

OCTOBER

Differentiated Passages



720L October Passages Name: _____ Date: _____
Day of the Dead
Day of the Dead is a Mexican holiday. It starts October 31st. It ends November 2nd. It is 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.

500L October Passages Name: _____ Date: _____
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?



4th & 5th Grade



OCTOBER PASSAGES

4th & 5th grade

Table of Contents

*This product includes 6 differentiated leveled passages in the 4th-5th Grade Text Complexity Band (the range for 4th-5th grade is 740-1010). Each passage is available on two levels and comes with general comprehension questions, a skill-based activity, and a reading response activity.

1. Midnight Snack- A Halloween Story, *Focus on Plot* (730L, 900L)
2. Making Bubbe Proud- Yom Kippur, *Focus on Characters* (750L, 930L)
3. The Town Mouse & The Country Mouse- Fable, *Focus on Theme* (870L, 1090L)
4. A Question of Honor- Columbus Day, *Focus on Author's Perspective* (770L, 950L)
5. Autumn Lanterns- Functional / How To, *Focus on Sequence* (780L, 960L)
6. Day of the Dead, *Focus on Main Idea and Details* (760L, 990L)



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."





Midnight Snack

Yolanda stared down at the jack-o-lantern on her front steps. Well, what used to be a jack-o-lantern anyway. Now it was just a pile of orange mush, oozing everywhere. This was the third time she'd awakened to find someone had smashed her nicely decorated pumpkin. Someone didn't like Halloween very much apparently.

"Hey, Yolanda!" her friend Desiree called as she rode her bicycle into Yolanda's driveway. When she saw the destroyed pumpkin, she put her hands on her hips. "Not again."

"Yup. Again."

"Happened to me too," Desiree said. "Dante and Marisol both had theirs turned into pudding also."

"Okay, so who doesn't like all four of us?" Yolanda was determined to figure this out. Then she'd try to get the person to stop ruining their jack-o-lanterns. Halloween was her favorite holiday, and she loved having a jack-o-lantern on her front steps.

"No one I can think of," Desiree said, "but maybe we can work together." She texted Dante and Marisol, and they both came over to Yolanda's house.

After much discussion, they decided to have a sleepover at Yolanda's house so all four of them could keep watch over a new jack-o-lantern. They had fun cutting into the top of a fresh pumpkin Yolanda's mom got for them, scooping out the seeds, and decorating it.

"Wow, this is the best one yet!" Yolanda set it on the front steps.



October Passages

"I'll be sad to see it get creamed," Dante said.

"Let's try to catch the person *before* they get their hands on it," Marisol suggested.

They made a schedule of two-hour shifts for watching the pumpkin. When it was finally Yolanda's turn, she took up her post behind the tall shrubs to the right of her front stairs. She peeked through them to get a view of the pumpkin. Just when her shift was about to end, the neighbor's German Shepherd, Scout, wandered over. He sniffed the pumpkin, poking his nose into the jack-o-lantern's eye and mouth cutouts.

Scout opened his mouth, but before he could chomp into the pumpkin, Yolanda slipped out from the bushes. "No, Scout. That's not a midnight snack for you."

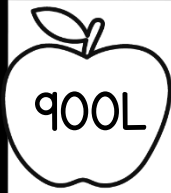
At seeing her, Scout's tail wagged back and forth. Yolanda had played with and taken care of Scout on many occasions. They were old friends, but she wasn't going to let him snack on her jack-o-lanterns anymore.

"Let's get you back home." She picked up a stick, and Scout abandoned the pumpkin. He'd much rather play than eat.

When Yolanda explained what was happening to her neighbor, he promised to keep Scout inside until Halloween season was over.



"Okay, guys," Yolanda said when she returned to her friends. "Our jack-o-lanterns should be safe now."



Midnight Snack

Yolanda stared glumly down at the jack-o-lantern resting on her front steps. Well, what used to be a jack-o-lantern anyway. Now it was just a pile of orange mush and pumpkin bits oozing everywhere. This was the third time she'd awakened to find someone had smashed her nicely decorated pumpkin. Someone didn't like Halloween very much apparently.

"Hey, Yolanda!" her friend Desiree called as she rode her bicycle into Yolanda's driveway. When she spied the mush of the destroyed pumpkin, she defiantly put her hands on her hips. "Not again."

