

## **GRADE 8 English Language Arts** **Reading and Responding: Lesson 7**

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 ( $\implies$ ) by them.

### *Purpose of Lesson 7:*

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- read a fictional passage,
- practice test-taking strategies,
- practice using context clues to increase vocabulary,
- practice using the process of elimination, and
- practice making inferences from a reading passage.

### *Equipment/Materials Needed:*

- Student Worksheets Reading and Responding Lesson 7 – 1 and 7 - 2
- Pencils
- A board (a chalkboard, a dry erase board, or even poster board)
- Chalk, dry erase markers, or magic marker

### *Preparations before beginning Lesson 7:*

- The tutor will read “The Dilemma” aloud to students during the lesson. It is found on page 79.
- Write these words on the board:
  - Characters
  - Setting
  - Conflict
  - Resolution

## LESSON 7: Reading and Responding

After your introductory remarks to students, say:

**Today we will practice several techniques that you can use to be a successful reader and responder. The good news is that you can use these techniques or strategies in any class and on any test. You will be familiar with many of these techniques. Here's a technique that's easy to do and that helps get your mind focused.**

**Listen carefully to the instructions your teacher gives. When the teacher says, "Follow along while I read these directions aloud," you be sure to follow along. Look at the words and listen to the teacher's voice. You can look and listen.**

**In today's lesson, we will talk about *how* you use context clues, *how* you make inferences, and *how* you find main ideas. Then we will practice! The more you practice, the better you are!**

Now say:

**There are several techniques to follow when working with a reading selection. The first thing you do is read the title. The title often gives you an idea what the passage is about.**

**The second thing to do is skim the passage. Just look over it quickly. Look to see whether it is long or short. Look for boldface type or italics. Look for quotation marks that would signal dialogue.**

**The third thing to do is read and think. As you read, think about the story. Keep these key words in mind. Refer to the board.**

**Ask yourself these questions:**

**Who are the characters?**

**What is the setting? Is it taking place a long time ago or in the present?**

**Where is the story taking place?**

**What is the conflict?**

**How is the conflict resolved?**

Then say:

**You have to stay focused. Keep your mind on your reading. There's more to reading than just knowing all the words. We practice different techniques to help you grow as a reader.**

**When I distribute the reading passage in a minute, skim it. Begin with the title. Look quickly. Don't try to read it yet. We will actually read it in a minute.**

→ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 7 – 1. Give students about a minute to skim the story page. Then say:

**Turn your story face down.** Pause to allow students to turn the story face down.

**Let's see how well you skimmed the selection. What is the title?**

Pause. (Response: "The Dilemma")

If no one responds, ask how many words were in the title. Some students may not know the word *dilemma*.

**What is a *dilemma*?** (Response: a difficult problem)

**Is there any boldface type?** (Response: no)

**Any italics?** (Response: no)

**Is there dialogue?** (Response: yes)

**Skimming helps you get ready to read. Let's read and find out what the dilemma or problem is in this selection.**

**Turn your paper over and I will read the selection aloud. Follow along on your copy while I read.**

Read the title. Then read the selection. Students should look at their copy of the selection during the reading.

Say:

**After you have read the selection, but before you answer the questions, take time to think about the story.**

Refer to the words on the board as you continue.

**Who are the characters in this selection?** Pause.

(Response: Jennifer and Yolanda)

**What is the problem or dilemma?** Pause.

(Response: Jennifer has to make a speech.)

**Let's think about the setting. When does the story take place?** Pause.

**The story could take place just about any time. There's not really any clue in the story to tell you a specific time.**

**Where does the story take place?** Pause.

(Response: There is not a definite clue in the story. It could be at school, at home, or just about anywhere.)

**Why is Jennifer scared?** Pause.

(Possible responses: She is afraid of getting up in front of the whole school; she's afraid she'll forget the speech.)

**How was this conflict or problem solved?** Pause. **Well, we really don't know whether Jennifer made the speech or not.**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 7 – 2.  
Be sure everyone has a pencil.

**Now you are ready to answer question one. Question one is a short-answer response. You have to write out an answer to the question in your best handwriting and in complete sentences.**

**This question won't be hard for you to answer. You just practiced for it a couple of minutes ago when we reviewed the key words on the board.**

**Number one. "What problem does Jennifer face in this selection? How do you know that your answer is Jennifer's problem?"**

**This question actually has two questions in it. Be sure that you answer both parts. The first part is the problem. What is the problem Jennifer faces?** Pause.

**The problem Jennifer faces is she has to make a speech.**

**Good news! That's the first sentence in the answer. Write it on your paper now.**

Pause to allow students time to complete the task. Repeat the sentence if necessary.

**Now that you have answered the first part of the question, let's tackle the second part. How do you know making the speech is a problem?**

Pause.

(Responses: She whined; she almost cried; she says she will panic.)

