

GRADE 8 English Language Arts **Reading and Responding: Lesson 10**

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 10:

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- read a fictional passage,
- practice test-taking strategies, and
- practice responding to short-answer questions.

Equipment/Materials Needed:

- Student Worksheets Reading and Responding Lesson 10 – 1, 10 – 2, and 10 - 3
- Pencils

LESSON 10: Reading and Responding

After your introductory remarks to students, say:

In class you read several passages taken from fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. After reading, you may have to answer multiple-choice questions and short-answer questions. These questions are designed to see how well you understand what you read.

Today we will examine some short-answer questions and develop some strategies for answering these questions. Sometimes it just helps to practice reading and thinking about the questions.

Then say:

The good news is that there are really only two main things to remember about answering these short-answer questions. Number one: write legibly. That strategy is super important! Write so somebody else can read it.

Number two: write in complete sentences. That strategy is also super important. If you don't write in complete statements, you take a chance that the person who scores your answer won't understand what you were trying to say.

Here's something you can do to be sure you write in a complete sentence. Take the question and restate it or say it as the first part of your answer.

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 10 – 1.
Every student needs a pencil.

Now we are going to study some short-answer questions. Then we will practice turning that question into an answer. Don't worry; these exercises are just pretend questions. We will use these questions to practice this technique of turning the question into the answer.

Now remember these are make-believe questions. We are pretending that we have read a story about Nick. Nick likes to talk in school. He doesn't like to do homework. Look at number one. "Is Nick a real-life character? Give examples from the story to support your response." Did you notice that this question has two parts to it? First you have to answer whether Nick is a real-life character; second, you have to support your answer with details and examples from the story.

Suppose you were going to answer this question. Nick seems to be a real-life character, since he likes to talk in school and he doesn't like to do homework. How are you going to compose your answer?

Ask a volunteer to turn the question into a sentence.

(Response: Nick is a real-life character.)

Good, now write that sentence on your paper.

Pause to allow students time to write. Repeat the answer, if necessary.

Use the examples I gave you to show that Nick is a real-life character. He likes to talk in school. He doesn't like to do homework.

Pause to allow students time to write. Repeat the answer if necessary.

Let's continue to practice the technique of turning questions into answers.

Look at our number two pretend question. "What do the actions of other characters in the story let us know about Joe? Give examples." How many parts does this question have?

(Response: two) **Yes, and be sure you answer both parts!**

For the sake of time, let's just say that Joe is a mean, dishonest man. How will you write the first sentence to this question? Think about turning the question around into a sentence. Pause.

Write the sentence on your paper.

(Response: The actions of the other characters show that Joe is mean and dishonest.)

If students are struggling, give them this prompt: The actions of the other characters...

Look at number three. “What is Laura’s problem in this selection?” Let’s just say that Laura lost her backpack. Write the first sentence in our pretend answer. Pause.

(Responses might include: In this story, Laura lost her backpack.

Laura’s problem is she lost her backpack.)

Ask a volunteer to share. If no one volunteers, give the possible responses.

Remind students that their pretend answers need correct capital letters and correct punctuation marks!

Last one. “What is this selection mostly about?” Let’s say this selection is about the weather. Write your opening sentence.

Pause to allow time for students to write.

(Response: This selection is mostly about the weather.)

Ask for a volunteer to share. Again remind students of the need for capital letters and punctuation.

Now, we will read a selection and then respond to some short-answer questions. The passage we will use today is called “A Lesson Learned.” You may recall that it was used in an earlier lesson when we worked on multiple-choice questions.

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 10 – 2.

Then say:

Please read the selection now. Do not rely on your memory for this story. When you have finished reading, sit quietly until it is time to continue the lesson.

It is possible that some students will be reading this passage for the first time. They will probably need a longer time than those who are rereading. Today’s lesson does not require completion of the earlier lesson activities.

Now say:

Who are the characters in this story? Pause.

(Response: Mom and Calvin)

What is the setting for this selection? Where does it take place?

Pause.

(Response: in the kitchen; in their apartment)

What is the problem in the story? Pause.

(Response: Calvin's bicycle has been stolen.)

Those are some essential story parts. After you have finished reading a passage on the test, it is probably a good idea to take just a minute to think about what you have read. Thinking about the story helps you get everything straight in your head.

