

OCTOBER

Differentiated Passages



October Passages

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Street with no Jack-o-Lanterns

A ghoulish delight filled the air. Darkness fell across the night sky. It created an eerie mood. Harper was delighted. Halloween was her favorite day. She adored the smell of pumpkin spice. She loved the sound of spooky creaks and a witch's cackle. Harper had been counting down the days with excitement. She couldn't wait for the ghoulish scare Halloween night would bring. She placed her tall velvet witch hat on her head. She slipped on a matching black dress. She looked in the mirror. She looked spooktacular.

Harper grabbed her orange polka-dotted candy basket. The doorbell rang. She greeted her best friends, Mason and Emory. They were ready for what the night might bring. Harper instantly felt as if something was missing. Her gut told her that something was just not right.

"What is this feeling that something is missing?" pondered Harper. Her eyes scanned up and down her street. Finally, it clicked. The Halloween glow had vanished. The street looked dark.

Emory's eyes got big. She turned and looked at Harper and Mason. "It's the pumpkins. They're gone. All of them," said Emory.

Harper and Mason looked down their street. She was right. The pumpkins were gone. There were no pumpkins with scary faces. There were no jack-o-lanterns with faces aglow. And there were no orange toothless grins.



QUESTIONING

2nd & 3rd Grade



OCTOBER PASSAGES

2nd & 3rd grade

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*This product includes 6 differentiated leveled passages in the 2nd-3rd Grade Text Complexity Band (the range for 2nd-3rd grade is 420-820). Each passage is available on two levels and comes with general comprehension questions, a skill-based activity, and a reading response activity.

1. The Street with No Jack-o-Lanterns- Halloween Story- *Focus on Questioning* (480L, 820L)
2. Saying Sorry- Yom Kippur Story- *Focus on Characters* (450L, 740L)
3. Belling the Cat- Fable- *Focus on Theme* (480,790)
4. How to Carve a Pumpkin- Functional / How To- *Focus on Sequence* (320L, 490L)
5. A Hero or Not- Columbus Day- *Focus on Cause and Effect* (470L, 810L)
6. The Day of the Dead- *Focus on Facts* (490L, 710L)



ABOUT LEXILE LEVELS



MagiCore Learning, LLC is a certified Lexile® Partner. These texts are officially measured and approved by Lexile and MetaMetrics® to ensure appropriate rigor and differentiation for students.

The Lexile Framework® for Reading measures are scientific, quantitative text levels. When the Lexile of a text is measured, specific, measurable attributes of the text are considered, including, but not limited to, word frequency, sentence length, and text cohesion. These are difficult attributes for humans to evaluate, so a computer measures them.

Common Core State Standards uses Lexile level bands as one measure of text complexity. Text complexity ranges ensure students are college and career ready by the end of 12th grade. Lexile measures help educators scaffold and differentiate instruction as well as monitor reading growth.

Grade Band	Lexile® Bands Aligned to Common Core Expectations
K-1	N/A
2-3	420L-820L
4-5	740L-1010L
6-8	925L-1385L

Keep in mind when using any leveled text that many students will need scaffolding and support to reach text at the high end of their grade band. According to Appendix A of the Common Core Standards, "It is important to recognize that scaffolding often is entirely appropriate. The expectation that scaffolding will occur with particularly challenging texts is built into the Standards' grade-by-grade text complexity expectations, for example. The general movement, however, should be toward decreasing scaffolding and increasing independence both within and across the text complexity bands defined in the Standards."





The Street with no Jack-o-Lanterns

A ghoulish delight filled the air. Darkness fell across the night sky. It created an eerie mood. Harper was delighted. Halloween was her favorite day. She adored the smell of pumpkin spice. She loved the sound of spooky creaks and a witch's cackle. Harper had been counting down the days with excitement. She couldn't wait for the ghoulish scare Halloween night would bring. She placed her tall velvet witch hat on her head. She slipped on a matching black dress. She looked in the mirror. She looked spooktacular.

