself to eat it.

"Charles and I have been dating for six months now, and since we are getting serious," I wanted both of you to meet him said my mother still holding her school girl grin.

The entire room grew silent.

"Well," said my brother with a blank look on his face. My mother's eyes bulged out and then retracted as though she was sending a coded message to Ralo from across the table. I forced a smile and looked down at my plate.

My mother put down her napkin and went over to the dishes. This is what she always does when she gets nervous.

"So tell me about yourself. Your name is Rolando, right. Your mother has told me great things about you," said Charles trying to break the silence.

"Yes it is. I was named after my father!" snapped Ralo.

"Ralo enough!" yelled my mother.

"Francesca, it's okay. I understand," said Charles. "And your name is Angel?" Charles continued to talk but his face was flushed red.

I stared at Charles and tried to understand what interest my mother had in him. His hair was cut low with patches of grey. A few strands of brown hair clung to his head for dear life. His skin was like faded leather, thick and aged with time. It had a glimpse of charm, I guess to an older woman. But my mother was only 37 and Charles could have easily passed for her father.

"Yes, my name is Angel," I replied trying to seem polite. I looked over at my brother. He was tapping his foot nervously. One hand was clenched into a fist and the other hand held his head up onto the table. Then, his face grew tight, he punched the table, and stormed out of the room.

"Ralo! Ralo! Don't do this!" yelled my mother.

"You know what. Maybe this was not a good idea," said Charles as he got up from his seat and walked toward the door. "I will talk you, uh, sometime," stammered Charles as he left the house.

"No wait Charles!" yelled my mother. Her attempt to coax him back into the house was futile. Tears welled into my mother's eyes. She watched Charles drive away. I just looked at the darts of rain that now jetted into our house from the open door, and I closed it to keep up from getting wet from the storm.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**The Storm**  
**Common Core Standard RL.4**

**Do a close reading of 'The Storm'. Analyze and explain how the author's word choice and use of literary devices assists the reader in understanding each character's feelings and reactions toward Charles.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### Close Reading and Written Response Rubric

|   | <b>Emerging<br/>1</b>   | <b>Developing<br/>2</b>  | <b>Proficient<br/>3</b>  | <b>Exemplary<br/>4</b>  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>CCSS.W.1a, 1b<br/>CCSS.RL.1<br/>Write an argument to support a claim.</b>                          | The claim that is made is incorrect. Very few details are provided to support this incorrect viewpoint.   | The claim that is made incorrectly answers the written response question, but several text details are provided to support this viewpoint.             | The claim of the written response must be implied by the reader, but it correctly answers the written response question.   | The claim of the written response is clearly stated and is the correct answer to the written response question.   |
| <b>CCSS.SL.4<br/>Present text claims and findings.</b>  | Details are not provided to support the claim of the written response. If details are provided, they are unclear and/or show a misinterpretation of what is stated in the text. | Just a few details are provided to support the claim that is made in the written response. The response may include a few misinterpreted text details. | Some details are provided to support the claim of the written response. A few key details that could have strengthened the written response are not highlighted or included in the response.                                     | Many well-chosen details are provided to effectively support the claim of the written response. All of the details are relevant and show valid reasoning.   |
| <b>CCSS.RL.4,<br/>RL.10<br/>Interpret and comprehend literal and figurative language in the text.</b> | Details were not highlighted or underlined during the close reading. No analysis was provided.  | A few details were highlighted or underlined during the close reading. A partial analysis and partial interpretation has been provided.                | Some details and/or figurative language have been highlighted or underlined to support the claim of the written response. A few key details were not identified. An interpretation of most of the key details has been provided. | During the close reading, several details were highlighted or underlined in the text to support the claim of the written response. An interpretation of key details and figurative language has also been provided. |
| <b>CCSS.L.2<br/>Punctuation,<br/>Grammar,<br/>Conventions</b>   | There are many major grammatical errors throughout the text. There may also be punctuation errors. Some of the written response is unclear.                                     | There are several grammatical and punctuation errors in the text. Some parts of the written response are unclear.                                      | There are a few punctuation and/or grammar errors. Most ideas are clear.   | Sentences are effectively put together and nearly all use proper grammar and punctuation. Ideas are clear and are easy to read and understand.  |

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Teacher Annotated Close Reading  
Answer Key**

**THE STORM**

Close Reading Notes

**When the storm hit on Friday evening, we weren't prepared.** Ralo was being his usual antagonistic self as always fussing about unimportant things.