After you have finished reading a passage and before you answer the questions, think about how we practiced and ask yourself the questions we just practiced. That strategy is a test-taking technique you can use on any test.

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 10 – 3.

Say:

Let's practice responding to some short-answer questions from "A Lesson Learned." What are the two things we want to remember to do on short-answer questions? Pause.

(Response: to write legibly and to write in complete sentences)

Look at question one. "Calvin is willing to work hard for what he wants. How do we know of his willingness to work hard?"

Before you write anything on your paper, let's talk through this question. The answer is in the story, so look back at the story to see what Calvin did to get this bicycle that he wanted. Circle the things Calvin did that show he is willing to work for what he wants.

Pause to allow students time to find and circle.
If the students are struggling, direct them to paragraph six.

Then say:

What details did you find in the story to support the statement that Calvin was willing to work hard?

Ask for a volunteer or call on students to share responses.
(Responses: He saved his money for a long time; he mowed yards; he raked leaves; he did extra chores. Some students may also mention that he studied or did research on the bike.)

Now as you get ready to write, be sure to use part of the question in your answer. How will you begin the answer to this question?

Call on a volunteer.
(Response: Calvin was willing to work hard for what he wanted.)

Calvin was willing to work hard for what he wanted. That sentence is your beginning. Write that sentence on your paper. Then write two sentences that tell what work Calvin did to get what he wanted.

Allow time for students to write.
If students appear to be struggling, remind them to look back at the supporting details they circled.

Ask for volunteers to read their answers.
Remind students of the need for capital letters and punctuation.

Say:

Go to question number two. “Contrast Calvin’s emotions from the first paragraph with his emotions in the last paragraph. Use details from the story to support your answer.”

Let’s begin by circling the key words in this question.

Pause to allow students to circle.
(Responses should include contrast, first paragraph, last paragraph, details.)

What does it mean to contrast Calvin’s emotions?

Pause.

(Possible responses: to show how they change; to show how he feels at the beginning and then how he feels at the end.)

Be sure you explain what Calvin was feeling at the beginning of the story and then explain how he was feeling at the end. You show the change by using details from the story.

Begin by asking yourself how Calvin felt at the beginning? Pause.

(Responses: sad, mad, angry)

At the end of the story, how did Calvin feel? Pause.

(Responses: happy, excited, relieved)

There are lots of little steps in answering this question. Let’s go to the next one.

In your answer, you will have to write a sentence that tells how Calvin felt at the beginning of the story. Who has thought of a way to say how he felt at the beginning of the story? Pause.

(Possible responses: In the beginning of the story, Calvin felt angry. Calvin was mad at the beginning.)

It is important to say “at the beginning” or “when the story started” so the reader knows what you are talking about. Write a beginning sentence on your paper now. You may use the one we just said or you may make-up one of your own.

Pause to allow students time to write.

It really doesn’t matter if you used the word *angry* or *mad* or *upset*. What does matter is the support. Now use words or phrases from the story to show that Calvin is angry, mad, or upset. What words could you use to show how Calvin felt at the beginning of the story?

(Responses: He slumped; he wasn’t interested in the cookies; he groaned.)

Say:

Think of a way to state the answer in a sentence and write the answer on your paper.

Pause to allow students time to write.

(Responses might include: Calvin slumped in his chair and groaned as he talked with his mother. He slumped at the table; he didn't even look at the oatmeal cookies, and he groaned.)

Encourage students to use at least two of the three actions mentioned.

You've now answered half the question. You still have to tell about Calvin's emotions at the end of the story. How was he feeling at the end of the story? Pause.

(Responses: happy, excited, relieved)

You need to make a sentence that tells how Calvin felt at the end of the story. Who will volunteer to give us a sentence? Pause.

(Possible responses: Calvin felt happy at the end of the story. At the end of the story, Calvin felt happy.)

If no one volunteers, say: I was thinking of writing, "At the end of the story, Calvin was excited and happy."

You must use the phrase "by the end of the story" or "at the end" in your sentence. Now, write a sentence on your paper. You may use the one we just said or make-up one of your own.

Pause to allow time for writing.

How do you know he was excited and happy? Where's the support for that sentence? Pause.

(Possible responses: by the look on his face when he was on the phone; he repeated to himself "you won't believe it, you won't believe it"; he said that the police had found his bike.)

Good. Now write a sentence that tells why he is now happy and excited.

