

5 Reading Passages & Response Pages

IDENTIFYING THEME

★ Easy to Follow
4 Step Reading
Process



INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Identifying Theme

Step 1: Read the Passage

Trixie & the Math

Trixie's math AND spelling tests were BOTH coming up tonight, did her homework, and even did flashcards with her brother. When she arrived, Trixie felt confident and almost...excited. After years of going to nail it!

But something went horribly wrong. On the spelling test, she came first. On the math test, her mind went blank. She couldn't remember the product, or area and perimeter. Trixie bowed her head while the teacher talked. When the period was over, Trixie was exhausted. As the line moved, Trixie said, "Trixie, can I talk to you?"

Trixie's heart sank, but she walked over and stood next to Mrs. Ingles. "Sweetie, it looks like you had a hard time on your tests tonight. I tried so hard!" Trixie started to sob.

"Trixie, look at me." Trixie looked at the kind face of her teacher. "I accept, but you have a learning disability. Letters and numbers are hard. I'll give you extra time on your tests, or even take them in another room." Trixie said, "I don't want to be different!" Trixie cried harder. "I feel like I'm not good enough."

Mrs. Ingles raised her eyebrow at Trixie. "What's the problem, Trixie? You're an artist. You have the fastest mile time in PE. And you're good at sports. With academic work, but you are far from stupid. Work with your learning disability, instead of ignoring it. Trixie honestly felt a little better. Maybe it was time to try. "Thank you, Mrs. Ingles, I'll think about it. I'll talk to you tomorrow, right?"

Step 2: Think About the Passage

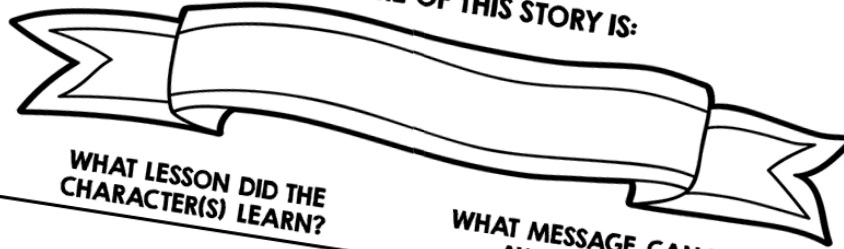
THINK ABOUT:

- What is the big idea?
- How did the characters change?
- What lesson did they learn?
- What problem...

Add a post-it note or jot directly in this box.

Step 3: Organize Your Thinking

THE THEME OF THIS STORY IS:



WHAT LESSON DID THE CHARACTER(S) LEARN?

WHAT MESSAGE CAN YOU TAKE AWAY FROM THE TEXT?

Step 4: Respond to the Text

1. In the first sentence of the passage, what is meant by the phrase, "his heart pounding?"
2. Why was Tobias helping the family, even though he was afraid?
3. What word would you use to describe the actions of the slaves?

4 STEP READING PROCESS

Each passages and response questions follow the same 4 Step Process.

Step 1: Read the Passage

Students can read the short reading passage.

Step 2: Think About the Passage

Students can use sticky notes or the blank squares to jot down their thoughts or questions about the text.

Step 3: Organize Your Thinking

Students can organize their thinking around the focus skill with the graphic organizer template.

Step 4: Respond to the Text

Students can answer 3 comprehension questions about the text.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE
Identifying Theme

Step 3: Organize Your Thinking

THE THEME OF THIS STORY

EVIDENCE #1

EVIDENCE #2

THE AUTHOR CHOSE THIS THEME BE

Step 4: Respond to the Text

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Step 2: Think About the Text

THINK ABOUT:

- What is the big idea?
- How did the characters change?
- What lesson did you learn?

Add a post-it note directly in this

IDENTIFYING THEME

Each text is written as a fictional story and will give students the opportunity to identify the theme or life lesson in the story.

Gives students practice identifying the theme.

- Students will get practice identifying the topic and then figuring out the theme.
- Students will consider how characters changed and the life lesson they learned.
- Students will look for evidence in the text to support their thinking about theme.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Identifying Theme Name: _____ Date: _____

Step 1: Read the Passage

Special Pen Pals

Carter sat in the morning sun, working on something at the breakfast table. His big sister Summer came in looking for food, as usual. "What are you doing, squirt?" she asked. "Mmmmm, working on a project," he replied. "I adopted a bunch of senior citizens living in an assisted living facility here in town. I'm trying to finish pen pal cards for them this morning."

