

Table of Contents

Introduction	9
Features of the Student Book	12
Features of the Teaching and Assessment Resources	13
Skills Chart	16
Active Reading Strategies	20
Active Reading Model	21
Active Reading Practice: Fiction	22
Active Reading Practice: Nonfiction	25

Unit One Who Am I?

Unit One Differentiated Instruction	28
Introducing Unit One	30
Unit One Vocabulary	31
Unit One Selections	
What's the Worst That Could Happen? Bruce Coville	
Teaching Page	32
Comprehension Quiz	33
Skill Development: Humor	34
Vocabulary Quiz	35
Eleven Sandra Cisneros	
Teaching Page	36
Comprehension Quiz	37
Skill Development: Simile	38
Charles Shirley Jackson	
Teaching Page	39
Comprehension Quiz	40
Skill Development: Inference	41
Vocabulary Quiz	42
I'm Nobody! Who Are You? Emily Dickinson / Primer Lesson Carl Sandburg	
Teaching Page	43
Comprehension Quiz	44
Skill Development: Personification	45
Change Charlotte Zolotow	
Teaching Page	46
Comprehension Quiz	47
Skill Development: Repetition	48
Tuesday of the Other June Norma Fox Mazer	
Teaching Page	49
Comprehension Quiz	50
Skill Development: Turning Point	51
Vocabulary Quiz	52
Unit One Vocabulary Test	53
Unit One Objective and Essay Test	55
Unit One Writing Prompts and Projects	57

Unit Two Family Matters

Unit Two Differentiated Instruction	59
Introducing Unit Two	61
Unit Two Vocabulary	62
Unit Two Selections	
The Circuit Francisco Jiménez	
Teaching Page	64
Comprehension Quiz	66
Skill Development: Foreign Words	67
Vocabulary Quiz	68
My Father’s Hands Held Mine Norman H. Russell / Knoxville, Tennessee Nikki Giovanni	
Teaching Page	69
Comprehension Quiz	70
Skill Development: Theme	71
The All-American Slurp Lensey Namioka	
Teaching Page	72
Comprehension Quiz	74
Skill Development: Tone	75
Vocabulary Quiz	76
The Power of the Powerless: A Brother’s Lesson Christopher de Vinck	
Teaching Page	77
Comprehension Quiz	79
Skill Development: Using Persuasion	80
Vocabulary Quiz	81
Beneath the Cherry Trees from <i>Marley and Me</i> John Grogan	
Teaching Page	82
Comprehension Quiz	83
Skill Development: Anecdote	84
Vocabulary Quiz	85
These Shoes of Mine Gary Soto	
Teaching Page	86
Comprehension Quiz	87
Skill Development: Reading Plays	88
Vocabulary Quiz	89
Unit Two Vocabulary Test	90
Unit Two Objective and Essay Test	92
Unit Two Writing Prompts and Projects	94

Unit Three Best of Friends?

Unit Three Differentiated Instruction	96
Introducing Unit Three	98
Unit Three Vocabulary	99
Unit Three Selections	
The Dog of Pompeii Louis Untermeyer	
Teaching Page	101
Comprehension Quiz	103
Skill Development: Distinguishing Fact from Fiction	104
Vocabulary Quiz	105

Elephants Cross Under River, Making Hearts Rise Michael Kaufman	
Teaching Page	106
Comprehension Quiz	107
Skill Development: Titles	108
Vocabulary Quiz	109
Thank You, M'am Langston Hughes	
Teaching Page	110
Comprehension Quiz	111
Skill Development: Making Connections	112
Noodle Soup for Nincompoops Ellen Wittlinger	
Teaching Page	113
Comprehension Quiz	115
Skill Development: First-person Narrator	116
Vocabulary Quiz	117
The Walrus and the Carpenter Lewis Carroll	
Teaching Page	118
Comprehension Quiz	119
Skill Development: Consonance	120
What Do Fish Have to Do with Anything? Avi	
Teaching Page	121
Comprehension Quiz	122
Skill Development: Symbol	123
Vocabulary Quiz	124
Homeless Anna Quindlen	
Teaching Page	125
Comprehension Quiz	127
Skill Development: Contrast	128
Vocabulary Quiz	129
from <i>Reflections on the Civil War</i> Bruce Catton	
Teaching Page	130
Comprehension Quiz	132
Skill Development: Drawing Conclusions	133
Vocabulary Quiz	134
Unit Three Vocabulary Test	135
Unit Three Objective and Essay Test	137
Unit Three Writing Prompts and Projects	139
Unit Four Decisions, Decisions	
<hr/>	
Unit Four Differentiated Instruction	141
Introducing Unit Four	143
Unit Four Vocabulary	144
Unit Four Selections	
President Cleveland, Where Are You? Robert Cormier	
Teaching Page	146
Comprehension Quiz	148
Skill Development: Cause-and Effect-Relationships	149
Vocabulary Quiz	150
Shrewd Todie and Lyzer the Miser Isaac Bashevis Singer	
Teaching Page	151
Comprehension Quiz	153
Skill Development: Relevant Details	154
Vocabulary Quiz	155



The Princess and the Tin Box James Thurber

Teaching Page 156

Comprehension Quiz 157

Skill Development: Moral 158

The Curious Treasure of Captain Kidd Alvin Schwartz

Teaching Page 159

Comprehension Quiz 160

Skill Development: Factual Accounts 161

The Highwayman Alfred Noyes

Teaching Page 162

Comprehension Quiz 163

Skill Development: Rhythm 164

Vocabulary Quiz 165

Ballad of Birmingham Dudley Randall

Teaching Page 166

Comprehension Quiz 167

Skill Development: Irony 168

from *Woodson* Gary Paulsen

Teaching Page 169

Comprehension Quiz 170

Skill Development: Visual Mapping 171

Vocabulary Quiz 172

Unit Four Vocabulary Test 173

Unit Four Objective and Essay Test 175

Unit Four Writing Prompts and Projects 177

Unit Five To Be a Hero

Unit Five Differentiated Instruction 179

Introducing Unit Five 181

Unit Five Vocabulary 182

Unit Five Selections

Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima from *Now Is Your Time!* Walter Dean Myers

