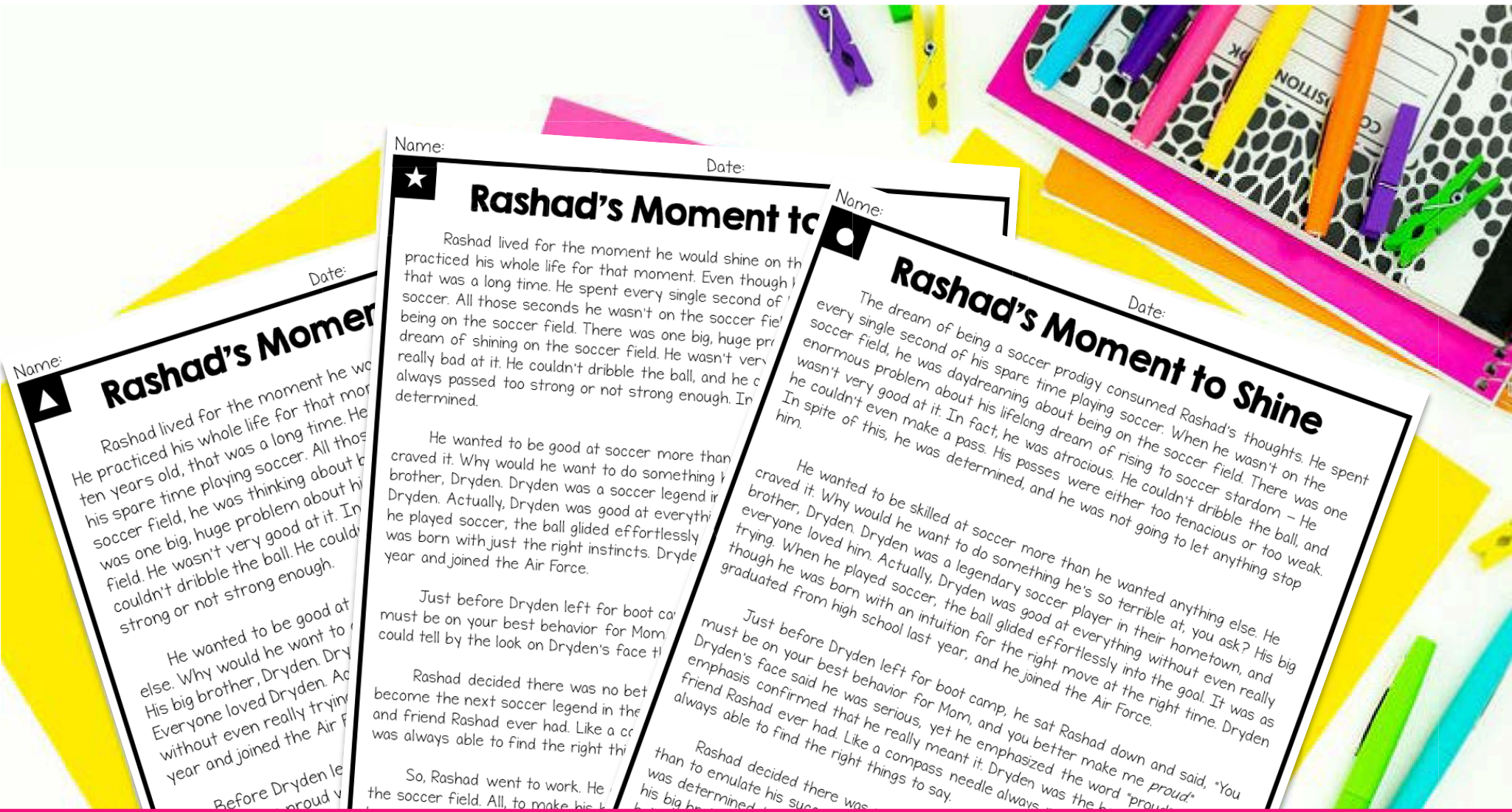


# Differentiated Reading Passages

## IDENTIFYING THEME

Same Story, 3 Different Reading Levels



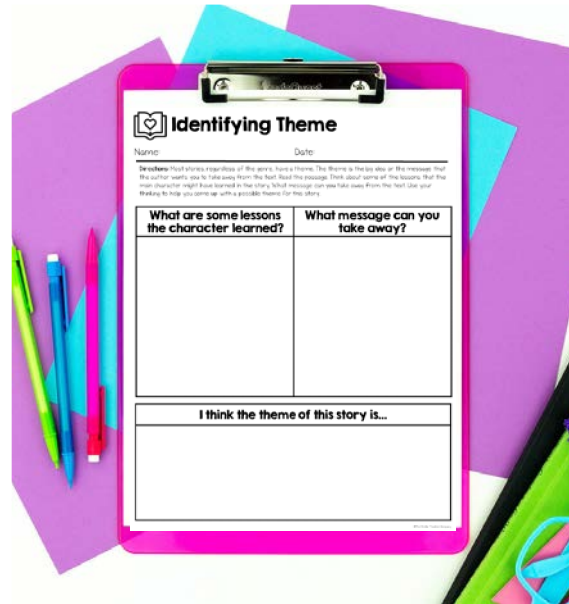
# WHAT'S INCLUDED?

This resources includes differentiated reading passages, skill-based graphic organizers, and comprehension passages based on the passages. Each passage and response page will help your students practice identifying the theme of a story.



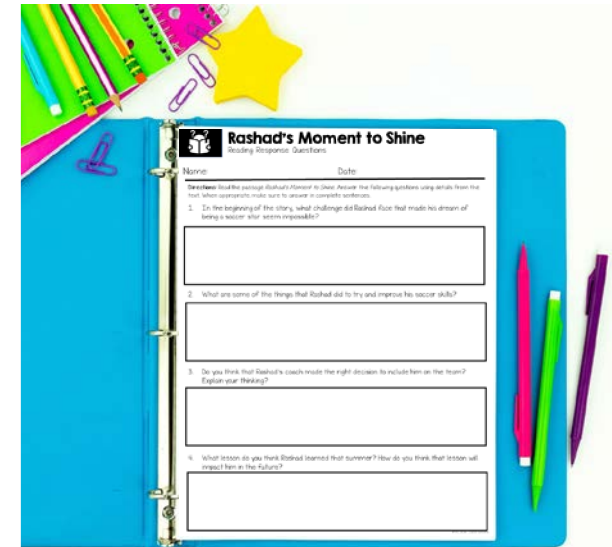
