**Suggested Focus Calendar for Responding to Reading**

Targeted Discussion Area for Interactive/Shared Reading Using a Variety of Fiction and Nonfiction Read Alouds

Grades 3-5

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Grade 3** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 5** |
| Sept | A1 and A2 | A1, A3 | A1, A3  (A2 review) |
| October | A3 and B3 | C1 and C2 | C1 C2  (B3 review fiction) |
| November | C1 and C2 | B1 and B2 | B1 and D2 |
| December | B1 and D2 | D1 | B2 and D1 |
| January | A1, C1, A3 and C2 | D2 and D3 | D3 and B3 |
| February | Review | Review | Review |
| Weaving Throughout | A5 and D1 | B3, A4, A5, D1 |  |

Assessment Focus for September to help determine small group instruction

Grade 3

Review Area Questions

1. Story Elements
2. Theme
3. Summarize
4. Using Evidence

Grade 4

Review Area Questions

1. Personal Connection
2. Theme
3. Summary
4. Using Evidence

Grade 5

Review Area Questions

1. Summarizing
2. Personal Connection
3. Most Important part
4. Theme

**Grade 3**

**Cockroach**

Leon just moved into the apartments across the street. He’s the smallest kid on the block. His head doesn’t even come up to my shoulder. He’s really skinny, too. Barry gave Leon the nickname of Cockroach.

“You’re about as big as a bug,” Barry told him. You could tell that Leon didn’t like his new name. But you could also tell that he was used to being teased about his height.

We asked Leon to shoot baskets with us after school. We play almost every night. In our neighborhood, there’s not much else to do. No movie theaters or libraries. Just a playground with two hoops—and no nets.

“Sure,” said Leon. “I used to play a lot where. . .”

He stopped, and we knew he was thinking about where he used to live. He was probably missing his friends. We were glad we’d asked him to play ball.

We met at the playground after school. Right away, Barry tossed the ball to Leon to see what he had.

“Take a shot,” Barry yelled from across the court. Leon shot the ball from 20 feet away. It went right in without even touching the rim.

“Your turn,” he said to Barry, snagging his own rebound. “I’ll guard you.”

Barry started to dribble, but Leon stole the ball in the blink of an eye. In another second, he shot the ball. Swish. Straight in.

Barry and I looked at one another.

“You’re pretty darned good,” said Barry. “For a cockroach.”

“I told you I used to play a lot,” Leon replied.

“From now on, you’re on our team every game,” I said. “But about that nickname. . . .”

“Let’s make it Hornet,” Barry said, “and that shot is your stinger.”

“Yeah,” agreed Leon.

Question 1

What happened in the beginning, middle and end of the story?

Question 2

What is the theme of the story? What is the author’s message?

Question 3

Can you summarize the text?

Question 4

Use evidence from the story to explain how Leon played basketball?

**Grade 4**

**BEST FRIENDS**

By Mary Beth Olson

“Please stay,” I begged.

Ann was my best friend, the only other girl in the neighborhood and I didn’t want her to go.

She sat on my bed, her blue eyes blank.

“I’m bored,” she said, slowly twirling her thick red pigtail around her finger. She had come to play a half hour ago.

“Please don’t go,” I pleaded. “Your mother said you could stay an hour.”

Ann started to get up, then spotted a pair of miniature Indian moccasins on my bedside table. With their bright colored beads on buttery leather, the moccasins were my most cherished possession.

“I’ll stay if you give me those,” Ann said.

I frowned. I couldn’t imagine parting with the moccasins. “But Aunt Reba Gave them to me,” I protested.

My aunt had been a beautiful, kind woman. I had really adored her. She was never too busy to spend time with me. We made up silly stories and laughed and laughed. The day she died, I cried under a blanket for hours, unable to believe that I would never see her again. Now, as I cuddled the soft moccasins in my hands, I was filled with fond memories of Aunt Reba.

“Come on,” prodded Ann. “I’m your best friend.” As if she needed to remind me!

I don’t know what came over me, but more than anything, I wanted someone to play with me. I wanted someone to play with me so much that I handed Ann the moccasins!

After she stuffed them in her pocket, we rode our bikes up and down the alley a few times. Soon it was time for her to go. Upset at what I had done, I didn’t feel like playing anyway.

I pleaded “not hungry” that evening and dragged off to bed without dinner. Once up in my room, I began to really miss those moccasins!

When my mom had tucked me in and turned out the light, she asked me what was wrong. Through my tears, I told her how I had betrayed Aunt Reba’s memory and how ashamed I felt.

Mom hugged me warmly, but all she could say was, “Well, I guess you’ll have to decide what to do.”

Her words didn’t seem to help. Alone in the dark, I began to think more clearly. *Kids’ code says you don’t give, then take back. But was it a fair trade? Why did I let Ann toy with my feelings? But most of all, is Ann really my best friend?*

I decided what I would do. I tossed and turned all night, dreading daylight.

At school the next day, I cornered Ann. I took a deep breath and asked for the moccasins. Her eyes narrowed, and she stared at me for a long time.

*Please*, I was thinking. *Please.*

“Okay,” she said finally, producing the moccasins from her pocket. “I didn’t like them anyway.” Relief washed over me like a wave.

After a while, Ann and I stopped playing together. I discovered the neighborhood boys weren’t half bad, especially when they asked me to play softball. I even made girlfriends in other neighborhoods.

Through the years, I have had other best friends. But I have never again begged for their company. I have come to understand that best friends are people who want to spend time with you, and they ask nothing in return.