Teaching Page 184

Comprehension Quiz 185

Skill Development: Characterization 186

Vocabulary Quiz 187

The Living Kuan-yin Carol Kendall and Yao-Wen Li

Teaching Page 188

Comprehension Quiz 190

Skill Development: Prediction 191

Vocabulary Quiz 192

Where the Girl Rescued Her Brother Joseph Bruchac

Teaching Page 193

Comprehension Quiz 194

Skill Development: Imagery 195

Paul Revere’s Ride Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Teaching Page 196

Comprehension Quiz 198



Skill Development: Previewing	199
Vocabulary Quiz	200
Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Mary Pope Osborne	
Teaching Page	201
Comprehension Quiz	202
Skill Development: Hyperbole	203
The Mysterious Mr. Lincoln Russell Freedman	
Teaching Page	204
Comprehension Quiz	205
Skill Development: Biography	206
Vocabulary Quiz	207
Casey at the Bat Ernest Lawrence Thayer	
Teaching Page	208
Comprehension Quiz	209
Skill Development: Suspense	210
Rikki-tikki-tavi Rudyard Kipling	
Teaching Page	211
Comprehension Quiz	212
Skill Development: Setting	213
Vocabulary Quiz	214
Unit Five Vocabulary Test	215
Unit Five Objective and Essay Test	217
Unit Five Writing Prompts and Projects	219
Unit Six On the Edge	
<hr/>	
Unit Six Differentiated Instruction	221
Introducing Unit Six	223
Unit Six Vocabulary	224
Unit Six Selections	
On Being Seventeen, Bright, and Unable to Read David Raymond	
Teaching Page	226
Comprehension Quiz	227
Skill Development: Writer's Purpose	228
The Tell-Tale Heart Edgar Allan Poe	
Teaching Page	229
Comprehension Quiz	231
Skill Development: Mood	232
Vocabulary Quiz	233
Southbound on the Freeway May Swenson	
Teaching Page	234
Comprehension Quiz	235
Skill Development: Speaker	236
All Summer in a Day Ray Bradbury	
Teaching Page	237
Comprehension Quiz	238
Skill Development: Conflict	239
Vocabulary Quiz	240



The Cremation of Sam McGee Robert Service	
Teaching Page	241
Comprehension Quiz	242
Skill Development: Diction	243
from <i>Frozen Man</i> David Getz	
Teaching Page	244
Comprehension Quiz	245
Skill Development: KWL Chart	246
The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street Rod Serling	
Teaching Page	247
Comprehension Quiz	248
Skill Development: Jargon	249
Vocabulary Quiz	250
Where the Sidewalk Ends Shel Silverstein	
Teaching Page	251
Comprehension Quiz	252
Skill Development: Fantasy	253
Unit Six Vocabulary Test	254
Unit Six Objective and Essay Test	256
Unit Two Writing Prompts and Projects	258
Writing Workshops	
Writing About Literature	260
Process of Writing About Literature: Writing a Book Review	263
Writing a Book Review: Six Traits of Writing Rubric	265
Writing to Inform and Explain	267
Process of Writing to Inform: Writing a Recipe	269
Writing a Recipe: Six Traits of Writing Rubric	270
Writing to Persuade	272
Process of Writing to Persuade: Writing a Persuasive Letter	274
Writing a Persuasive Letter: Six Traits of Writing Rubric	275
General Standards and Criteria for Project Evaluation	278
Answer Key	279

Introduction

Encouraging Successful Readers

It surely comes as no surprise to you that successful readers are engaged readers: They are actively involved in their own reading process. They monitor their own understanding, relate deeply to the texts they read, and use what they already know to understand new material.

In their interactions with text, good readers are not only learning about the information they are reading, they are developing the literacy and thinking skills necessary to become lifelong readers.

Themes helps readers learn about subjects relevant to this age group through the reading of short stories, poems, fables, tales, dramas, and nonfiction. The selections the students read were assembled to encourage not only an understanding and appreciation of literature but also a passion for reading in general. Students who enjoy reading short stories learn to enjoy reading news items about social issues as well as scientific essays. In addition, the literary skills pages (Understanding Fiction, Understanding Nonfiction, Understanding Poetry, and so on) help students develop a deeper appreciation for the structure and meaning of literature. The reading skills pages offered in this *Teaching and Assessment Resources* book call upon higher level and creative thinking from students.

Second Language Learners

Classrooms today are comprised of a rich variety of heritages and languages reflecting the diverse cultural nature of our society. The terms English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) were developed to recognize those students whose heritage language is other than English. These English Language Learners (ELL) enter the classroom at various English language levels. They are faced with challenging content in an unfamiliar language. An appropriate instructional model must be in place for these students. Instruction is designed to meet the needs of ELL students by providing materials based on their level of English proficiency.

When developing instruction using ELL strategies, it is important to remain sensitive to the student's first language and cultural background while also encouraging the acquisition of English in a nonthreatening and productive learning environment. Students' individual learning styles and preferences must also be considered.

Using the Matrix Program

As an integral part of the Perfection Learning Matrix Program, *Themes* offers students in your classroom the opportunity to learn and grow together. ELL students, challenged students, gifted students, students who are working at grade level, and students with differing learning styles can all find success reading selections from the same books—along with supplementary texts that can be combined specifically for each individual.

The use of graphic organizers, visual mapping, charts, tables, and Venn diagrams benefit students of all levels. Cooperative learning groups can also help all students—offering support and encouragement to ELL students, a chance for on-level students to learn by helping others, and a way for gifted students to discover new ways to enhance the teaching process. Following are suggestions for whole-class involvement with *Themes*.

Before Students Read the Selection

All students will benefit by going over the vocabulary highlighted for any given selection in the anthology. ELL students, in particular, may have trouble reading context clues, understanding idioms, or relating to the themes or plots of many stories. Devise ways of having struggling students pair up with others to work together on vocabulary lists. Have them act out meanings or share their own learning techniques. Ask gifted students to think of ways to make vocabulary learning engaging and rewarding. Try some of the techniques listed below.

- Encourage communication among all students in your class. ELL students gain much by listening to their peers, and all students gain by hearing their classmates' opinions, interpretations, and experiences.
- Use prereading techniques with the entire class, such as asking them to make predictions based on the title of and accompanying image for a selection. Some images may not be familiar to ELL students. Be sure that images and their relationship to the content are discussed.
- Use Previewing pages in the student book to help connect the student to the reading and to focus on a particular literary skill. Go over the important vocabulary words found in the selection.
- As you guide students, be sure to restate, expand, paraphrase, repeat, and speak slowly and clearly.
- Use graphic organizers.
- Use gestures, visuals, and concrete examples to illuminate text, and ask students to help you with this.
- Use the Differentiated Instruction chart at the beginning of each unit to help focus understanding based on your students' various learning styles and challenges.

