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HERITAGE MONTH**

**2026 Curated List of Books for K-5 Classrooms, Activities,
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A Poem for Peter by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What do you like to do in the snow?
 - Have you ever made footprints in snow?
2. Show the cover of *The Snowy Day* and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

Listening for Feelings

1. As you read, pause to ask:
 - How did Ezra feel as a child?
 - How did he feel when he became an artist?
2. Students draw a happy, thinking, or dreaming face to show emotions.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 (PreK–2 Band))

1. Footprint Art
Students paint white paper with blue “snow” and add footprints.
2. Complete the sentence: “I can be creative when I _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class display titled, “Our Snowy Day Artists.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - What does an artist do?
 - Can anyone be an artist?
2. Discuss how artists share stories with pictures and words.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Students identify:
 - What Ezra dreamed about
 - How he worked toward that dream

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

1. Writing Response: Why was it important for Ezra to create a book like *The Snowy Day*? Students write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a collage page inspired by snow, using paper shapes like Ezra did.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - Why is it important for children to see themselves in books?
 - How do books help us understand others?
2. Students turn and talk with a partner.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits that describe Ezra: (e.g., determined, imaginative, hardworking)
2. Students choose one and provide evidence from the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Ezra Jack Keats make a difference in children’s literature?
2. Students write 3–4 sentences using details from the book.
3. Creative Extension: Students design their own book cover featuring a main character who is not often seen in stories.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Overcoming Obstacles

1. Ask:
 - What challenges might someone face when trying something new?
 - Why is practice important?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a goal they have worked toward.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

Theme: Cause and Effect

1. Track:
 - Obstacles Ezra faced
 - How his persistence led to success
2. Encourage text evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.3.7)

1. Students write a journal entry from Ezra’s perspective the day *The Snowy Day* was published. Include:
 - His feelings
 - A challenge he overcame
 - Why the book mattered
2. Creative Extension: Students create a short illustrated “mini *The Snowy Day*” story from their own life.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Diversity in Literature

1. Discuss:
 - Why does representation in books matter?
 - How can stories shape the way we see the world?
2. Students write a short reflection.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Students analyze how these themes develop.
2. Possible themes:
 - Perseverance
 - Inclusion
 - Creativity

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, ELA W.4.7, ELA W.4.8, ELA RI.4.9)

1. Analytical Paragraph
 - a. Prompt: How did Ezra Jack Keats change children’s literature?
 - b. Students write a structured paragraph including:
 - A clear claim
 - Two supporting details
 - Explanation of impact
2. Creative Extension: Students research another author who broke barriers in publishing and compare their impact to Ezra’s.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: The Power of Story

1. Discuss:
 - How can a single book influence society?
 - Why might representation in literature create social change?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

Historical Context Analysis

1. Students examine:
 - The publishing world in the early 1960s

- Why *The Snowy Day* was groundbreaking
 - How Ezra’s background influenced his work
2. Create a chart: Challenge | Creative Choice | Long-Term Impact

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

Argument Writing

1. Prompt: Was *The Snowy Day* an important turning point in children’s literature? Why?
2. Students write a structured response including:
 - A claim
 - Text evidence
 - Explanation of cultural significance
3. Discuss:
 - How did Ezra’s experiences shape his art?
 - Why is it important for stories to reflect diverse experiences?
 - How can young writers and artists create change today?
4. Students write a concluding reflection on how creativity can influence the world.

Amazing Abe by Norman H. Finkelstein

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

Community Helpers

1. Ask:
 - What is a newspaper?
 - How do people learn about what is happening in their community?
 - Who helps people in your community?
2. Students draw a picture of someone who helps others and share why that person is important.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

Listening for Helping Actions

1. As you read, pause and ask:
 - What problem did Abe notice?
 - What did Abe do to help people?
2. Students show thumbs up when they hear an example of someone helping others.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 (PreK–2 Band))

Drawing Response

1. Students draw a picture of Abe helping people and dictate or write one sentence about what he did.
2. Creative Extension: Create a class chart titled “Ways We Can Help Our Community.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

Understanding Community Helpers

1. Ask:
 - What is a newspaper?
 - What do newspapers help people learn?
 - What does it mean to “have a voice?”
2. Students draw a picture of someone who helps their community and share why that person is important.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Listening for Problem-Solving

1. As you read, students identify:
 - A problem Abe noticed
 - What Abe did to help
 - How his actions helped immigrants feel informed and connected
2. Encourage discussion about kindness, leadership, and helping others.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, ELA RL.1.2)

Writing About Helping Others

Prompt: How did Abe help immigrants feel welcome and heard?

1. Students write 2–3 sentences explaining:
 - What problem immigrants faced
 - What Abe did to help
 - Why his actions mattered
2. Creative Extension: Students create one page of a “Classroom Newspaper,” including a headline, picture, and short sentence about something happening at school.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

Understanding News and Community

1. Ask:
 - Where do people get their news?
 - Why might some people need news in their own language?
2. Students turn and talk with a partner about a time they learned something important from a story or news source.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

Tracking Problems and Solutions

1. Students identify:
 - A challenge immigrants faced
 - What Abe did to help them stay informed
2. Record responses on a chart: Problem | Abe’s Action | Result.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

Writing Response

1. Prompt: Why was Abe’s newspaper important for immigrants?
2. Students write 3–4 sentences explaining how his work helped people in their community.
3. Creative Extension: Students create a simple “news article” about something happening in their classroom or school.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Finding Your Voice

1. Ask:
 - Why is it important for people to share their ideas and stories?
 - How can writing help people understand each other?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time they shared an idea or helped someone learn something new.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

Cause and Effect

1. Students track:
 - Challenges Abe noticed in immigrant communities
 - The actions he took to help
 - How those actions affected people
2. Encourage students to use examples from the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

Writing Reflection

1. Prompt: How did Abe use writing to help others?
2. Students write a short paragraph explaining how his newspaper made a difference.
3. Creative Extension: Students write a short advice column answering a question from a “new student” at their school.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Information and Community

1. Discuss:
 - Why is access to information important?
 - How can newspapers or media help communities stay connected?
2. Students write a short reflection about why sharing information matters.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyzing Leadership

1. Students identify:
 - Challenges immigrants faced in a new country
 - How Abe responded to those challenges
 - The impact of his leadership through journalism
2. Encourage students to support answers with text evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

Explanatory Writing

1. Prompt: How did Abe's newspaper help immigrant communities feel informed and connected?
2. Students write a structured paragraph including:
 - A main idea
 - Supporting details from the text
 - An explanation of impact
3. Creative Extension: Students design a newspaper headline and short article about an important event in their community.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA SL.5.1)

Media and Democracy Discussion

1. Discuss:
 - What role does the press play in a democracy?
 - Why might immigrants need news in their own language?
 - What responsibilities come with having a public voice?
2. Students write a brief response explaining why access to information is important in a free society.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

Analyzing Leadership and Impact

1. Students track:
 - Challenges Abraham Cahan faced as an immigrant
 - The actions he took as a journalist
 - How founding the *Forward* helped immigrant communities
2. Encourage discussion of how journalism can influence identity, civic engagement, and social change.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2)

Analytical Writing

1. Prompt: How did Abraham Cahan use journalism to empower immigrant communities?
2. Students write a structured response including:
 - A clear claim
 - Two pieces of textual evidence
 - Explanation of how his work impacted immigrants
3. Creative Extension: Students design a mock front page of an immigrant newspaper from the early 1900s, including a headline, advice column, and community announcement reflecting the needs of new Americans.

Anna & Solomon by Elaine Snyder

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.4)

Understanding Moving and Feelings

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever been somewhere new?
 - How did you feel? (e.g., happy, scared, excited)
 - What helps you feel safe in a new place?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice and what they think the story might be about.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.2)

Noticing Feelings and Events

1. Pause to identify:
 - How Anna and Solomon are feeling

- What is happening in the story
2. Students act out feelings (e.g., nervous, brave, happy).
 3. Ask simple questions:
 - What is happening now?
 - How are they helping each other?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA RL.K.2, ELA L.K.1 & L.K.2, ELA SL.K.5)

Responding Through Drawing and Sharing

1. Drawing & Dictation: Students draw Anna and Solomon in their new place and describe their picture (teacher writes their words).
2. Class Discussion: How did Anna and Solomon feel when they moved? What helped them feel better?
3. Creative Extension: As a class, create a “Welcome Chart” with pictures and kind ideas to help new students feel included.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

Understanding Immigration and Family

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to move to a new country?
 - How might someone feel leaving their home?
 - What helps people feel brave during big changes?
2. Students draw a picture of a time they tried something new and share how they felt.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Noticing Feelings and Challenges

1. As you read, pause to identify:
 - A challenge Anna and Solomon face
 - How they feel
 - What helps them during difficult moments
2. Encourage students to use feeling words and discuss how the characters support one another.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 [PreK–2 Band])