Does the narrator mean a real storm is does this have a double meaning?

"Children stop arguing. You both are making my head pound," said my mother as she washed the last dish, rinsed it, and placed it into the drying rack.

**I knew something was going to happen that day.** Earlier that morning, an uneasy feeling had churned my stomach. My Grandma used to call me "seer" because I knew about things before they happened. Like the time when my hand itched, I knew someone was going to get some money. My aunt won a contest that same day at her job. One time, I even dreamed of fish. The next day, my other aunt Lydia told the family that she was pregnant with twins. Something within my inner being knew that this time something was different, much deeper, much more wrong.

Does this foreshadow something that will happen later?

I looked out of the window at the ocean that was just twenty feet from our house. It twisted and gnarled into knots. The trees tried to hold their balance against the wind. Then rain began to fall like grapes from the sky.

They each miss the father. Angel was very close to her father.

"Kids, I'm heading out of the house. I will be back soon," said my mother as she grabbed an umbrella from the rack near the door.

**"Okay, well be careful,"** I said as I closed the front door behind her. **My brother sat distracted at the computer. It was just the three of us, my mother, brother, and I. It had been that way for four years since my dad died. Sometimes I could hear my mother cry in the room late at night when her door was closed.**

I cried sometimes too because I missed my father so much. **He used to call me his little Angelita. Although my name is Angel, he added "ita" to show that I was his little girl. His daddy's little girl. My brother developed a bad temper after my father's death.** He showed his grief with frustration and sharp tones when someone talks to him.

Angel and Ralo's mother must have a secret that she is not sharing.

Since years have passed, we have gotten into a groove and have adjusted to daily life without my father. Sometimes I used to see my mother stare at nothing. That's when I knew she was thinking about my father. **Instead, nowadays she smiles to herself as though she is holding a secret.**

I walked outside to check on the garden, and the sky had become darker. Thick gray clouds like smoke from someone's chimney thickened the air and rain was falling. Mama still hadn't made it back home, and I began to wonder if everything was okay. Then, I heard an automobile door close and figured that it was my mother finally making it back home. But then I heard a second door close. I went to the window to see who it was. A man with rosy pink skin attempted to cover his head with a jacket. Rain splashed on him with total disregard at his futile attempt to remain dry. I watched my mother stride out of her car with an umbrella.

"Ralo, some strange man is with Mama," I warned my brother. He acted indifferent and continued to play his video game. I could hear the lock turn on

the front door, and then it opened. Inside walked my mother and a man than was nearly a foot taller than her and twenty years older.

"I want to introduce you to Charles," said my mother with a school girl grin. By this time, my brother's attention was fully directed at the front door.

"Hello Charles," I said. Charles reached out his hand to shake mine. I returned the gesture. My brother stood motionless and stared at the strange man named Charles. My mother smiled as though she had just won the lottery as she introduced each one of us.

"You make yourself comfortable here on the couch Charles," said my mother. She then fussed around in the kitchen as "Charles" awkwardly found himself a seat. I didn't know what to say to him, so I avoided the living room altogether. Instead, I ran up to my bedroom and tried to distract myself with drawing and listening to music. I remembered my premonition earlier in the day, and I could not quench the uneasy feeling.

Soon my mother gathered everyone into the dining room. "Kids, I need to talk to you," she began. She looked over at Charles and smiled. I picked up a lump of potatoes from my plate and forced myself to eat it.