Pause to allow students time to write.

Ask for volunteers to read their answers to the question.

Say:

Please read and answer question number three by yourself. Use the techniques that we have just practiced.

Pause to allow time for students to write their answers.

If students are struggling, say, “Look for things his mom says or does to show she is optimistic.”

Then say:

Now that everyone has an answer written, let’s talk about the question a minute. How do we know Calvin’s mother is optimistic? What does she say or what does she do?

(Responses: She speaks sympathetically; she speaks gently; she gives him a hug; she says she thinks something will turn up.)

Yes, those answers are support for your answer. Be sure you go back to the selection to read or reread parts of it to find your answer. Don’t guess! For goodness sakes, don’t leave the answer space blank.

I hope you used the question and turned it into your first sentence. Let’s have a volunteer to read his or her response.

(Possible responses: Calvin’s mother was optimistic. She talked to him sympathetically and gently. She gave him a hug. She encouraged him by saying that perhaps they will find it and that something will turn up.)

The answers to these questions aren’t long. Be sure you answer all the question; write legibly and write in complete sentences.

Okay, time for the last one. “What real-life lesson can be learned from this story?” Think about the question and then write your answer.

Pause to allow students time to write.

Say:

What lesson do you think Calvin learned?

(Possible responses: not to be careless with his bike; not to forget to lock it up; bad things can turn out good.)

Let's share some responses.

Listen for an opening sentence similar to these: A real-life lesson can be learned from this story. A real-life lesson learned from this story is that bad things can sometimes turn out okay.

Today you have practiced several techniques that will help you to respond to the short-answer questions. It takes a lot of practice to be successful. It doesn't matter if you are playing a sport or playing a musical instrument. You must practice! This fact is especially true of reading and writing!

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 10 – 1

NAME _____

DIRECTIONS: Practice rewriting the question as part of your answer. Use your best handwriting. Write in complete sentences.

1. In the selection “Catch Me If You Can,” is Nick a real-life character? Give examples from the story to support your response.

2. What do the actions of other characters in the story let us know about Joe? Give examples.

3. What is Laura’s problem in this selection? What do you predict will happen next?

4. What is this selection mostly about?

A LESSON LEARNED

Calvin slumped over the table while his mother minced onions for the gumbo. He never even looked at the oatmeal cookies in front of him.

“I’m sorry about your bicycle,” his mother said sympathetically. “Perhaps they’ll find it . . . you never know.” Calvin realized his mother was trying to be optimistic, but he didn’t need optimism at the moment. He needed a bicycle, preferably his black, 10-speed, Italian racer. How was he going to get back and forth to school? Even more important, how was he going to go on the bike trip to the lake?

“I should have taken it up to my bedroom and kept it there,” Calvin groaned.

“We all make mistakes, son,” said Mom gently, as she reached over to give him a hug. “Some lessons are more expensive than others. I know you are upset, but maybe something will turn up. Think positive thoughts.”

“Yea, sure!”

Calvin walked over to the window and stared down at the traffic on the busy street. He heard a door slam down the hall. He leaned against the kitchen counter and remembered how long he had saved to purchase the bicycle. He had mowed yards, raked leaves, and done extra chores for months in order to buy the bicycle. Calvin researched various models and manufacturers on the Internet. He hung out at the bike store on Saturdays and talked with Johnny, the manager. Johnny gave him old copies of the magazine *Cycling* to read.

When the telephone rang, Calvin made no move to answer it. “Please get the telephone,” his mom said. Calvin did not really want to answer it. Reluctantly, he walked over and picked up the phone.

“Hello...yes...okay...” His mother surmised that the news was good by the look on his face. “Sure...and thanks...see you soon.”

“Mom, you won’t believe it, you won’t believe it! That was Officer Parker. The police found my bike. I have to get the registration forms and the sales receipt and then let’s go! Hurry up!”

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 10 – 3

NAME _____

DIRECTIONS: Answer these questions. Use your best handwriting. Write in complete sentences.

1. Calvin is willing to work hard for what he wants. How do we know that he is willing to work hard?

2. Contrast Calvin’s emotions from the first paragraph with his emotions in the last paragraph. Use details from the story to support your answer.

3. How do we know Calvin’s mother is optimistic? What does she say or do?

4. What real-life lesson can be learned from this story?