Question 1

Give a summary of the story.

Question 2

What is the theme of the story? What is the author saying to you?

Question 3

Show how something that happened in the story is like something that happened in your life?

Question 4

Using evidence from the story, prove that the narrator is brave?

**Grade 5**

**ALMOST ANNIE**

**Part I**

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Sara could hardly wait for tomorrow. This was going to be the best day of her life, the day she’d finally get to audition for the school play. This year, all of the classrooms were going to work together on one big production—*Annie*. As a fourth grader, she figured she had a chance at a really good part. In fact, she wanted to play the leading role—Annie, the little orphan girl who gets adopted by Daddy Warbucks and lives happily ever after in a mansion fit for a queen.

*I just know I’ll get picked to be Annie*, Sara thought as she drifted off to sleep. *I’ve acted in plays before and everyone has said I’m a natural actress. I even have red, curly hair like the real Annie. Besides, I’ve been practicing my audition piece for two whole weeks*. She sleepily hummed a few bars to herself, just as she’d heard them dozens of time on the movie soundtrack: *Tomorrow, tomorrow, I love ya tomorrow. . . . .*

Audition day dawned bright and sunny. Sara bounded out of bed and surveyed the clothes hanging in her closet. What could she wear that would make her really *look* like Annie?

“I know,” she mused, “I’ll wear my red sweater. Red is the color of the dress Annie always wore.” She buttoned it up so that only the top of her white turtleneck was sticking out. She glanced in the mirror approvingly.

A few hours later, Sara sat on a bench outside Ms. Bartlett’s door. Ms. Bartlett was the music teacher and she was playing piano for all of the children as they sang their audition song. Sara noticed that she wasn’t the only kid who thought to wear something red. She looked around at the other students who were auditioning for the lead role. She didn’t think Rebecca would get the part. She had such a soft voice that the teacher always had to ask her to repeat her answer about six times before she heard her. She doubted Jodi would get chosen, either. She was the tallest student in the school. If Jodi got the part, she’d probably be taller than Daddy Warbucks!

Just then another girl slid onto the bench next to Sara. She looked nervous. “Are you trying out for the part of Annie?” the girl asked.

Sara thought this was a ridiculous question since only students auditioning for Annie had been called to Ms. Bartlett’s room so far. Still, she tried to be polite: “Yes, I’m auditioning for Annie. It’s not a big deal though if I don’t get it.” Sara didn’t want this girl (who she had never seen before) to know how badly she wanted to play this role.

“Oh,” answered the girl, fidgeting with her straight, brown hair. “I’d love to be Annie. At my old school, we always did a play. This year I thought I might get a lead, but then we moved. My name is Maria.”

Sara introduced herself to Maria just as her name was called. She flew off the bench and into Ms. Bartlett’s room. She wanted to impress her music teacher with a star-quality performance so there would be no question about who should get the part of Annie in this play.

**ALMOST ANNIE**

**Part II**

As Sara closed the door behind her after her audition she was satisfied that she’d done her best. She even hit the high note with no trouble! Ms. Bartlett promised to announce the cast over the loud speaker at dismissal time. Those four hours until the end of the day felt like an entire decade. But at last Sara heard the familiar static that signaled an announcement.

“May I have your attention!” Ms. Bartlett paused. “I’m pleased to announce the cast of this year’s school play. First, the part of Annie will be played by Maria Ortiz. . . . . .”

Sara froze. She barely heard her own name announced a few seconds later as one of the children in the orphanage. She stuffed her books into her backpack and left the room quietly, though the thoughts racing through her mind were anything but quiet. *It’s not fair*, she wanted to scream. *I deserved that part. I worked for it. I even LOOK like Annie.*

Sara slammed the back door as she entered her house, stomped up the stairs, and threw herself across her bed. She knew her mother was following her and quickly buried her head in Pinky, her beloved stuffed bunny, so her mother wouldn’t see her tears.

“I didn’t get the part. I’m going to be a stupid orphan,” Sara sniffed, her words muffled by Pinky’s matted fur.

“Oh,” was all Sara’s mother said. She didn’t want to make a bad situation worse by saying those things mothers often say at a time like this: *There’s always next year*. Or, *All of the parts in a play are important.* Eventually, she did encourage Sara to at least give it a try.

So Sara took her place among the other orphanage children. During the first couple of rehearsals she mentally criticized every word Maria said and every note she sang. But gradually she had to admit to herself that Maria had a knack for acting. She didn’t seem to be just playing a role on that stage. She seemed to really *be* Annie. (The red, curly wig helped!) And off stage, during the few scenes that didn’t involve Annie, Maria was so nice. She and Sara joked around and sometimes they played cards. Sara almost always won.

“It’s not fair!” Maria moaned. “At my old school, I was known as *The Card Shark*. But now, you always beat me!”

On the night of the last performance when the cast took its final bow, Sara couldn’t help but think that she’d sure like to be the one in the center of the stage getting all of that loud applause, and so many flowers.

“Here, Sara, I want you to have this.” Maria plucked the biggest, reddest rose from the bouquet her mother had given her.

“Thanks,” Sara smiled. One day the petals from that rose, dried and pressed, would find a place in her scrapbook: Happy Memories of This Year’s School Play.

Question 1

Summarize the story.

Question 2

What is the theme of the story? What is the author saying to you?

Question 3

Show how something that happened in the story is like something that happened in your own life. Explain

Question 4

What is the most important part of the story and why?