Harper grabbed her orange polka-dotted candy basket. The doorbell rang. She greeted her best friends, Mason and Emory. They were ready for what the night might bring. Harper instantly felt as if something was missing. Her gut told her that something was just not right.



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Emory's eyes got big. She turned and looked at Harper and Mason. "It's the pumpkins. They're gone. All of them," said Emory.

Harper and Mason looked down their street. She was right. The pumpkins were gone. There were no pumpkins with scary faces. There were no jack-o-lanterns with faces aglow. And there were no orange toothless grins.

The three friends sat in silence for a moment. Where were the pumpkins? "We have to find the pumpkins before trick-or-treating begins. The night just won't have the right Halloween feeling without them," said Harper. Emory and Mason nodded in agreement.

"Do you think someone who dislikes Halloween may have smashed the pumpkins?" said Mason with worry in his voice.

"I sure hope not. Let's check the street. Look in all the trash cans just to be sure," said Harper. Harper, Mason, and Emory checked the up and down the street. They looked inside each trash can. But the pumpkin mystery remained a mystery.

"What if someone who collects jack-o-lanterns took all of them?" suggested Emory.

"Who would collect jack-o-lanterns?" asked Mason and Harper. Then it hit all three of them. They all turned to look at the older black house that sat on top of the hill. The house had hanging shutters and peeling paint. It gave off a horrifying feeling.

"No." said Emory, "No. No. No."

Harper grinned at Emory, "Yes, yes, yes! We have to solve the pumpkin mystery. We have to get the Halloween glow back! There is an old lady that lives there. Maybe she took them. Let's go!" said Harper. She bounded toward the house.

Mason and Emory reluctantly followed her. Harper knocked on the door. There was no answer. Harper opened the door and her friends followed quickly behind.

"Hello?" said a creepy voice. It came from a dark room lit with only a small lamp.

"Hello?" called Mason. The friends nervously followed the sound of the voice. However, they didn't find what they expected. There was no goblin, no monster, no witch, nor wizard! It was a sweet old lady with her wispy hair tied neatly in a bun.

Harper quickly explained how pumpkins had vanished from their street. The sweet older woman shook her head. She said she did not have the pumpkins. However, she had some important information to share.

October Passages

"I saw a young boy about your age. He was pulling a wagon full of pumpkins. He looked as if he was headed toward the park," The older lady explained.

Before she could finish her sentence, Harper and her friends shouted, "thank you." They were already out the door. They were running to the park.

Harper, Mason, and Emory froze in their tracks in the center of the community park. They saw a very confusing scene. Sitting in the grass, with his head in his hands and tears rolling down his face, was their friend from school, Caleb. Next to Caleb, pumpkins were scattered all around a red wagon.

"Caleb? Are you okay? What are you doing with all these pumpkins?" asked Harper, bewildered.



"I wanted to create a surprise for our street. I tried to build a haunted house out of everyone's pumpkins. I didn't think they would mind if I took them for such a thrilling surprise. But it turns out round pumpkins are not good building materials. I totally messed up. Now there is no haunted house surprise, and no one has their pumpkins."

"It's okay, Caleb," piped Emory, "There is still time to get all the pumpkins back to their homes in time for trick-or-treating. We will help you!"

Caleb smiled, thankful for his friends' help. The four friends began loading up the pumpkins in the wagon. They were happy the pumpkin mystery was solved!



The Street with no Jack-o-Lanterns

A ghoulish delight filled the air as darkness fell across the night sky and created an eerie mood. Harper was positively delighted. Halloween was her most favorite day of the year. She adored the smell of pumpkin spice. She found the sound of spooky creaks and a witch's cackle quite appealing. Harper had been counting down the days with excitement, waiting for the ghoulish scare Halloween night would bring. She placed her tall velvet witch hat sprinkled with sparkly silver stars on her head. She slipped on a matching black dress. She looked in the mirror and decided she look positively spooktacular.