As Students Read the Selection

Remind students that they must be active readers. If necessary, go over the six strategies for active reading or give those who need some extra help copies of the Active Reading Strategies found on page 20 and the Active Reading Model on page 21 of this book. If students need practice in reading actively, have them work on the Active Reading Practice reproducibles that begin on page 22. Additionally, you may help ELL students in the following ways.

- If any students seem puzzled by literary terms referred to (such as *plot*, *theme*, *author's perspective*, *main ideas*, and so on), go over the appropriate ones before they begin the selection.
- Work with students to answer the Reviewing questions that follow each selection. You may wish to share some of these before they begin reading in order to help them focus on important aspects of the selection.
- Advise students to refer to the vocabulary and footnotes that accompany the text.
- Encourage students to take notes and jot down ideas and responses in their journals as they read.
- Record selections for those students who need auditory input. Parents or students may be willing to help with this.
- Allow ELL students the extended time they may need to read through the text and process their thoughts and responses.

After Students Read the Selection

Always be available to discuss the selection after students finish reading. Encourage them to voice their concerns, impressions, or any elements of the selection that sparked their imaginations. To keep track of students' progress, use the many pages in this resource provided for each selection. Discussion questions appear on the first page, followed by comprehension, skill development, and vocabulary worksheets. Also provided are objective and essay tests and vocabulary tests. In addition, the strategies below should be of help to you.

- Encourage students to express personal reactions through written, oral, or multi-modal activities.
- Arrange students in cooperative groups to complete various worksheets.
- Offer ELL students the opportunity to answer questions on the tests provided in this resource book orally rather than in writing.
- Have students answer in writing the Reviewing questions that follow each selection.
- Apply the suggestions found in the Differentiated Instruction charts to further aid students' understanding of the text they have read.

Features of the Student Book

Units The selections in *Themes* are grouped into six theme-based units. The book offers a mixture of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry (and two plays) grouped around themes familiar to young people. The opening pages of each unit combine a strong visual image relevant to the theme and a quotation relevant to the theme.

Building Vocabulary Each unit begins with a one- to three-page vocabulary skill builder. Depending on the student, this element will be a review or an introduction to the concepts of base and root words, affixes, contextual clues, synonyms, antonyms, dictionary use, and analogies.

Understanding a Genre Appearing throughout the book are six one-page essays that explain fundamental aspects of the literary genres of fiction, poetry (I and II), nonfiction, drama, and folktales. These essays give students a basic understanding of how each genre “works” and show how it compares and contrasts with the other forms of writing.

Previewing Each selection begins with a **Reading Connection**, which offers background information about the writer, subject, theme, or other topic related to the reading. A **Skill Focus** calls attention to some literary element or rhetorical technique present in the selection. Finally, a **Vocabulary Builder** lists vocabulary words that students may find challenging or unfamiliar.

Footnotes and Vocabulary Words with which students are unlikely to be familiar are footnoted in the text and defined at the bottom of selection pages. Vocabulary words (challenging words of a more general usage) are highlighted in bold type in the text and defined in the margin. These vocabulary words, along with reproducible vocabulary quizzes, are found in this *Teaching and Assessment Resources* book.

Reviewing After reading each selection, students are offered discussion questions as well as a writing assignment. Some of the discussion questions address more than one selection, giving students the opportunity to make thematic and stylistic connections. A short biography of the author of the selection appears at the bottom of this page.

Features of the *Teaching and Assessment Resources*

Teaching the Skills On **pages 16–19** you will find a chart, arranged unit by unit, that identifies:

- the theme of each unit and its particular focus
- the page (or pages) devoted to vocabulary building and their focus
- the broad literary genre that is the focus of the unit
- the title, author, and genre of each selection
- the literary skill focus of each selection
- the writing product students will produce for each selection

Active Reading Strategies, found on **page 20**, is a student handout that explains the six strategies that good readers use and how to apply them.

Active Reading Model, found on **page 21**, shows how an active reader would go about reading the selection “What’s the Worst That Could Happen?” by Bruce Coville.

Active Reading Practice pages offer a fiction piece, “Eleven” by Sandra Cisneros (**pages 22–24**), and a nonfiction piece, “Elephants Cross Under River, Making Hearts Rise” by Michael Kaufman (**pages 25–27**). Students begin by answering questions, and then continue reading and writing their own questions and comments.

Differentiated Instruction Ideas for teaching students who learn in various ways are offered for each selection in the book. The Differentiated Instruction chart appears at the beginning of each unit. Creative ideas are offered for helping visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners as well as ELL and struggling students. In addition, each selection is rated as *Easy*, *Average*, or *Challenging*.

Introducing the Unit Ways to address the theme presented in each unit of the student book are offered in these resource pages. In addition, tips for helping students with the Building Vocabulary pages are provided, as well as activities that enhance an understanding of the genre being investigated.

Unit Vocabulary Handouts All of the unit’s vocabulary words are listed by selection title on reproducible handouts. Pass out these lists to help students prepare for the vocabulary tests.

Teaching Page Each selection is supported with a teaching page. This resource page provides the following elements:

- a selection summary
- vocabulary words and definitions
- discussion questions from the pupil book and possible answers to these questions
- suggestions for helping students with the writing assignment

Comprehension Quiz A comprehension quiz is provided for each selection in the student book. The quiz contains five short answer questions and one writing prompt. These pages are intended to check students’ literal understanding of the selection.

For Struggling or ELL Learners The comprehension quiz provides a quick way of checking that students have understood the basic events and themes of the selection. Students may benefit from working in small groups to answer the questions.

For On-Level Learners These students should be able to answer the quiz questions without additional help.

For Advanced Learners You should not have to use this resource with advanced students. However, you may wish to challenge them to write their own tests that can then be taken by other members of their group.

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Skill Development Page The skill development page is offered to help students in their understanding of literary and reading skills. Students use a graphic organizer to analyze, investigate, or evaluate a specific literary technique used in the selection or a reading skill necessary to the understanding of the selection.