## 3 Sets of Differentiated Reading Passages

Each set includes the same story written at three different levels for a total of 9 passages.



## Graphic Organizer

Each story has a graphic organizer students can use in response to that story, OR, it can be used with any text to practice the same skill.



## Reading Response Questions

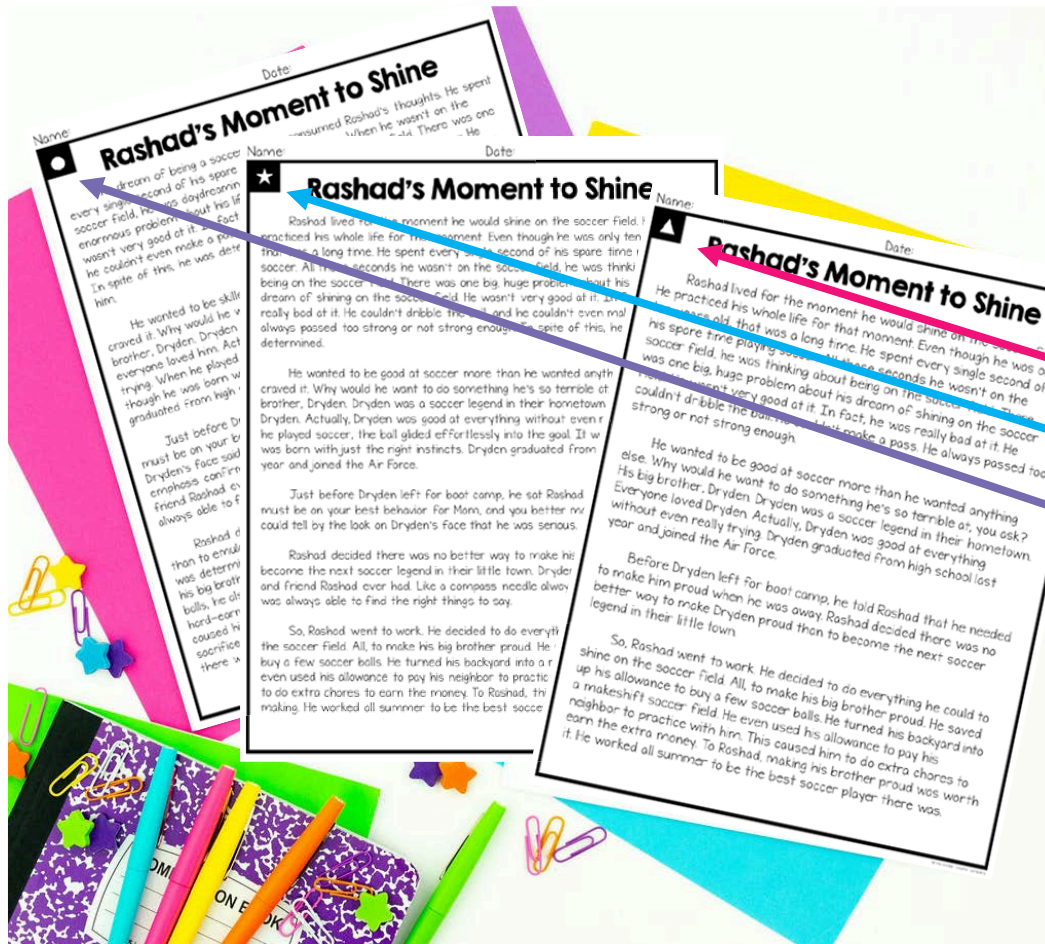
Each story also includes a set of reading response questions that could be answered using any level of passages, so it doesn't matter if your students are reading level A, B, or C, the answer to the questions will still be the same.