"Charles and I have been dating for six months now, and since we are getting serious," I wanted both of you to meet him said my mother still holding her school girl grin.

The entire room grew silent.

"Well," said my brother with a blank look on his face. My mother's eyes bulged out and then retracted as though she was sending a coded message to Ralo from across the table. I forced a smile and looked down at my plate.

My mother put down her napkin and went over to the dishes. This is what she always does when she gets nervous.

"So tell me about yourself. Your name is Rolando, right. Your mother has told me great things about you," said Charles trying to break the silence.

"Yes it is. I was named after my father!" snapped Ralo.

"Ralo enough!" yelled my mother.

"Francesca, it's okay. I understand," said Charles. "And your name is Angel?" Charles continued to talk but his face was flushed red.

I stared at Charles and tried to understand what interest my mother had in him. His hair was cut low with patches of grey. A few strands of brown hair clung to his head for dear life. His skin was like faded leather, thick and aged with time. It had a glimpse of charm, I guess to an older woman. But my mother was only 37 and Charles could have easily passed for her father.

"Yes, my name is Angel," I replied trying to seem polite. I looked over at my brother. He was tapping his foot nervously. One hand was clenched into a fist and the other hand held his head up onto the table. Then, his face grew tight, he punched the table, and stormed out of the room.

"Ralo! Ralo! Don't do this," yelled my mother.

"You know what. Maybe this was not a good idea," said Charles as he got up from his seat and walked toward the door. "I will talk you, uh, sometime," stammered Charles as he left the house.

"No wait Charles!" yelled my mother. Her attempt to coax him back into the house was futile. Tears welled into my mother's eyes. She watched Charles drive away. I just looked at the darts of rain that now jetted into our house from the open door, and I closed it to keep up from getting wet from the storm.

Angel and Ralo react differently to Charles. Ralo is behaving more distant and Angel is being friendly.

This is upsetting to Ralo. This also bothers Angel, but she is more calm and polite about the situation.

Francesca is devastated.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Exemplary Response

### **The Storm** **Common Core Standard RL.4**

**Do a close reading of 'The Storm'. Analyze and explain how the author's word choice and use of literary devices assists the reader in understanding each character's feelings and reactions toward Charles.**

*The author uses a variety of literary devices to assist the reader in understanding how each character feels about and reacts toward Charles in the story. The short story begins with the use of symbolism. Throughout the story, there is a storm brewing outside. This storm grows stronger as the day progresses just as the storm inside of the house progresses with the family when Francesca's children learn that their mother is dating. The author also uses motif. This is an object or idea that constantly reoccurs throughout a story. In this text, the motif is water and washing. In the beginning of the text, Francesca washes the dishes. When Charles makes it over to the house, Francesca washes the dishes when she becomes nervous. Water often stands for a rebirth or something new in literature. This motif represents the new life that Francesca struggles to have after becoming a widow. The text also states that "[Francesca] is holding a secret". This use of foreshadowing lets the reader know that something is going to happen later on in the text. It is later on that her children learn about Charles. The smiles and "school girl grin" let the reader know that Francesca is happy now. Francesca's tears when Charles leaves the house at the end of the story also reveals Francesca's concern for him. This contrasts with her children's opinions and reactions toward Charles. Early in the text, Ralo is described as being antagonistic. Since the*

reader is told about Ralo's disposition early in the story, his reaction to Charles later in the text is easy to anticipate. The text states the fact that Ralo "speaks in sharp tones" and has become bitter. The reader is able to see Ralo's dislike for Charles by his reaction toward him when they meet. Unlike Angel who is unhappy about Charles because she also misses her father, Ralo does not try to be polite. Instead, he stares at Charles, states that he is named after his father and storms out of the room during dinner. This is different from Angel's reaction to meeting Charles. The reader is able to see how close Angel, Francesca's daughter was with her father through the use of flashback. Angel recounts in the story how she was called "Angelita" by her father and how she was always "Daddy's little girl". Meeting Charles is uncomfortable for Angel as well but she attempts to be polite by shaking Charles' hands and by carrying on a conversation with him. Each character has a different reaction toward Charles. The uneasy feeling that Angel has throughout the text serves as a tool for helping to foreshadow that something would go wrong in the story. Additionally, the use of specific word choice and a variety of literary devices assists the reader in determining how each character feels.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**THE TRAIN RIDE**Close Reading Notes

It was the final train of the evening and Jerold felt fortunate to have gotten the last ticket for his surprise visit. He knew what would happen when he got to his parent's home. A tight, reassuring bear hug- in the way that only a mother could give- was sure to greet him.

