HIGH-QUALITY TITLES THAT SUPPORT THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Teaching Guide includes Common Core strands, discussion questions, activities, and Guided Reading Levels for 25 NEW titles for K–12

www.readcommoncore.com
**About the Book**

A bus driver named Joe heads out on his route, stopping at one bus stop after another to pick up passengers. He picks up five dogs and five cats in all, dropping off nine of them at the plane, train, or boat. The tenth passenger, a dog, Joe takes home! This deceptively simple picture book is, in fact, a masterful primer on basic math skills (addition, subtraction, and the concept of sets) for the preschool and early-elementary school set.

**Common Core Objectives**

With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. Represent addition and subtraction with drawings. Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities.

**Questions and Activities**

1. Why are pictures in a book important? **RL.K.6**
2. How do the pictures in My Bus relate to the story? **RL.K.7**
3. Write a number sentence from the story and illustrate it. **K.CC.A.3, K.OA.A.1**

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**About the Book**

This series includes three I Can Read! Early Reading Boxes featuring new lovable character Tug the Pup and his friends. Written by educator and reading specialist Dr. Julie Wood and illustrated by Sebastien Braun, each box set contains 11 lively stories with full-color illustrations plus a parent guide and reward stickers.

**Common Core Objectives**

Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story using key details. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. Read common high-frequency words by sight. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

**Questions and Activities**

1. How do you identify the characters, setting, and events in a story? **RL.K-1.3**
2. Who is the story about? Where does the story take place? What happened in the story? **RL.K-1.1**
3. Retell the story in your own words. Draw a story map. **RL.K-1.2, SL.K-1.5**

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**About the Book**

A little girl says good night to a seal, a bear, a lion, a train, and so on—giving readers a bit of information about each. What the reader discovers, in a lovely surprise ending, is that everything the little girl describes is a stuffed animal or toy on her bed. First published in 1953 and originally illustrated by the author, this timeless bedtime book has been reimagined by acclaimed artist Laura Dronzek for a new generation of readers.

**Common Core Objectives**

Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text. Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

**Questions and Activities**

1. What are the differences between books that tell stories and books that give information? What text type is “It is Night”? Give reasons. **RL.1.5**
2. Identify how the author supports points in the text using examples. **RL.1.1, RL.1.3**
3. How do the illustrations support the text? **RL.1.7**
**GRADES K–1** (continued)

**About the Book**
Five carpenter ants in a stump hear a scary noise outside. What is it? One ant has a theory, and he drills a hole in the stump to prove that his theory is correct. But is it? This is a funny page-turner with a surprise ending that will delight kids.

**Common Core Objectives**
Recognize common types of text. Identify who is talking at various points in the story. Read common high-frequency words by sight (color words). Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (interjections).

**Questions and Activities**
1. How does the author’s word choice and language contribute to the tone of the story? Give examples. **RL.1.4**
2. How do you identify who is talking at different points in a story? **RL.1.6**
3. What makes a story fiction or nonfiction? What genre is *It’s an Orange Aardvark!*? Write your answer and draw a picture. **RL.1.5, W.1.8**

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**GRADES 2–3**

**About the Book**
Together, a young boy and his *abuelo* (grandfather) go camping, ride horses, and even confront a mountain lion. Soon the boy’s family moves from the country to the city, away from Abuelo, and it is the boy’s memories that help him adjust to his new life. Arthur Dorros’s skillful blend of Spanish and English and Raúl Colón’s poignant paintings illuminate how the special bond between an *abuelo* and a *nieto* (grandson) reaches across miles.

**Common Core Objectives**
Determine the meaning of unknown words and phrases based on reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies. Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

**Questions and Activities**
1. How does the illustrator use pictures and details to develop the characters, setting, and events in the story? **RL.2.7**
2. What strategies can you use to get the meaning of unknown words in a story? **L.2.4**
3. List words from the story that you do not know. Explain how the context of the story can help find the meaning. Give examples from the story. **L.2.4a**

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**About the Book**
This is the story of the famous “Lonesome George,” a giant tortoise who was the last of his species, lived to be 100 years old, and became known as the rarest creature in the world. Renowned naturalist and bestselling author of the Newbery Medal–winning *Julie of the Wolves* and the critically acclaimed *Everglades*, Jean Craighead George introduces young children to the wonders of the natural world in this incredible evolution story set in the Galápagos Islands about the tortoise who was the last of his kind and whose death marked the extinction of his subspecies.