"Yup. Again."

"Happened to me too," Desiree said. "Dante and Marisol both had theirs turned into pudding also."

"Okay, so who doesn't like all four of us?" Yolanda was determined to figure out who the pumpkin smasher was and get them to stop ruining their jack-o-lanterns. Halloween was her favorite holiday, and she loved having a glowing, spooky jack-o-lantern perched on her front steps.

"No one I can think of," Desiree said, "but maybe we can work together." She texted Dante and Marisol, and they both came over to Yolanda's house.

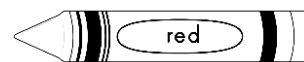
After much discussion, they decided to have a sleepover at Yolanda's house so all four of them could keep watch over a new jack-o-lantern. They had fun cutting into the top of a fresh pumpkin Yolanda's mom got for them, scooping out the seeds, and carving it. Yolanda carved triangle eyes, Dante made a round nose, and Marisol added lots of sharp teeth.



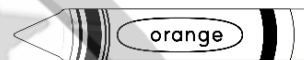
October Comprehension Questions

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 are Yolanda and her friends upset in the beginning of the story?



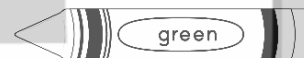
2. Read the following sentence about Yolanda.



Yolanda is creative and brave. She thinks of solutions to solve problems.

Write a sentence from the text that supports this claim.

3. Why do Yolanda and her friends make a new, fresh jack-o-lantern?



- a. They love making them and want to add to their collection
- b. It is a fun craft for their sleepover
- c. They want to replace the jack-o-lantern that was destroyed the night before
- d. They are using it as bait to catch the person responsible for destroying the others



4. How do Yolanda and her friends solve the problem? How do they keep their jack-o-lanterns safe?

PLOT ELEMENTS

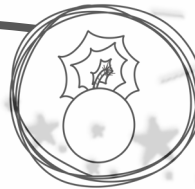


Setting



Characters

Problem



Event #1



Event #2



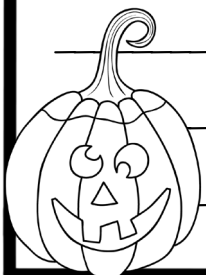
Event #3

Solution



MIDNIGHT SNACK RESPONSE

Midnight Snack is a mystery. Mysteries include all of the plot elements included on the graphic organizer. Draft your own story that includes the same plot elements and a mystery the characters must work together to solve.





Making Bubbe Proud



Leah braided her long, brown hair. She straightened her white dress. Her identical twin sister, Rebecca, did the same on her side of the bedroom they shared. Today was Yom Kippur, and the first year the girls were old enough to be expected to fast for twenty-five hours with their family. This was an important Yom Kippur tradition, but Leah was already hungry. She should have eaten more chicken kreplach before the fast began. It would be many hours until bagels and quiche – her favorites – were served after the fasting was complete.

“Come here, girls,” Bubbe called from downstairs.

Leah followed Rebecca to the living room where their grandmother waited for them. Bubbe was wearing a long white dress. She motioned for the girls to take seats on the couch. Small pads of paper and pencils waited for them on the cushions.

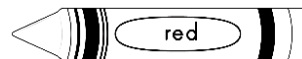
Bubbe took a seat in the old rocking chair across from the couch. “Yom Kippur is about forgiveness,” she said, taking her own pad and pencil onto her lap. “You’ve been thinking about the past year. You’ve been reviewing your deeds. Did you both ask each other for forgiveness like I asked you to?”

“Yes, Bubbe,” they both said.

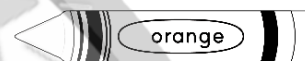
October Comprehension Questions

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 is special about the day this story takes place?

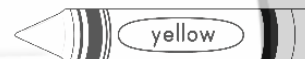


- a. The characters are celebrating Yom Kippur and worked hard to forgive each other for things they have done the past year.
- b. The characters are fasting, and they regret they didn't eat more chicken at dinner the previous night.
- c. Leah spilled paint on Rebecca's pants and must ask for her forgiveness that night.
- d. The girls are celebrating a special birthday, but Leah is still mad at Rebecca for pretending to be her.