The agent punched each ticket sending flakes of paper into the air. Grabbing the last of his bags, Jerold made his way to the first empty seat he could find. Creamy potato soup. Jerold's stomach gurgled just thinking about it. He wouldn't even have to ask. Within just a few minutes of entry into his parent's home, Jerold knew that his mother would be busy chopping potatoes and scallions sending every stomach in the house into a frenzy.

~

The last train entered the station. It had been three months since Mrs. Henry had seen her son. After traveling two hours, she was only ten minutes away from her youngest child. This was the one that her and Charles, her husband, had thought was a girl until Jerold came screaming into the world gulping in every sight and sound. She was proud of herself - with it being the first time that she had ever taken the train and the first time she had ever traveled alone. Charles was on a business trip in Toronto and would be out of town for the next few days, so surprising her son with a visit was the perfect idea. Not only would Jerold be delighted to see her, he would be happy to receive potato soup. All attempts had been made to ensure that the soup would stay warm the entire trip. An insulated warmer made of space-age material had been purchased. The label guaranteed it would keep hot things hot and cool things cool for six hours with a money back guarantee. Her eyes gazed back out the window. Mrs. Henry watched the train skate past trees and buildings. She could feel the train car slowing down with a muffled jerk as it approached the station. How surprised Jerold would be.

~

It didn't take as long as he thought it would. Jerold was sure that there would be an unplanned stop along the route. Carl, his roommate, told horror stories of delays and inconveniences which now Jerold knew were exaggerations of Carl's wild imagination. If he had not been so homesick, Jerold would have spent the one day he had off hanging out with Carl taking in a movie. Everyone needed a day off from studying sometimes. Medical school had been more challenging than Jerold had imagined. He just needed the familiar twisty roads and warm faces that he had always known, even if it was just for one day.

He knew the way home. Wielding shortcuts and pointing to landmarks that had been familiar to him since childhood, Jerold showed the taxi driver which way to turn and when to stay straight. Jerold was almost there. He imagined the look on his parents faces and knew they would tell him how proud they were of him until he became embarrassed, smiled, and became embarrassed all over again.



The map did not seem as confusing back in Philadelphia. Nonetheless, she would find the place. Mrs. Henry knew that Jerold's brownstone apartment was just a few minutes from the train station. Maybe she should have taken a taxi, she thought. Carrying a pot of potato soup and an overnight bag was more challenging than she realized. If she didn't need to hold an address in her hand too, it would not have seemed like such an impossible task to carry so many things. Somehow she lumbered her way there and approached the front of an apartment. While she rested the pot and bag on the stairs, Mrs. Henry rang the doorbell. After no one answered, she rang it again. A shadow made its way to the area leading up to the door.

"May I help you," a tall gentleman answered.

"Hello, I'm Mrs. Henry, Jerold's mother. You must be Carl. I have heard so much about you. Is Jerold here? I know he will be shocked to see me," said Mrs. Henry.

The gentleman's face went blank. "So nice to meet you. I am Carl. I hate to tell you this, but Jerold is in Philadelphia so that he can visit you."