**Common Core Objectives**
Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe. Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

**Questions and Activities**
1. How does a reader determine the genre of a particular book? What characteristics apply to *Galápagos George*? **RI.2.5, RL.2.3**
2. What elements of a book help the reader determine the main idea? What details support the main idea? **RI.2.2, RL.2.2**
3. How do the illustrations contribute to the text (characters, setting, and plot)? **RI.2.7, RL.2.7**

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For more information, additional titles, and supporting materials, visit [www.readcommoncore.com](http://www.readcommoncore.com).
About the Book
Mouse has baked a special treat for Little Bird’s birthday! But delivering it to his friend isn’t easy—not when everyone he meets along the way offers to trade something for a piece of cake. New York Times bestselling illustrator LeUyen Pham whips up a surprising and clever story about kindness, creativity, generosity, and friendship.

Common Core Objectives
Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story using key details. Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text. Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

Questions and Activities
1. How does the author develop characterization, and how does the characterization enhance the reader’s understanding of the characters? **RL.2.6, RL.2.7**
2. How do the characters in the story respond to events and challenges? **RL.2.3**
3. How does the author structure the story? **RL.2.5**

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About the Book
Light is all around you! It comes in many forms: light from the sun brightens our day, firelight flickers in the night, electric lights fill our homes—and some animals even make the sea glow! With lively illustrations and fun diagrams from Paul Meisel, Light Is All Around Us by Wendy Pfeffer is a fascinating look at the many ways that light brightens our world.

Common Core Objectives
Describe the relationship between a series of scientific ideas or concepts using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect. Use information gained from illustrations and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text.

Questions and Activities
1. What is light? Where do we find it? **RI.3.1, RI.3.2**
2. Why do we use various text features and structures in nonfiction? How does the author present the information? **RI.3.5**
3. Write an essay telling how light energy affects your everyday life using evidence from the book. **RI.3.3, W.3.2**

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About the Book
In his latest adventure, Stanley heads to Paris, France, to catch an art thief by posing as a famous painting hanging in the Louvre. Once again, Stanley’s a hero, catching the thief in the act!

Common Core Objectives
Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language. Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters.

Questions and Activities
1. What strategies can you use when you come to a word or phrase that you do not know? List the words and phrases from the story that are challenging. Create a plan for each. **RL.3.4, L.3.4**
2. What do you already know about the main character from other stories in the Flat Stanley series? Create a character web. **RL.3.9**
3. Describe the main character in the story and explain how his actions contribute to the sequence of events. **RL.3.3, SL.3.4**

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About Book #1
When a four-inch-tall alien crash-lands through Zack McGee’s bedroom window, Zack is sure he’s about to become the first victim in a new War of the Worlds. But when the alien turns out to have weapons that are more ticklish than terrifying, Zack realizes that, rather than protect the world from the alien, it’s up to him to protect the alien in his pocket from the world. With illustrations on every spread, a do-it-yourself science experiment, fun scientific facts, and the hilarious adventures of Zack and Amp, this book is the start of an extraordinary adventure!

About Book #2
Ever since Amp crash-landed his spaceship through Zack McGee’s bedroom window, Zack’s life has gotten crazier and his grades have gone from bad to worse. Who has time for homework when there’s an alien invasion to stop? But now Zack’s up against his greatest challenge yet: the school science fair. If Zack doesn’t get an A on his project, he’s going to flunk the class. Luckily, Zack has Amp around to help, but when Zack’s experiment turns out to be too good, he winds up in a whole different kind of trouble. The adventure continues with another do-it-yourself science experiment, more fun scientific facts, frequent illustrations, and a riveting plot.

Common Core Objectives
Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language. Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series). Explain how specific aspects of a text’s illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story.

Questions and Activities
1. Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of the Alien in My Pocket series. What aspects of the text are fiction/nonfiction? RL.3.9, RI.4.5
2. How does the illustrator use pictures and details to develop the characters, setting, and events in the story? How do the pictures contribute to the meaning of the text? RI.4.7, RI.4.7
3. How does the author use reasons and evidence to support claims in the text? RI.4.8

By Nate Ball
Illustrated by Macky Pamintuan
Guided Reading Level R
Book #1 Tr 978-0-06-231491-8 • Book #1 Pb 978-0-06-221623-6 • Book #2 Tr 978-0-06-231494-9 • Book #2 Pb 978-0-06-221625-0
Available 1/7/14

About the Book
When twelve-year-old Donn Fendler gets tired of waiting for his father and brothers to join him on the summit of Maine’s highest peak, he decides to find his own way back to camp. But a fast-moving fog obscures the boy’s path and takes him off course, and then he falls down an embankment that hides him from sight. Terror sets in; before Donn knows it, almost two weeks have passed, and he’s starving, scared, and delirious. A physically, mentally, and emotionally charged journey told from the point of view of the boy who lived it, Lost on a Mountain in Maine is an inspiring survival memoir.

