

GRADE 8 English Language Arts Reading and Responding: Lesson 15

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 hand out materials to students, will have an arrow symbol (\Rightarrow) by them.

Optional: At some point during the lesson, you may read the passage aloud so students can hear fluent, expressive reading and the correct pronunciation of unfamiliar words. You may read the passage aloud immediately before or after students read have it independently, or at another point during the lesson, as you feel appropriate. The decision to read the passage aloud should depend on student needs, the degree of text difficulty, and the particular lesson.

Purpose of Lesson 15:

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- read a nonfiction selection,
- identify the author’s purpose,
- distinguish fact from opinion,
- distinguish expository text from narrative text,
- use context clues to define unfamiliar vocabulary, and
- make inferences (read between the lines).

Equipment/Materials Needed:

- Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 15-1
- Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 15-2
- Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 15-3
- Pencils

Introduction

Today's lesson will be about *facts* and *opinions*. Who can tell the difference between them? Pause. (Facts are true; opinions are neither right nor wrong, but reflect feelings or beliefs.) Give examples, asking students to identify them as facts or opinions.

To reinforce understanding, lead students in an activity sometimes used as an icebreaker. Explain the following:

- ◆ Each student must say something about the student next to him: for example, a student may say, "Derek has some cool shoes." The other students must decide whether this statement is a fact or opinion. Students may get confused at first and say the statement is a fact, especially if all agree that Derek has cool shoes. Clarify any confusion, clearly explaining why this statement is an opinion. You might say, "**Derek does have cool shoes in my opinion; but the principal might think they are too wild looking, so the principal's feelings would be another opinion. We can't say this statement is a fact, even if we all agree that Derek's shoes are cool. Who can change this opinion statement to a factual statement by taking one word out of the sentence?"** Pause. **If we just say, *Derek has shoes*, we have stated a fact, because the statement is true, not just what someone thinks.**
- ◆ Derek then says something about the next student, such as *Sarah's hair is blond*. Students should identify this statement as a fact because it is true that Sarah has blond hair. Change the statement to an opinion, such as *Sarah's hair is long, blond, and beautiful*. Have students identify the key words that make the statement an opinion. Explain that describing anything as beautiful is giving an opinion; some people may think blond hair is ugly. Describing hair as long would also be an opinion because we don't have a definition for long. Some may think shoulder-length hair is long, and others may think hair long only if it is waist-length.
- ◆ Explain that words used to show comparisons may help to clarify: for example, *Sarah's hair is longer than Mary's hair* is a fact that can be verified; *Mary's hair is short* is an opinion; *Mary's hair is shorter than Sarah's hair* is a fact.
- ◆ Continue until each student has had at least one turn to say something or until students can identify the statements correctly.

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 15-1.

Now that you understand the differences between facts and opinions, complete this comparison chart. For rows 1-5, circle the choice correctly describing a fact or opinion. For the last row, list some words that give clues as to whether a statement is a fact or opinion. There are many words that can be listed. List just a few.

After students have completed the chart, discuss descriptions of facts and opinions in Rows 1-7. Answers for Rows 6 and 7 may overlap. Accept students' answers that are logical. Answers in Row 8 will also vary; accept and validate logical answers: for example, a student may have included *I love...or I hate....* Phrases expressing emotions are considered key words for opinion statements. Answers are highlighted below:

	<i>FACTS</i>	<i>OPINION</i>
1.	◆ Can be proved right or wrong: <i>yes no</i>	◆ Can be proved right or wrong: <i>yes no</i>
2.	◆ Based on evidence: <i>sometimes always never</i>	◆ Based on evidence: <i>sometimes always never</i>
3.	◆ Depends on point of view: <i>sometimes always never</i>	◆ Depends on point of view: <i>sometimes always never</i>
4.	◆ Can be changed: <i>yes no</i>	◆ Can be changed: <i>Yes no</i>
5.	◆ Answers questions with <i>one answer more than one answer</i>	◆ Answers questions with <i>one answer more than one answer</i>
6.	◆ <i>Usually</i> answers <i>who what when where how why</i>	◆ <i>Usually</i> answers <i>who what when where how why</i>
7.	◆ <i>Sometimes</i> answers <i>who what when where how why</i>	◆ <i>Sometimes</i> answers <i>who what when where how why</i>
8.	◆ Some key words: numbers, dates <i>Born in 1988, he is 13 years old.</i>	◆ Some key words or phrases: <i>I think..., I believe..., I feel...</i>

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Now that you understand the differences between *facts* and *opinions*, let's look at *opinions* more closely. We know that opinions are neither right nor wrong. Does this mean all opinions are good ones? Pause. (No. Some are bad.) What makes an opinion good or bad? Pause. (Good ones are based on the facts or experiences; bad ones are not.)