**Yes. Now, you have the answer to the second part of the question. All you need to do is make it into a sentence.** Pause. Allow time for students to complete writing. Give prompts and clues as needed.

If a student is struggling, you might say: Start your sentence with "Making a speech is a problem for Jennifer because..."

Ask for volunteers to read their complete answer. Listen to be sure the students stated the problem and then gave a detail from the story to show that for Jennifer making a speech was a problem.

Now say:

**Look at Question two, which is a multiple-choice question. "The author gives you reason to think that Yolanda is**

- A. cunning and sneaky.**
- B. supportive and caring.**
- C. cruel and uncaring.**
- D. generous and fun-loving."**

**Mark your answer.**

Pause to allow time for students to complete the task.

**Let's look at the answer choices. Is there any reason to think Yolanda is cunning and sneaky?** Pause.

(Response: no)

**No, there is nothing in the story that makes the reader think Yolanda is cunning and sneaky.**

**What about Choice B: supportive and caring? Pause.**

(Response: yes)

**What makes you think she is supportive and caring? Give me some proof from the story.**

(Response: She told Jennifer that everybody liked her, that she spoke intelligently in class, that she had made a speech for Student Council office, and she had introduced the speaker for the Veterans' Day Assembly; she encouraged Jennifer to start practicing now.)

**Good. But remember, we still need to look at Choices C and D. Is Yolanda cruel and uncaring? Pause.**

(Response: no)

**Look at the last choice, generous and fun loving. What about that answer? Pause.**

(Response: no)

**So, Choice B, supportive and caring, is the correct response.**

Say:

**One mistake students sometimes make is not to examine all four answer choices. Don't get in too much of a hurry! Look at all the choices just to be sure you have the right answer.**

**When you saw Choice B, you knew that Choice B was the right answer; but go ahead and check out Choices C and D. It is better to be safe, than sorry!**

**Let's continue with question number three. Read the question and then look at your four answer choices. You probably need to look back at the passage on this one before you mark your answer.**

Pause to allow students time to respond.

Say:

**Let's talk through question number three. "In this selection, why do the three dots follow "and I'll have more time to..."**

**Choice A: to show words are left out.**

**Choice B: to show Jennifer forgot what she was saying.**

**Choice C: to show Yolanda interrupts Jennifer.**

**Choice D: to show Jennifer's thoughts weren't clear.**

**So, what do those three dots mean? Pause.**

**(Response: Choice C: to show Yolanda interrupts Jennifer.)**

**Yes. For this question, you really need to go back into the story and find this part of the selection. When you look in the story, you can actually see the answer in that last paragraph.**

**Then look carefully at Choices A, B, and D. There's no reason to think words were left out, or that Jennifer forgot what she was saying, or that Jennifer's thoughts weren't clear.**

Say:

**If you have a story with a lot of dialogue or conversation, here's a little trick to use. When you are reading, pretend that you are hearing the two different voices. This trick sounds silly, but it is like seeing and hearing a movie in your mind. If something silly works and helps you to understand what you read, use it!**

**The purpose of these lessons is to help develop tricks or techniques that successful readers use. By practicing those techniques on these shorter passages, you will be able to do a better job on any reading assignment.**

**Now, go to question four. Read the question. Pause.**

**What is the key word in number four? (Response: not)**

**How do you know that *not* is the answer? (Response: It is in all capital letters and in boldface type.)**

**The printer wanted to be sure we knew that *not* was important! Okay, so with which of these statements would Yolanda NOT agree?**

**Choice A: if it's to be, it's up to me.**

**Choice B: to succeed, do the best you can where you are, with what you have.**

**Choice C: if it seems too hard, it probably is.**

**Choice D: if you think you can, you can.**

**Remember that we are looking for the statement Yolanda would not agree with. Three of these statements, she would agree with – right?**

**So here's the trick. Let's look at Choice A. Would she agree with this statement? Pause. (Response: yes)**

**Yes, Choice A sounds like something Yolanda would believe. Put a little check mark by Choice A, since it sounds like what she thinks and believes.**

**Go ahead to Choice B. Is that a statement Yolanda would believe in? Pause. (Response: yes) Yolanda seems to be a pretty positive person, so Choice B is a statement with which she would agree. Put a little check mark by Choice B, since it fits Yolanda.**

**Answer Choice C. Does Choice C sound like Yolanda? Pause. (Response: no) No, Choice C really doesn't sound like anything she could agree with. She's upbeat and positive; that statement is not upbeat and positive.**

**Let's go to Choice D. Does that saying seem to fit Yolanda? Pause. (Response: yes) Yes, this statement seems to fit her attitude and her thinking. Put a check mark by it.**

**Good job. Now you have put check marks by three responses that Yolanda would agree with. That leaves Choice C as the one she would NOT agree with.**

**It took some time to figure it out, but you did it! Don't get in a big hurry or you will mess up! Take the time to think.**

**Let's think about question four just a minute before we move ahead. Were any of those four answer choices actually in the story? Pause. (Response: no)**

**No, they weren't. So how were you supposed to be able to answer that question? What did you have to do or what did you have to know before you could answer it? Pause.**

(Responses should include: you had to read the story; you had to figure out what kind of person Yolanda was; you had to use the clues in the story about her attitude.)