Summer tossed her long, shiny hair. "Wow, that's so nice Carter." She turned to leave. Carter called her back. "Come watch this, Summer! This is why I am working on this project." Carter pulled up YouTube and played a video posted by a nurse at the home. Many of the seniors living there rarely got visitors and they sort of just stopped wanting to live. When HE had watched the video his heart broke and he started this pen pal relationship with several lonely seniors.

Summer was surprised she actually teared up watching the video. "That is so sad!" she wiped under her eye and turned to go back to her room. Carter laughed. "What are you going to do back in your room?"

"Just text and SnapChat and watch videos with my friends," Summer replied. "It's the weekend so I'm just going to chill." Carter raised his eyebrows at her and admonished, "Why don't you come work on this with me? It won't take long, and the more letters and cards the seniors get, the better. You can chill anytime." Now Summer felt like a jerk. I mean, she thought of herself as a good person who was kind to others, but her little brother was really being kind to total strangers! Total strangers who really needed a little bit of joy in life. "Sure, I can do that. Who should I write first?"

Step 2: Think About the Passage

THINK ABOUT:

- What is the big idea?
- How did the characters change?
- What lesson did they learn?
- What problem or challenge did they overcome?
- How can you personally connect to this text?

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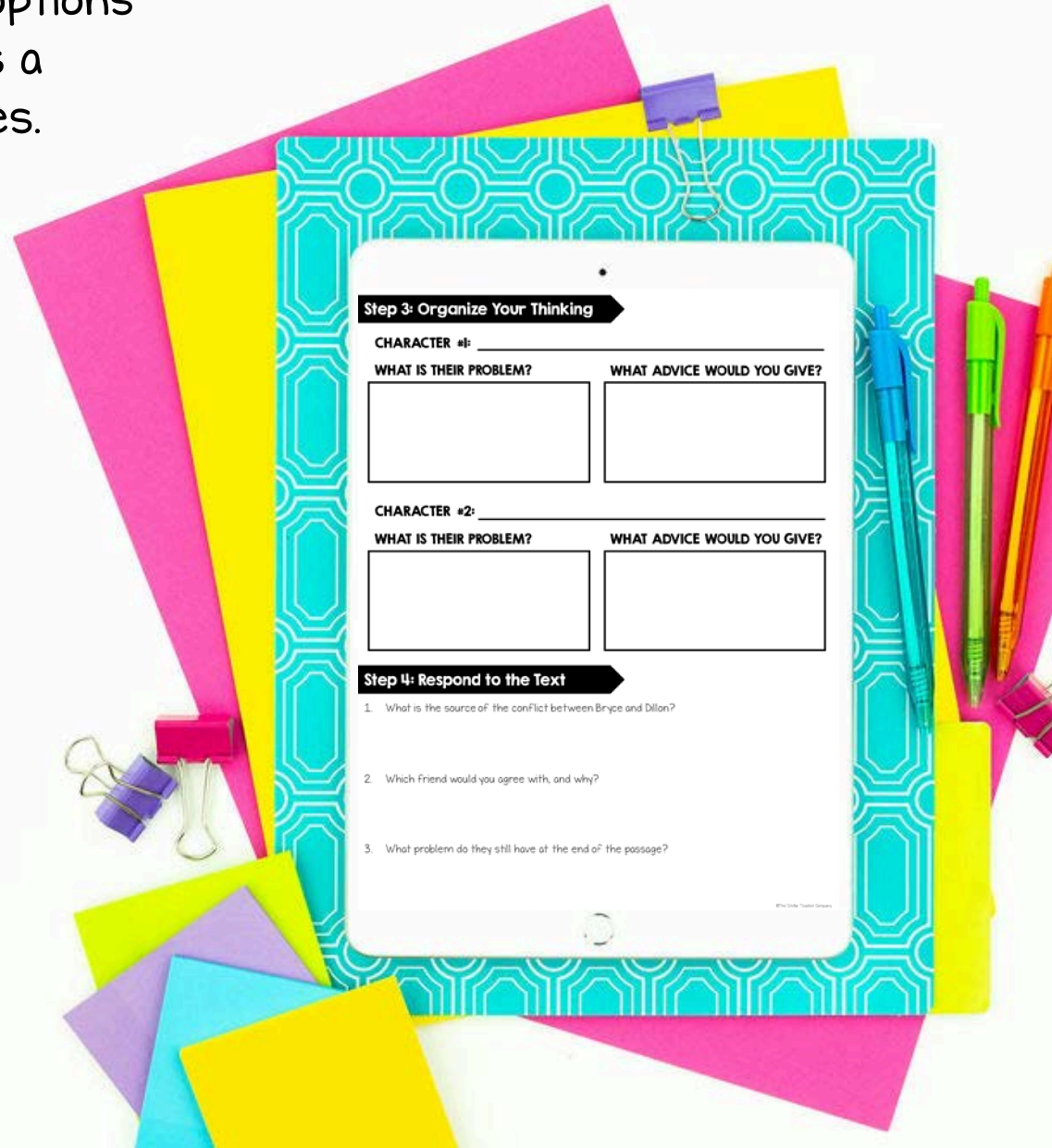
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Includes Digital Versions

I love to provide both print and digital options in my resources. This resource includes a digital version created using Google Slides.