Responding Through Writing and Drawing

1. Prompt: How did Anna and Solomon show bravery when they moved to a new place?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences explaining:
 - One challenge the characters faced
 - How they felt
 - How they showed courage
3. Students may add an illustration to match their writing.
4. Creative Extension: Students create a “Welcome to Our School” booklet with pictures and kind messages to help someone new feel safe and included.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

Understanding Immigration and New Beginnings

1. Ask:
 - What challenges might someone face when moving to a new place?
 - Why is it important for people to feel welcomed in a new community?
2. Students turn and talk with a partner about how they would help someone new feel comfortable at school.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

Tracking Challenges and Feelings

1. Students identify:
 - A challenge Anna and Solomon experience
 - How they respond to that challenge
 - What helps them feel hopeful or supported
2. Record ideas on a chart: Challenge | Feelings | What Helped.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

Writing Response

1. Prompt: How did Anna and Solomon show courage when they moved to a new place?

2. Students write 3–4 sentences explaining:
 - A challenge the characters faced
 - How they felt
 - How they showed bravery and supported each other
3. Creative Extension: Students design a “Welcome Guide” for a new student that includes drawings and short sentences about ways to feel included at school.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Immigration, Change, and Belonging

1. Discuss: What challenges might families face when moving to a new country?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time they experienced change and how they adapted.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

Analyzing Challenges and Responses

1. Track:
 - Challenges Anna and Solomon face
 - How they respond
 - What helps them adjust
2. Encourage students to cite specific moments from the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

Writing Response

1. Prompt: How did Anna and Solomon show resilience during their transition?
2. Students write a paragraph including:
 - A challenge
 - Their emotional response
 - How they overcame it
3. Creative Extension: Create a short comic strip showing a “first day” experience in a new place.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, ELA W.4.10)

Theme: Immigration and Resilience

1. Discuss: What does it mean to build a new life in a new place?
2. Students write a brief reflection on how communities can support newcomers.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.9)

Theme and Character Development

1. Analyze how the story develops themes of courage, adaptation, and family support.
2. Identify how Anna and Solomon change over time.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

Analytical Writing

1. Prompt: How do Anna and Solomon demonstrate resilience in the face of change?
2. Students write a structured paragraph with:
 - Claim
 - Evidence
 - Explanation
3. Creative Extension: Design a “Newcomer Support Plan” for a school or community.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA SL.5.1, ELA W.5.4)

Theme: Immigration, Identity, and Perseverance

1. Discuss: How does moving to a new place shape a person’s identity?
2. Students write a short opinion response about the importance of welcoming communities.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

Critical Analysis

1. Examine:
 - Key challenges
 - How the characters respond

- The outcomes of their actions

2. Create a chart: Challenge | Response | Outcome | Theme

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA SL.5.1)
Argument Writing and Reflection

1. Prompt: Do Anna and Solomon succeed more because of their own perseverance or the support of others?
2. Students write a structured response including claim, evidence, and reasoning.
3. Discuss how students can help create inclusive communities in their own lives.

Annushka's Voyage by Edith Tarbescu

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever traveled to a new place?
 - How might you feel if you had to leave your home?
2. Show the cover of *Annushka's Voyage* and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

Tracking Feelings

1. As you read, pause to ask:
 - How does Annushka feel during her journey?
 - What makes her feel brave or scared?
2. Students draw faces to show emotions Annushka experiences.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 [PreK–2 Band])

1. Draw *Annushka's Voyage*: Students create a picture showing one part of her journey.
2. Complete the sentence: "I feel brave when I _____."
3. Creative Extension: Make a class mural titled, "Our Journeys."

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - What is a voyage?
 - Have you ever moved or traveled far from home?
2. Discuss how *Annushka's* story shows courage and family support.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Students identify:

- What *Annushka* dreams about
- How she works toward her goal of reaching a new home

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

Writing Response Prompt: Why was *Annushka's* journey important?

1. Students write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a map showing *Annushka's* voyage with drawings and labels.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - Why might it be hard to leave home?
 - How do people adapt to new places?
2. Students turn and talk with a partner about a time they tried something new.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits that describe *Annushka*. (e.g., brave, determined, hopeful)
2. Students choose one trait and provide evidence from the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Annushka show courage during her voyage?
2. Students write 3–4 sentences with details from the book.
3. Creative Extension: Design a travel journal page for Annushka, including drawings and notes.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Overcoming Challenges

1. Ask:
 - What difficulties might someone face when moving to a new place?
 - How can they overcome fear or homesickness?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a challenge they overcame.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

Theme: Cause and Effect

1. Track:
 - Obstacles Annushka faces
 - How her courage and choices help her continue
2. Encourage text evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.3.7)

1. Journal Entry: Students write from Annushka’s perspective during a key moment of her journey, including:
 - Feelings
 - A challenge she overcame
 - Why the journey mattered
2. Creative Extension: Students illustrate a “mini voyage” from their own life.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Empathy and Resilience

1. Discuss:
 - Why do stories about moving or immigration matter?
 - How can books help us understand others’ experiences?
2. Students write a short reflection.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyze how themes develop in the story:

- Courage
- Family support
- Adaptation to new environments

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, ELA W.4.7, ELA W.4.8, ELA RI.4.9)

1. Analytical Paragraph Prompt: How did Annushka’s voyage show resilience and courage?
2. Students write a structured paragraph including:
 - A clear claim
 - Two supporting details
 - Explanation of impact
3. Creative Extension: Compare Annushka’s story to another story about moving or migration.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Personal Growth and Social Awareness

1. Discuss:
 - How can a story about one person influence how we see the world?
 - Why is it important to hear stories from diverse perspectives?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

Historical and Cultural Context Analysis

1. Examine:
 - Annushka’s home and cultural background
 - The challenges she faces in a new place
 - How her choices influence her journey
2. Create a chart: Challenge | Annushka’s Choice | Outcome

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

Argument Writing

1. Prompt: Did Annushka’s voyage make a difference in understanding courage and resilience? Why?
2. Students write a structured response including:
 - Claim
 - Text evidence
 - Explanation of significance
3. Discuss:
 - How Annushka’s experiences shaped her growth
 - Why sharing diverse stories is important today
4. Students write a concluding reflection on how courage and empathy can influence others.

As Good As Anybody: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Abraham Joshua Heschel’s Amazing March Toward Freedom by Richard Michelson

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to be treated fairly?
 - How do you feel when someone is kind or unfair to you?
2. Show the cover of *As Good As Anybody* and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

Listening for Character Feelings

1. As you read, pause to ask:
 - How does the main character feel in different situations?
 - What actions show kindness or fairness?
2. Students draw a happy, worried, or surprised face to show the character’s emotions.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 [PreK–2 Band])

1. Students draw a scene showing someone being kind or fair.
2. Complete the sentence: “I can be kind when I _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom display titled, “Kindness in Action.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - Who in your life shows fairness or courage?
 - How do you treat others kindly?
2. Discuss how the story explores fairness and bravery.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Students identify:

- Moments when the character stands up for what is right
- How the character shows courage or fairness

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

1. Writing Response: Why is it important to treat everyone as “as good as anybody?” Students write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a poster showing an act of fairness or kindness.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - Why is fairness important in our community?
 - How can small actions make a big difference?
2. Students turn and talk with a partner about a time they stood up for someone or something.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits that describe the main character (e.g., brave, fair, compassionate).
2. Students choose one trait and provide evidence of it from the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How does the main character show courage or fairness?
Students write 3–4 sentences using details from the story.
2. Creative Extension: Create a comic strip showing a “kindness moment” inspired by the story.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Courage and Fairness

1. Ask:
 - What challenges might someone face when standing up for what is right?
 - How can you remain brave in difficult situations?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time they did something brave.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

Theme: Cause and Effect

1. Track:
 - Obstacles the character faces
 - How the character’s choices lead to fairness or kindness
2. Encourage use of text evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.3.7)

1. Journal Entry: Students write from the character’s perspective about a key moment of fairness or courage.
Include:
 - Feelings
 - A challenge they faced
 - Why the action mattered
2. Creative Extension: Illustrate a “mini-story” showing a brave or kind action from their own life.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Empathy and Justice

1. Discuss:
 - Why is fairness important in our community and school?
 - How do our actions affect others?
2. Students write a short reflection.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Analyze how the story develops themes of:
 - Courage
 - Fairness
 - Standing up for others

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, ELA W.4.7, ELA W.4.8, ELA RI.4.9)

1. Analytical Paragraph Prompt: How does the main character demonstrate fairness and courage?
2. Students write a structured paragraph including:
 - A clear claim

- Two supporting details
 - Explanation of impact
3. Creative Extension: Research another historical figure who stood up for fairness and compare that character to this story's character.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Justice and Social Awareness

1. Discuss:
 - How can standing up for what is right influence a community?
 - Why is it important to listen to stories about fairness and courage?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

Historical Context Analysis

1. Examine:
 - The time and place of the story
 - Challenges the character faces
 - How their choices lead to fairness or justice
2. Create a chart: Challenge | Character's Choice | Outcome

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

Argument Writing

1. Prompt: Was the character's action important for fairness and courage? Why?
2. Students write a structured response including:
 - Claim
 - Text evidence
 - Explanation of significance
3. Discuss:
 - How the story shows fairness and courage
 - Why sharing these stories matters today
4. Students write a concluding reflection on how their own actions can influence fairness in the community.