For Struggling or ELL Learners These students may need help understanding some of the instructions that accompany the graphic organizers. You may want to go over the information and the directions with them before they begin. These pages are very helpful in imparting the literary knowledge and reading skills necessary for these students to understand works of literature.

For On-Level Learners These students should be able to answer the questions without additional help, particularly those who learn visually. If any of your average learners seem to have trouble with a particular Skill Development page, team them up with students who are adept at these kinds of activities.

For Advanced Learners Advanced students should benefit from the literary focus of most of these pages, but many will not need to work on the reading skills covered. Literary techniques such as symbolism, sensory details, and poetic techniques will probably augment their understanding of literature as well as their own writing skills. You can pick and choose which pages your advanced students will best benefit from using.

Vocabulary Quiz Any selection with a vocabulary list of five or more words has a one-page assessment of the students' understanding of these words. Students match words to definitions or choose the correct vocabulary word to complete sentences.

For Struggling or ELL Learners The vocabulary quiz is a good way to check that students have understood the important vocabulary used in the selection. Have these students work in pairs or with an advanced student to learn any words that they do not understand.

For On-Level Learners These students should be able to answer the questions without additional help, however, if there is a list that seems to you particularly challenging, have them work together to use these words in sentences.

For Advanced Learners You will probably want to give your advanced students only those pages with challenging word lists. Advanced learners may benefit from helping struggling or ELL students learn the vocabulary in these selections by devising vocabulary "bees," vocabulary flashcards, or other games to play with them.

Vocabulary and Comprehension Assessments Two tests accompany each of the six units: a 25-point vocabulary test based on the unit vocabulary words and a 25-point reading comprehension test with 20 objective questions and a 5-point short essay prompt.

For Struggling or ELL Learners Both of these tests are a good way to check that these students have understood important elements in the selections. You may want to offer support by reading the tests with them, helping with any questions they have, or giving them extra time to finish. After taking the test, have students work with an advanced student to discuss the items they missed and make corrections.

For On-Level Learners These students should be able to do well on these tests without additional help; however, if there seem to be problematic areas, discuss this with the students and allow them to go over their tests.

For Advanced Learners Advanced students will probably have no trouble completing these tests successfully. Ask for volunteers to help struggling students go over items they missed on the tests and help them make corrections.

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Writing Prompts and Projects At the end of each unit there are two pages of writing prompts and project ideas divided into these five categories: *Writing About Literature*, *Writing Nonfiction*, *Creative Writing*, *Writing Research Papers*, and *Presentations and Projects*.

Writing Workshops There are three workshops at the end of book dedicated to in-depth academic writing: *Writing About Literature*, *Writing to Inform and Explain*, and *Writing to Persuade*. After each workshop, a one-page rubric based on the Six Traits of Writing is provided.

General Standards and Criteria for Project Evaluation Adapt this rubric to help you assign and assess student work.

Skills Chart

Unit One—Who Am I?

Unit Elements

- **Theme:** The quest of the individual adolescent; what are his or her concerns, values, beliefs, interests, and worries?
- **Building Vocabulary:** Base Words and Roots (p. 10–11)
- **Genre Study:** Understanding Fiction (p. 12); Understanding Poetry I (p. 44)

SELECTION	GENRE FOCUS	SKILL FOCUS	WRITING FOCUS
What's the Worst That Could Happen? <i>Bruce Coville</i>	short story	humor	anecdote
Eleven <i>Sandra Cisneros</i>	short story	simile	description
Charles <i>Shirley Jackson</i>	short story	inference	writing with adverbs
I'm Nobody! Who Are You? <i>Emily Dickinson</i> / Primer Lesson <i>Carl Sandburg</i>	poems	personification	poem of direct address
Change <i>Charlotte Zolotow</i>	poem	repetition	cloze poem about the seasons
Tuesday of the Other June <i>Norma Fox Mazer</i>	short story	turning point	letter of advice

Unit Two—Family Matters

Unit Elements

- **Theme:** Young people experience their families as sources of both comfort and conflict.
- **Building Vocabulary:** Prefixes (p. 68)
- **Genre Study:** Understanding Nonfiction (p. 96); Understanding Drama (p. 114)

SELECTION	GENRE FOCUS	SKILL FOCUS	WRITING FOCUS
The Circuit <i>Francisco Jiménez</i>	short story	foreign words	comparison/contrast
My Father's Hands Held Mine <i>Norman H. Russell</i> / Knoxville, Tennessee <i>Nikki Giovanni</i>	poems	main idea/theme	journal entry
<i>The All-American Slurp</i> <i>Leney Namioka</i>	short story	tone	dialogue

Power of the Powerless: A Brother's Lesson <i>Christopher de Vinck</i>	nonfiction	persuasion	memoir
Beneath the Cherry Trees from <i>Marley and Me</i> <i>John Grogan</i>	nonfiction	anecdote	story
These Shoes of Mine <i>Gary Soto</i>	drama	reading plays	character analysis

Unit Three—Best of Friends?

Unit Elements

- **Theme:** Young people finding meaningful friendships
- **Building Vocabulary:** Suffixes (p. 128)

SELECTION	GENRE FOCUS	SKILL FOCUS	WRITING FOCUS
The Dog of Pompeii <i>Louis Untermeyer</i>	short story	fact/fiction	newspaper account
Elephants Cross Under River, Making Hearts Rise <i>Michael Kaufman</i>	nonfiction	titles	personal response
Thank You, M'am <i>Langston Hughes</i>	short story	making connections	thank-you letter
Noodle Soup for Nincompoops <i>Ellen Wittlinger</i>	short story	first-person narrator	epigrams
The Walrus and the Carpenter <i>Lewis Carroll</i>	poem	consonance	nonsense poem
What Do Fish Have to Do with Anything? <i>Avi</i>	short story	symbol	explanation
Homeless <i>Anna Quindlen</i>	nonfiction	contrast	opinion essay
from <i>Reflections on the Civil War</i> <i>Bruce Catton</i>	nonfiction	drawing conclusions	informative report

Unit Four—Decisions, Decisions

Unit Elements

- **Theme:** Life offers many challenging choices. How does one decide?
- **Building Vocabulary:** Context Clues (pp. 222–224)
- **Genre Study:** Understanding Folktales (p. 240); Understanding Poetry II (p. 264)

