

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

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 8:*

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- read a fiction selection,
- practice test-taking strategies, and
- practice critical-thinking skills.

### *Equipment/Materials Needed:*

- Student Worksheets Reading and Responding Lesson 8 – 1 and 8 – 2
- Pencils

*LESSON 8: Reading and Responding*

After your introductory remarks to students, say:

**Today we will read and respond to a fictional selection “The Incredible Find.” Successful readers like to guess, or predict, what a story is going to be about just from the title.**

**“The Incredible Find.” Any guesses or predictions? Pause.**

Student responses may range from the serious to the absurd.

If no one responds, you might say, “Do you think somebody found some money? Do you think the story is about finding a lost pet?”

The purpose is to get students thinking! It is highly unlikely they will guess what was found in this selection.

**In a few minutes, you will read the selection and learn what this incredible find is!**

**Sometimes students start reading without having their brains focused on the reading material. The problem is the students are just seeing words, not really making any connections. Your eyes and your brain have to work together.**

**Predicting is an excellent way to get yourself ready to read. It gives your brain an opportunity to shut out all those other things you are thinking about. When you read, you need to give your full attention to the printed page.**

**Today we are going to continue practicing some techniques and strategies that will assist you in being a successful reader.**

**Successful readers are not only predictors, but also thinkers. When you read, *think* about the characters. What do they look like? Where are they? What are they doing? If they are talking to each other, how do they sound?**

**Your brain is at work the entire time you are reading!**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 8 – 1.

Say:

**Here is the reading passage. While you are reading, try to visualize or see the characters. Think about where this story takes place. After you have finished reading, sit quietly and wait for us to continue the lesson.**

Allow time for students to complete the reading.

Then say:

**Before you work on the story questions, let's think about the story.**

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

(Response: Will and Andrew)

**What are they doing?** Pause.

(Response: They are hunting for rocks; they are examining a rock crystal.)

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

(Response: There's not a definite answer. It could be summer, since the story indicates that it is a hot day.)

**Where are they?** Pause.

(Response: There's not a definite place. It could be a park, the mountains, a dry riverbed.)

**Why? Why are the guys out in the heat?** Pause.

(Response: They are searching for rocks.)

**By rethinking the story, you are better prepared to answer the questions. It takes only a couple of minutes.**

**It is generally a good idea to look over the questions and answer choices. That approach will help you stay focused!**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 8 – 2.  
Be sure every student has a pencil.

Then say:

**Before attempting to answer any questions, what should you do?**

(Response: look carefully at the questions and answer choices)

**Yes, look at the page. We are going to look at the page right now. Then you will come back and answer the questions.**

**Begin with number one and look for the key word or phrase in the question. Sometimes it just helps knowing what the question is asking. Like in number one – that’s a vocabulary question. What is the key word in number one? Pause.**

(Response: symmetry)

**Look at number two. What’s the key word? Pause.**

(Response: where)

**Circle *where*. This question is a question about setting, about where the story takes place.**

**Read number three.**

Pause to allow time for students to read the question.

**It sounds to me as if you are going to have to *figure out* the answer based on information in the selection.**

**Numbers four and five are what are called short-answer questions. In number four, what is the key word? Pause.**

(Response: actions.)

**Yes, actions. Be sure that you give more than one action!**

**Number five should not give you any trouble because there are several clues or hints in the story that answer this question.**

**Remember that on the short-answer questions you should write in complete sentences and in your best handwriting.**

**Please answer questions 1 – 5 now. Do not get in a hurry and make a careless mistake! Do not rely on your memory! Go back and find the answers in the selection.**

Allow time for students to respond to the questions.

Then say:

**Now we are ready to check and discuss these questions. It is important to get the answer right, but it is also important for you to explain *why* that answer is right. You just don't get a break from thinking when you read!**

**Number one. "In the selection, The boys knew that the *symmetry* or balanced arrangement of surfaces is what Will needed to use to classify the crystal." What does the word *symmetry* mean?**

**What does *symmetry* mean?**

(Response: Choice C: proportioned or equal)

**How did you arrive at answer Choice C?**

(Response: The sentence gives the answer because it says *symmetry or* balanced; then you look for an answer that means balanced and that was answer choice C.)

Students may have difficulty verbalizing their reasoning. Give hints and guide them as needed. Students must give substantial responses. Do not accept "I just know that's the answer." The focus here is on the thinking involved in *knowing* the answer. Some students may know the word *symmetry* from mathematics.

**Good job. Let's do number two. Where did the story take place?**

(Response: Choice C: a dry riverbed.)

