

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

Reading Passages

SAMPLE

GRADE 5

Four reading levels for every passage

PREPARE + CLUSTERS 1 TO 8

RANDI WHITNEY

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CLUSTER 1 · LEVEL 1

The Ocean Lesson

1. Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

2. "How do they know where to go?" Nyla asked.

3. "They don't need to be taught," her guide explained. "It's an instinct. They are born with that behavior."

4. Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment.

5. The guide smiled and said, "Slow and steady wins the race."

6. Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. She stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns. A trainer explained how they hunt in the wild.

7. "Orcas rely on learned behavior," he said. "Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together."

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8. The trainer smiled and said, "These orcas are a whale of a team."

9. Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful.

10. "So they have to learn how to survive?" Nyla asked.

11. "Yes," the trainer replied. "Their success depends on learning and cooperation."

12. Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

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CLUSTER 3 · LEVEL 4

Our Rights, Our Voices

1. Long ago, when a nation was new,
2. Leaders asked, “What should we do?”
3. They wanted rules that all could know,
4. To help the young country safely grow.
5. They wrote down rights to make things fair,
6. So people’s freedoms would be there.
7. These promises would help explain
8. How laws should work across the land.
9. After the Constitution was complete,
10. Many people thought one part was incomplete.
11. They wanted written rights everyone could see,
12. To help protect each person's liberty.
13. They knew the country still would grow,
14. And future generations needed to know
15. That everyone should have a voice,
16. And freedoms should protect each choice.
17. The First says you can speak your mind,
18. Practice religion of any kind,
19. Write your thoughts and gather too,
20. And transmit ideas as others do.
21. People also have the right to meet
22. Peacefully along a town or street.
23. They can ask leaders to hear their plea,
24. And work together respectfully.
25. The Second says you have a right
26. To keep yourself safe day or night,
27. The Third says soldiers cannot stay,

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disagreed about how these ideas should be applied, but the principles written in 1776 have remained at the center of those discussions.

28. The Declaration of Independence announced the birth of a new nation, but it also created a set of ideals that challenged future generations to continue improving the country. Its words encouraged people to think about fairness, liberty, equality, and the responsibilities of both citizens and government. While the nation has changed in many ways since 1776, the ideas expressed in the Declaration continue to shape American democracy and inspire people to work toward the promise of equal rights and freedom for all.

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9. Then tea was dumped into the bay;
Some praised the bold and risky way.
While others questioned whether right
Could grow from property destroyed at night.

10. So even people on one side
Could disagree on how to decide.
A shared goal does not always mean
The same solution will be seen.

11. The Intolerable Acts were meant
To punish those whom Britain blamed.
Instead, the colonies drew near
As one town's trouble spread its fear.

12. Their separate voices formed a choir;
Their shared concerns became a fire.
But even then, some hoped that peace
Could make the growing conflict cease.

13. Eventually, the colonies chose
A road from which great change arose
The Declaration boldly said
That natural rights should guide instead.

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14. It claimed that people had a right
To life and liberty held tight.
And government, the writers said,
Gets power from the people led.

15. Those words became a nation's claim,
But practice did not match the frame.
Equality was written there,
While many people lacked its share.

16. Abigail Adams raised her voice:
Remember women in your choice.
Enslaved people could clearly see
The contradiction with liberty.

17. Native peoples also faced
Loss of land as borders changed.
The nation's promise, broad and bright,
Had not yet reached each person's life.

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