Big Dreams, Small Fish by Paula Cohen

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever tried something new, even if it was hard?
 - What does it mean to have a dream?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

1. Track: How the small fish feels in different situations.
2. Students draw a happy, worried, or excited face to show emotions.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 [PreK–2 Band])

1. Students draw their own "small fish with a big dream."
2. Complete: "I feel brave when I _____."
3. Creative Extension: Make a classroom display titled, "Our Big Dreams."

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Discuss:
 - What is a dream?
 - How do we work toward goals?
2. Students share a personal goal with a partner.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Identify:

- What the fish dreams about
- How the fish takes steps toward that dream

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

1. Writing Response: What lesson does the fish teach about following dreams? Students write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Create an illustration of the fish achieving its dream.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - Why is it important to keep trying?
 - How do small steps lead to big results?
2. Turn and talk: Discuss a time you didn't give up.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List character traits of the fish (e.g., determined, brave, persistent).
2. Students provide evidence from the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How did the fish reach its goal? Write 3–4 sentences with story details.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a “dream chart” showing steps to achieve a goal.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Perseverance

1. Discuss challenges when following a dream.
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a goal they have worked toward.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track: Obstacles the fish faces and how it responds.
2. Encourage citing text evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.3.7)

1. Journal Entry: Write from the fish's perspective when facing a challenge. Include feelings, actions, and outcome.
2. Creative Extension: Students illustrate a “mini story” about achieving a personal goal.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Growth Mindset

1. Discuss: Why is persistence important?
2. Students write a reflection about a time they kept trying.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyze how themes of determination and perseverance are developed.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, ELA W.4.7, ELA W.4.8, ELA RI.4.9)

Analytical Paragraph

1. How does the fish's story show perseverance? Include claim, evidence, and explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Compare with another story of someone achieving a goal.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Ambition and Resilience

1. Discuss: How can small actions lead to big results?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Examine: Obstacles, choices, and outcomes in the story.
2. Create a chart: Obstacle | Action | Result

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

1. Argument Writing: Did the fish succeed because of courage or persistence? Why?
2. Structured response: claim, evidence, explanation.
3. Discuss how personal effort influences outcomes today.

Brave Girl by Michelle Markel

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - Who is someone you admire and why?
 - How do people show courage?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

1. Track the main character’s feelings during challenges.
2. Students draw a happy, worried, or thoughtful face to show emotions.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 [PreK-2 Band])

1. Students draw a scene showing an act of courage.
2. Complete the sentence: “I am brave when I _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Make a class display entitled, “Courage in Action.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to stand up for what is right?
 - Who has been brave in your life?
2. Discuss how the story shows bravery and perseverance.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Identify:

- What the main character wants to achieve
- How she shows courage in the story

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

1. Writing Response: Why was it important for the character to be brave? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students illustrate a key moment of courage.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - How can one person make a difference?
 - How do small acts of bravery help others?
2. Students turn and talk about a time they were brave.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits (e.g., brave, determined, caring).
2. Students provide textual evidence for one trait.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How does the main character show bravery? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Create a “Bravery Timeline” showing events from the story.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Courage and Persistence

1. Discuss challenges someone faces when standing up for others.
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a personal challenge.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track obstacles and how the character responds.
2. Encourage citing textual evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.3.7)

1. Journal Entry: Write from the character’s perspective at a key moment. Include feelings, actions, and outcome.
2. Creative Extension: Illustrate a mini-story about personal bravery.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Leadership and Empathy

1. Discuss: Why is it important to stand up for what is right?
2. Students write a reflection.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyze how the story develops themes of courage, persistence, and leadership.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, ELA W.4.7, ELA W.4.8, ELA RL.4.9)

1. Analytical Paragraph: How does the main character inspire others? Include claim, evidence, and explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Compare this character to another historical figure known for courage.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Advocacy and Impact

1. Discuss: How can one person create change?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Examine: Obstacles, choices, and impact of actions.
2. Create a chart: Challenge | Character’s Action | Outcome

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

1. Argument Writing: Did the character’s actions make a difference? Why?
2. Structured response: claim, evidence, explanation.
3. Discuss how students can take brave actions today.

Castle on Hester Street by Linda Heller

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever moved to a new home or neighborhood?
 - How does it feel to explore new places?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

1. Track characters’ feelings during changes.
2. Students draw faces showing happy, worried, or excited feelings.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 [PreK–2 Band])

1. Draw a scene from the story showing the neighborhood.
2. Complete: “I feel excited when I _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class map of “Our Neighborhood Adventures.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - How do people adjust to a new home?
 - How can neighbors help each other?
2. Discuss how the story shows community and family.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Identify:

- How characters adapt to a new environment
- Ways they show friendship and support

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

1. Writing Response: How do characters show kindness or bravery? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw a map of Hester Street with characters’ homes and shops.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - How do new experiences change us
 - How can neighbors help each other?
2. Students turn and talk about a time they had to adjust to something new.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Identify traits of characters (e.g., helpful, curious, brave).
2. Students give examples from the story showing how characters adapted or helped.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How do the characters show community and friendship? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw a map of Hester Street showing important locations from the story.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Community and Adaptation

1. Discuss: How does moving to a new place challenge a person or family?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time they adapted to a new situation.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track events:
 - Challenges characters face
 - How they solve problems or help each other
2. Encourage citing text evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.3.7)

1. Journal Entry: Write from a character’s perspective about living on Hester Street. Include feelings, challenges, and solutions.
2. Creative Extension: Illustrate a scene showing friendship and community support.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Diversity and Neighborhood Life

1. Discuss: How do neighborhoods change when new families arrive?
2. Students write a reflection about how they can help others feel welcome.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)
Analyze how the story develops themes of community, kindness, and adaptation.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, ELA W.4.7, ELA W.4.8, ELA RI.4.9)

1. Analytical Paragraph: How do the characters work together to create a sense of community? Include claim, evidence, and explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Research a historical neighborhood and compare its story to Hester Street.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Community and Cultural Heritage

1. Discuss: How can communities help preserve culture and traditions?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Examine: Challenges characters face, their choices, and how the community supports them.
2. Create a chart: Challenge | Character's Action | Outcome

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

1. Argument Writing: How does the story show the importance of community and friendship?
2. Structured response: claim, evidence, explanation.
3. Discuss: How can students make their own neighborhoods more welcoming and supportive?

Emma's Poem by Linda Glaser

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever written or drawn to express your feelings?
 - How can words make a difference?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

1. Track Emma's feelings as she writes her poem.
2. Students draw a happy, thoughtful, or inspired face.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 [PreK–2 Band])

1. Students draw a picture showing something they feel strongly about.
2. Complete the sentence: "I can use words to _____."
3. Creative Extension: Make a class display of student poems.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - Why might someone write a poem?
 - How can words help people understand feelings?
2. Discuss how Emma's poem expresses her courage and compassion.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Identify:

- The main idea of Emma's poem
- How she uses words to share her thoughts

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

1. Writing Response: Why is it important to share your feelings with words? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students write a short poem about something important to them.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - How can poems inspire people?
 - How can words show courage?
2. Students turn and talk about a time they shared something brave with words.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits of Emma (e.g., courageous, expressive, thoughtful).
2. Students provide textual evidence for one trait.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Emma’s poem affect her community? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Create a mini book of student poems inspired by Emma.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Using Voice to Make Change

1. Discuss how words can inspire action or understanding.
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time when words helped them or others.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how Emma uses words to make a difference.
2. Encourage citing textual evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.3.7)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Emma’s perspective about sharing her poem. Include feelings, challenges, and outcomes.
2. Creative Extension: Illustrate a page from your own “courageous poem.”

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Courage and Expression

1. Discuss: How can writing inspire empathy and understanding?
2. Students write a reflection.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyze how the story develops themes of courage, expression, and community impact.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, ELA W.4.7, ELA W.4.8, ELA RI.4.9)

1. Analytical Paragraph: How does Emma’s poem inspire others? Include claim, evidence, and explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Compare Emma’s poem to another historical example of writing for change.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Advocacy Through Words

1. Discuss: How can a poem or story influence a community?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Examine: Obstacles Emma faces, choices she makes, and her impact.
2. Create a chart: Challenge | Action | Result

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

1. Argument Writing: Was Emma’s poem important for her community? Why?
2. Structured response: claim, evidence, explanation.
3. Discuss how students can use writing to inspire change today.