The doorbell rang as Harper grabbed her orange polka-dotted candy basket embellished with bats and pumpkins. She swiftly greeted her best friends, Mason and Emory, ready for what the night might bring. Harper instantly felt as if something was missing. Her gut told her that something was just not right.



"What is this feeling that something is missing?" pondered Harper as her eyes scanned up and down her street. Finally, it clicked. The Halloween glow that Spice Street always had on Halloween Night had vanished. The street looked dark.

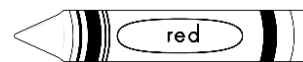
Emory's eyes got big as she turned and looked at Harper and Mason. "It's the pumpkins. They're gone. All of them," said Emory.

Harper and Mason looked down their street. She was right. The pumpkins, whose candle-light glow had dotted every porch at every house, were gone - every last one. There were no pumpkins with scary faces. There were no jack-o-lanterns with faces aglow. And there were no orange toothless grins staring back at them.

October Comprehension Questions

Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is no crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

1. What was Harper excited about at the beginning of this story?



2. What is the problem in the story?

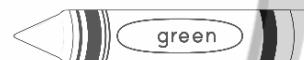


3. How does Harper feel about asking the old lady where the pumpkins are?

- a. Excited because she is one step closer to finding the pumpkins.
- b. Happy because the pumpkins are in front of the old lady's house.
- c. Scared because the old lady's house looks haunted.
- d. Sad because the old lady took all the pumpkins.



4. Why is Caleb crying?



5. How did the friends work together to save Halloween?



QUESTIONING

Who? 

are the main characters?

When? 

does the story take place?

Where? 

does the story take place?

What? 

is the problem?

Why? 

is there a problem?

How? 

is the problem solved?



THE STREET WITH NO JACK-O-LANTERNS RESPONSE

Pretend you are interviewing the main character, Harper, from the story. Think of 3 questions you could ask her and what you predict she would say in her answers. Write a response below including both the questions and your predictions for her answers.

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Saying Sorry

Caleb dressed in all white like his family. Today was Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur was the holiest day of the Jewish year. It was about asking for forgiveness. His parents and older sister had to stop eating for the day. That was a Yom Kippur custom. Caleb didn't have to do that, but he did want to be forgiven.

Especially by Levi.

Levi lived across the street. He'd been Caleb's best friend since they were babies. Until Caleb messed it all up.

He'd taken Levi's *Lords of the Dark Forest* book. Caleb had only meant to read it quickly. He'd return it before Levi noticed it was gone. He'd asked Levi to borrow the book. His best friend wouldn't part with it. Caleb couldn't resist. He had slipped it into his backpack two weeks ago. Caleb had run up to his own room and yanked the book from his bag. He'd read half the story by dinner time! Barney, his dog, had gotten on his bed. The dog had shredded the cover of Levi's book. Caleb knew he'd have to replace it. He'd planned to save his allowance to get a new copy.

Levi told him he couldn't find the book the next day. Caleb hadn't told Levi he'd taken it.



He'd pretended to help look for it instead. Finally, he'd confessed.

"I took your book, Levi," he'd said. "Then Barney ate it."

"That book was a special gift from my grandfather!" Levi had shouted.

Caleb had slinked back to his own house. He hadn't spoken to Levi since then. He had a new *Lords of the Dark Forest* book on his desk now. He knew what he had to do if he had any hope of Levi forgiving him.

"Where are you going?" his mother asked as he raced down the stairs and toward the front door. "We're leaving for synagogue soon for prayer services.

"I'll be right back," Caleb called over his shoulder. "I promise."

He knocked on Levi's door. A frown immediately appeared on Levi's face when he answered. "What do you want?"

Caleb held up the book. "I know it's not the copy from your grandfather. It *is* brand new without any Barney drool though." He wiggled it a little. "I'm so sorry, Levi. I never should have taken your book. I hope you can forgive me."