**\* Digital versions are included for all templates. \***



# EASY TO DIFFERENTIATE

Each story is written at three different levels. You can select the level that is best for your entire class, or you can let students choose the level they want to read. This makes discussing the same text whole group so much easier.



Each text is written at 3 different levels to make it easy to differentiate.

- ▲ Level A: 420L - 610L
- ★ Level B: 6:10L - 810L
- Level C: 810L - 1100L

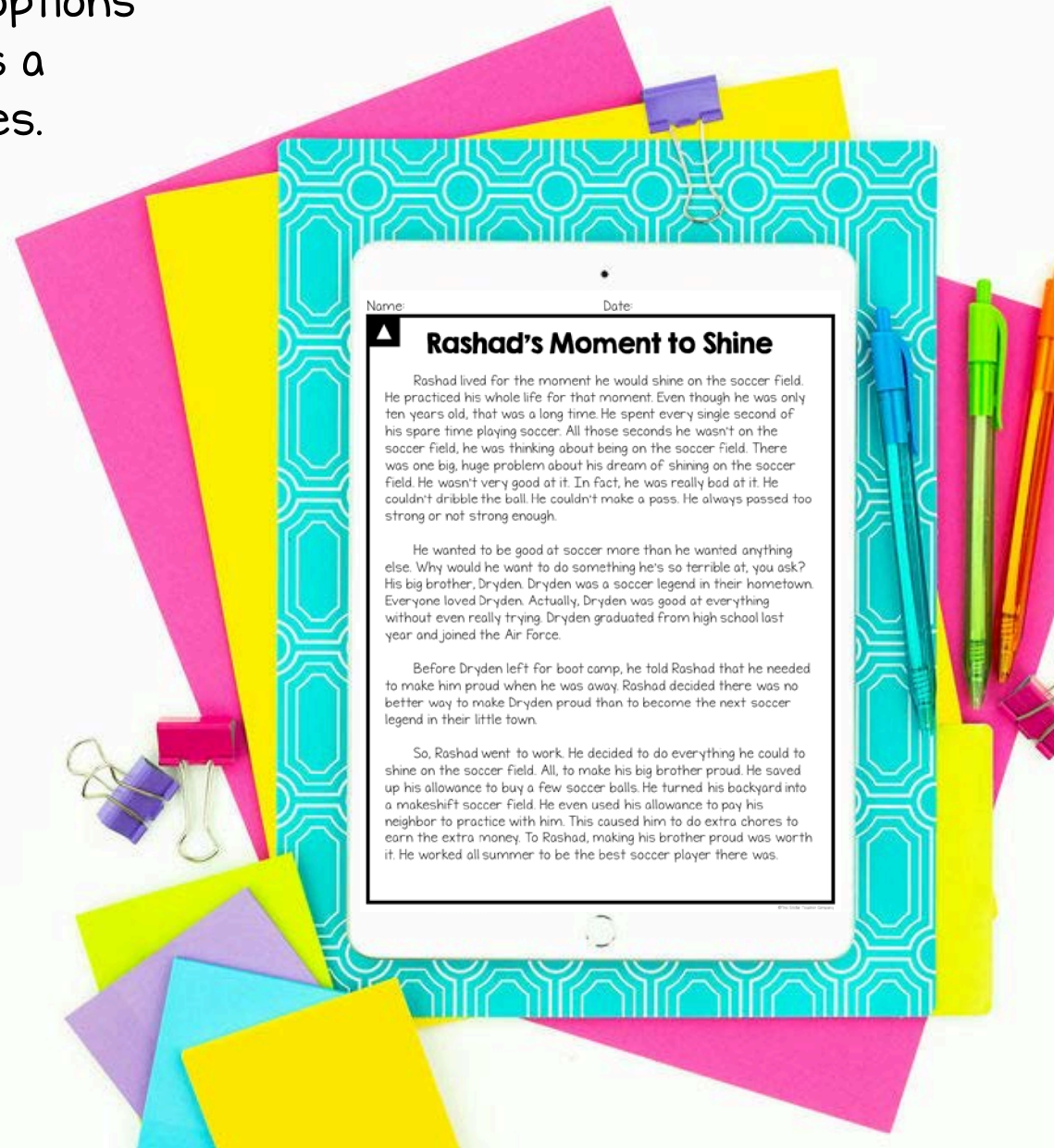
\*Digital versions are included for all passages and response pages.\*