**For this particular question, you had to figure out what kind of person Yolanda was. You had to use the clues from the story to decide that she had a positive attitude and that she looked for the good in people and situations.**

**In the classroom, your teacher probably refers to this strategy as making an inference. *Making an inference* simply means you use the clues and hints from the author to figure stuff out!**

Say:

**Question five is vocabulary. Read it and choose your answer. Then we will talk about the answer you selected as well as the ones you didn't.**

Pause to allow time for students to complete the task.

**In this selection, who is pessimistic? Pause.**

(Response: Jennifer)

**Correct. In fact, Yolanda calls her a pessimist. So what does *pessimist* mean? Is it Choice A: inclined to expect the best?**

(Response: no)

**No, it's not Choice A. Jennifer certainly didn't expect the best.**

**What about Choice B? Is Choice B the correct answer?**

(Response: no) **Jennifer does seem to be involved in lots of things, but Jennifer’s involvemnet is not why Yolanda called her a pessimist.**

**Did you choose Choice C: inclined to be short-tempered?** (Response: no) **Why not?** (Response: There is nothing in the story to suggest that she was short-tempered.)

**Okay. That process of elimination leaves Choice D. Is Jennifer inclined to expect the worst?** (Response: yes)

**Give me an example from the story to support your answer.** Pause. (Responses could include almost anything she said: “I’ll panic” or “What am I going to do” or “What if I forget what I’m supposed to say.”)

**So answer D, it is! Good work.**

Then say:

**Use the different strategies and techniques we have practiced today. On the multiple-choice questions, what technique or strategy could you use?** Pause.

(Responses: Read the question carefully; read all four choices; go back to read the story again; figure out which answer it isn’t.)

Some students might mention using the process of elimination.

**What strategies or techniques will you use on the short-answer questions?** Pause.

(Responses: Write in complete statements; use our best handwriting; be sure to answer all parts of the question.)

**It sounds as if you have the necessary strategies! Be sure to take your time and use your strategies. Follow the patterns we have practiced to reach an answer. Don’t leave the questions blank. Use your strategies and techniques to find the answer!**

## THE DILEMMA

Jennifer was terrified at the prospect of having to make a speech in front of the entire school. “I’ll panic when I see everybody looking at me,” she whined to her friend Yolanda. Her eyes filled with tears. “Oh, what am I going to do?”

“You just worry about everything. You are such a pessimist!” Yolanda replied. “Everybody likes you; and you speak intelligently in class, so why should a larger audience bother you? After all, you made that speech when you ran for Student Council officer, and you introduced the speaker at the Veterans’ Day Assembly.”

“But this is different. I have to make a real speech about the significance of the Constitution in our daily lives,” Jennifer explained. “Besides, Mr. Campbell expects me to memorize the speech. What if I forget what I’m supposed to say, and I’m just standing there with my mouth gaping open? There will be guests there and the mayor is supposed to come, and I just can’t do this! I just can’t.”

“You told me once that you wanted to be a lawyer,” Yolanda remarked. “If you become a lawyer, you will have to speak before judges and juries and argue points of law. That’s bound to be more difficult than making a speech in the auditorium.”

“But when I’m a lawyer, I’ll be older,” Jennifer argued, “and I’ll have more time to . . .”

“To practice talking in front of people?” Yolanda interrupted. “Why not start practicing now?”

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 7 – 2

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

1. What problem does Jennifer face in this selection? How do you know that your answer is Jennifer’s problem?

---

---

---

---

2. The author gives you reason to think that Yolanda is
- A. cunning and sneaky.
  - B. supportive and caring.
  - C. cruel and uncaring.
  - D. generous and fun-loving.
3. In this selection, why do the three dots follow “and I’ll have more time to...”?
- A. To show words are left out
  - B. To show Jennifer forgot what she was saying
  - C. To show Yolanda interrupts Jennifer
  - D. To show Jennifer’s thoughts weren’t clear
4. With which of the following statements would Yolanda **NOT** agree?
- A. If it’s to be, it’s up to me.
  - B. To succeed, do the best you can where you are, with what you have.
  - C. If it seems too hard, it probably is.
  - D. If you think you can, you can.
5. In this selection, *pessimistic* means
- A. inclined to expect the best.
  - B. inclined to get involved in too many activities.
  - C. inclined to be short-tempered.
  - D. inclined to expect the worst.