Slowly, Levi took the book. "Thanks for replacing it. I should apologize too. I could have let you borrow the book. I didn't have to hog it all to myself."

"So, are we friends again?" Caleb squeezed his eyes shut as he waited for Levi's reply.

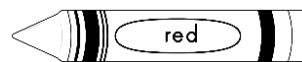
"Yes," Levi said with a slight smile. "Just keep Barney the Destroyer away from my stuff from now on."

They both laughed. At the end of prayer services on Yom Kippur, the rabbi played a horn called a shofar. As Caleb listened to its sound, he was thankful that the year ahead would include his best friend.

October Comprehension Questions

Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is no crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

1. Why does Caleb want to be forgiven in the beginning of the story?



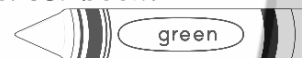
2. How does Levi feel when Caleb first confesses to taking his book?



- a. Relieved because now he knows where the book is.
- b. Happy because his friend also got to read the book.
- c. Angry because the book was a special gift.
- d. Sad because he hadn't gotten to read the book yet.

What detail from the text supports your answer?

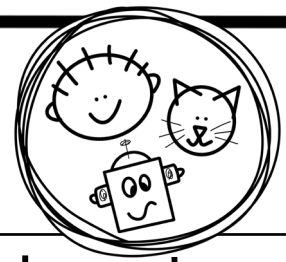
3. What happens when Caleb brings Levi his new copy of his *Lords of the Dark Forest* book?



4. What lesson do both characters learn at the end of the story?



CHARACTERS



Character's Problem:

How did the character
change over time?

How does the character
solve the problem?

Drawing of the character

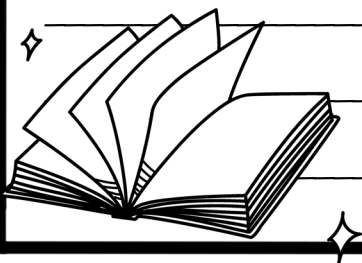
Name: _____

Character traits:



SAYING SORRY RESPONSE

Use your character graphic organizer to write a paragraph explaining how Caleb changed in the story. What was he like at the beginning? What was he like at the end? What lesson did he learn?





Belling the Cat

The Mice once called a meeting. They needed a plan to free themselves of their enemy, the Cat. At least they wished to find some way of knowing when she was coming. They wanted to have time to run away. Indeed, something had to be done. They lived in constant fear of her claws. They hardly left their dens by night or day.

Many plans were discussed. But none of them was thought good enough. At last, a very young Mouse got up and said:

"I have a plan that seems very simple. I know it will be successful.



All we have to do is to hang a bell about the Cat's neck. When we hear the bell ringing, we will know immediately that our enemy is coming."

All the Mice were much surprised. Why had they not thought of such a plan before? But in the midst of the rejoicing over their good fortune, an old Mouse arose and said:

"I will say that the plan of the young Mouse is very good. But let me ask one question: Who will bell the Cat?"

It is one thing to say that something should be done. It is quite a different matter to do it.



Belling the Cat

The Mice once called a meeting to decide on a plan to free themselves of their enemy, the Cat. At least they wished to find some way of knowing when she was coming, so they might have time to run away. Indeed, something had to be done. They lived in such constant fear of her claws that they hardly dared stir from their dens by night or day.

Many plans were discussed, but none of them was thought good enough. At last, a very young Mouse got up and said:

"I have a plan that seems very simple, but I know it will be successful.



All we have to do is to hang a bell about the Cat's neck. When we hear the bell ringing, we will know immediately that our enemy is coming."

