

## **GRADE 8 English Language Arts Reading and Responding: Lesson 3**

Read aloud to the students the material that is printed in **boldface type** inside the boxes. Information in regular type inside the boxes and all information outside the boxes should **not** be read to students. Possible student responses are included in parentheses after the questions.

Any directions that ask you to do something, such as to turn to a page or to hand out materials to students, will have an arrow symbol (  $\Rightarrow$  ) by them.

### *Purpose of Lesson 3:*

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- read a nonfiction selection,
- read for details,
- read for cause and effect, and
- practice the process of elimination.

### *Equipment/Materials Needed:*

- Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 3 – 1 and 3 – 2
- Pencils

### *Preparations before beginning Lesson 3:*

There is a passage “Rivers” to read aloud during this lesson. It is found on page 33.

### LESSON 3: Reading and Responding

After your introductory remarks to students, say:

**In this lesson we will continue the review of good reading techniques and strategies. Reading assignments include both fictional and nonfictional passages as well as poetry. Today we will work with a nonfictional selection.**

**What is nonfiction?** Pause.

(Response: *Nonfiction* is writing that tells about real people, places, and events or objects.)

**The reading you do in science, social studies, and mathematics is primarily nonfiction. Because the material is full of facts, details, and special vocabulary, it can sometimes be difficult to read. The selection that we will use today might have come from a science book.**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 3 – 1. Be sure that each student has a pencil.

**This selection is the nonfictional selection we will use for today’s lesson. There are several steps you should take to be a successful reader of nonfiction. Begin by looking at the selection. Just look at it. Look to see whether there are any visuals: any maps, charts, drawings, or pictures. Are there any words in boldface type or italics?** Pause.

(Response: yes)

**Yes, there are several names of rivers in boldface type.**

**As we continue the lesson, I will demonstrate the process or the steps a successful reader uses. This lesson is designed to help you be a good reader of nonfiction.**

**You may be familiar with many of the techniques I use, while others may be brand new to you. Look for tricks or techniques you can use when you are reading on your own.**

Now say, as if thinking aloud:

**I begin with the title, *Rivers*. Then I try to think of all the things I know about rivers. Let's see...I know rivers sometimes overflow and cause floods; I know that rivers get their water from rainfall and melting snow; I know that rivers can be big or little; I know that some rivers are pretty straight and others wind around the country; I know some names of rivers – the Mississippi, the Red River, and the Ouachita.**

It is possible that students will speak up and share facts they know about rivers. That participation is fine. The focus here is on the strategies a good reader uses.

**I look at the selection and I see several names of rivers in boldface type. There aren't any maps or drawings or diagrams with this piece; but I do want to look at the first sentence, since the first sentence can help me to understand this article on rivers.**

This next part of the lesson focuses on what good readers do. In the dialogue, you are “thinking aloud” in order to show students what goes on in the reading process. Your dialogue demonstrates the techniques and the strategies that successful readers use.

Then say, as if thinking aloud:

**Next, I read the first sentence to myself. “A river is a large body of water whose sources may include rainfall, streams, springs, and melting ice and snow.” That sentence helps me to define a river.**

**Now, I am ready to read the selection. I will continue to think about what I am reading. I will try to visualize or get a picture in my head. I am going to try to connect the sentence to information I already know about rivers. Since this selection is nonfiction, I know it may have a lot of information or a lot of details. I am not in a hurry. I take my time and focus on the information.**

**Please follow along as I read the passage aloud.**

Read the selection aloud. Read slowly. The students should follow along on their copies as you read aloud. It is important for students to look at the printed page, not just listen to you. If you need to remind students to look at their copies, stop at the end of a paragraph and say: “Look back on your paper as we continue with paragraph number \_\_\_.”

After reading the selection, say:

**I am going to continue thinking out loud and telling you what I am doing as part of the process of reading.**

Read this as if you were talking to yourself.

**I am finished reading. There was a lot of information in that article about rivers. Thank goodness, I don't have to try to remember everything. When I get ready to answer the questions, I can reread the article or reread parts of the article and make notes to myself in the margin.**

**Before I start answering the questions, I am going to do a quick review of the article. Let's see. Paragraph one was sort of a definition of a river.** Pause and instruct students to write the word *definition* in the margin next to paragraph one.

**The second paragraph was about size.** Pause and instruct students to write the word *size* in the margin next to paragraph two.

**The next two paragraphs were longer and had stuff in it I didn't know. They were about the age of a river.** Pause and instruct students to write the word *age* in the margin next to paragraphs three and four.