Common Core Objectives
Explain events in a historical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text. Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided. Interpret information presented visually, and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

Questions and Activities
1. What is a firsthand and secondhand account in nonfiction texts? What are the benefits to presenting these accounts when giving information about a specific event? RI.4.6
2. Compare and contrast firsthand and secondhand accounts of Lost on a Mountain in Maine. Describe the differences in focus on the information provided by the author. RI.4.6, RI.4.8
3. What text features contribute to the understanding of the event? Why are they helpful? RI.4.7

NEW IN PAPERBACK!
By Donn Fendler and Joseph Egan
Guided Reading Level S
Pb 978-0-688-11573-9
Paperback available 12/23/13

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About the Book
Ivan, an adult male silverback gorilla, has been living in captivity for 27 years, most of that time on display at the Exit 8 Big Top Mall and Video Arcade, along with Stella, a wise older elephant, and Bob, a sassy stray dog. Julia, the janitor’s daughter, helps Ivan with his artistic efforts. But when Mack, the owner of the mall, introduces a baby elephant named Ruby, Ivan sees his captivity for what it is. Realizing that Ruby needs more freedom, Ivan assumes his rightful place as a leader and secures a better future for himself and his friends.

Common Core Objectives
Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions). Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

Questions and Activities
1. How does point of view contribute to the authenticity of a story? Write an explanatory text telling how the author uses point of view in the book and how you as the reader were impacted. RL.4.6, W.4.2
2. How do authors develop characterization, and how does the characterization enhance the reader’s understanding of the character’s personality? RL.4.3
3. How does the author use figurative language through the character’s eyes? RL.4.1, RL.4.4

About the Book
Forty stories to enchant, inspire, frighten, and creep you out! This illustrated story collection by acclaimed literary talents Stefan Bachmann, Claire Legrand, Katherine Catmull, and Emma Trevayne (the curators) is inventive, literary, and tons of fun. The book is arranged by theme, illustrated throughout, and features commentary by the curators.

Common Core Objectives
Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text. Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium.

Questions and Activities
1. What are the elements of plot in a short story, and how do they function together to create a fictional story? RL.5.5
2. Write an explanatory text comparing and contrasting two or more characters, settings, or events from one of the stories drawing from specific details. W.5.2, RL.5.3
3. How does point of view contribute to authenticity of the stories? RL.5.6

About the Book
Vince Elgin is an orphan, having lost his mother and father in a fire when he was young. With only a senile grandfather he barely knows to call family, Vince was interned in a group home, dreaming that his father, whose body was never found, might one day return for him. When a letter arrives telling Vince his grandfather has passed away, he is convinced that if his father is still alive, he’ll find him at the funeral. He strikes out for the small town of Dyerville carrying only one thing with him: his grandfather’s journal. The journal tells a fantastical story of witches and giants and magic, one that can’t be true. But as Vince reads on, he finds that his very real adventure may have more in common with his grandfather’s than he ever could have known.

Common Core Objectives
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

Questions and Activities
1. How does the author’s word choice affect the tone and meaning of a story? RL.5.4
2. Analyze the impact of specific word choices from the story. RL.5.4
3. Summarize the plot. Explain how the characters respond to change as the plot moves toward a resolution. RL.5.2

For more information, additional titles, and supporting materials, visit www.readcommoncore.com.
About the Book
While much has been written about the men who founded our nation, the wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters behind the scenes of the American Revolution contributed to their country’s birth as significantly as the men in the spotlight. Cokie Roberts presents the stories of these founding mothers as traced through their personal correspondence, private journals, ledgers and lists, and even favored recipes. *Founding Mothers* reveals the surprising tales of fascinating women such as Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, Deborah Read Franklin, Eliza Pinckney, Catherine Littlefield Green, Esther DeBerdt Reed, and Martha Washington.

Common Core Objectives
Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. Describe the overall structure of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

Questions and Activities
1. How does the structure of nonfiction text affect how we understand the material? **RI.5.5**
2. What composite structure does the author use to shape events, ideas, concepts, and information? **RI.5.5**
3. What is the author’s purpose for writing this book? Do you think the author is a reliable source? Discuss. **RI.5.8, SL.5.1d, SL.5.4**

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About the Book
In the hilarious and action-packed conclusion to the acclaimed hit series that began with *The Hero’s Guide to Saving Your Kingdom*, Liam, Frederic, Gustav, Duncan, Ella, Snow, and Rapunzel are caught and arrested for the murder of Briar. The heroes are simultaneously shocked and saddened to hear of this news. But a series of suspicious events leads them to believe that not only is Briar Rose still alive, but some unseen evil is working its way into the throne rooms of all thirteen kingdoms. It’s up to the League to break out of prison, find Briar, and uncover the nefarious plot before the entire country is destroyed.