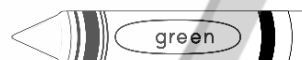


2. Why does Bubbe say that forgiveness is important? How do Rebecca and Leah feel about it?

3. What happens after the characters write letters to themselves?



4. What do you think Leah learned at the end of the story?



What evidence from the text supports your response?

CHARACTERS

Characters go through changes in stories. Use the graphic organizer below to describe how Leah feels during the beginning, middle and end of the story.

In the **BEGINNING**
Leah feels...



TEXT EVIDENCE



In the **MIDDLE** Leah
feels...



TEXT EVIDENCE



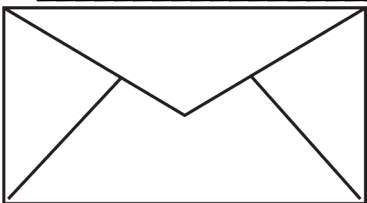
In the **END** Leah
feels...



TEXT EVIDENCE



In *Making Bubbe Proud* the characters write a letter to themselves. They write what they hope to do better in the coming year. Then, they seal the letter and save it until next year. Write the same kind of letter to yourself below. What would you want to do better?

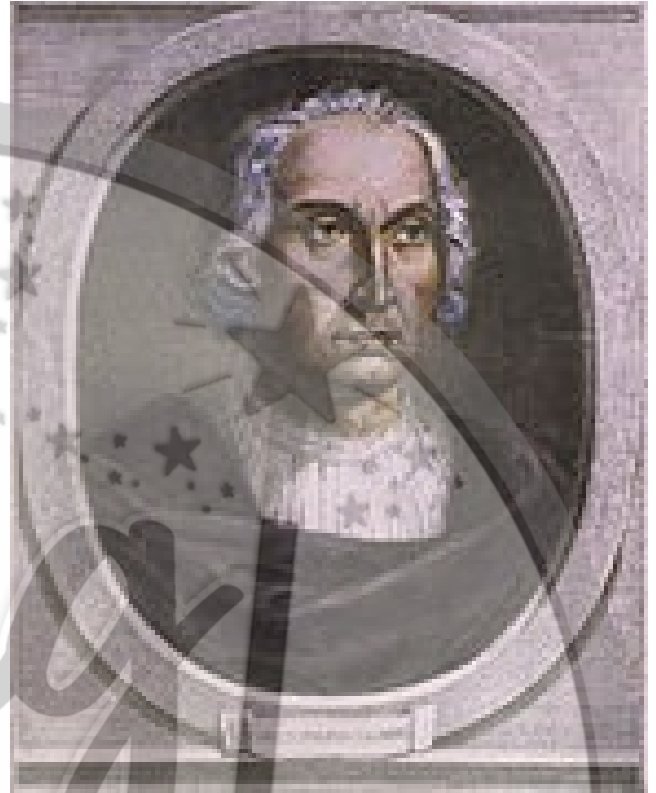


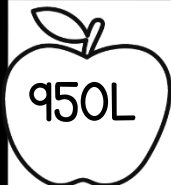
A Question of Honor

Christopher Columbus is honored every October with his own holiday. He was an explorer who convinced the king and queen of Spain to fund his idea. Columbus suggested sailing *west* to Asia. The other explorers of his time were all traveling *east*. While his plans were bold and he was determined to be successful, Columbus did not reach Asia. He didn't discover unoccupied land either, but he claimed it anyway. Does this make him a brave figure deserving of a holiday?

Columbus did reach land on October 12, 1492. The journey started in Spain. He had figured the distance it would take to reach Asia to be about 2,400 miles. Earth was actually much larger than he'd expected. The route was closer to 11,000 miles. His crew nearly mutinied against him when they grew weary of life at sea. When they did eventually come across land, it was not Asia as Columbus had thought. Instead, this expedition arrived at what is today the Bahama Islands. These islands are off the coast of Florida. Columbus hadn't realized the entire continent of North America was between Europe and Asia. Can he be called a hero if he didn't meet his goal?