**I never realized that rivers could be classified as young or old. I guess I learned something new today.**

→ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 3 – 2.

**Now I am ready to start answering the questions.**

**Question number one “What is the main purpose of this article?”**

**Choice A: to tell about the size of rivers.**

**Choice B: to describe the differences between old and new rivers.**

**Choice C: to tell about floods.**

**Choice D: to list the water sources of rivers.**

**What is the key word or phrase in the question? Pause.**

**(Response: main purpose) Circle *main purpose*.**

Then say:

**Look at Choice A: to tell about the size of rivers. Is that the main purpose of the article?**

(Response: no)

**There is information about the size of rivers in this article, but the size is not the main purpose. Remember, you said *main purpose* was the key word for this question.**

**Put a dot by Choice A, since we know Choice A is not the answer.**

**Go to Choice B: to describe the differences between old and new rivers. Is describing the differences the main purpose of the article? Pause. (Response: yes)**

**Yes, I believe giving a description of differences is really what the article is about, but don't stop yet. Look at Choice C. Is the main purpose of this article to tell about floods? Pause.**

(Response: no)

**There is a little bit of information about floods in the passage, but a description of floods is not the main idea. Put a dot by choice C, since you know that Choice C is not the right answer.**

**Look at D: to list the water sources of rivers. Is "water sources" the correct answer? Pause.**

(Response: no)

**Again, there is information about the water sources of rivers in the article but that information is not the main idea.**

**Therefore, the correct answer is Letter B: to describe the differences between old and new rivers. Be sure you mark your answer now.**

Then say:

**Let's do question number two now. "The selection says 'Old rivers tend to *meander* across flood plains, wind slowly back and forth, and take the path of least resistance.'" What does the word *meander* mean?**

**Look at your choices.**

- A. go directly.**
- B. stop and start.**
- C. wander back and forth.**
- D. overflow.**

**What do you think you should do before you mark an answer?**

Pause.

(Response: read the meander sentence again)

**Yes, reread the sentence. Old rivers tend to meander across flood plains, wind slowly back and forth, and take the path of least resistance.**

Say:

**If you look closely, you will discover the answer is actually in the sentence. The writer has defined *meander* for you.**

**Look at the sentence once again. “Old rivers tend to meander across flood plains, wind slowly back and forth...” Ah ha! There’s the answer: *meander* means to wind slowly back and forth.**

**Now, look at the four choices. Do you see “wind slowly back and forth?”** Pause.

(Response: no)

**No, you don’t see “wind slowly back and forth,” but answer Choice C is “wander back and forth.” Isn’t to wander back and forth the same or almost the same as “wind slowly back and forth”?**

**So, now that you have figured that one out, mark Choice C.**

**Question number three is also a multiple-choice item. Please do it by yourself. Then we will talk about the steps you used to answer this question.**

Pause to allow time to respond to question three.  
In the discussion that follows, guide students to explain the process they used in answering this question.

Now say:

**“Why are young rivers better in the production of electricity?”**

**Let’s see what steps you used to answer this question. I am interested to find out whether you used the techniques we have been practicing. Be honest!**

**Raise your hand if you read the question more than once.** Pause.

It helps a student to read the question, look at all four possible answers, and then read the question again before making an answer choice.

**Raise your hand if you circled the key word or words in the question.** Pause.

Circling the key word or key phrase helps a student to focus on the question. Often a student misses the answer because he or she did not realize what the question was asking.

**Raise your hand if you looked back in the article to check a piece of information.** Pause.

The article is meant to be read and used. Some students foolishly try to answer the questions without referring back to the passage. Even when a student feels very confident about an answer, it is worth the time to recheck that answer.

**These are very important techniques to use when reading and responding to questions. Try to use all three!**

Then say:

**Well, now we need the answer to question three.**

**Is it Choice A?** Pause.

(Response: no)

**Why is Choice A not the correct response? Pause.**

(Response: There's no support or proof.)

**Okay. What about Choice B: they have more force? Is that correct?**

Pause. (Response: yes)

**Why is that the correct answer? Where is the support or proof found in the article? Pause.**

(Response: in the last paragraph. The article says, "Young rivers are more useful in producing electricity because the force of the water can turn generators.")

**Even though you found the answer, we need to look at C and D.**

**Choice C says "they are cleaner." Why is that answer wrong?**

Pause.

(Response: Cleanliness doesn't have anything to do with the question; it is totally unrelated.)

**And, finally Choice D: their riverbeds are wider. Why is that answer wrong? Pause.**

(Response: That answer is false; young riverbeds are small and narrow according to paragraph three.)