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**The Train Ride**  
**Common Core Standard RL.6**

**Do a close reading of 'The Train Ride'. Analyze the dramatic irony in the reading passage. Analyze how the author uses dramatic irony and differences in the points of view of Jerold and Mrs. Henry to create suspense.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### Close Reading and Written Response Rubric

|   | <b>Emerging<br/>1</b>   | <b>Developing<br/>2</b>  | <b>Proficient<br/>3</b>  | <b>Exemplary<br/>4</b>  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>CCSS.W.1a, 1b<br/>CCSS.RL.1<br/>Write an argument to support a claim.</b>                          | The claim that is made is incorrect. Very few details are provided to support this incorrect viewpoint.   | The claim that is made incorrectly answers the written response question, but several text details are provided to support this viewpoint.             | The claim of the written response must be implied by the reader, but it correctly answers the written response question.   | The claim of the written response is clearly stated and is the correct answer to the written response question.   |
| <b>CCSS.SL.4<br/>Present text claims and findings.</b>  | Details are not provided to support the claim of the written response. If details are provided, they are unclear and/or show a misinterpretation of what is stated in the text. | Just a few details are provided to support the claim that is made in the written response. The response may include a few misinterpreted text details. | Some details are provided to support the claim of the written response. A few key details that could have strengthened the written response are not highlighted or included in the response.                                     | Many well-chosen details are provided to effectively support the claim of the written response. All of the details are relevant and show valid reasoning.   |
| <b>CCSS.RL.4,<br/>RL.10<br/>Interpret and comprehend literal and figurative language in the text.</b> | Details were not highlighted or underlined during the close reading. No analysis was provided.  | A few details were highlighted or underlined during the close reading. A partial analysis and partial interpretation has been provided.                | Some details and/or figurative language have been highlighted or underlined to support the claim of the written response. A few key details were not identified. An interpretation of most of the key details has been provided. | During the close reading, several details were highlighted or underlined in the text to support the claim of the written response. An interpretation of key details and figurative language has also been provided. |
| <b>CCSS.L.2<br/>Punctuation, Grammar, Conventions</b>   | There are many major grammatical errors throughout the text. There may also be punctuation errors. Some of the written response is unclear.                                     | There are several grammatical and punctuation errors in the text. Some parts of the written response are unclear.                                      | There are a few punctuation and/or grammar errors. Most ideas are clear.   | Sentences are effectively put together and nearly all use proper grammar and punctuation. Ideas are clear and are easy to read and understand.  |

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Annotated Close Reading  
Answer Key**

Close Reading Notes

**THE TRAIN RIDE**

It was the final train of the evening and Jerold felt fortunate to have gotten the last ticket for his surprise visit. He knew what would happen when he got to his parent's home. A tight, reassuring bear hug- in the way that only a mother could give- was sure to greet him.

Jerold thinks that he is "lucky" to get a train ticket.

The agent punched each ticket sending flakes of paper into the air. Grabbing the last of his bags, Jerold made his way to the first empty seat he could find. Creamy potato soup. Jerold's stomach gurgled just thinking about it. He wouldn't even have to ask. Within just a few minutes of entry into his parent's home, Jerold knew that his mother would be busy chopping potatoes and scallions sending every stomach in the house into a frenzy.

Jerold is excited about going home to visit his parents.

The last train entered the station. It had been three months since Mrs. Henry had seen her son. After traveling two hours, she was only ten minutes away from her youngest child. This was the one that her and Charles, her husband, had thought was a girl until Jerold came screaming into the world gulping in every sight and sound. She was proud of herself -- with it being the first time that she had ever taken the train and the first time she had ever traveled alone. Charles was on a business trip in Toronto and would be out of town for the next few days, so surprising her son with a visit was the perfect idea. Not only would Jerold be delighted to see her, he would be happy to receive potato soup. All attempts had been made to ensure that the soup would stay warm the entire trip. An insulated warmer made of space-age material had been purchased. The label guaranteed it would keep hot things hot and cool things cool for six hours with a money back guarantee. Her eyes gazed back out the window. Mrs. Henry watched the train skate past trees and buildings. She could feel the train car slowing down with a muffled jerk as it approached the station. How surprised Jerold would be.

This is a big deal for Mrs. Henry because she has never taken a trip by herself and she is excited to see her youngest child.