# 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.



# A LOOK INSIDE... STORY #1

## Passage A - Level 420L - 610L

Tryouts started, and Rashad quickly realized that he hadn't improved much. He left tryouts incredibly discouraged. All the other boys were so much better than him. Why couldn't he be as good as his brother? Dryden was such a natural. It was so easy for him. Dryden never practiced at home, but he was still really good. Rashad was so discouraged that he decided to quit. He practiced his speech to the coach to drop out of tryouts.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Rashad's Moment to Shine

Rashad lived for the moment he would shine on the soccer field. He practiced his whole life for that moment. Even though he was only ten years old, that was a long time. He spent every single second of his spare time playing soccer. All those seconds he wasn't on the soccer field, he was thinking about being on the soccer field. There was one big, huge problem about his dream of shining on the soccer field. He wasn't very good at it. In fact, he was really bad at it. He couldn't dribble the ball. He couldn't make a pass. He always passed too strong or not strong enough.

He wanted to be good at soccer more than he wanted anything else. Why would he want to do something he's so terrible at, you ask? His big brother, Dryden, Dryden was a soccer legend in their hometown. Everyone loved Dryden. Actually, Dryden was good at everything without even really trying. Dryden graduated from high school last year and joined the Air Force.

Before Dryden left for boot camp, he told Rashad that he needed to make him proud when he was away. Rashad decided there was no better way to make Dryden proud than to become a soccer legend in their little town.

So, Rashad went to work. He decided to do everything he could to excel on the soccer field. All to make his big brother proud. He saved up his allowance to buy a few soccer balls. He turned his backyard into a makeshift soccer field. He had his allowance to pay his neighbor to practice with him. This caused extra chores to earn the money. To Rashad, this sacrifices were worth it. He worked all summer to be the best soccer player.

## Passage B - Level 610L - 810L

Tryouts started, and Rashad quickly realized that he hadn't improved much. He left tryouts extraordinarily discouraged. All the other boys were far superior on the field. Why couldn't he be as good as his brother? Dryden was such a natural, and it was so easy for him. Dryden never practiced at home, but he was still exceptional. Rashad was so disheartened that he decided to quit. He practiced his "I'm-a-quitter" speech and decided to tell Coach the next day.

Rashad never got the chance to make that speech because he made the team! Rashad was so excited after a dream come true.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Rashad's Moment to Shine

Rashad lived for the moment he would shine on the soccer field. He practiced his whole life for that moment. Even though he was only ten years old, that was a long time. He spent every single second of his spare time playing soccer. All those seconds he wasn't on the soccer field, he was thinking about being on the soccer field. There was one big, huge problem about his lifelong dream of shining on the soccer field. He wasn't very good at it. In fact, he was really bad at it. He couldn't dribble the ball, and he couldn't even make a pass. He always passed too strong or not strong enough. In spite of this, he was determined.