If two people have different opinions about the same subject, can they both be right? Pause. Discuss situations in which people have different opinions, but opinions that do make sense.

Read aloud these sentences: John says pizza is the best food he has ever eaten. Bob says pizza is the worst food he has ever eaten. Mary says pizza is the best tasting fast food, but she has never eaten any pizza.

Do these opinions make sense? Why or why not? Pause. Even though John and Bob have different opinions, their opinions do make sense because they both have eaten pizza. Mary's opinion does not make sense because she has never eaten pizza.

In other words, opinions based on facts or experiences are valid. On the other hand, opinions not based on facts or experiences are invalid. Sometimes we have opinions based on assumptions (What we think is true, but we don't really know for sure.) or rumors (What we hear others say, but we don't really know whether or not it's true.) instead of facts or firsthand experience. These are invalid opinions.

⇒ Write the following on the board:

Valid Opinions

- ◆ Based on *facts*
- ◆ Can be based on *experiences*

Invalid Opinions

- ◆ Based on *assumptions*
- ◆ May be based on *rumors*

Now Say:

Have you ever had an *invalid opinion*, heard someone make a statement that was an *invalid opinion*, or read statements that were *invalid opinions*? Pause. If students do not respond, provide one or two examples of your personal experiences regarding invalid opinions or assumptions.

Now that we have discussed the differences between facts and opinions, let's think about what types of reading materials would have facts and opinions. Let's start with facts. Can you tell what type of reading materials would contain mostly facts? Pause. (Textbooks, encyclopedias, newspapers.)

These publications are all good examples of reading materials with facts; there are many more. Some reading passages contain a mixture of facts and opinion: for example, the newspaper has many articles with facts; the purpose of these articles is to inform us. The newspaper also has articles called *editorials*, which are about the authors' opinions on a particular subject. The purpose of these editorials is to persuade the reader to have the same opinion as the authors.

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 15-2.

Now I'd like to read a passage about Maya Angelou. Follow along with me, reading silently as I read aloud. After reading aloud, prompt students to determine the reason for reading such a passage.

Can anyone tell what type of passage this one is and where it might be found? Pause. (maybe a biography because it's about someone's life; it might be found in a book or magazine.)

Since this passage is about someone's life, we know it is an example of *nonfiction*, which means a true story, or true information. If the purpose of this passage is to inform us, then what kinds of statements do we expect to find – *factual* or *opinion*? Pause. (mostly facts)

Yes, this passage probably has mostly factual statements. Do you think there are any opinions in this passage? Pause.

Read this passage again, this time reading silently to yourself. While you are reading, underline all sentences that are factual and write a check by all sentences that are opinions. Circle the key words in each sentence identified as opinion.

After students have completed reading the passage and identifying sentences as opinion or statement, discuss reasons for identifying the three sentences as opinions and key words that give clues for this classification.

Are most sentences in this passage fact or opinion? Pause. (fact.)
Yes, just as we expected in an article that informs, most of the statements are factual. How many statements were the author's opinion? Pause. (three.)

There is one opinion statement in each of the three paragraphs:

◆ **First Paragraph (4th sentence):**

*In this selection, she describes African-American life with witty, intelligent language. Key words indicating an opinion are *witty* and *intelligent*. People may define these words differently.*

◆ **Second Paragraph (1st sentence):**

*Maya Angelou is one of the most talented women of our time. Key words are *most talented*. What is considered talent by some is not talent to others. Whoever is considered the most talented is a matter of preference or opinion.*

◆ **Third Paragraph (2nd sentence):**

*She gives marvelous, one-woman shows in which she sings, reads her poetry, and tells stories of her fascinating life. Key words *marvelous* and *fascinating* may mean different things to different people.*

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lessons 15-3.