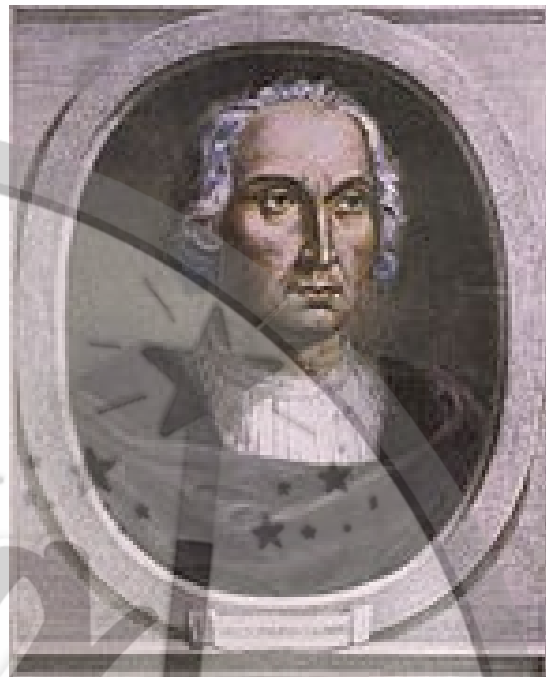
On these islands, Columbus and his crew encountered Native people - most notably the Taino. These peaceful people welcomed the explorers with valuable gifts. Columbus responded by enslaving the Taino. He wrote in his journal that he believed they would make good servants. He made policies that forced Native people to work in gold mines and on plantations for profit. The Native people tried to fight back. Columbus issued orders that caused the deaths of many of them. The Taino population went from 250,000 to a few hundred over time.





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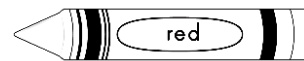
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On these islands, Columbus and his crew encountered Native people - most notably the Taino. These peaceful people welcomed the European explorers with valuable gifts. Columbus responded by enslaving the Taino. He wrote in his journal that he believed they would make good servants. He made policies that forced Native people to work in gold mines and on plantations for profit. When the Native people tried to revolt, Columbus issued orders that resulted in the deaths of many of them. Over time, the Taino population went from 250,000 to a few hundred.

October Comprehension Questions

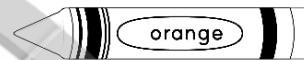
Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is no crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

1. Why is Christopher Columbus honored in October?

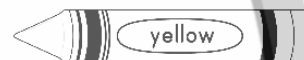


2. What does the author mean by the following statement:

"Can he be called a hero if he didn't meet his goal?"



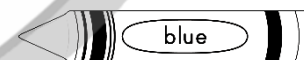
3. Describe how Christopher Columbus treated the Taino.



4. How did the other settlers respond to Christopher Columbus's actions?



- a. They complained about him in Spanish court.
- b. They didn't return with him on future voyages to the New World.
- c. They fought back against him with the natives.
- d. They contracted diseases and were unable to respond to his actions.



5. What does Indigenous Peoples' Day focus on? How is it different from Columbus Day?

AUTHOR'S PERSPECTIVE

The author's opinion about topics influences the facts that they present. Fill in the chart below to analyze how the author's perspective about Columbus Day impacted the article. Be sure to include one detail from each of the 4 body paragraphs.

**Author's Perspective**


Detail


Detail

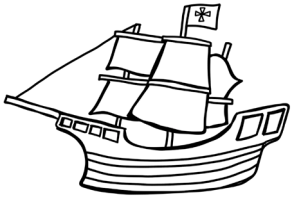

Detail


Detail

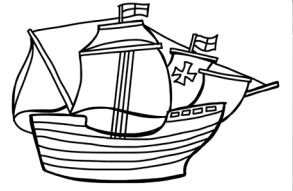
How did the author's perspective influence the facts they chose to include?







A QUESTION OF HONOR RESPONSE



Sometimes in non-fiction, the text is influenced by the author's opinion. Think of a topic you have an opinion about. Write a paragraph that gives your opinion about the topic you chose and provides facts that support your opinion.

Handwriting practice lines for the response paragraph.

Autumn Lanterns

The days are getting shorter. Darkness is settling in. You can light up your autumn nights, however, by making these fun lanterns. You will need several supplies for this craft. First, you will need two 9-inch by 12-inch pieces of sturdy black card stock and a sheet of white tissue paper. Next, you will need several sheets of different colored tissue paper. The colors can be whatever you'd like. Selecting ones such as yellow, orange, and cranberry might give your finished craft a nice autumn feel. A pencil, a ruler, a pair of scissors, and a glue stick are all needed as well. Finally, a battery-powered tea light is the last material for this project.