All the Mice were much surprised that they had not thought of such a plan before. But in the midst of the rejoicing over their good fortune, an old Mouse arose and said:

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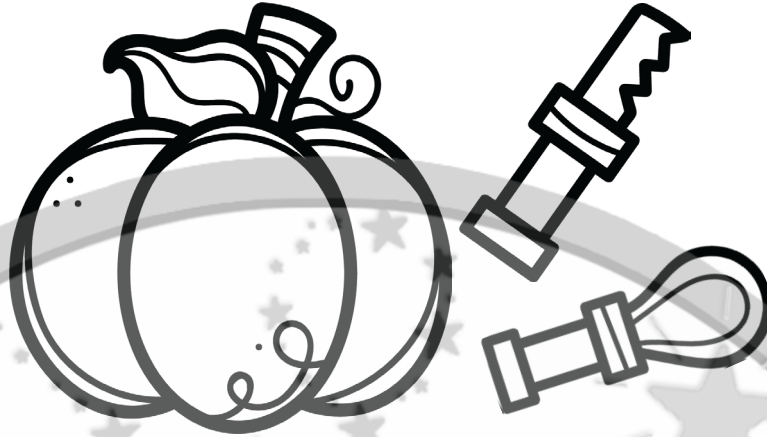
It is one thing to say that something should be done, but quite a different matter to do it.



How to Carve a Pumpkin

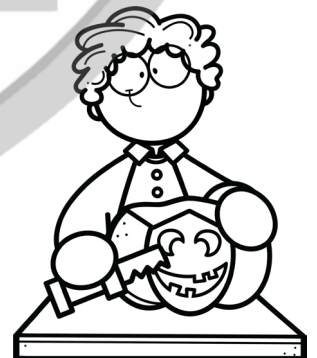
Materials

- Pumpkin
- Knife
- Spoon
- Marker



Steps

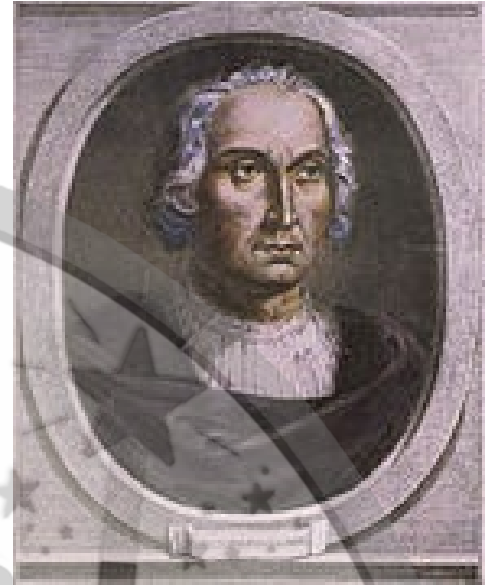
1. Pick a pumpkin you like. Look at the shape, round, smooth pumpkins are the easiest to carve. Make sure the pumpkin is big enough to fit a design on it. Choose a pumpkin with a stem. A long stem will make a good handle.
2. Place the pumpkin on a stable, flat surface. This could be a table or the ground. Make sure the pumpkin does not roll or rock when you touch it.
3. Use the pumpkin carving knife to cut a hole in the top of the pumpkin. Cut a circle around the stem. Do this so the top of your pumpkin has a handle.
4. Use the spoon to scoop out the insides of the pumpkin. Scrape the sides of the inside of the pumpkin. Then, remove the seeds and mush. You can save the seeds. Some people cook them. They are a crunchy snack.
5. Plan your design for your jack-o-lantern. You can draw the design with a marker. This will make it easier to see where you need to cut. Most people cut a face with eyes, a nose, and a mouth with teeth. You can choose whatever design you like!
6. Use the knife to cut through the front of the pumpkin. Cut out the design you chose.





A Hero or Not?

Columbus Day is celebrated every year in October. People enjoy a day off from school and work. They remember Christopher Columbus. He was an explorer who discovered the New World in 1492. He's a brave hero. Did Columbus actually discover anything, though? Was he really a hero? Or have we all been celebrating myths?