In addition to the print version, you get a digital version created using Google Slides for all the passages, response pages, and graphic organizers.

Rest assured, you can use this resource in both face-to-face and virtual classrooms.




STUDENT & TEACHER FRIENDLY

These passages are easy for students and teachers to use. There are so many different ways you can use these passages in your classroom.

So Many Classroom Uses:

- Homework
- Independent Practice
- Assessment
- Strategy Lessons
- Small Group Instruction
- Test Prep/Review
- Model
- Partner Practice

Step 3: Organize Your Thinking

THE THEME  **INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Identifying Theme** Name: _____ Date: _____

Step 1: Read the Passage

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EVIDENCE #1

THE AUTHOR

Step 4: Respond to the

What was Sara doing wrong with...

Why do you think her dad put...

How would you describe the...

Step 2: Think About the Passage

THINK ABOUT:

- What is the big idea?
- How did the characters change?
- What lesson did they learn?
- What problem or challenge did they overcome?
- How can you personally connect to this passage?

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A LOOK INSIDE...

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Identifying Theme Name: _____ Date: _____

Step 1: Read the Passage

Trixie & the Magic Letters

Trixie's math AND spelling tests were 100% correct on Friday. Determined to ace both, she studied every night, did her homework, and even did flashcards with her brother Max on the way to school in the car. When Friday arrived, Trixie felt confident and almost excited. After years of struggling with tests at school, this time she was going to nail it!

But something went horribly wrong. On the spelling test, Trixie couldn't remember whether the L or the E came first. On the math test, her mind went blank. She couldn't remember the difference between a factor and product, or area and perimeter. Trixie bowed her head while Fat hours dropped from her face onto her test paper. When the period was over, Trixie was exhausted. As the line filed out of the classroom, Mrs. Ingles called her over. "Trixie, can I talk to you?"

Trixie's heart sank, but she walked over and stood in front of her teacher. "Sweetie, it looks like you had a hard time on your tests today."

"I tried so hard!" Trixie started to sob.

"Trixie, look at me!" Trixie looked at the kind face of her teacher. "We talked about this before. I know it's hard to accept, but you have a learning disability. Letters and numbers are hard for your brain to process. You can have extra time on your tests, or even take them in another room."

"I don't want to be different!" Trixie cried hunched. "I feel so stupid!"

Mrs. Ingles read her eyebrows at Trixie. "What are some things you are really good at? You're an amazing artist! You have the fastest mile race in PE. And you are an exceptional friend. You might need a little extra help with academic work, but you are far from stupid! Working with the resource teacher can give you some strategies to work with your learning disability, instead of ignoring it. Think about giving it a try."

Trixie honestly felt a little better. Maybe it was time to stop denying her learning issues and accept some help.

"Thank you, Mrs. Ingles. I'll think about it. I'll talk to my parents tonight." Being different didn't have to be a bad thing, right?

Step 2: Think About the Passage

THINK ABOUT!

- What is the big idea?
- How did the characters change?
- What lesson did they learn?
- What problem or challenge did they overcome?
- How can you personally connect to this text?

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Step 3: Organize Your Thinking

WHAT IS THE TOPIC?

What is the main topic of the text? What is the text about?

QUESTIONS? What are important questions you have about the text?

ANSWERS! Can you answer these questions from reading the text?

WHAT IS THE THEME?

Use the topic, your questions, and answers to come up with possible themes.

Step 4: Respond to the Text

- How long had Trixie been struggling at school? How do you know?
- Why was Trixie so dejected by her test performance?
- How did Mrs. Ingles try to make Trixie feel better?

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Identifying Theme Name: _____ Date: _____

Step 1: Read the Passage

Conductor on the Underground Railroad

Tobias crouched in the reeds on the bank of the river. His heart pounded. A party of bounty hunters rode by on horseback, looking for escaped slaves to return to their owners. The year was 1842, and the politics of slavery were more complicated than ever. Even though he was just a teenager, Tobias agreed with his family that slavery was a barbaric institution. Each man, woman, and child deserved to live a free life belonging to no one.