He wanted to be good at soccer more than he wanted anything else. He craved it. Why would he want to do something he's so terrible at, you ask? His big brother, Dryden, Dryden was a soccer legend in their hometown. Everyone loved Dryden. Actually, Dryden was good at everything without even really trying. When he played soccer, the ball glided effortlessly into the goal. It was as though he was born with just the right instincts. Dryden graduated from high school last year and joined the Air Force.

Just before Dryden left for boot camp, he sat Rashad down and said, "You must be on your best behavior for Mom, and you better make me proud." Rashad could tell by the look on Dryden's face that he was serious.

Rashad decided there was no better way to make his brother proud than to become the next soccer legend in their little town. Dryden was the best brother Rashad ever had. Like a compass needle always points north, Dryden was able to find the right things to say.

Rashad went to work. He decided to do everything he could to excel on the soccer field. All to make his big brother proud. He saved up his allowance to buy a few soccer balls. He turned his backyard into a makeshift soccer field. He had his allowance to pay his neighbor to practice with him. This caused extra chores to earn the money. To Rashad, these sacrifices were worth it. He worked all summer to be the best soccer player.

## Passage C - Level 810L - 110L

Tryouts began, and Rashad realized, rather hastily, that he hadn't improved much since the beginning of summer. He left tryouts fraught with disappointment because all the other boys were far superior on the field. Why couldn't he be as good as his brother or any of the other boys? Rashad seemed to be facing insurmountable odds. Dryden was such a natural, and it was so easy for him. Dryden never practiced at home, but he was still exceptional. Rashad was so disheartened that he decided to quit. He practiced his "I'm-a-quitter" speech and decided to tell Coach the next day.

Rashad never got the chance to make that speech because he made the team! Rashad was so excited after a dream come true.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Rashad's Moment to Shine

The dream of being a soccer prodigy consumed Rashad's thoughts. He spent every single second of his spare time playing soccer. When he wasn't on the soccer field, he was daydreaming about being on the soccer field. There was one enormous problem about his lifelong dream of rising to soccer stardom - He wasn't very good at it. In fact, he was atrocious. He couldn't dribble the ball, and he couldn't even make a pass. His passes were either too tenacious or too weak. In spite of this, he was determined, and he was not going to let anything stop him.

He wanted to be skilled at soccer more than he wanted anything else. He craved it. Why would he want to do something he's so terrible at, you ask? His big brother, Dryden, Dryden was a legendary soccer player in their hometown, and everyone loved him. Actually, Dryden was good at everything without even really trying. When he played soccer, the ball glided effortlessly into the goal. It was as though he was born with an intuition for the right move at the right time. Dryden graduated from high school last year, and he joined the Air Force.

Just before Dryden left for boot camp, he sat Rashad down and said, "You must be on your best behavior for Mom, and you better make me proud." Dryden's face said he was serious, yet he emphasized the word "proud." This emphasis confirmed that he really meant it. Dryden was the best brother and friend Rashad ever had. Like a compass needle always points north, Dryden was always able to find the right things to say.

Rashad decided there was no better way to make his brother proud than to become the next soccer legend in their little town. Dryden was the best brother Rashad ever had. Like a compass needle always points north, Dryden was able to find the right things to say.

Rashad went to work. He decided to do everything he could to excel on the soccer field. All to make his big brother proud. He saved up his allowance to buy a few soccer balls. He turned his backyard into a makeshift soccer field. He had his allowance to pay his neighbor to practice with him. This caused extra chores to earn the money. To Rashad, these sacrifices were worth it. He worked all summer to be the best soccer player.

### Rashad's Moment to Shine

Reading Response Questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Read the passage *Rashad's Moment to Shine*. Answer the following questions using details from the text. When appropriate, make sure to answer in complete sentences.

- In the beginning of the story, what challenge did Rashad face that made his dream of being a soccer star seem impossible?
- What are some of the things that Rashad did to try and improve his soccer skills?
- Do you think that Rashad's coach made the right decision to include him on the team? Explain your thinking?
- What lesson do you think Rashad learned that summer? How do you think that lesson will impact him in the future?

### Life Lesson

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Read the story. Determine a life lesson that you could learn from this text. Make sure you include three specific pieces of evidence from the text that helped you determine the life lesson.

What is a Life Lesson we can learn from this text?