SELECTION	GENRE FOCUS	SKILL FOCUS	WRITING FOCUS
President Cleveland, Where Are You? <i>Robert Cormier</i>	short story	cause-and-effect relationships	proposal
Shrewd Todie and Lyzer the Miser <i>Isaac Bashevis Singer</i>	folktale	relevant details	modern folktale
The Princess and the Tin Box <i>James Thurber</i>	fable	moral	moral
The Curious Treasure of Captain Kidd <i>Alvin Schwartz</i>	nonfiction	factual accounts	biography
The Highwayman <i>Alfred Noyes</i>	poem	rhythm	imagery
Ballad of Birmingham <i>Dudley Randall</i>	poem	irony	comparison
from <i>Woodsong</i> <i>Gary Paulsen</i>	nonfiction	visual mapping	cause-effect essay

Unit Five—To Be a Hero

Unit Elements

- **Theme:** What makes a hero? Are they born, made, or thrust into the role?
- **Building Vocabulary:** Multiple Meanings of Words (p. 286)

SELECTION	GENRE FOCUS	SKILL FOCUS	WRITING FOCUS
Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima <i>Walter Dean Myers</i>	nonfiction	characterization	character sketch
The Living Kuan-yin <i>Carol Kendall and Yao-Wen Li</i>	folktale	prediction	analysis
Where the Girl Rescued Her Brother <i>Joseph Bruchac</i>	legend	imagery	comparison
Paul Revere's Ride <i>Henry Wadsworth Longfellow</i>	poem	previewing	timeline
Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind <i>Mary Pope Osborne</i>	tall tale	hyperbole	"autobiographical" tall tale

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The Mysterious Mr. Lincoln <i>Russell Freedman</i>	nonfiction	biography	photo essay
Casey at the Bat <i>Ernest Lawrence Thayer</i>	poem	suspense	parody
Rikki-tikki-tavi <i>Rudyard Kipling</i>	short story	setting	children's story

Unit Six—On the Edge

Unit Elements

- **Theme:** An investigation of the many ways in which humans are tested or how they stretch their own abilities or imagination.
- **Building Vocabulary:** Analogies (pp. 366–367)

SELECTION	GENRE FOCUS	SKILL FOCUS	WRITING FOCUS
On Being Seventeen, Bright, and Unable to Read <i>David Raymond</i>	nonfiction	writer's purpose	reading
The Tell-Tale Heart <i>Edgar Allan Poe</i>	short story	mood	atmosphere/mood
Southbound on the Freeway <i>May Swenson</i>	poem	speaker	pro/con essay
All Summer in a Day <i>Ray Bradbury</i>	short story	conflict	prediction
The Cremation of Sam McGee <i>Robert Service</i>	poem	diction	literary opinion
from <i>Frozen Man</i> <i>David Getz</i>	nonfiction	KWL chart	fact into fiction
The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street <i>Rod Serling</i>	drama	jargon	screenplay
Where the Sidewalk Ends <i>Shel Silverstein</i>	poem	fantasy	fantasy poem

Active Reading Strategies

Active Reading means being an interested and focused reader. It involves thinking about what you are going to read, what you are reading, and what you have just read. Use the information below to become an active reader.

Pre-reading

Before you even begin reading, ask yourself, “Why am I reading this? What do I hope to learn from it?” Look at the title, and think about what it might tell you about the text. Skim over the pages, looking for subheadings, captions, sidebars, or illustrations that give you clues about what you are going to read.

During Reading

If you own the book you are reading, you should highlight, underline, and annotate as you read. This emphasizes the information and helps transmit it to your brain. You can also easily review these important points later. Always be sure to monitor your reading by constantly mulling over the information, images, impressions, and so on that you are receiving from the text. The best way to do this is to use the six Active Reading strategies outlined below. The more you employ these strategies, the more help they will offer. They should become second nature to you.

- **Questioning** *Ask questions that come to mind as you read.*
Continually questioning the text will help you stay alert and interested in what you are reading. As your questions are answered, think of new ones.
- **Predicting** *Use what has happened to guess what will happen next.*
As you read, keep guessing as to what will happen next. Think about what the characters are up to, where the plot is going, and what the author will do next. Keep making predictions right up to the end of the reading.
- **Clarifying** *Clear up any confusion about the text and resolve any questions.*
If you have trouble understanding something you have read, clear it up right away. Go back and reread the passage until you understand it. Think about the main idea of the passage. Continually clarify what the author is telling you throughout your reading.
- **Connecting** *Compare the text with your own experience.*
Connect what you read to something you have read, seen, or experienced yourself. Ask yourself, “What does this remind me of?” Visualize the information—try to see it in your mind. When you connect with the characters and situations you read about, your reading is more meaningful.
- **Summarizing** *Review what has happened so far.*
Every now and again as you read, stop to review what you have read so far. Determine what you know, what you think you know, and what has changed about what you thought you knew.
- **Evaluating** *Form opinions and arrive at conclusions about your reading.*
Make judgments as you read. Use your common sense as well as the evidence in the text to arrive at sound opinions and valid conclusions.

After Reading

When you finish reading, stop to think about what you have read. Go over the entire piece in your head. Try to remember the main points and the relevant details. Use a response journal to jot down your feelings about what you’ve read.

Active Reading Practice: Fiction

Eleven by Sandra Cisneros

Use Active Reading strategies to answer the questions on these pages. Write your own Active Reading observations on the lines provided and mark the text as you read.

What they don't understand about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you're eleven, you're also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two, and one. And when you wake up on your eleventh birthday you expect to feel eleven, but you don't. You open your eyes and everything's just like yesterday, only it's today. And you don't feel eleven at all. You feel like you're still ten. And you are—underneath the year that makes you eleven.

Like some days you might say something stupid, and that's the part of you that's still ten. Or maybe some days you might need to sit on your mama's lap because you're scared, and that's the part of you that's five. And maybe one day when you're all grown up maybe you will need to cry like if you're three, and that's okay. That's what I tell Mama when she's sad and needs to cry. Maybe she's feeling three.

Because the way you grow old is kind of like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one. That's how being eleven years old is.

You don't feel eleven. Not right away. It takes a few days, weeks even, sometimes even months before you say Eleven when they ask you. And you don't feel smart eleven, not until you're almost twelve. That's the way it is.

Only today I wish I didn't have only eleven years rattling inside me like pennies in a tin Band-Aid box. Today I wish I was one hundred and two instead of eleven because if I was one hundred and two I'd have known what to say when Mrs. Price put the red sweater on my desk. I would've known how to tell her it wasn't mine instead of just sitting there with that look on my face and nothing coming out of my mouth.