Common Core Objectives
Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics. Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Questions and Activities
1. Why do writers of fiction use figurative language in their stories? Give examples from the book. **RL.5.4**
2. How do words and phrases impact the meaning and tone of this story? **RL.5.4**
3. What is a fractured fairy tale? Analyze and discuss how the points of view of the characters and the audience create suspense and humor. **RL.5.6, RL.5.9, SL.5.1**

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About the Book
When Kara Westfall was six years old, her mother was convicted of the worst of all crimes: witchcraft. Years later, Kara and her little brother, Taff, are still shunned by the people of their village, who believe that nothing is more evil than magic . . . except, perhaps, the Thickety—the mysterious forest that covers nearly the entire island. The villagers live in fear of the Thickety and the terrible creatures that live there. But when an unusual bird lures Kara into the forbidden forest, she discovers a strange book with unspeakable powers. A book that might have belonged to her mother. And that is just the beginning of the story.

Common Core Objectives
Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics. Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, or scene fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

Questions and Activities
1. How is theme reflected through character behavior and elements of plot? **RL.5.1, RL.5.2**
2. Compare and contrast *The Thickety* with another suspense mystery you have read on the author’s approach to themes and topics. **RL.5.9, W.5.4**
3. Discuss how the author uses figurative language to enhance meaning and tone, citing specific quotes from the book. **RL.5.4, SL.5.4**
**About the Book**

When Sand wakes up alone in a long-abandoned castle, he has no idea how he got there. Everything in the castle—from dishes to candles to apples—is torn in half or slashed to bits. Nothing lives here and nothing grows, except the vicious, thorny bramble that prevents Sand from leaving. To survive, Sand does what he knows best: he fires up the castle’s forge to mend what he needs to live. But the things he fixes work somehow better than they ought to. Is there magic in the mending, granted by the saints who once guarded this place? With gorgeous language and breathtaking magic, *The Castle Behind Thorns* tells of the power of memory and story, forgiveness and strength, and the true gifts of craft and imagination.

**Common Core Objectives**

Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

**Questions and Activities**

1. How does the structure of a text contribute to the meaning and style? **RL.6.5**
2. Compare and contrast the structure of *The Castle Behind Thorns* with another modernized fairy tale. How does the structure of each contribute to meaning and style? **RL.6.5, W.6.2**
3. Why do writers of fiction use figurative language in stories? Identify examples of figurative language and discuss how specific word choice impacts meaning and tone. **RL.6.4, SL.6.1**

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**About the Book**

The “Harlem Hellfighters,” the African American soldiers of the 369th Infantry Regiment of World War I, redefined heroism—for America and for the world. At a time of widespread bigotry and racism, these soldiers put their lives on the line in the name of democracy. *The Harlem Hellfighters: When Pride Met Courage* is a portrait of bravery and honor. With compelling narrative and archival photographs, Michael L. Printz Award winner Walter Dean Myers and renowned filmmaker Bill Miles deftly portray the true story of these unsung American heroes.

**Common Core Objectives**

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details. Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

**Questions and Activities**

1. How does reading nonfiction help us to explore and understand our world? What is the author’s purpose, and how is it conveyed? **RI.6.6**
2. What is the central idea of the text? Provide a summary. **RI.6.2**
3. Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated on through examples and anecdotes. **RI.6.1, RI.6.3**

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About the Book
Aileen comes from a long line of magic makers, and her aunt Beck is the most powerful magician on Skarr. But Aileen’s magic has yet to show itself, even though she is old enough and it should have, by now! When Aileen is sent over the sea on a mission for the king, she worries that she’ll be useless and in the way. A magical cat changes all that—and with every obstacle Aileen faces, she becomes stronger and more confident, until her magic blooms. This stand-alone novel by the beloved and acclaimed author will be welcomed by fans old and new. Almost finished upon her death in 2011, The Islands of Chaldea was completed by Diana’s sister Ursula Jones, a popular author and actress.

Common Core Objectives
Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact). Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Questions and Activities
1. How does making inferences help the reader to analyze the novel? RL.6.1
2. Describe how the story’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. RL.6.3, W.6.2
3. Analyze the impact of specific word choices, including figurative language, on meaning and tone of the novel. RL.6.4
About the Book
Based on the life of Cambodian advocate Arn Chorn-Pond, *Never Fall Down* is the story of how one Cambodian boy survived the horrors of the Khmer Rouge regime. Only eleven when the Khmer Rouge invade his hometown, Arn is forced into slave labor, and his life for the next four years, 1975–1979, is a nightmare of suffering, privation, and death. National Book Award Finalist Patricia McCormick has seamlessly interwoven fact and fiction to create a powerfully unforgettable story of war and survival.