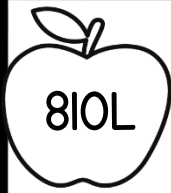


Columbus did sail from Spain across the Atlantic Ocean. He reached land on October 12, 1492. That part of the story is true. Other explorers of his time were busy traveling *east* to Asia. Columbus sailed *west*. He was mistaken about the size of the planet though. He thought Asia was about 2,400 miles west of Europe. It's closer to 11,000 miles. He also had no idea that North America was in his way.

Columbus didn't actually get to Asia either. He landed in the Bahamas. These are islands off the coast of the United States near Florida. He also wasn't the first person to reach this land. That means he didn't "discover" it. There were already people living there.

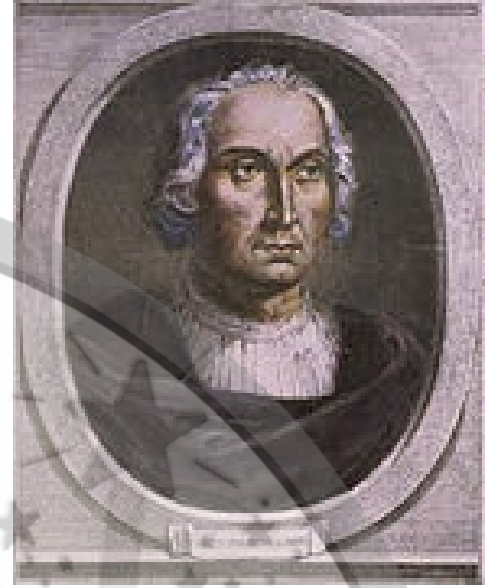


These Native people welcomed Columbus. They gave him gifts. Columbus made them slaves. European explorers were responsible for wiping out many Native people. They didn't treat them well. They also spread diseases.



A Hero or Not?

Columbus Day is celebrated every year in October. People enjoy a day off from school and work to remember Christopher Columbus. He was an explorer who was said to have discovered the New World in 1492. He's considered a brave hero. Did Columbus actually discover anything though? Was he really a hero? Or have we all been celebrating based on myths?



First of all, Columbus did sail from Spain across the Atlantic Ocean. He made landfall on October 12, 1492. That part of the story is true. While other explorers of his time were busy traveling *east* to Asia, Columbus sailed *west*. Many experts already agreed that Earth was round. Columbus used that fact to try a new route to Asian goods and lands. He was mistaken, however, about the size of the planet. He thought he could reach Asia by sailing 2,400 miles west. It's actually closer to 11,000 miles. He also had no idea that an entire continent, North America, was between Europe and Asia.

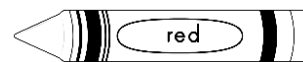


It's often said that Columbus' voyage was made on three ships. Their names were thought to be the *Santa Maria*, the *Nina*, and the *Pinta*. Sailors of Columbus' time, however, often nicknamed their ships. Historians believe *Santa Maria* was the correct name, but the crew called that ship *La Gallega* instead. The real name of the *Nina* was *Santa Clara*. It is thought *Pinta* was a nickname for the third ship, and its real name remains unknown.

October Comprehension Questions

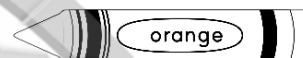
Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is no crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

1. Why did Christopher Columbus sail west? What did he expect to find?



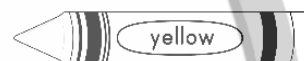
2. Write a detail from the text that supports the following claim:

Christopher Columbus did not discover a new land.



3. How were the explorers responsible for wiping out many Native people? (Choose all that apply.)

- a. The explorers killed them when they landed
- b. The explorers made them slaves
- c. The explorer brought deadly animals with them
- d. The explorers brought diseases



4. Why do many people celebrate Indigenous People's Day instead of Columbus Day today?



5. What is one positive effect of Columbus's journey?



CAUSE AND EFFECT

Complete the graphic organizer to show the causes and effects of the Explorers trip.

Cause

Christopher Columbus sailed from Spain, across the Atlantic Ocean in search of a new route to Asia.