The trip will be even more charming because she will be able to give her son potato soup which is his favorite.

It didn't take as long as he thought it would. Jerold was sure that there would be an unplanned stop along the route. Carl, his roommate, told horror stories of delays and inconveniences which now Jerold knew were exaggerations of Carl's wild imagination. If he had not been so homesick, Jerold would have spent the one day he had off hanging out with Carl taking in a movie. Everyone needed a day off from studying sometimes. Medical school had been more challenging than Jerold had imagined. He just needed the familiar twisty roads and warm faces that he had always known, even if it was just for one day.

Jerold had a surprise of his own. He will be even more surprised to find out that his parents are not at home to greet him.

He knew the way home. Wielding shortcuts and pointing to landmarks that had been familiar to him since childhood, Jerold showed the taxi driver which way to turn and when to stay straight. Jerold was almost there. He imagined the look on his parents faces and knew they would tell him how proud they were of him until he became embarrassed, smiled, and became embarrassed all over again.

The map did not seem as confusing back in Philadelphia. Nonetheless, she would find the place. Mrs. Henry knew that Jerold's brownstone apartment was just a few minutes from the train station. Maybe she should have taken a taxi, she thought. Carrying a pot of potato soup and an overnight bag was more challenging than she realized. If she didn't need to hold an address in her hand too, it would not have seemed like such an impossible task to carry so many things. Somehow she lumbered her way there and approached an apartment doorbell. While she rested the pot and bag on the stairs, Mrs. Henry rang the doorbell. After no one answered, she rang it again. A shadow made its way to the area leading up to the door.

"May I help you," a tall gentleman answered.

"Hello, I'm Mrs. Henry, Jerold's mother. You must be Carl. I have heard so much about you. Is Jerold here? I know he will be shocked to see me," said Mrs. Henry.

The gentleman's face went blank. "So nice to meet you. I am Carl. I hate to tell you this, but Jerold is in Philadelphia so that he can visit you."

The situation is so unfortunate because Mrs. Henry went through all of this trouble for nothing. She won't even be able to see her child during her surprise visit.

This last sentence shows how the entire story is a form of dramatic irony. Mrs. Henry did not expect for her son not be at home.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Exemplary Response

### **The Train Ride** **Common Core Standard RL.6**

**Do a close reading of 'The Train Ride'. Analyze the dramatic irony in the reading passage. Analyze how the author uses dramatic irony and differences in the points of view of Jerold and Mrs. Henry to create suspense.**

*The story is a true case of dramatic irony because the readers are fully aware of what the characters in the story do not know. The author establishes these different points of view early in the text by describing Jerold's train ride. Jerold thinks that he is lucky because he was able to get a train ticket back home. He is unaware that his father is out of town on a business trip and that his mother is on her way to visit him at college. The author raises the stakes even higher by revealing the fact that Mrs. Henry has never taken a trip alone and never rode on a train either. She went through so much trouble to visit her son for nothing. She also purchased a "space-age" container to keep homemade potato soup, her son Jerold's favorite, warm the entire train ride to visit him. The reader sadly observes all of the trouble that the mother and son both go through to visit one another. The mother purchased a thermos, made potato soup and struggled to carry everything from the train station to her son's apartment. She realized that all of this was for nothing at the end of the story. To make matters worse, Jerold only has one day to rest from medical school. This makes the reader cringe even more to know that Jerold and his mother Mrs. Henry will not meet. These differing points of view create suspense because although the reader knows that the characters are both in totally different locations, the reader feels sad for both characters because neither of*

them realize until the end that their surprise vacation is a waste.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER PEOPLE'S CHILDREN**Close Reading Notes

The inside of the dean's office looked just the way that I imagined that it would. Everything was stale and drab as though Dean Stevens decorated the room using only clearance items from the resale store. Dust covered plaques of achievements from long ago dangled from the walls. Pictures of children that were taken years ago leaned respectfully on the file cabinet.