Now you can apply what you have learned about facts and opinions and test-taking strategies to answer the questions on this worksheet.

Remember to

- ◆ **choose the *best answer that makes sense* and that is *in the passage* for multiple choice questions;**
- ◆ **use context clues and sounding out to define unfamiliar words;**
- ◆ **answer questions in complete sentences; and**
- ◆ **underline and write the question number at the beginning of the sentences where answers are found and circle key words.**

After students have completed the worksheet, discuss the answers to each question. Before providing correct answers, give students the opportunity to give their answers and explanations for them. Have students explain the reasons for their choices and their reasons for eliminating choices; then ask them to identify key words, when appropriate.

Answers to Worksheet 15-1

1. **Choice C** (*well known for her performance in martial arts*) **is correct**. Key words for this question are *is not true*. This one might have been a little tricky if you didn't read carefully. The 5th sentence in the second paragraph, *Angelou was not satisfied with working only in the arts, however*, may have led you to think Choice C was true; but *martial arts* are a different kind of art than singing, dancing, and acting. What are *martial arts*? Pause. (Karate, taekwondo, etc.)

Choice A (*is an author*) is incorrect, because that statement is true. All three paragraphs include sentences that indicate Angelou is an author. The last sentence in the first paragraph tells us Angelou wrote *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. The 3rd sentence in the second paragraph tells us Angelou was a journalist; a journalist writes articles. Every sentence except the first one in the last paragraph tells us Angelou is an author. She reads poetry she has written and works on her autobiography. She read a poem she had especially written for Clinton's presidential inauguration.

This answer was found in the lines of the passage.

Choice B (*has been involved in politics*) is also incorrect because that statement is true. You had to read *between the lines* in the 2nd paragraph to find this answer. The 5th sentence, *She also became involved in the civil rights movement and worked with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Choice D (*has been a dancer, singer, producer, and director*) is also incorrect because that statement is true. This answer was found *in the lines* in the 4th sentence of the second paragraph.

(answers continued)

2. Choice D (*Angelou has experienced a variety of professions.*) is correct.

By reading *between the lines* in the first paragraph, we learn that Angelou is an author. Key words are *variety of professions*. The last sentence says that a book she wrote was made into a screenplay. In the second paragraph, several sentences tell of Angelou's many professions. The 4th sentence says Angelou worked as a *singer, actress, journalist, teacher, producer, director, and magazine editor*. You had to read between the lines to answer this question, because no sentence stated that Angelou had many professions.

Choice A (*Although Angelou was little known in the 1990's, she was famous in the 1960's, during the time of the civil rights movement.*) is incorrect; it is not true. Key words are *little known* and *1990's*. We know the first part of the sentence isn't true; the last two sentences in the 3rd paragraph say that former President Clinton asked Angelou to write a poem for the 1993 presidential inauguration. If part of the sentence is false, the entire sentence is false.

Choice B (*From the age of three years old, Angelou knew exactly what profession she wanted when she grew up, so she focused on dancing.*) is incorrect because it is not true. Key words are *knew exactly, focused, and dancing*. Although Angelou has worked as a professional dancer, she has also experienced many other professions. Several sentences in each of the three paragraphs tell us Angelou did not focus on a particular profession, but experienced several. (See the supporting statement above in explanation for Choice D.)

Choice C (*Angelou has recently completed her brief autobiography while living in New York.*) is incorrect because the statement is not true. Key words are recently, completed, brief, and autobiography. The 3rd sentence of the last paragraph tells us that Angelou continues to work on later volumes of her autobiography. If she continues to work on the autobiography, then it can't be completed. Also, if Angelou is working on volumes of her autobiography, it cannot be *brief*, which means short.

(answers continued)

3. The author's opinion of Maya Angelou is very positive. We can tell by the three opinion statements that the author believes Angelou to be very talented in many areas. Accept answers that show the author's opinion to be positive. Be sure students support their answers with specific statements found in the passage, particularly the opinion statements.