Feivel's Flying Horses by Heidi Smith Hyde

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.4)

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever pretended you could fly?
 - What do you like to imagine or create?
2. Show the cover and ask:
 - What do you see?
 - What do you think is happening?

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Pause to identify Feivel's feelings (e.g., excited, nervous, brave).
2. Students act out feelings using facial expressions or body movements.
3. Ask simple questions:
 - What is Feivel trying to do?
 - What happens next?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA RL.K.2, ELA L.K.1 & L.K.2, ELA SL.K.5)

1. Drawing & Dictation: Students draw Feivel flying and describe their picture (teacher can write their words).
2. Class Discussion: How did Feivel use his imagination?
3. Creative Extension: Build a simple "flying invention" using classroom materials (e.g., paper, blocks, etc.) and share with the class.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever imagined doing something amazing?
 - How do you feel when trying something new?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.3, ELA RL.1.4, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Track Feivel's feelings and actions as he prepares for flying.
2. Students draw faces showing excitement, worry, or determination.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2)

1. Writing Response: How did Feivel show courage or creativity? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw Feivel flying and label parts of his invention.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - How can imagination solve problems?
 - What do you dream of doing?
2. Turn and talk: Discuss a time they used creativity.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Identify traits of Feivel (e.g., creative, brave, determined).
2. Provide textual evidence for one trait.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Feivel's creativity help him? Write 3–4 sentences using story details.
2. Creative Extension: Make a diagram of Feivel's flying machine.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Creativity and Problem-Solving

1. Discuss how imagination can help to overcome obstacles.
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a creative solution they used.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track obstacles that Feivel faces and his solutions.
2. Encourage textual evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Feivel’s perspective preparing to fly. Include feelings and problem-solving steps.
2. Creative Extension: Illustrate a “mini flying adventure” of their own invention.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Innovation and Courage

1. Discuss: How can new ideas help us solve challenges?
2. Students write a reflection.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyze how the story develops themes of creativity, determination, and courage.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

1. Analytical Paragraph: How does Feivel’s creativity solve problems? Include claim, evidence, explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Have students design their own flying invention.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Innovation and Perseverance

1. Discuss: How does determination lead to success?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Examine: Challenges, creative solutions, and outcomes.
2. Create a chart: Problem | Feivel’s Idea | Result

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1)

1. Argument Writing: Did Feivel succeed because of creativity, courage, or both? Why?
2. Structured response: claim, evidence, explanation.
3. Discuss how students can apply creativity to solve real problems.

Frank Who Liked to Build by Deborah Blumenthal

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever built something from blocks or Legos?
 - How does it feel to create something new?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

1. Track Frank’s feelings as he builds.
2. Students draw faces showing concentration, happiness, or surprise.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 (PreK–2 Band))

1. Students draw their own “big idea” building.
2. Complete: “I am creative when I _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class display titled, “Our Big Builds.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Discuss:
 - What does it mean to solve a problem while building?

- How can we improve our ideas?

2. Students share a time they tried building or creating something.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Identify:

- What Frank wants to build
- How he experiments and solves problems

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

1. Writing Response: How did Frank’s creativity help him? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a new invention inspired by Frank.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - How does trying new ideas help us learn?
 - What makes someone a “builder” or problem solver?
2. Students turn and talk about a time they tried a new approach.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits of Frank (e.g., creative, determined, curious).
2. Provide text evidence for one trait.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How does Frank solve problems while building? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students design their own mini invention.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Creativity and Problem Solving

1. Discuss how persistence helps creators solve challenges.
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time they overcame a building challenge.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track: Problems Frank faces and his solutions.
2. Encourage citing text evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.3.7)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Frank’s perspective about him solving a building challenge.
2. Creative Extension: Illustrate a mini story of a new invention.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Innovation and Determination

1. Discuss: How do inventors improve the world?
2. Students write a reflection about a creative idea they’ve had.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyze how the story develops themes of creativity, persistence, and experimentation.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, ELA W.4.7, ELA W.4.8, ELA RL.4.9)

1. Analytical Paragraph: How does Frank’s creativity solve problems? Include claim, evidence, explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Students research a modern inventor and compare that person to Frank.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Innovation and Problem-Solving

1. Discuss: How does creative thinking help solve challenges?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Examine: Challenges, creative solutions, and results.
2. Create a chart: Problem | Frank's Idea | Result

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1)

1. Argument Writing: Did Frank succeed because of creativity, persistence, or both? Why?
2. Structured response: claim, evidence, explanation.
3. Discuss how students can apply problem-solving in their own lives.

Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue by Anna Harwell Celenza

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - Have you ever listened to music that made you feel excited?
 - How can music tell a story?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

1. Track emotions conveyed by the music in the story.
2. Students draw faces showing happy, surprised, or calm feelings.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1 (PreK–2 Band))

1. Students draw a picture showing how the music makes them feel.
2. Complete: “Music makes me feel _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class “music story” collage.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - How can music tell a story without words?
 - What feelings can music create?
2. Discuss how Gershwin's music tells a story.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Identify:

- Key events in the story of Gershwin's life
- How music expresses his ideas

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.1.7)

1. Writing Response: How did Gershwin's music tell a story? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students illustrate a scene inspired by a musical piece.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - How does creativity in music compare to creativity in art?
 - Can music tell a story of a person or place?
2. Students turn and talk about a song they enjoy.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits of Gershwin (e.g., creative, passionate, determined).
2. Provide textual evidence for one trait.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts

— Connecting 11.1, ELA RL.2.7)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Gershwin use music to share his story? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students create their own short “music story” illustration.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Creativity and Expression

1. Discuss: How can music influence people’s feelings or ideas?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about music that inspires them.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track events and decisions in Gershwin’s musical journey.
2. Encourage citing text evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Gershwin’s perspective about him performing “Rhapsody in Blue.”
2. Creative Extension: Illustrate a “music scene” inspired by the story.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Innovation in Music

1. Discuss: How do musicians create new styles or ideas?
2. Students write a reflection.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyze how Gershwin blends musical styles to tell a story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

1. Analytical Paragraph: How did Gershwin’s creativity change music? Include claim, evidence, explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Compare Gershwin’s style to that of a modern musician.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Music as Storytelling

1. Discuss: How can music influence culture and emotions?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Examine: Gershwin’s creative choices, challenges, and impact on music.
2. Create a chart: Choice | Outcome | Cultural Impact

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1)

Argument Writing

1. Prompt: How did Gershwin’s music influence culture? Structured response: claim, evidence, explanation.
2. Discuss: How can students use creativity to influence others today?

Gittel's Journey by Leslea Newman

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What does it feel like to travel somewhere new?
 - Have you ever been away from home?
2. Show the cover and ask what students notice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

1. Track Gittel’s feelings on her journey.
2. Students draw happy, worried, or excited faces.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1)

1. Draw a scene from the story showing part of Gittel’s journey.
2. Complete: “I would feel _____ if I traveled far from home.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom display titled, “Our Journeys.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - How does it feel to travel alone?
 - Why is it important to help others on a journey?
2. Discuss Gittel’s courage and determination.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Identify:

- Challenges Gittel faces
- How she adapts and finds help

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.1, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2)

1. Writing Response: How does Gittel show bravery? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw a scene from her journey.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask: Why is it important to remember events in order?
2. Discuss sequencing and Gittel’s journey steps.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits of Gittel (e.g., brave, determined, clever).
2. Students give textual evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.1, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: How does Gittel overcome obstacles? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Story Map/Journey Timeline: Students create a four-box timeline of Gittel's journey. In each box they draw a picture and write a sentence. The boxes show:
 - leaving home with Mama
 - boarding the ship alone
 - arriving at Ellis Island with the smeared paper
 - being found by cousin Mendel

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Courage and Resilience

1. Discuss: What does it take to travel far from home alone?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time when they were brave.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track obstacles and Gittel’s solutions.
2. Encourage textual evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

1. Journal Entry: Write about Ellis Island from Gittel’s perspective. Include feelings, challenges, and outcome.
2. Creative Extension: Illustrate the story’s key moments in sequence.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.10, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Immigration and Community

1. Discuss: How do communities help newcomers?
2. Students write a reflection.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.1, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

Analyze themes of courage, family, and adaptation.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

1. Analytical Paragraph: How does Gittel’s courage and perseverance help her succeed? Include a claim, two supporting details, and explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Create a visual “storyboard” of Gittel’s journey, highlighting key events.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Courage, Family, and Adaptation

1. Discuss: How can bravery and problem-solving help someone overcome big challenges?
2. Students write a short opinion response.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Examine: The challenges Gittel faces, her decisions, and the outcomes.
2. Create a chart: Challenge | Gittel’s Action | Result

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, ELA RL.5.6, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

Argument Writing

1. Prompt: How does Gittel’s journey show the importance of courage, determination, and family? Structured response: claim, evidence from the story, explanation.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a “travel journal” from Gittel’s perspective, including illustrations and text.