Supporting Text Evidence	
Supporting Text Evidence	
Supporting Text Evidence	

How could you apply the life lesson from this text into your own life?

The Response Sheet and Graphic Organizer work with ALL 3 Passages!





# A LOOK INSIDE... STORY #2

Passage A - Level 420L - 610L

Passage B - Level 610L - 810L

Passage C - Level 810L - 110L

Taking a deep breath, I washed my hands and walked back to class. The teacher noticed I seemed a bit off. "Do you want to call your mom?" asked Mrs. Vance. I didn't. I wasn't sure how to explain my problem. During the final seconds of class, the secretary walked in. I could see her and Mrs. Vance eying me. Did they know? They called me over to the edge of the room.

Was it the money someone was going to use to pay their dance tuition? Had they intended to use it for groceries later that day? Taking a deep breath, I washed my hands and walked back to dance class. The teacher noticed I seemed a bit off and asked if I wanted to call my mom. I didn't. I wasn't sure how to explain my dilemma. During the final seconds of class, the secretary walked in. I could see her and Mrs. Vance eying me. Did they know? They called me over to the edge of the room.

Was it the money someone was going to use to pay their dance tuition? Had they intended to use it for groceries later that day? Taking a deep breath, I exhaled, washed my hands, walked back to dance class, and tried to focus. The teacher noticed I seemed a bit off and asked if I wanted to call my mom. I didn't. I wasn't sure how to explain my predicament. During the final seconds of class, the secretary walked in. I could see her and Mrs. Vance eying me. Did they know? They called me over to the edge of the room.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Karina Leads the Way

Karina was in between childhood and adulthood in her caribou-life. She and her family live in Alaska. They were facing a big problem: Arctic wolves. Arctic wolves are fantastic hunters, especially when their prey stand out as much as caribou. The dark brown caribou stand out against the white snow. This makes Karina and her family easy targets to the Arctic wolves. This has been true for hundreds of years - until now.

One day, Karina and her sister, Marissa, were eating lichen on their favorite rocky spot. Karina saw a dark red figure off in the distance. It was pacing back and forth. Surprised, Karina said to her sister, "Marissa, what is that?"

"What? I don't see anything," said Marissa, totally uninterested. Marissa went back to grazing on her lichen.

Karina still felt scared, so she watched the red figure. It began slowly moving towards her. She could see six more dark red figures that were moving towards them. She realized what she was seeing, and she knew she had to act quickly.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Karina Leads the Way

Karina was in between childhood and adulthood in her caribou-life. She had beautiful, silky brown fur, and her antlers were starting to fill out nicely. She and her family live in Alaska. It's called the tundra. They were facing a big problem: Arctic wolves. The Arctic wolf has all white fur, and they blend perfectly into the snow-covered hills. Caribou are all brown, and they do not blend into the snow-covered hills. In fact, they stand out. Arctic wolves are fantastic hunters, especially when their targets stand out as much as caribou. This makes Karina and her family extremely vulnerable to the Arctic wolves. This has been true for hundreds of years - until now.

A few months ago, Karina and her sister, Marissa, were eating lichen on their favorite rocky spot. Suddenly, Karina saw a dark red figure off in the distance. It was pacing back and forth. Startled, Karina said to her sister, "Marissa, what is that?"

"What? I don't see anything," replied Marissa, totally unconcerned. Marissa went back to grazing on her lichen.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Karina Leads the Way

Karina was in between childhood and adulthood in her caribou-life. She had exquisite, silky brown fur, and her antlers were starting to fill out nicely. She and her family live in Alaska, in a place called the tundra. This has been their sanctuary for hundreds of years, but now they were facing a big problem: Arctic wolves. The Arctic wolf has pure, snowy white fur, and they blend perfectly into the snow-covered hills. Caribou are all brown, and they do not blend into the snow-covered hills. In fact, they stick out like a sore thumb. Arctic wolves are naturally fantastic hunters, especially when their targets stand out as much as caribou. This makes Karina and her family extremely vulnerable to the Arctic wolves, and this has been the case for the last few decades - until now.

A few months ago, Karina and her sister, Marissa, were gossiping and eating lichen on their favorite rocky spot. Suddenly, Karina saw a dark red figure off in the distance, and it was stealthily pacing back and forth. Startled, Karina whispered to her sister, "Hey, Marissa, what is that?"