"Whose is this?" Mrs. Price says, and she holds the red sweater up in the air for all the class to see. "Whose? It's been sitting in the coatroom for a month."

"Not mine," says everybody. "Not me."

← **Connecting:** Do you agree with the author's thoughts about birthdays?

← **Clarifying:** If eleven years are like rattling pennies, what does the Band-Aid box represent?

"It has to belong to somebody," Mrs. Price keeps saying, but nobody can remember. It's an ugly sweater with red plastic buttons and a collar and sleeves all stretched out like you could use it for a jump rope. It's maybe a thousand years old and even if it belonged to me I wouldn't say so.

Maybe because I'm skinny, maybe because she doesn't like me, that stupid Sylvia Saldivar says, "I think it belongs to Rachel." An ugly sweater like that, all raggedy and old, but Mrs. Price believes her. Mrs. Price takes the sweater and puts it right on my desk, but when I open my mouth nothing comes out.

"That's not, I don't, you're not ... Not mine," I finally say in a little voice that was maybe me when I was four.

"Of course it's yours," Mrs. Price says. "I remember you wearing it once." Because she's older and the teacher, she's right and I'm not.

Not mine, not mine, not mine, but Mrs. Price is already turning to page thirty-two, and math problem number four. I don't know why but all of a sudden I'm feeling sick inside, like the part of me that's three wants to come out of my eyes, only I squeeze them shut tight and bite down on my teeth real hard and try to remember today I am eleven, eleven. Mama is making a cake for me tonight, and when Papa comes home everybody will sing Happy birthday, happy birthday to you.

But when the sick feeling goes away and I open my eyes, the red sweater's still sitting there like a big mountain. I move my pencil and books and eraser as far from it as possible. I even move my chair a little to the right. Not mine, not mine, not mine.

In my head I'm thinking how long till lunchtime, how long till I can take the red sweater and throw it over the schoolyard fence, or leave it hanging on a parking meter, or bunch it up into a little ball and toss it in the alley. Except when math period ends, Mrs. Price says loud and in front of everybody, "Now Rachel, that's enough," because she sees I've shoved the red sweater to the tippy-tip corner of my desk and it's hanging all over the edge like a waterfall, but I don't care.

"Rachel," Mrs. Price says. She says it like she's getting mad. "You put that sweater on right now and no more nonsense."

"But it's not—"

"Now!" Mrs. Price says.

This is when I wish I wasn't eleven, because all the years inside of me—ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, and one—are pushing at the back of my eyes when I put one arm through one sleeve of the sweater that smells like cottage cheese, and then the

Text Interaction: Underline words that help you "see" the sweater through the narrator's eyes.

← **Predicting:** Will focusing on her party help Rachel calm down?

← **Questioning:** Does this teacher have something against Rachel?

other arm through the other and stand there with my arms apart like if the sweater hurts me and it does, all itchy and full of germs that aren't even mine.

That's when everything I've been holding in since this morning since when Mrs. Price put the sweater on my desk, finally lets go, and all of a sudden I'm crying in front of everybody. I wish I was invisible but I'm not. I'm eleven and it's my birthday today and I'm crying like I'm three in front of everybody. I put my head down on the desk and bury my face in my stupid clown-sweater arms. My face all hot and spit coming out of my mouth because I can't stop the little animal noises from coming out of me, until there aren't any more tears left in my eyes, and it's just my body shaking like when you have the hiccups, and my whole head hurts like when you drink milk too fast.

But the worst part is right before the bell rings for lunch. That stupid Phyllis Lopez, who is even dumber than Sylvia Saldivar, says she remembers the red sweater is hers! I take it off right away and give it to her, and only Mrs. Price pretends like everything's okay.

Today I'm eleven. There's a cake Mama's making for tonight, and when Papa comes home from work we'll eat it. There'll be candles and presents, and everybody will sing Happy birthday, happy birthday to you, Rachel, only it's too late.

I'm eleven today. I'm eleven, ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, and one, but I wish I was one hundred and two. I wish I was anything but eleven, because I want today to be far away already, far away like a runaway balloon, like a tiny o in the sky, so tiny-tiny you have to close your eyes to see it.

← **Summarizing:** What has happened in the story so far?

← **Evaluating:** Does the narrator feel she is too young to reason with a teacher?

Unit One: Who Am I?

Differentiated Instruction

Talk to students about the idea of composing a verbal photograph. Give them examples using different forms of written material, including poems, songs, and personal essays. Ask students what kind of topics and words they would use to “paint” a literary portrait of themselves.

Differentiated Classroom Tip:

With more challenging selections, assign different students to investigate different aspects of the work (the plot, the theme, the conflicts, and so on). Read the selection aloud to the students, perhaps asking them to take various parts. Once you have read the selection together, have students share what they discovered in their investigation with other members of the class.

NAME OF SELECTION	TYPE OF LEARNER			
	Auditory	Visual	Kinesthetic	ELL/Struggling
What’s the Worst That Could Happen? (short story) pp. 14–27 Average	Assign students to read various parts of the story aloud. Have them discuss the methods the author uses to make the story comical.	Have students draw a comic strip or storyboard that shows the sequence of events in the school play.	Ask students to script and act out the scene from the play. Be sure to include a Hostess cupcake.	Help students understand the use of exaggeration and sarcasm when they occur.
Eleven (short story) pp. 30–33 Easy	Read the story aloud to students. Discuss the way in which Mrs. Price talks to Rachel, as well as the nature of Rachel’s responses.	Ask students to recall the worst thing they have ever been made to wear and to draw a picture of it that conveys their distaste.	Bring an old, ratty sweater to class and ask students to try it on, imagining the feelings of Rachel in the story. Ask them to list what they see, feel, and smell.	Talk to students about the motivations for the main characters’ behavior. Why doesn’t Rachel stand up for herself?
Charles (short story) pp. 36–42 Challenging	Narrate the story, but have students take on the role of Laurie and other characters. Pay attention to the words, tone, and gestures that Laurie uses to cover up his lies.	Ask students to draw pictures of Laurie (AKA Charles) acting out in his kindergarten class. Ask them if the pictures remind them of anything that ever happened to them.	Have students create an impression of Laurie/Charles using only facial expressions and movement.	Discuss the narrative technique of the narrator who looks back and tells a story set in the past (the reminiscence narrator).