At the moment though, Tobias was terrified. His job was to guide groups of slaves who had made it across the river to safe houses along the route to Ohio. If discovered, the consequences would be dire. He could be shot or arrested. His home could be burned to the ground, his parents hurt or killed. Tobias took a deep breath. Yes, the risk was enormous. Ultimately the risks he feared were the circumstances slaves lived with every day.

As the bounty hunters rode out of sight, Tobias silently turned and made eye contact with the small family crouched behind them. They heaved a collective sigh, because that had been close. Tobias whispered, "I know that was scary, but we just have to get across that field. The barn with the design on the side is where we are headed."

As a unit, the dad, mom, and two children nodded their understanding, a look of determination in each eye. Tobias was struck by the sense that he was doing exactly the right thing at the right moment. Sometimes life requires we step up to the plate and do the right thing. As a unit, the group crossed the road and blended into the cornfield on their way to freedom.

Step 2: Think About the Passage

THINK ABOUT!

- What is the big idea?
- How did the characters change?
- What lesson did they learn?
- What problem or challenge did they overcome?
- How can you personally connect to this text?

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Step 3: Organize Your Thinking

THE THEME OF THIS STORY IS:

WHAT LESSON DID THE CHARACTER(S) LEARN?

WHAT MESSAGE CAN YOU TAKE AWAY FROM THE TEXT?

Step 4: Respond to the Text

- In the first sentence of the passage, what is meant by the phrase, "his heart pounding"?
- Why was Tobias helping the family, even though he was a freed?
- What word would you use to describe the actions of Tobias and the family of escaping slaves?

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Identifying Theme Name: _____ Date: _____

Step 1: Read the Passage

It's Just a Push-up!

Sara collapsed on the ground. It was 11th grade physical fitness testing time, and things were not going well. She had not been able to do one, single, solitary push-up! Sara was not used to failure. She was certainly not used to seeing "Needs Improvement" marked by her name. She decided then and there she was going to master the push-up.

The next morning she still couldn't do any push-ups. Her stormy face at breakfast made her dad ask what was wrong. "I can't do ANY push-ups!" she wailed.

"What have you tried so far?" he asked.

"To do push-ups! She was being a little rude, but these were dire circumstances. There's what we're going to do," her dad said as he pulled out a pad of paper.

The next morning Sara got in a plank on her knees and did 5 knee push-ups! A week later, she was up to 10, which is in the "healthy zone" for physical fitness testing. The morning after she did 10 knee push-ups, Sara's arms and chest were SORE. But the improvement had her excited. Her dad had said she had to keep making little changes and keep going when they were tough.

Sara leveled into a full-body plank. She lowered into a push-up and was able to push back up! Her arms were shaking and she couldn't do any more, but now it was just a matter of time. Sara took a day off to let her soreness heal. The next time she practiced, she completed 3 full-body push-ups! She pushed herself to do 2 more each day, but now it was becoming almost easy.

The next time the PE teacher did fitness testing, Sara retook her push-up test. She got past "Needs Improvement" at 6. She passed the "healthy zone" at 11. Sara managed 2 more for a total of 13 push-ups and glowed as the teacher changed her mark to "Excellent." Her teacher asked, "Wow, what did you do?" Sara smiled and said, "I got tough."

Step 2: Think About the Passage

THINK ABOUT!

- What is the big idea?
- How did the characters change?
- What lesson did they learn?
- What problem or challenge did they overcome?
- How can you personally connect to this text?

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Step 3: Organize Your Thinking

THE THEME OF THIS STORY IS...

EVIDENCE #1 **EVIDENCE #2** **EVIDENCE #3**

THE AUTHOR CHOSE THIS THEME BECAUSE...

Step 4: Respond to the Text

- What was Sara doing wrong with her first push-up practice strategy?
- Why do you think her dad pulled out the pad of paper? What did he do that helped Sara make progress?
- How would you describe the strategy that ended up working for Sara?

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Identifying Theme Name: _____ Date: _____

Step 1: Read the Passage

Special Pen Pals

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Step 3: Organize Your Thinking

POSSIBLE THEME #1 **EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT**

POSSIBLE THEME #2 **EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT**

Step 4: Respond to the Text

- How did Carter get the idea to become pen pals with the residents of the nursing home?
- Was Summer doing anything wrong? What was Carter's point in calling her back after she watched the video?
- Write one sentence summarizing Carter and Summer's conversation.



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