"What? I don't see anything," replied Marissa, totally unconcerned. Marissa went back to lazily grazing on her lichen.

Karina, still feeling a bit panicked, watched the red figure closely. It

**Karina Leads the Way**  
Reading Response Questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Read the passage *Karina Leads the Way*. Answer the following questions using details from the text. When appropriate, make sure to answer in complete sentences.

- How did Karina realize she was different than the rest of the caribou in her community?
- How did Karina feel about being the leader of the caribou migration? Use details in the text to support your thinking?
- Do you think that Karina made the right choice by leading the caribou migration even though she was scared? Explain.
- What lesson do you think Karina learned? How do you think that lesson will impact her in the future?

**Identifying Theme**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Most stories, regardless of the genre, have a theme. The theme is the big idea or the message that the author wants you to take away from the text. Read the passage. Think about some of the lessons that the main character might have learned in the story. What message can you take away from the text? Use your thinking to help you come up with a possible theme for this story.

What are some lessons the character learned?	What message can you take away?

I think the theme of this story is...

The Response Sheet and Graphic Organizer work with ALL 3 Passages!

# A LOOK INSIDE... STORY #3

Passage A - Level 420L - 610L

Passage B - Level 610L - 810L

Passage C - Level 810L - 110L

"Look at this little one," his grandfather said. He picked up what appeared to be the runt of the litter. He handed it to Pablo.  
 "He is so little."  
 "Yep. He will need a lot of extra care."  
 Pablo had tears in his eyes. There were nine little piglets all wandering around without anyone to care for them. "I can do it."

"Look at this little one," the his grandfather said. He picked up what appeared to be the runt of the litter. He handed it to Pablo.  
 "He is so little."  
 "Yep. He will need a lot of extra care."  
 Pablo had tears in his eyes. There were nine little piglets all wandering around without anyone to care for them. "I can do it."

Pablo sprang to his feet and sprinted to the smaller barn up in the meadow behind the house. The young boy learned that the piglets' mom had passed away, so they were required around the clock feedings.  
 "Look at this little one," his grandpa declared. He swooped up what appeared to be the runt of the litter and placed it in Pablo's hands.  
 "He is so little," Pablo quietly exclaimed.  
 "Yep. He will need a lot of extra care if he is going to make it." His grandpa

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Sadie's New Puppy

Abigail bragged, and bragged, and bragged. All she could do was talk about her new puppy. I have to admit, I was jealous. When she wasn't bragging about how cute he was, she was posting about it all over social media. I just couldn't escape it. My mom told me last year that I wasn't ready for a puppy. She said I wasn't responsible enough. If Little-Miss-Perfect-Abigail can have a puppy, then I should have one too.

"Mom, I promise I'll be responsible," I begged between my mouthfuls of mac and cheese at the dinner table.

"Sadie, I don't know. Why are you so determined all of a sudden?" Mom replied. She didn't say no, so that was a good sign. I could never tell her the truth. The truth was that I only wanted a puppy to make Abigail jealous. Mom would never go for that. I had to come up with something better.

"I just feel so lonely now that Jesse's moved out. I lied. Jesse was my older brother who just left for college. I was so happy he was gone because I got to move into his big room. Plus, I no longer had to deal with him making fun of me all the time. Big brothers are so annoying.

"I know it's been tough on you, Sadie. I can't let you be lonely. You're thirteen, so I guess you can have a puppy. You'll have to feed him every day, walk him before school, after school, and before bedtime. You'll have to train him, too. We can't have him sleep everywhere around here," she explained, still hesitant about the idea. I burst into the biggest smile. "Thank you, Mom!" I gave her a big hug and ran up to my room. The first thing I did was call Abigail to brag. I felt a little guilty that I lied to Mom, but I was getting a puppy! That guilt was gone. The next Saturday, we went to the animal shelter, and I picked up the absolute sweetest little puppy. He was dark brown all over with white feet, and he had the best puppy breath!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Sadie's New Puppy

Abigail bragged, and bragged, and bragged. All she could do was talk about her new puppy. I have to admit, I was jealous. When she wasn't bragging about how cute he was, she was posting about it all over social media. I just couldn't escape it. My mom told me last year that I wasn't ready for a puppy. She said I wasn't responsible enough. If Little-Miss-Perfect-Abigail can have a puppy, then I should have one too.

"Mom, I promise I'll be responsible," I begged between my mouthfuls of mac and cheese at the dinner table.