NAME OF SELECTION	TYPE OF LEARNER			
	Auditory	Visual	Kinesthetic	ELL/Struggling
I'm Nobody! Who Are You? (poem) p. 46 Challenging Primer Lesson (poem) p. 47 Average	Find and play some recordings of Dickinson and Sandburg poems that will give students a feel for these two distinctive poets.	Ask students to provide a visual image that could appear in a book beside either of these poems.	Have pairs of students read the poems aloud to each other. Ask them to consider why the speaker in each poem addresses the audience directly.	Discuss the topic of self-worth, and how it plays into each speaker's advice.
Change (poem) p. 50 Average	Divide the students into three groups and have them read the poem aloud in rounds to convey its theme of "life cycles." Discuss how people may associate each season with various meanings.	Have students collect photographs of all the seasons from magazines and the Internet. Ask them to list words that bring to mind their favorite season as well as their least favorite season.	Ask students to make a colorful collage of visual images of their favorite season, using pictures they have collected from various sources.	Ask students if they ever stop to think about the ways in which they are changing. Do the passing seasons help them to mark their own changes? Are there stages they miss?
Tuesday of the Other June (short story) pp. 54–64 Average	Have pairs of students read aloud the scenes in the story between the narrator and the Other June. Ask them it feels to be on both ends of the power struggle.	Ask students to paint or sculpt with clay an expressionistic piece of art about "bullying."	Direct students to role play any of the bullying scenes from the story, taking turns being the bully and the victim to get a sense of the feelings each girl experiences.	Ask students if they've ever experienced being bullied. What were the circumstances, and what brought it to an end? What advice would they give to both victims and bullies?

Introducing Unit One: Who Am I?

The Theme (p. 8)

In this unit, students will read selections that have something to say about the process of self-discovery. Each selection revolves around the question of identity—something many young people struggle with today. Trying to make an impression, struggling to stand on one’s own, trying out a new persona, reveling in one’s uniqueness, standing up to adversity: these are the challenges explored in Unit One.

- Ask students to talk about the character traits they admire in others. Follow this up with a discussion of the character traits they feel they possess, and how they feel about these characteristics.
- Ask students to bring to class an object that symbolizes who they are and to discuss in what way it represents them.
- Read the quote from Shakespeare on page 8 in the student book. Ask students to find other meaningful quotes about self-awareness and self-discovery.

Building Vocabulary (pp. 10–11)

Go over these pages with students to be sure they understand the difference between a **base word** and a **root word**. Supply additional examples of both from the words found in the selections they will read in the unit.

- Write the base words on page 11 in the student book on the chalkboard, and ask students to build new words from these (such as *freely*, *knowledgeable*, *knowingly*, *worthwhile*, *exploratory*, and so on).
- Create a large chart like the one below. Encourage students to use their dictionaries to find Greek and Latin roots of English words. Have them add these words to the chart throughout the year.

GREEK AND LATIN ROOTS			
English Words	Latin Root	Greek Root	Meaning
bicycle cyclone motorcycle encyclopedia		kyklos	wheel, circle, ring
dictate dictionary diction predict	dic/dict		to say; to speak

Understanding Genre

Understanding Fiction (p. 12)

Ask students to recommend a passage from a favorite novel or short story that will be read aloud in class. After the reading, discuss with students how character, setting, and theme affect the plot.

Understanding Poetry (p. 44)

Have students recite or choose stanzas from favorite poems. Have classmates identify the poetry as either **rhymed verse** or **free verse**.

Unit One Vocabulary

Watch for the following words as you read the selections in the unit. Record your own vocabulary words and definition on the blank lines.

What's the Worst That Could Happen?

pages 14–27

baffled puzzled; confused

barbarian uncivilized

bogus false; not genuine

clenches tightens

delusion fantasy; illusion

eloquent expressive

fiasco disaster

improvisation acting without a script or rehearsals

repulsed disguised

staggers moves unsteadily

theory idea; belief

Eleven pages 30–33

Charles pages 36–42

cynically doubting the motives of others

deprived had things taken away

elaborately taking pains to do something perfectly

insolently rudely; without respect

maneuvered moved carefully

raucous noisy

renounced gave up; rejected

scornfully with disrespect

simultaneously together

unsettling upsetting; disturbing

I'm Nobody! Who Are You? / Primer

Lesson pages 46–47

Change pages 50–51

Tuesday of the Other June pages 54–64

bureau piece of bedroom furniture with drawers

crest the top or peak

droning speaking in a boring or dull manner

frisky lively; playful

mocked made fun of

slink creep; sneak

tenant someone who rents a place to live

torment torture

trouble-shooters people who solve problems

wheezed made a gasping sound as if struggling for
breath

Summary

A young girl's eleventh birthday is spoiled by her teacher's classroom humiliation. Pushed to wear an old worn-out sweater that has been abandoned in the cloakroom, Rachel breaks down in tears in front of her classmates.

Discussing the Selection

1. According to Rachel, the narrator of this story, why is being eleven so hard? *Answers will vary. Rachel thinks that her younger self, with all its feelings and ways of behaving, never disappears. The layers of years can peel back and make her vulnerable when she least expects it.*
2. Describe Rachel and Mrs. Price, her teacher. Use specific details that show what each character is like. *Rachel seems to be insecure and immature for her age. She cries easily and believes that her younger self is buried but still present, waiting to ambush her. Mrs. Price is pushy and overbearing, forcing Rachel to wear a sweater that the girl clearly disowns. She is also abrupt and bossy, ordering Rachel to put on the sweater "Now!"*
3. Why doesn't Rachel stand up for herself? Explain what you would do in her situation. *Rachel is naturally timid. She has probably been taught that teachers have absolute power, thus her thoughts about Mrs. Price's demands: "She's older and the teacher, she's right and I'm not." Encourage students to explain how they would have handled the situation.*
4. What similes are used to describe growing old? Do they sound like comparisons an eleven-year-old girl might make? Decide whether you think they are effective. *Growing old is described as being "like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one." (p. 31) Some students may believe the author's comparisons are too sophisticated for an eleven-year-old. Most will agree that they think they are effective word-pictures to describe growing older.*

Writing a Description

Sandra Cisneros believes that her physical appearance ("skinny arms, crumpled clothes, crooked hair") at age eleven kept people from seeing her inner self. Before students start writing their self-description, they might enjoy drawing a picture of themselves at age eleven. Around the picture they can cluster some of the details (people, situations, settings and the like) that they want to remember from this year and include in their description. It might help them also to set the picture in a "typical" place that reminds them of that year—their bedroom, a local park, a favorite classroom. Settings also inspire good details that enrich a description.