Hammerin’ Hank by Yona Zeldis McDonough

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.4)

Understanding Heroes and Fairness

1. Ask:
 - What is a hero?
 - Have you ever played a sport or game?
 - How do we feel when people are kind or unkind?
2. Show the cover and ask:
 - What do you see?
 - What is happening?

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.2) Noticing Actions and Feelings

1. Pause to identify:
 - What Hank is doing
 - How he feels (e.g., happy, proud, upset)
2. Students act out feelings and baseball motions (e.g., swinging, running).
3. Ask:
 - What is happening now?
 - Is everyone being kind?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA RL.K.2, ELA L.K.1 & L.K.2, Physical Education — Movement 2.1)

Responding Through Drawing and Movement

1. Drawing & Dictation: Students draw Hank playing baseball and describe their picture.
2. Class Discussion: How did Hank show bravery?
3. Creative Extension: Practice simple baseball movements and talk about trying your best and being a good teammate.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - What is a hero?
 - Can athletes be heroes? Why?
 - Have you ever worked hard to get better at something?
2. Show the book cover and ask students what they notice about Hank and the baseball setting.
3. Briefly introduce the idea that sometimes people are treated unfairly because of who they are.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Pause during the story and ask students to identify:
 - What challenges Hank faces
 - How he responds to them
2. Discuss how Hank practices and improves his baseball skills.
3. Identify feelings Hank might experience when people are unkind.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Physical Education — Movement 2.1)

1. Writing Response: Students write 2–3 sentences completing: “Hank is a hero because _____.”
2. Character Traits Chart: Students list or draw traits that describe Hank (e.g., determined, brave, hardworking).
3. Creative Extension: Students draw a picture of Hank playing baseball and label one way he showed courage or perseverance.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

Understanding Heroes and Challenges

1. Ask:
 - What makes someone a hero?
 - What challenges might athletes face?
2. Turn and talk: Share a time you worked hard to improve at something.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

Tracking Challenges and Responses

1. Identify:
 - A challenge Hank faces
 - How he responds
 - What helps him keep going
2. Record ideas on a chart:

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

Writing Response

1. Prompt: How did Hank show determination?
2. Students write 3–4 sentences including:
 - A challenge
 - What Hank did
 - Why that shows he is a hero
3. Creative Extension: Design a baseball card for Hank with words and pictures showing his strengths.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Perseverance and Fairness

1. Discuss: What does it mean to be treated unfairly?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time that they or someone else showed perseverance.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

Analyzing Character and Events

1. Track:
 - Challenges that Hank faces
 - His reactions and decisions
 - How his actions affect outcomes
2. Encourage use of textual evidence.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

Writing Response

1. Prompt: How did Hank respond to unfair treatment?
2. Students write a paragraph including:
 - A challenge
 - His response
 - What this shows about his character
3. Creative Extension: Create a short comic showing a moment when Hank shows courage.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, ELA W.4.10)

Theme: Identity, Perseverance, and Justice

1. Discuss: Why is it important to stand up for who you are?
2. Students write a short reflection on fairness and inclusion in sports or school.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.9)

Theme and Character Development

1. Analyze how Hank's experiences shape his character.
2. Identify themes of perseverance, courage, and standing up to prejudice.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

Analytical Writing

1. Prompt: How does Hank demonstrate courage both on and off the field?
2. Students write a structured paragraph with:
 - Claim
 - Evidence
 - Explanation
3. Creative Extension: Design a poster that promotes fairness and respect in sports.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Perseverance, Identity, and Standing Up to Prejudice

1. Discussion:
 - What challenges might an athlete face besides competition?
 - Why might standing up for your identity be important?
2. Quick Write (3–4 sentences): Describe a time when someone showed determination, even when others doubted them.
3. Introduce Hank Greenberg as a real historical baseball player who became an important role model.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA SL.5.2)

1. Students track key events in Hank's life using a chart: Challenge Hank faces | How Hank Responds | Outcome
2. Discuss:
 - Why people admired Hank
 - How he handled prejudice and pressure
3. Identify themes of perseverance, courage, and pride in identity.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Civic Engagement)

1. Opinion Writing – Prompt: Why is Hank Greenberg considered an important role model in sports and beyond? Students include:
 - A clear claim
 - At least two examples from the story
 - An explanation of why those examples matter
2. Historical Connection Activity – Students research one additional athlete who helped break barriers in sports and present a short summary to the class.
3. Creative Extension – Create a “Sports Heroes Hall of Fame” classroom display, highlighting athletes who showed courage, fairness, or perseverance.

Hank on First by Stephen Krensky

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What is baseball?
 - What does a team do together?
 - How do teammates help each other?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about Hank and the baseball game.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Physical Education — Movement 2.1)

1. Pause and ask students to identify what Hank is doing to help his team.
2. Students act out simple baseball movements (e.g., running, throwing, catching) while discussing teamwork.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1)

1. Draw a picture of Hank helping his team during the game.
2. Complete the sentence: “A good teammate helps by _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom poster titled, “We Are a Team.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - Why is teamwork important in sports?
 - How can teammates encourage each other?
2. Discuss how everyone on a team has an important role.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify:
 - What Hank’s role is on the team
 - How he supports other players
2. Discuss moments when teamwork helps the team succeed.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2)

1. Writing Response – Prompt: How does Hank help his team? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a picture showing teamwork in the story.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask: Why does every player on a team have a special job?
2. Discuss how cooperation helps groups succeed.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits that describe Hank as a teammate (e.g., supportive, encouraging, hardworking).
2. Students find textual evidence that shows these traits.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: What makes Hank a good teammate? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Story Map Activity – Students create a four-box sequence, drawing one picture and writing one sentence for each box, showing:
 - The team preparing for the game
 - Hank playing first base
 - A moment when teamwork matters
 - The outcome of the game

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Teamwork and Responsibility

1. Discuss: Why is every player important on a team?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time when they worked together with others to complete a task.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track moments when Hank supports his teammates or helps the team succeed.
2. Discuss how different roles contribute to the team’s success.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Hank’s perspective during the game. Describe what he is thinking and feeling.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a short comic strip showing the most important moments in the game.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Leadership and Sportsmanship

1. Ask: What makes someone a good leader on a team?
2. Students discuss examples of leadership and encouragement in sports.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify the key events in the baseball game.
2. Analyze how Hank demonstrates responsibility and teamwork.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how teamwork helps Hank's team succeed. Include details from the story.
2. Creative Extension: Design a "Teamwork in Action" poster, highlighting important moments from the story.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Collaboration and Responsibility

1. Discuss: Why is collaboration important in sports and in life?
2. Students write a short reflection about a time when teamwork helped achieve a goal.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA W.5.9)

1. Students track the sequence of events in the game and how Hank's role affects the outcome.
2. Create a chart: Event | Hank's Action | Result for the Team

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Civic Engagement)

1. Opinion Writing: Why is teamwork an important value in sports and communities? Students include: claim, examples from the story, and explanation.
2. Discussion Extension: Compare teamwork in sports with teamwork in school or community groups.
3. Creative Extension: Students create a "Team Values" chart, identifying qualities that help groups succeed.

Harry and the Highwire by Julie Carpenter

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What is a circus?
 - What kinds of performers might you see there?
 - How do people feel when they try something brave?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about Harry and the high wire.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Visual Arts — Responding 7.1)

1. Pause to discuss how Harry feels as he learns to walk on the high wire.
2. Students show feelings using facial expressions or simple drawings (e.g., excited, nervous, proud).

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1)

1. Draw a picture of Harry practicing on the high wire.
2. Complete the sentence: "Harry is brave because _____."
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom chart called "Things That Make Us Brave."