"Sadie, I don't know. Why are you so determined all of a sudden?" Mom replied. She didn't say no, so that was a good sign. I could never tell her that I only wanted a puppy so I could make Abigail jealous. Mom would never go for that. I had to come up with something better.

"I just feel so lonely now that Jesse's moved out. I lied. Jesse was my older brother who just left for college. I was so happy he was gone because I got to move into his big room. Plus, I no longer had to deal with him making fun of me all the time. Big brothers are so annoying.

Mom looked down at her plate, deep in thought. "I know it's been tough on you, Sadie. I can't let you be lonely. You're thirteen, so I guess you can have a puppy. You'll have to feed him every day, walk him before school, after school, and before bedtime. You'll have to train him, too. We can't have him sleep everywhere around here," she explained, still hesitant about the idea. I burst into the biggest smile. "Thank you, Mom!" I gave her a big hug and ran up to my room. The first thing I did was call Abigail to brag. I felt a little guilty that I lied to Mom, but I was getting a puppy! That guilt was gone. The next Saturday, we went to the animal shelter, and I picked up the absolute sweetest little puppy. He was dark brown all over with white feet, and he had the best puppy breath!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Sadie's New Puppy

All Abigail did was talk incessantly about her cute new puppy, and I have to admit, I was envious. When she wasn't droning on and on about how cute her new puppy was, she was posting about it all over social media. I just couldn't escape it, and I couldn't resist my jealousy any longer. When I saw everyone commenting on her last post, a blade of envy shot so deeply through me. I knew I had to do something to get over my jealousy, and that meant to get a puppy of my own.

Unfortunately, Mom told me last year that I wasn't ready for a puppy because I wasn't responsible enough. This made me feel even more disdain for Abigail because if Little-Miss-Perfect-Abigail can have a puppy, then I should have one too. I cannot imagine that it'd be *that* big of a deal to take care of a puppy.

"Mom, I promise I'll be responsible," I pleaded between my mouthfuls of mac and cheese at the dinner table. I used my absolute best puppy-dog voice. All I thought about was how much I wanted to snatch all the attention away from Abigail and her new puppy. Mom was silent for a long time, and I could hear my heart thumping in my chest with anticipation. Mom finally looked up at me, studied my face, and let out a big sigh.

"Sadie, I don't know. We already discussed this last Christmas. Why are you so determined all of a sudden?" Mom asked with a hint of curiosity in her voice. I could never tell her that I only wanted a puppy to take all the attention away from Abigail. Mom would never go for that, so I knew I had to come up with something more convincing.

I know it's been tough on you, Sadie. I can't let you be lonely. You're thirteen, so I guess you can have a puppy. You'll have to feed him every day, walk him before school, after school, and before bedtime. You'll have to train him, too. We can't have him sleep everywhere around here," she explained, still hesitant about the idea. I burst into the biggest smile. "Thank you, Mom!" I gave her a big hug and ran up to my room. The first thing I did was call Abigail to brag. I felt a little guilty that I lied to Mom, but I was getting a puppy! That guilt was gone. The next Saturday, we went to the animal shelter, and I picked up the absolute sweetest little puppy. He was dark brown all over with white feet, and he had the best puppy breath!

**Sadie's New Puppy**  
Reading Response Questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Read the passage, *Sadie's New Puppy*. Answer the following questions using details from the text. When appropriate, make sure to answer in complete sentences.

1. What was Sadie's reason for wanting a puppy? Do you think this is a good reason? Explain.
2. What do you think Sadie envisioned would happen when she got a puppy?
3. What was Sadie's reality like of actually owning a puppy?
4. What lesson do you think Sadie learned? How do you think that lesson will impact her in the future?

**Story Elements**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** After you have read the passage, identify all the basic story elements in this passage. Make sure you include specific details from the text when describing/explaining each story element.

**C** Who are the characters?

**S** Describe the setting?

**P** What is the main problem?

**S** How do the characters try to solve the problem?

**T** What is the theme (message) of the story?

The Response Sheet and Graphic Organizer work with ALL 3 Passages!



# Hey! Let's be friends!

Click the icon below to follow me on social media.



## Looking for new ideas and easy-to-implement strategies?

Tune in to the [Stellar Teacher Podcast](#) each week to hear me share actionable strategies that will help take you to the next level of your teaching career!

Click [HERE](#) to listen!