"My Freddie would not have done such a thing," protested Mrs. Richards as she glanced at the behavior notice.

I was the one sitting in the chair with the ripped shirt and Freddie was sitting on the other side of the room like a poster child for good manners.

"Well according to the notice from their homeroom teacher, both boys were pushing each other in the hallway. According to the district policy, this will be a two-day suspension," said Dean Stevens as he picked a string from his suit jacket.

You'd think that I'd be ashamed of myself for sitting in the dean's office, but really it was not my fault. Freddie has had it in for me ever since sixth grade when he said that I "snitched" on him to the teacher. Although normally I am able to stay out of his path, this time Freddie cornered me, and started shoving me like a rag doll.

My mother sat in shock and tried to absorb the fact that I had actually gotten a written referral to the dean.

"Well, I don't care what you say. You are only picking on my boy like you always do. Freddie does not push anyone at home so there is no reason for me to believe that he would do something like that at school," said Mrs. Richards rather sharply.

The entire thing is ridiculous if you ask me. Freddie has been a bully since elementary school. There isn't a day that goes by that he doesn't get called on by some teacher for swinging his folder around or for making some type of obnoxious noise that typically results in all the students erupting into laughter. I am on the National Junior Honor Society and nearly had a heart attack when I was told to go to the office after the scuffle. The last time that I was scolded was in second grade when I accidentally grabbed chocolate instead of white milk.

Dean Stevens began to explain the terms of our suspensions. My mother awoke from her daze and made me assure the dean that I would never push anyone ever again even if I was pushed first.

Freddie's mother mumbled something under her breath and rushed out of the room sending a tornado of papers from Dean Steven's desk flying into the air.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

**Other People's Children  
Common Core Standard RL.6**

**Do a close reading of 'Other People's Children'. How does the author develop and contrast the points of view of the different characters in the text?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

### Close Reading and Written Response Rubric

|   | <b>Emerging<br/>1</b>   | <b>Developing<br/>2</b>  | <b>Proficient<br/>3</b>  | <b>Exemplary<br/>4</b>  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>CCSS.W.1a, 1b<br/>CCSS.RL.1<br/>Write an argument to support a claim.</b>                          | The claim that is made is incorrect. Very few details are provided to support this incorrect viewpoint.   | The claim that is made incorrectly answers the written response question, but several text details are provided to support this viewpoint.             | The claim of the written response must be implied by the reader, but it correctly answers the written response question.   | The claim of the written response is clearly stated and is the correct answer to the written response question.   |
| <b>CCSS.SL.4<br/>Present text claims and findings.</b>  | Details are not provided to support the claim of the written response. If details are provided, they are unclear and/or show a misinterpretation of what is stated in the text. | Just a few details are provided to support the claim that is made in the written response. The response may include a few misinterpreted text details. | Some details are provided to support the claim of the written response. A few key details that could have strengthened the written response are not highlighted or included in the response.                                     | Many well-chosen details are provided to effectively support the claim of the written response. All of the details are relevant and show valid reasoning.   |
| <b>CCSS.RL.4,<br/>RL.10<br/>Interpret and comprehend literal and figurative language in the text.</b> | Details were not highlighted or underlined during the close reading. No analysis was provided.  | A few details were highlighted or underlined during the close reading. A partial analysis and partial interpretation has been provided.                | Some details and/or figurative language have been highlighted or underlined to support the claim of the written response. A few key details were not identified. An interpretation of most of the key details has been provided. | During the close reading, several details were highlighted or underlined in the text to support the claim of the written response. An interpretation of key details and figurative language has also been provided. |
| <b>CCSS.L.2<br/>Punctuation, Grammar, Conventions</b>   | There are many major grammatical errors throughout the text. There may also be punctuation errors. Some of the written response is unclear.                                     | There are several grammatical and punctuation errors in the text. Some parts of the written response are unclear.                                      | There are a few punctuation and/or grammar errors. Most ideas are clear.   | Sentences are effectively put together and nearly all use proper grammar and punctuation. Ideas are clear and are easy to read and understand.  |

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Teacher Annotated Close Reading  
Answer Key**

**OTHER PEOPLE'S CHILDREN**

The inside of the dean's office looked just the way that I imagined that it would. Everything was stale and drab as though Dean Stevens decorated the room using only clearance items from the resale store. Dust covered plaques of achievements from long ago dangled from the walls. Pictures of children that were taken years ago leaned respectfully on the file cabinet.