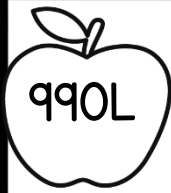


Begin by taking the black card stock and measuring a rectangle of 6 inches by 12 inches long.

You should only have to make one cut because the card stock is already 12 inches long. Draw a 5-inch by 5-inch square in the center of this rectangle with a pencil. Cut out the square. You should now have what looks like a picture frame. There should be two longer flaps on its sides.

Next, take the white tissue paper and draw a square with sides measuring 6 inches. Cut out the square. Cut pieces out of the colored sheets of tissue paper to glue to the white tissue paper square. You can keep it simple and make some stripes. You can also get a little more detailed. Make a design that looks more like stained glass maybe. Go easy on the glue to keep it neat. Be gentle so the tissue paper doesn't tear.





Day of the Dead

People in Mexico and other Latin American countries and communities celebrate the Day of the Dead on November 1st and 2nd. This holiday honors those who have died. It also reminds people that death is a part of life. The Day of the Dead celebration has roots deep in history. The native people of Mexico had a festival for the dead hundreds of years ago. European explorers from Spain came to Mexico during the 1500s and spread their Catholic religion to the native people. Catholics have two holy days, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. These are celebrated on November 1st and 2nd. All of these holidays were combined to create the Day of the Dead.



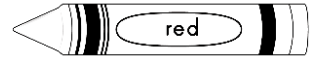
It is believed that the spirits of dead relatives return once a year to visit their families on the Day of the Dead. November 1st is for the souls of children. November 2nd is for adult spirits. Families clean and decorate their homes and graves to prepare for the arrival of these souls. Altars are often created in homes

to honor the relatives who have passed. These altars are called *ofrendas*. They may include marigolds, candles, and skulls made of sugar, wood, or clay. Foods and personal items of the deceased person are also placed on the altars. Families clean tombstones, sing songs, and talk to their ancestors at the graveyard.

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. Explain the roots of the Day of the Dead. Where did the celebration come from?



2. How do families prepare to celebrate Day of the Dead? (choose all that apply)

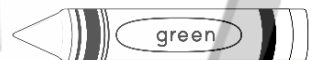


- a. Families clean their homes and decorate graves
- b. Families write letters to their ancestors
- c. Families only wear black clothing out of respect for their ancestors
- d. Families create altars with marigolds, sugar skulls and pictures
- e. Families talk to and sing songs to their ancestors

3. What is the main idea of paragraph 4?



4. What detail supports the following main idea?



Families celebrate Day of the Dead with many kinds of food.

- a. Life-sized skeleton models and skulls, called *calaveras*, made of papier-mâché and other materials are decorated with bold colors, intricate patterns, and marigold-inspired designs.
- b. These loaves of bread, along with other candies and sweets, are often shaped like skeletons or animals or decorated with skull and bone shapes.
- c. Tamales, tortilla soup, and *pozole*, which is a stew, are popular choices. Chicken or pork dishes might be served as well.
- d. Families clean tombstones, sing songs, and talk to their ancestors at the graveyard.

MAIN IDEA

Complete the graphic organizer below by filling in the main idea and details from the article. Be sure to include a detail from each body paragraph.

The graphic organizer consists of a top rectangular box labeled "Main idea" and three vertical rectangular boxes below it, each labeled "Detail". Arrows point from the "Main idea" box to each of the "Detail" boxes. Each "Detail" box contains a key icon. The background features a large, faint watermark that reads "Main Idea CORE" with a starburst design.

Main idea

Detail

Detail

Detail

DAY OF THE DEAD RESPONSE

Use the information on your graphic organizer to write a short summary of the article. Be sure to include the main idea and the most relevant details.



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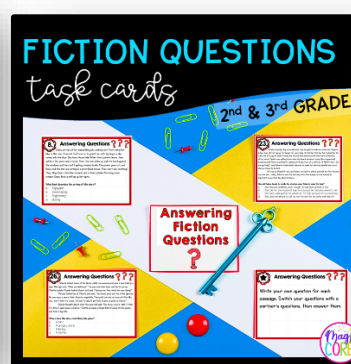


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