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to practice something?
 - Why do people need courage when learning something new?
2. Discuss how performers must practice many times before they perform.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify:
 - What Harry is trying to learn
 - What challenges he faces
2. Discuss how Harry keeps trying, even when it is difficult.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2)

1. Writing Response: How does Harry show courage? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw a scene from the story showing Harry learning a new skill.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask: Why is practice important when learning a new skill?
2. Discuss how performers prepare before a show.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List character traits that describe Harry (e.g., brave, determined, patient).
2. Students identify textual evidence that shows these traits.
- 3.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: What helps Harry to succeed on the high wire? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Story Timeline Activity – Students create a four-box timeline showing:
 - Harry discovering the high wire
 - Practicing and learning
 - Facing a challenge
 - Performing successfully
3. Students draw pictures and write one sentence for each box.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Courage and Practice

1. Discuss: Why do people sometimes feel nervous when trying something new?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time they practiced something until they improved.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track the challenges Harry faces as he learns the high-wire act.
2. Discuss how perseverance helps him grow more confident.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Harry’s perspective before performing on the high wire. Include thoughts and feelings.
2. Creative Extension: Create a short comic strip showing the key events in Harry’s journey.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Overcoming Fear and Building Confidence

1. Ask: What strategies help people to overcome fear when learning something challenging?
2. Students discuss examples of perseverance in sports, arts, or school activities.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key moments when Harry must overcome fear or difficulty.
2. Analyze how practice and support help him to improve.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how Harry develops confidence through practice and determination. Include details from the story.
2. Creative Extension: Design a “Steps to Success” poster showing how Harry improves over time.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Determination and Personal Growth

1. Discuss: Why is perseverance important when trying to reach a goal?
2. Students write a short reflection about a challenge they worked hard to overcome.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA W.5.9)

1. Students track Harry’s progress using a chart: Challenge | Harry’s Action | Result
2. Discuss how Harry’s confidence grows throughout the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Visual Arts — Connecting 11.1)

1. Opinion Writing: Why are courage and perseverance important qualities for achieving goals? Use examples from the story.
2. Reflection Extension: Students identify one personal goal and list steps they would take to achieve it.
3. Creative Extension: Create a “Path to Success” illustration showing Harry’s journey from beginner to performer.

I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes Her Mark by Debbie Levy

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean when something is fair?
 - What should we do if something feels unfair?
 - Why is it important to stand up for others?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Social Studies — Civic Responsibility)

1. Pause and discuss moments when Ruth speaks up about unfair situations.
2. Students identify feelings Ruth might have when she sees something unfair.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1)

1. Draw a picture of someone helping to make things fair.
2. Complete the sentence: “I can help others by _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom chart titled, “Ways We Can Be Fair.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to disagree respectfully?
 - Why might someone speak up if they think something is wrong?
2. Discuss the idea that laws and rules should treat people fairly.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify moments when Ruth stands up for fairness.
2. Discuss what challenges she faced.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Civic Responsibility)

1. Writing Response: Why did Ruth speak up about unfair rules? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a picture showing someone who is helping others or standing up for fairness.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask: Why is it important for laws to treat people equally?
2. Discuss examples of fairness in school and community settings.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List character traits that describe Ruth (e.g., determined, thoughtful, courageous).
2. Students provide examples from the text, showing these traits.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: What does Ruth do when she sees something unfair? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Story Timeline Activity – Students create a four-box timeline, drawing a picture and writing one sentence for each box showing:
 - Ruth noticing unfair rules
 - Ruth studying and learning about the law
 - Ruth working to change unfair laws
 - Ruth serving as a judge

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Fairness and Speaking Up

1. Discuss: What should people do when they see unfair treatment?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time they helped make something fair.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track examples of unfair rules that Ruth challenges.
2. Discuss how determination helps her continue working toward fairness.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Ruth’s perspective about why fairness matters. Include thoughts and feelings.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a short comic strip showing one moment when Ruth worked to change an unfair rule.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Equality and Justice

1. Ask: Why are equal rights important in a democracy?
2. Students discuss examples of how laws can affect fairness in society.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key moments when Ruth challenges unfair laws.
2. Analyze how her actions helped expand equality.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how Ruth Bader Ginsburg helped promote fairness and equality. Include details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Design a “Fairness and Justice” poster, highlighting an important value Ruth stood for.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Justice, Equality, and Civic Responsibility

1. Discuss: Why is it important for citizens and leaders to challenge unfair laws?
2. Students write a short reflection about a time when standing up for something important made a difference.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Students track important events in Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s life using a chart: Challenge | Ruth’s Action | Impact
2. Discuss how dissent can be an important part of democracy.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Civic Engagement)

1. Argument Writing: Why was Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s work important for fairness and equality? Students include a claim, evidence from the story, and explanation.
2. Civic Extension: Students research another person who worked for civil rights and share their findings.
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom “Voices for Justice” display, highlighting individuals who stood up for fairness.

Itzhak: A Boy Who Loved the Violin by Tracy Newman

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What kinds of instruments make music?
 - Have you ever heard a violin?
 - How does music make people feel?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the violin and the boy.
3. Introduce Itzhak Perlman as a famous musician who loved playing the violin.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Music — Responding 7.1)

1. Pause to discuss how Itzhak feels while learning to play the violin.
2. Students show emotions with facial expressions or drawings (e.g., happy, focused, proud).

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Music — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1)

1. Draw a picture of Itzhak playing the violin.
2. Complete the sentence: “Music makes me feel _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Listen to a short violin piece and draw what the music makes students imagine.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Music — Responding 7.2)

1. Ask:
 - Why do people practice instruments?
 - How can music help people express feelings?
2. Discuss how musicians must practice often to improve.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify:
 - What Itzhak loves about music
 - What challenges he faces while learning the violin
2. Discuss how practice helps him improve.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Music — Creating 1.1)

1. Writing Response: Why does Itzhak love playing the violin? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students draw themselves playing an instrument or performing music.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Music — Responding 7.1)

1. Ask: Why is practice important when learning a skill?
2. Discuss how musicians prepare for performances.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List character traits that describe Itzhak (e.g., dedicated, passionate, determined).
2. Students identify evidence from the story showing these traits.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: What helps Itzhak become a great musician? Write 3–4 sentences.
3. Story Timeline Activity – Story Timeline Activity – Students create a four-box timeline, drawing a picture and writing one sentence for each box showing:
 - Itzhak discovering the violin
 - Practicing music
 - Overcoming challenges
 - Performing for audiences

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Passion and Perseverance

1. Discuss: What happens when someone loves doing something very much?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a hobby or activity that they enjoy practicing.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track challenges Itzhak faces while learning to play the violin.
2. Discuss how dedication and practice help him succeed.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Itzhak’s perspective before a big performance. Include thoughts and feelings.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a comic strip showing the key moments of Itzhak’s journey as a musician.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Music — Responding 7.1)

Theme: Dedication and Artistic Expression

1. Ask: Why do artists spend many years practicing their craft?

2. Students discuss how music can communicate emotions and ideas.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key moments when Itzhak’s dedication to music shapes his life.
2. Analyze how practice and passion contribute to his success.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how Itzhak Perlman’s love of music helped him to become a successful violinist. Include details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students design a concert poster, advertising one of Itzhak’s performances.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Music — Connecting 11.1)

Theme: Perseverance, Passion, and Achievement

1. Discuss: Why do people pursue activities they love, even when they are difficult?
2. Students write a short reflection about a goal they would like to achieve through practice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Students track Itzhak’s progress using a chart: Challenge | Itzhak’s Action | Result
2. Discuss how perseverance and dedication helped to shape his career.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

1. Opinion Writing: Why is dedication important when developing a talent? Use examples from the story.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about another famous musician and share a short presentation.
3. Creative Extension: Create a “Journey of a Musician” visual timeline showing key moments in Itzhak Perlman’s life.

Judah Touro Didn't Want to Be Famous by Audrey Ades

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.4, Social Studies — Civics/Community)

Theme: Helping Others

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to help someone?
 - How do you feel when you help others?
 - Can you help someone without telling anyone?
2. Discuss ways people show kindness in their homes, school, and community.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.3)

1. Identify ways Judah Touro helps others in the story.
2. Describe how people feel when they are helped.
3. Notice how Judah does kind things without asking for attention.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA SL.K.5, ELA L.K.1)

1. Draw & Dictate: Draw a picture of yourself helping someone and describe it.
2. Class Chart: Create a “Ways We Can Help” chart together.
3. Role Play: Act out simple ways to show kindness in everyday situations.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — Civics)

Theme: Kindness and Giving

1. Ask:
 - What is kindness?
 - Why is it important to help others?
 - Do you always need a reward for doing something nice?
2. Introduce the idea that some people give quietly without wanting attention.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.2, ELA RL.1.3)

1. Retell important parts of the story.
2. Describe Judah Touro and what kind of person he is.

3. Identify ways he helps others.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA W.1.8, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Writing: Write about one way Judah helped others.
2. Personal Connection: Write or draw a time when you helped someone.
3. Kindness Coupons: Create coupons for kind acts (e.g., help a friend, clean up, etc.).

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — Civics/History)

Theme: Generosity and Community

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to be generous?
 - How can helping others make a community stronger?
 - Why might someone not want to be famous?
2. Introduce the idea of community helpers and philanthropy (in simple terms).