Effect

Cause



Effect



A HERO OR NOT RESPONSE

Use the details from your graphic organizer on the page before to explain the causes and effects of Christopher Columbus's voyage. Be sure to include why he made his journey and the effects on the Native people he encountered.

Handwriting practice lines for the response. The page features a large, faint watermark in the background that reads "Magi CORE" in a stylized font, with a starburst graphic above the word "Magi".



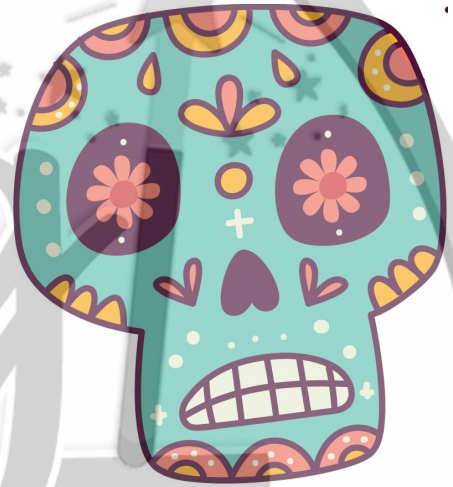
Day of the Dead

Day of the Dead is a Mexican holiday. It starts October 31st. It ends November 2nd. It is celebrated all over Latin America. This holiday comes from the Aztec Natives. It has been celebrated for at least 3,000 years. There are celebrations to remember family members and friends who have died. There are festivals and parades. People pray for their deceased loved ones. Family members bring gifts to graves. They set up altars for loved ones. Some gifts include sugar skulls, marigolds, and food. People believe that the souls of their loved ones visit them during this holiday. The souls hear their loved one's prayers. Day of the Dead celebrations are fun and lighthearted. Mexican culture sees death as natural. They do not mourn the deceased.

Symbols

Skull

The skull is one of the most common symbols for the Day of the Dead. People wear skull masks. People eat sugar skull candies. Skull dolls are used to decorate everywhere. These skulls are not meant to be scary.



Altars

Altars are tables with foods and offerings for loved ones. People make altars in their homes. Sometimes altars are also placed at graves.

Marigolds

Marigolds are flowers. They are orange and yellow. These flowers symbolize death. People scatter marigolds at altars. They place them at graves.



Not all Day of the Dead celebrations look the same. It is a personal holiday. Families celebrate together however they choose to. Not everyone eats the same food. Not everyone puts out the same gifts. Would you like to celebrate the Day of the Dead? Who would you honor? What food would you put on the altar? What gifts would you like to share with your loved ones?

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Good to Go



Not O.K.

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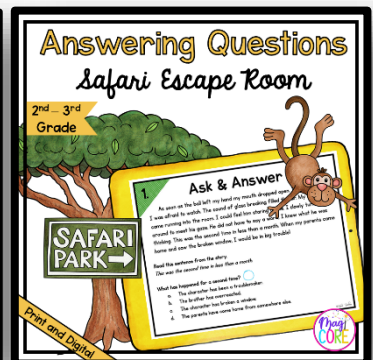
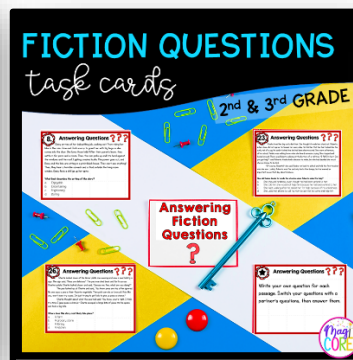
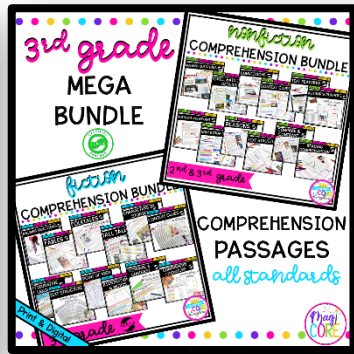


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