**Please explain how or why you chose Answer C.**

(Response: The site *riverbed* in the first paragraph eliminates the construction site. You can tell they are outside, not in a classroom or a museum.)

Say:

**Numbers one and two seemed fairly easy, didn't you think?**

(Response: nodded agreement.)

**The reason is you are applying those thinking skills when you read.**

**Number three. “What can the reader tell about the boys’ attitude toward the environment?” I don’t even remember seeing anything in the story about the environment, did you?**

(Response: no)

The word *environment* is not in the story; the reader has to figure this one out from several clues the author gives.

**So, what did you choose for this answer?**

(Response: Choice C: They are respectful of the land and its resources.)

**Explain that choice, please.**

(Response: They picked up their water bottles and the trash. The other three choices don’t have anything to do with protecting the land or the environment.)

**Great job. That question really made you think and analyze those answer choices.**

**“What actions in this story suggest the day is a hot day?” Will someone please volunteer to read his or her response?**

(Possible responses: The story suggests this was a hot day. Will took off his cap and wiped his forehead because the sun was beating down on him. The story says that Will opened another water bottle because the sun was shining on them.)

Be sure students read their written response, not just tell you the answer. There are numerous clues in the story: Will’s cap, wiping his forehead, opened another water bottle, and the sun beat down on them.

Say:

**There are several clues in the story that let the reader know it is a hot day. Just be sure you pick more than one to include in your answer.**

**You also probably need to reread your answer after you have written it .**

**Now for the last one. “How did they know this rock crystal was an important rock find?” That question is another one of those questions you kind of have to figure out.**

**Let’s hear some somebody’s response to this question.**

(Possible responses: They had been searching for over two hours, indicating that crystals are not easily seen or found; they compared the crystal to the pictures in their book; they were very careful with the chisel; they wrapped the rock carefully.)

Then say:

**Remember that at the beginning of the lesson, we made predictions about “The Incredible Find.” Did anybody predict that the story would be about finding a rock crystal?**

**Probably not! But you certainly did a great job of practicing good reading techniques today.**

**Thanks.**

## THE INCREDIBLE FIND

Will took off his cap, removed a towel from his back pocket, and wiped his forehead. For the last two hours, he and his friend Andrew had been searching the riverbed for some new additions to their rock collections. He opened another water bottle and took a big drink as the sun beat down on them.

“Hey, Will!” Andrew called, “I’ve found something! Get yourself over here!” Will ran over as Andrew set his chisel against a large rock. With great care, Andrew began to tap the chisel with his hammer. After the third tap, a small piece of the rock broke off. Andrew picked up the piece of rock and handed it to Will.

“It looks like rock crystal,” Will said as he examined the specimen with his magnifying glass. What Will saw was almost beyond description. Inside the rough and plain-looking rock was a cluster of slender crystals. They had the distinctly regular shape he had seen in pictures. A smooth flat surface intersected to form sharp edges. It was just like in his science book. Although the crystals were colorless, sunlight filtered through them and created a spectrum of color. As Will turned the rock to catch the light, he said, “Wow! This sparkles like the lights on the Christmas tree.”

He sat down, got his book *Crystallography Made Easy* from his backpack, and began to compare the crystal to the pictures in the book. The boys knew that the symmetry, or balanced arrangement of surfaces, is what Will needed to use to classify the crystal.

“This is incredible! Our very first rock crystal,” Will declared. He was obviously pleased. Andrew carefully wrapped the specimen in some cloth and placed it in Will’s backpack. Neither of the boys wanted the piece to break during the trip home. “This find calls for a celebration,” Will said.

The boys gathered up their empty water bottles, candy wrappers, and the CD player. “Let’s get going,” said Andrew, “and be careful with that backpack.”

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 8 – 2

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. “The boys knew that the *symmetry*, or balanced arrangement of surfaces, is what Will needed to use to classify the crystal.” What does the word *symmetry* mean?
  - A. polished or smooth
  - B. jagged or sharp
  - C. proportioned or equal
  - D. colored or bright
  
2. Where does the story most probably take place?
  - A. in a science classroom.
  - B. in a museum.
  - C. in a dry riverbed.
  - D. at a deserted construction site.
  
3. What can the reader tell about the boys’ attitudes toward the environment?
  - A. They are careless with their belongings.
  - B. They are well-equipped for rock hunting.
  - C. They are respectful of the land and its resources.
  - D. They are unaware of possible dangers.
  
4. What actions in this selection suggest the day was a hot day?

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5. How did Will and Andrew know this rock crystal was an important rock find?

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