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.2, ELA RL.2.3)

1. Identify the main idea of the story.
2. Describe how Judah Touro's actions help others.
3. Discuss how his choices affect the community.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA W.2.8, ELA RL.2.7, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how Judah helped people.
2. Timeline: Create a simple timeline of key events in his life.
3. Community Connection: Brainstorm ways students can help their own community.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA SL.3.1, ELA SL.3.4, Social Studies — U.S. History/Civics)

Theme: Making a Difference

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to make a difference?
 - Can one person change a whole community?
 - Why might someone choose not to be recognized?
2. Introduce Judah Touro as a historical figure who helped others.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3)

1. Determine the central message of the story.
2. Describe Judah Touro's character traits using examples.
3. Explain how events in the story show his values.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA W.3.1, ELA W.3.8, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Informative Writing: Describe how Judah Touro made a difference.
2. Opinion Writing: Is it important to be recognized for helping others? Why or why not?
3. Project: Plan a small class or personal "giving back" activity.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Social Studies — U.S. History/Civics)

Theme: Humility and Giving Back

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to be generous?
 - Do people need recognition to do good things? Why or why not?
 - How can one person make a difference in a community?
2. Discuss the idea of philanthropy and helping others without seeking attention.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key events in Judah Touro's life that show his generosity and values.
2. Analyze how his actions impacted others and his community.
3. Discuss how his character traits (e.g., humility, kindness, generosity) are revealed through the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA RL.4.6, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how Judah Touro made a difference without seeking fame. Use details from the text.
2. Opinion Writing: Do you think it is better to help others quietly or to be recognized for your actions? Explain your thinking with reasons.
3. Creative Extension: Students design a “Giving Back” project plan, describing a way they could help their community without expecting recognition.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.2, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — U.S. History/Civics)

Theme: Philanthropy and Humility

1. Ask:
 - What is philanthropy?
 - Why do some people choose to give without recognition?
 - How does generosity impact society over time?
2. Discuss the role of individuals in shaping communities through acts of giving.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA W.5.9)

1. Analyze key events that highlight Judah Touro’s generosity.
2. Examine how his actions influenced his community and beyond.
3. Identify evidence that shows his humility and values.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Informative Essay: Explain Judah Touro’s contributions and their impact.
2. Opinion Writing: Should people be recognized for charitable acts? Support with reasons and examples.
3. Service Learning Project: Design a detailed plan for a community service initiative inspired by Judah Touro.

Klezmer! by Kyra Teis

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Music — Responding 7.1)

1. Ask:
 - What kinds of music do you like to hear?
 - What instruments can make music?
 - How does music make people feel?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the instruments and musicians.
3. Explain that klezmer is a joyful style of music often played at celebrations.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Music — Responding 7.2)

1. Pause and discuss how the musicians might feel while playing.
2. Students identify instruments that they see in the illustrations.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Music — Creating 1.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1)

1. Draw a picture of musicians playing music together.
2. Complete the sentence: “Music makes me feel _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Play a short klezmer-style song and let students move or clap to the rhythm.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Music — Responding 7.2)

1. Ask:
 - What instruments do you see in bands or orchestras?
 - Why do people play music at celebrations?
2. Discuss how music can bring people together.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify instruments in the story (e.g., violin, clarinet, drum, etc.).
2. Discuss how musicians work together to create music.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Music — Creating 1.1)

1. Writing Response: Why do people enjoy music together? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students draw a band or musical group performing together.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Music — Responding 7.1)

1. Ask: Why is music important at celebrations and gatherings?
2. Discuss how different cultures have their own musical traditions.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List instruments and sounds that students notice in the story.
2. Discuss how musicians communicate and play together.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: What makes klezmer music special? Write 3–4 sentences.
4. Music Timeline Activity – Students create a four-box timeline, drawing a picture and writing one sentence for each box showing:
 - Musicians gathering
 - Practicing or tuning instruments
 - Playing lively music
 - People dancing or celebrating

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Music — Connecting 11.1)

Theme: Music and Cultural Celebration

1. Discuss: How does music reflect traditions and culture?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about music they hear at celebrations or family events.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track the role of each instrument in the band.
2. Discuss how the musicians work together to create a joyful sound.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

1. Journal Entry: Describe how music can bring people together during celebrations.
2. Creative Extension: Students design a comic strip showing a band performing at a celebration.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Music — Connecting 11.1)

Theme: Music as Cultural Expression

1. Ask: Why do cultures create unique styles of music?
2. Discuss how music helps to preserve traditions and history.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify the instruments and musical roles in the klezmer band.
2. Analyze how the story shows music bringing a community together.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how klezmer music represents a cultural tradition. Include details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students design a concert poster, advertising a klezmer performance.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Music — Connecting 11.1)

Theme: Cultural Traditions and Community

1. Discuss: How does music help communities celebrate and preserve traditions?
2. Students write a short reflection about music that is meaningful in their families or communities.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Students track how the musicians contribute to the overall performance using a chart: Instrument | Role in the Music | Effect on the Sound
2. Discuss how music expresses culture and identity.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how klezmer music helps share cultural traditions and celebrate community. Include examples from the story.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about another cultural music tradition and present their findings.
3. Creative Extension: Create a “Music Around the World” classroom display featuring different cultural music styles.

Lipman Pike: America’s First Home Run King by Richard Michelson

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What games or sports do you like to play?
 - What does it mean to practice and get better at something?
 - Why is it exciting to watch a game?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the baseball game and the player.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1, Physical Education — Movement 2.1)

1. Pause to discuss what Lipman is doing during the game.
2. Students identify feelings that Lipman might have when he plays baseball (e.g., excited, proud, determined).

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Creating 1.1)

1. Draw a picture of Lipman Pike playing baseball.
2. Complete the sentence: “Playing sports can make people feel _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Students act out running the bases like a baseball player.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - Why do athletes practice before games?
 - What helps someone become good at a sport?
2. Discuss how hard work can help people to reach their goals.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify:
 - What Lipman Pike loves about baseball
 - What challenges he faces
2. Discuss how Lipman’s practice helps him to succeed.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2)

1. Writing Response: Why did Lipman Pike become a great baseball player? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a picture showing Lipman hitting a baseball.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask: Why do people remember important athletes?
2. Discuss how sports can bring people together.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List traits that describe Lipman Pike (e.g., determined, hardworking, talented).
2. Students identify textual evidence showing these traits.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: What helped Lipman Pike become successful in baseball? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Story Timeline Activity – Students create a four-box timeline, drawing a picture and writing one sentence for each box showing:
 - Lipman learning to play baseball
 - Practicing and improving
 - Playing in important games
 - Becoming known for hitting home runs

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Dedication and Achievement

1. Discuss: What helps someone become great at a sport?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about an activity they enjoy practicing.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track important events in Lipman Pike’s baseball career.
2. Discuss how determination and practice helped him to become successful.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.3, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Lipman Pike’s perspective during a big baseball game. Include thoughts and feelings.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a comic strip showing the key moments of the story.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1)

Theme: Sports History and Perseverance

1. Ask: Why do some athletes become famous in sports history?
2. Discuss how sports records and achievements are remembered.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key events that helped Lipman Pike to become known as a great baseball player.
2. Analyze how his dedication and skill contributed to his success.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain why Lipman Pike is remembered in baseball history. Include details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Design a “Sports History” poster, highlighting Lipman Pike’s accomplishments.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1)

Theme: Determination and Historical Impact

1. Discuss: What qualities help athletes to become historical figures in sports?
2. Students write a short reflection about a role model who worked hard to achieve success.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Students track key moments in Lipman Pike’s career using a chart: Event | Challenge | Outcome
2. Discuss how his achievements helped to shape early baseball history.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Civic Engagement)

1. Informative Writing: Explain why Lipman Pike is an important figure in baseball history. Include examples from the story.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about another early baseball player and present a short summary.
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom “Baseball History” timeline, including Lipman Pike and other important players.

Mendel’s Accordion by Heidi Smith Hyde

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.4)

Understanding Family and Music

1. Ask:
 - What is your favorite song?
 - Do you have something special from your family?
 - How can music make you feel?
2. Show the cover and ask:
 - What do you see?
 - What do you think the instrument is?

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.2)

Noticing Events and Feelings

1. Pause to identify:
 - What Mendel is doing with the accordion
 - How he feels (e.g., happy, proud, sad)
2. Students act out playing music and different emotions.
3. Ask:
 - What is happening now?
 - Why is the accordion important?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA RL.K.2, ELA L.K.1 & L.K.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

Responding Through Drawing and Sharing

1. Drawing and Dictation: Students draw something special to them and explain why.
2. Class Discussion: How did Mendel's accordion help him to remember important moments?
3. Creative Extension: Students create simple rhythms by clapping or using classroom instruments to express feelings.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

Understanding Family and Special Objects

1. Ask:
 - What is something special in your family?
 - Why is it important to you?
 - How can music tell a story?
2. Students draw a picture of a special object and share why it matters.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Noticing Connections and Feelings

1. Identify:
 - When Mendel uses the accordion
 - How it connects to important moments
2. Discuss how Mendel feels at different points in the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

Writing and Drawing Response

1. Prompt: Why is Mendel's accordion special? Students write 2–3 sentences including:
 - What the accordion is
 - Why it matters to Mendel
2. Creative Extension: Draw Mendel playing the accordion at an important moment and label the scene.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask:
 - What is a family tradition?
 - Do you have an object in your family that is special or meaningful?
 - How can music help people to remember important moments?
2. Discuss how objects can hold memories and stories across generations.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Identify important events in Mendel's life and how the accordion connects them.
2. Discuss how Mendel feels about his accordion and why it is meaningful.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Music — Connecting 11.1)

1. Writing Prompt: Why is Mendel's accordion important to him? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Story Timeline Activity – Students create a four-box timeline, drawing a picture and writing one sentence for each box showing:
 - Mendel receiving or playing the accordion
 - The accordion during an important life event
 - The accordion during a difficult moment
 - The accordion becoming a symbol of memory and tradition

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1)

Theme: Memory, Family, and Tradition

1. Discuss: Why are family stories and traditions important to remember?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about something meaningful in their family (e.g., an object, song, or tradition).