Eleven

 by Sandra Cisneros, pages 30–33

Comprehension Quiz

Choose the best answer and write the letter on the blank.

- _____ 1. Rachel thinks that she will feel _____ on her birthday.
- A. like a teenager
 - B. ten and even younger
 - C. no different at all
 - D. like a real eleven-year-old
- _____ 2. To Rachel, growing older is like _____
- A. a carrot.
 - B. a garden.
 - C. a tree branch.
 - D. an onion.
- _____ 3. Mrs. Price tells Rachel to put on _____
- A. her winter coat.
 - B. a red sweater.
 - C. the classroom birthday hat.
 - D. her reading glasses.
- _____ 4. Rachel obeys Mrs. Price because she's older and _____
- A. wiser.
 - B. convincing.
 - C. charming.
 - D. must be right.
- _____ 5. When Mrs. Price finds out that she was wrong, she _____
- A. apologizes to Rachel.
 - B. pretends that everything is okay.
 - C. accuses Rachel of lying.
 - D. laughs off the whole incident.

6. Why does Rachel think growing older is not easy?

7. What do you think about Mrs. Price's actions in the classroom?

Eleven

 by Sandra Cisneros, pages 30–33

Skill Development: Simile

A simile is the comparison of one thing to another that uses the words *like* or *as*. In the story, “Eleven,” Sandra Cisneros uses similes to describe the process of growing older.

Directions: Use the chart below to examine the similes in the story. In the column on the left, list the similes. In the column on the right, write in your own words what Cisneros is trying to express by using this simile.

Simile	Meaning

I'm Nobody! Who Are You?

by Emily Dickinson, page 46

Poems

Primer Lesson by Carl Sandburg, page 47

Summary

The speaker of the first poem declares herself a “Nobody” who is uninterested in being like the “dreary Somebodies” who must bray their names in public all “the livelong June.”

The speaker of the second poem instructs the audience to avoid proud words because once such words are uttered, they can never be called back.

Discussing the Selections

1. Why is it “dreary” to be “Somebody,” according to the speaker of the Dickinson poem? *Dreary connotes tasks that are boring, repetitive, and unrewarding. To the speaker, the life of a Somebody would be completely unappealing and almost farcical, requiring one to expose one’s self in unpleasant public places (“the Bog!”) to whoever is in the vicinity.*
2. What is the “primer lesson” given by the speaker of the Sandburg poem? *The speaker issues a warning to avoid being proud and boastful because this kind of utterance can never be called back.*
3. How is personification used in both poems? Identify all of the words in each poem that give human characteristics to something nonhuman. *In the Dickinson poem, the Frog is implied to be a “public” figure, telling his “name” “to an admiring Bog!” He is made out to be faintly ridiculous and superficial, which are aspects not truly “frog-like.” In the Sandburg poem, “proud words” are personified throughout the poem. They are said to be “let . . . go,” like ambulatory human beings, and they are “not easy to call . . . back.” “They wear long boots, hard boots; they walk off proud; they can’t hear you calling—”*
4. Reread the information about free verse on page 44. How is each poem typical of this form of poetry? *Though the Dickinson poem contains rhyme (you/too, Frog/Bog), it is a good example of free verse because of how its dashes imply self-interruption and digression, common aspects of ordinary, informal speech. The beginning of some lines sound much like people actually talking: “Then there’s”*

“How dreary,” and “How public.” The exclamation points also imply informality. Sandburg, a major devotee of free verse, uses no rhymes at all in “Primer Lesson.” Instead, the poem consists of ordinary words used in everyday speech rhythms.

Writing a Poem

It might help students to do some prewriting before starting to write a poem of direct address, especially one with the unit theme: “Who Am I?” Students can:

- Brainstorm a list of their beliefs in four categories: family, school, community, and one category of their own choosing, such as friends, recreation, or religion.
- Narrow their list to three core beliefs.
- Find a compelling or persuasive way to state each belief (“Mistakes don’t matter so much as trying my best.”).

After they have given more thought to what they believe, they should have a better idea of “who they are.” Tell them that the direct address form, which uses “you,” will give their poem a more conversational and personal feeling.

I'm Nobody! Who Are You? by Emily Dickinson, page 46

Primer Lesson by Carl Sandburg, page 47

Comprehension Quiz

Choose the best answer and write the letter on the blank.

- _____ 1. Who is the "Nobody" in the Dickinson poem?
 A. the speaker of the poem.
 B. Emily Dickinson, the poet
 C. a publicity-hungry frog
 D. an admirer of Somebody
- _____ 2. In this same poem, who is Nobody speaking to?
 A. a Somebody
 B. the reader
 C. her admirers
 D. the poet
- _____ 3. It must be _____ to be Somebody, according to the Dickinson poem.
 A. dreary
 B. wonderful
 C. horrible
 D. admirable
- _____ 4. Carl Sandburg's poem is a lesson about the lasting nature of _____.
 A. proud words.
 B. charm and good manners.
 C. self-respect.
 D. humility.
- _____ 5. In Sandburg's poem, proud words are compared to _____.
 A. hard, steel bullets.
 B. harsh musical notes.
 C. long, hard boots.
 D. nasty tastes in the mouth.
6. What advice might the speaker of "I'm Nobody" give to the speaker of "The Primer Lesson"? And vice-versa?

7. What answers do these poets contribute to the question "Who Am I?"

I'm Nobody! Who Are You?

 by Emily Dickinson, page 46

Primer Lesson

 by Carl Sandburg, page 47

Skill Development: Personification

Personification is a literary device in which human traits are given to non-human things. In the poems "I'm Nobody! Who Are You?" and "Primer Lesson," the poets use personification to give shape to abstract ideas such as identity and pride.

Directions: Complete the table below to identify examples of personification in the two poems. In the first two columns, list the non-human thing and its human characteristics. In the third column, use your own words to describe what the poet is expressing.

	Non-Human Thing	Human Characteristics	Idea or Concept Expressed
I'm Nobody! Who Are You?			
Primer Lesson			