Common Core Objectives
Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Questions and Activities
1. How does the book affect you personally?

2. How is the theme of the story reflected through character behavior and elements of plot?

3. How does point of view contribute to the authenticity of the story?

Common Core Objectives
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant.

Questions and Activities
1. How does the author’s background influence his/her writing? Research the work of author Patricia McCormick. W.9-12.7, RL.9-12.6

2. How does the author introduce and develop the events in the story? Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text. RL.9-12.3

3. Determine the author’s purpose in the text, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text. RL.9-12.6

About the Book
To Matthew, Amy is the girl with cerebral palsy. She can’t walk without a walker, talk without an automated voice box, or even fully control her facial expressions. But what he doesn’t realize is that trapped inside Amy’s uncooperative body is a kindred spirit. To Amy, Matthew is just another quiet boy from her school. But what Amy doesn’t know is that Matthew’s mind is consumed with repeated thoughts, obsessive rituals, and crippling fear—telltale signs of an obsessive compulsive disorder that he won’t ever admit to. No matter what she says, Matthew just can’t believe Amy is as happy with her life as she seems. How could she be? So when Amy decides to hire student-helpers to help with her daily life at school, Matthew jumps at the chance to prove he’s right. But as the two begin to spend time with each other, they finally open up about their individual problems. And what starts as a blossoming friendship eventually grows into something neither expected.

Common Core Objectives
Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text. Provide an objective summary of the text. Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

Questions and Activities
1. How are people transformed through their relationships with others? RL.9-12.3

2. Why is it important to reflect on the theme of a piece of literature? RL.9-12.2

3. What can the theme teach you about your own life? How is the theme reflected through the characters’ behavior and elements of the plot? RL.9-12.3, SL.9-12.1

About the Book
Emma Putnam is dead, and it’s all Sara Wharton’s fault. At least, that’s what everyone seems to think. Sara, along with her best friend and three other classmates, has been criminally charged for the bullying and harassment that led to Emma’s shocking suicide. Now Sara is the one who’s ostracized, already guilty according to her peers, the community, and the media. In the summer before her senior year, in between meetings with lawyers and a court-recommended therapist, Sara is forced to reflect on the events that brought her to this moment—and ultimately consider her own role in an undeniable tragedy. And she’ll have to find a way to move forward, even when it feels like her own life is over. In this powerful debut novel, inspired by real-life events, Amanda Maciel weaves a narrative of high school life as complex and heartbreaking as it is familiar.

Common Core Objectives
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant.

Questions and Activities
1. How does point of view contribute to the authenticity of the story? RL.11-12.6

2. How is the theme of the story reflected through character behavior and elements of plot? Write an objective summary of the book. RL.9-12.2, W.9-12.3

3. How did the book affect you personally? SL.9-12.1

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The Let’s-Read-and-Find-Out Science series provides many opportunities for primary students to think deeply about science topics and concepts. Supported by detailed illustrations, diagrams, and labels, students will be able to identify the main idea and supporting details, describe the connection between a series of scientific ideas, and build a strong vocabulary relevant to the primary science curriculum.

Seymour Simon’s engaging and informative books provoke close reading experiences through vivid photographs and real-world discovery. Students will become proficient thinkers and learners as they make inferences, summarize, and compare and contrast firsthand and secondhand accounts of the same event or topic.

For more information, additional titles, and supporting materials, visit www.readcommoncore.com.
The MathStart series allows students to make real-world connections to math concepts as they become involved with the story’s characters and plot development. This series has the best of both worlds as a fictional work and informational text, giving many opportunities for students to read to learn and reinforce important math skills. The MathStart series supplements school math programs and aligns to the Common Core State Standards in Counting & Cardinality; Operations & Algebraic Thinking; Number & Operations in Base Ten; Number & Operations—Fractions, Measurement, & Data; and Geometry.

STANDOUT NONFICTION PROGRAMS

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I Can Read! informational text titles are written in a variety of formats that engage young readers in specific content areas. Students will be able to identify differences in character’s point of view and how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges, as well as make connections between historical events and scientific ideas and concepts.

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Teaching guide prepared by Marla Conn, a reading specialist, educational consultant, and workshop presenter who specializes in Fountas and Pinnell’s Guided Reading approach and Common Core State Standards alignment.