Students may say this answer is wrong, but have a difficult time explaining *why* it is wrong.

**The correct answer is Choice B. Always check out all the possibilities. Sometimes, the choices are very close and you really have to be paying attention to what you are reading!**

Say:

**Now it is time for number four. "An older river's water flow begins to slacken or slow. What is the cause of the slow down in water flow?"**

**Choice A: landscaping.**

**Choice B: resistance.**

**Choice C: explosion.**

**Choice D: erosion.**

**This question is one that probably needs a second read. Read it to yourself now.** Pause to allow time for students to read.

**Notice that this question begins with a statement “An older river’s water flow begins to slacken or slow.” The question tells me something. It gives me a piece of information. Now comes the question – “What is the cause of the slow down in water flow?”**

Say:

**Look at your choices.** Pause.

**Start with Choice A. Does landscaping cause the water to slow down?** Pause. (Response: no)

**No, landscaping doesn’t cause the river water to slow down. What is landscaping anyway?**

(Response: beautifying a piece of land or property)

**You can eliminate that answer immediately.**

**Look at Choice B: resistance. Is that answer correct?** Pause.

(Response: no)

Students may not know what the word *resistance* means. By looking back in the passage and finding the sentence in which it is used, they can determine that it is not the answer to question four.

**Next is Choice C: explosion. Is an explosion what causes a river to slow down?** Pause.

(Response: no)

**Now, don’t go getting all excited and mark Choice D without reading it. Choice D is erosion. Is erosion what causes the slow down in water flow?**

(Response: yes)

**Prove it. Find the answer in the selection.** Pause to allow time for students to skim the article.

(Response: The answer is in the last paragraph. “Its riverbed becomes wider, the water’s rate of flow begins to slacken, and the effects of erosion begin to accumulate.”)

Now say:

**Today's lesson gives you some practical techniques or strategies to use in science, social studies, and mathematics.**

**Look for the clues that the writer gives you. Clues are found in the reading passage. If you are really concentrating, you can find them.**

## RIVERS

A river is a large body of water whose sources may include rainfall, streams, springs, and melting ice and snow. The end of a river is called the mouth, where the water empties into a larger river, a lake, or an ocean. Rivers are valuable to agriculture. Irrigation ditches carry water from a river to the farmland. The soil near a river is fertile or rich. Rivers are also an important source of energy. About a fourth of the world's electric power is produced at hydroelectric plants.

Rivers vary in size. Some are so small that in the hot, dry weather, they dry up. The world's longest river, the **Nile River**, flows 4,145 miles. The **Amazon River** measures 4,000 miles and carries more water than any other river.

When most people look at a river, they assume the river has always been there and always will be. However, like people and trees, rivers have ages, indicated by the kind of landscape they flow through and the rapidity with which they flow. Young rivers are usually smaller and narrower than old ones. Young rivers flow rapidly over boulders and ledges, plunge down steep slopes, and take the most direct route to a lake or to the sea. A canyon, a deep channel with high walls worn into the river's bed, is cut by the current of these fast-flowing rivers. Old rivers tend to meander across flood plains, wind slowly back and forth, and take the path of least resistance. The flood plain is the relatively flat area on one or both sides of the river. This land is the area that is covered by river water during floods.

A young river - such as the upper **Colorado River**, the **Penobscot** in Maine, or the **Salmon River** in Idaho - usually has many rapids. However, over many centuries of carrying rocks and soil down from the hills, a young river gradually ages. Its riverbed becomes wider, the water's rate of flow begins to slacken, and the effects of erosion begin to accumulate. An old river, such as the lower **Mississippi** or the **Red River**, has sandbars and long bends. Young rivers are more useful in producing electricity because the force of the water can turn generators. That fact explains why mills and machine shops were always built near rivers. Old rivers, however, are more beautiful.

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 3 – 2

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the main purpose of this article?
  - A. to tell about the size of rivers
  - B. to describe the differences between old and new rivers
  - C. to tell about floods
  - D. to list the water sources of rivers
  
2. The selection says “Old rivers tend to *meander* across flood plains, wind slowly back and forth, and take the path of least resistance.” What does the word *meander* mean?
  - A. go directly
  - B. stop and start
  - C. wander back and forth
  - D. overflow
  
3. Why are young rivers better in the production of electricity?
  - A. They aren’t old.
  - B. They have more force.
  - C. They are cleaner.
  - D. Their riverbeds are wider.
  
4. An older river’s water flow begins to slacken or slow. What is the cause of the slow down in water flow?
  - A. landscaping
  - B. resistance
  - C. explosion
  - D. erosion