"My Freddie would not have done such a thing," protested Mrs. Richards as she glanced at the behavior notice.

I was the one sitting in the chair with the ripped shirt and Freddie was sitting on the other side of the room like a poster child for good manners.

"Well according to the notice from their homeroom teacher, both boys were pushing each other in the hallway. According to the district policy, this will be a two-day suspension," said Dean Stevens as he picked a string from his suit jacket.

You'd think that I'd be ashamed of myself for sitting in the dean's office, but really it was not my fault. Freddie has had it in for me ever since sixth grade when he said that I "snitched" on him to the teacher. Although normally I am able to stay out of his path, this time Freddie cornered me, and started shoving me like a rag doll.

My mother sat in shock and tried to absorb the fact that I had actually gotten a written referral to the dean.

"Well, I don't care what you say. You are only picking on my boy like you always do. Freddie does not push anyone at home so there is no reason for me to believe that he would do something like that at school," said Mrs. Richards rather sharply.

The entire thing is ridiculous if you ask me. Freddie has been a bully since elementary school. There isn't a day that goes by that he doesn't get called on by some teacher for swinging his folder around or for making some type of obnoxious noise that typically results in all the students erupting into laughter. I am on the National Junior Honor Society and nearly had an asthma attack when I was told to go to the office after the scuffle. The last time that I was scolded was in second grade when I accidentally grabbed chocolate instead of white milk.

Dean Stevens began to explain the terms of our suspensions. My mother awoke from her daze and made me assure the dean that I would never push anyone every again even if I was pushed first.

Freddie's mother mumbled something under her breath and rushed out of the room sending a tornado of papers from Dean Steven's desk flying into the air.

Close Reading Notes

The narrator must not be used to going to the dean's office.

Freddie's mother did not see what happened, but she is defending her son. Something obviously happened otherwise the narrator would not have a ripped shirt.

The narrator is not used to getting into trouble.

The narrator's mother is responding differently than Freddie's mother.

Freddie appears to get into trouble often.

The narrator's mother is very upset that her son is suspended.

Freddie's mother appears to be blaming the school and won't take ownership for Freddie's actions.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period/Class \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Exemplary Response

### **Other People's Children Common Core Standard RL.6**

**Do a close reading of 'Other People's Children'. How does the author develop and contrast the points of view of the different characters in the text?**

The author shows and contrasts the points of view of the different characters in a variety of ways. Early in the text, the narrator is amazed by the appearance of the dean's office. Remarking about the "dangling pictures" and thinking that everything looks the way that the narrator imagined it would shows the narrator has probably never been in the dean's office. The reader can infer that he is not a problematic student. Later the text states that this student is on the National Honor Society and "nearly had an asthma attack" when he was told to go to the office. Although Freddie, the person that the narrator got into a scuffle with never speaks in the story, the reader is introduced to this character by what others say about him. The narrator describes Freddie as having several behavioral issues. Nearly every day Freddie is reprimanded by one of the teachers. This is a contrasting point of view than the image that Freddie's mother has of him. She thinks that the school is picking on her child although she never provides any justification for the school doing this. Freddie's mother's behavior contrasts with the reaction of the narrator's mother who is visibly upset about her son getting into trouble. She is in a daze and insists that her son never behaves this way again. In contrast, Freddie's mother never has him take ownership for his behavior and rushes

out of the room rudely. The reader is able to determine what the narrator is like because of his inner dialogue. The points of view of the mothers are revealed through their body language, what they say, and what they don't say.