4. a. *In this selection, she describes African-American life with witty, intelligent language.*

Possible answer: In this selection, she describes African-American life. The words that make this an opinion statement are *witty* and *intelligent*. Without these words, the statement is a fact. (Answers may vary.)

b. *Maya Angelou is one of the most talented women of our time.*

Possible answer: Some think Maya Angelou is one of the most talented women of our time. Reporting what someone else thinks changes this sentence to a factual statement. (Answers may vary.)

c. *She gives marvelous, one-woman shows in which she sings, reads her poetry, and tells stories of her fascinating life.*

Possible answer: She gives one-woman shows in which she sings, reads her poetry, and tells stories of her fascinating life. The word that makes this an opinion statement is *marvelous*. Without this word, the statement is a fact.

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 15-1

Name: _____

Complete the following chart comparing *facts* and *opinions*. For Rows 1-7, circle the choice that best describes a fact or opinion. For the last row, list a few words or phrases that are clues to factual and opinion statements.

Facts and Opinions

FACTS

OPINION

1. Can be proved right or wrong: <i>yes no</i>	Can be proved right or wrong: <i>yes no</i>
2. Based on evidence: <i>sometimes always never</i>	Based on evidence: <i>sometimes always never</i>
3. Depends on point of view: <i>sometimes always never</i>	Depends on point of view: <i>sometimes always never</i>
4. Can be changed: <i>yes no</i>	Can be changed: <i>Yes no</i>
5. Answers questions with <u>one answer</u> <u>more than one answer</u>	Answers questions with <u>one answer</u> <u>more than one answer</u>
6. Usually answers <i>who what when where how why</i>	Usually answers <i>who what when where how why</i>
7. Sometimes answers <i>who what when where how why</i>	Sometimes answers <i>who what when where how why</i>
8. Some key words: numbers, dates <i>Born in 1988, he is 13 years old.</i>	Some key words or phrases: I think..., I believe..., I feel...,

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MAYA ANGELOU

When she was three years old, Maya Angelou took a long train ride with her four-year-old brother Bailey. They left Long Beach, California, to live with their grandmother, who ran a general store in Stamps, Arkansas. Angelou later told the story of her childhood in a work called *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. In this selection, she describes African-American life with witty, intelligent language. She credits Mrs. Bertha Flowers with giving her a love of language that has lasted a lifetime. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* was made into a screenplay that aired as a television special.

Maya Angelou is one of the most talented women of our time. She studied dance in San Francisco. Later she toured Europe and Africa as a cast member in the musical *Porgy and Bess*. She has also worked as a singer, actress, journalist, teacher, producer, director, and magazine editor. Angelou was not satisfied with working only in the arts, however. She also became involved in the civil rights movement and worked with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She has traveled all over the world promoting the causes of peace and human rights.

Ms. Angelou presently lives in New York City, where she remains active in dance and theater. She gives marvelous, one-woman shows in which she sings, reads her poetry, and tells stories of her fascinating life. She continues to work on later volumes of her autobiography. In 1992, Angelou was invited by Bill Clinton to write a poem for his inauguration. In January, 1993, "On the Pulse of the Morning" was read by Maya Angelou for the President and the nation.

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 15-3

NAME: _____

Choose the best answer according to the article about Maya Angelou.

1. Which of the following statements concerning Maya Angelou's professional and personal experiences *is not true*?
 - A. Angelou is an author.
 - B. Angelou has been involved in politics.
 - C. Angelou is well known for her performance in martial arts.
 - D. Angelou has been a dancer, singer, producer and director.

2. Which of the following statements about Maya Angelou *is true*?
 - A. Although Angelou was little known in the 1990's, she was famous in the 1960's, during the time of the civil rights movement.
 - B. From the age of three years old, Angelou knew exactly what profession she wanted when she grew up, so she focused on dancing.
 - C. Angelou has recently completed her brief autobiography while living in New York City.
 - D. Angelou has experienced a variety of professions.

3. What is the author's opinion of Maya Angelou? What statements in the passage make you draw this conclusion?

4. Rewrite the following statements so that they are *factual*.
 - a. *In this selection, she describes African-American life with witty, intelligent language.*

 - b. *Maya Angelou is one of the most talented women of our time.*

 - c. *She gives marvelous, one-woman shows in which she sings, reads her poetry, and tells stories of her fascinating life.*