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how Mendel’s accordion appears at different points in the story.
2. Discuss how the accordion represents memory, resilience, and family history.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Music — Connecting 11.1, Social Studies — History and Culture)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how the accordion helps to tell Mendel’s story and connect generations. Include details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a “Memory Object” drawing or short description of an item that represents an important family memory or tradition.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, ELA W.4.10)

Theme: Memory, Tradition, and Resilience

1. Discuss: How can objects help preserve family history?
2. Students write a short reflection about a meaningful object or tradition in their lives.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.9)

Theme and Symbolism

1. Analyze how the accordion functions as a symbol throughout the story.
2. Identify how Mendel’s experiences shape the meaning of the accordion over time.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Music — Connecting 11.1, Social Studies — History and Culture)

1. Analytical Writing – Prompt: How does Mendel’s accordion represent memory and resilience? Students write a structured paragraph including:
 - Claim
 - Evidence
 - Explanation
2. Creative Extension: Create a “Memory Museum” display, featuring drawings or descriptions of meaningful objects and their stories.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA SL.5.1, ELA W.5.4)

Theme: Memory, Identity, and Cultural Heritage

1. Discuss: Why is it important to preserve family and cultural traditions?
2. Students write a short opinion response about how objects or music can carry history.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

Critical Analysis

1. Track:
 - Key events in Mendel’s life
 - How the accordion appears in each event
 - How its meaning changes over time
2. Create a chart: Event | Role of Accordion | Meaning

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Music — Connecting 11.1, Social Studies — History and Culture)

Argument Writing and Reflection

1. Prompt: Is Mendel’s accordion more important as a musical instrument or as a symbol of memory? Students write a structured response including:
 - Claim
 - Evidence
 - Reasoning

2. Creative Extension: Students write a short narrative or reflection about an object that represents their own family history or identity.

Next Year in the White House: Barack Obama's First Presidential Seder by Richard Michelson

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, History/Social Science — Civics & Culture)

1. Ask:
 - What is a holiday or special tradition your family celebrates?
 - What do people do to celebrate together?
 - What does it mean to share a meal with others?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the people, setting, and mood.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to talk about what a Seder is and what is happening at the table.
2. Identify moments when people are coming together and sharing traditions.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, History/Social Science — Civics & Culture)

1. Draw a picture of a special meal or tradition in your family.
2. Complete the sentence: “My family celebrates _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class “Celebration Chart” showing different traditions students share.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, History/Social Science — Civics & Culture)

1. Ask:
 - Why do people celebrate holidays together?
 - What makes a tradition important?
2. Discuss how families and communities pass down traditions.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify what is happening during the Seder meal.
2. Discuss how the people in the story feel about celebrating together.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, History/Social Science — Civics & Culture)

1. Writing Response: Why is it important to celebrate traditions? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a picture of a tradition your family celebrates.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, History/Social Science — Civics & Culture)

1. Ask: Why do communities keep traditions over time?
2. Discuss how traditions connect people to history and each other.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Describe the setting of the White House and the Seder.
2. Identify how the characters show respect for tradition.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, History/Social Science — Civics & Culture)

1. Writing Prompt: How does the Seder bring people together? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Connection Activity:
Students complete the sentence and illustrate:
 - “A tradition that is important to me is _____ because _____.”
3. Creative Extension:
As a class, create a “Our Traditions” book where each student contributes a page showing a meaningful family or cultural tradition.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, History/Social Science — Civics & Culture)

Theme: Traditions and Community

1. Discuss: How do traditions help bring people together?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a tradition they celebrate.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Identify the main idea of the story (celebrating Passover in a new place).
2. Discuss how the setting (the White House) makes this celebration unique.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, History/Social Science — Civics & Culture)

1. Journal Entry: Write about why traditions are important to individuals and communities.
2. Creative Extension: Create a comic strip showing a family celebrating a meaningful tradition.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, History/Social Science — Civics & Government)

Theme: Leadership and Cultural Traditions

1. Ask: Why is it important for leaders to recognize different cultures and traditions?
2. Discuss how traditions can be shared in public spaces.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key events that led to the first White House Seder.
2. Analyze how the people involved showed leadership and inclusion.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, History/Social Science — Civics & Government)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain why hosting a Seder at the White House is meaningful. Include details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Design a “Celebrating Traditions” poster showing how different cultures are recognized in the U.S.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, History/Social Science — Civics & Government)

Theme: Identity, Leadership, and Inclusion

1. Discuss: How can leaders promote inclusion and respect for different cultures?
2. Students write a short reflection about why traditions matter in a diverse society.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track key moments using a chart:
Event | Who Was Involved | Why It Matters
2. Discuss how this event reflects broader American values of diversity and inclusion.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, History/Social Science — Civics & Government)

1. Informative Writing: Explain the significance of the first White House Seder and what it represents about American society.
2. Research Extension: Learn about another cultural or religious tradition celebrated in the U.S. and present findings.
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom display titled “Traditions That Shape Our Communities.”

On a Beam of Light: A Story of Albert Einstein by Jennifer Berne

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Science — Inquiry)

1. Ask:
 - What kinds of questions do scientists ask?
 - What does it mean to wonder about something?
 - What are some things you are curious about?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the boy and the light.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause and discuss the questions that Albert asks about the world.
2. Students identify moments when Albert is curious or thinking deeply.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Science — Inquiry)

1. Draw a picture of something you wonder about.
2. Complete the sentence: “I wonder why _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class “Wonder Wall” where students post questions about the world.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Science — Inquiry)

1. Ask:
 - Why is curiosity important for learning?
 - What kinds of questions help people discover new ideas?
2. Discuss how scientists learn by asking questions and exploring.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify moments when Albert is thinking about how things work.
2. Discuss what inspires him to ask questions about the world.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Science — Inquiry)

1. Writing Response: Why did Albert Einstein like asking questions? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Students draw and label a picture of a scientific idea or discovery that they would like to explore.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Science — Inquiry)

1. Ask: Why do scientists observe and ask questions about the world?
2. Discuss how curiosity can lead to discoveries.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List character traits that describe Albert (e.g., curious, imaginative, thoughtful).
2. Students identify examples from the story that show these traits.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Science — Inquiry)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Albert’s curiosity help him learn about the world? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Story Timeline Activity – Students create a four-box timeline, drawing a picture and writing one sentence for each box showing:
 - Albert as a curious child
 - Asking big questions about the universe
 - Studying and learning more about science
 - Becoming a famous scientist

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Science — Inquiry)

Theme: Curiosity and Discovery

1. Discuss: Why is curiosity important for learning new things?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a question that they have about the world.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track the questions Albert asks throughout the story.

2. Discuss how imagination and curiosity help him to think about science.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Science — Inquiry)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Albert Einstein’s perspective, describing something he wonders about.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a comic strip showing Albert asking a big scientific question and exploring an idea.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Science — Inquiry)

Theme: Imagination and Scientific Thinking

1. Ask: How do imagination and curiosity help scientists make discoveries?
2. Discuss how asking questions can lead to new ideas and inventions.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key moments that show Albert’s curiosity and creativity.
2. Analyze how his way of thinking helps him to understand complex ideas.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Science — Inquiry)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how curiosity helped Albert Einstein to become an important scientist. Include details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students design a “Young Scientist” poster, showing questions they would explore if they were scientists.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Science — Inquiry)

Theme: Curiosity, Creativity, and Innovation

1. Discuss: Why are imagination and questioning important for scientific discoveries?
2. Students write a short reflection about a problem or mystery that they would like to solve.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Students track important moments in Albert Einstein’s life using a chart: Question Albert Asks | Idea He Explores | What He Learns
2. Discuss how curiosity and creativity can lead to groundbreaking discoveries.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Science — Inquiry)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how curiosity and imagination helped Albert Einstein to develop new scientific ideas. Include examples from the story.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about another scientist who made an important discovery and present their findings.
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom “Great Thinkers” display, highlighting individuals who changed how we understand the world.

Rifka Takes a Bow by Betty Rosenberg Perlov

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2)

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to be brave?
 - Have you ever tried something new that felt a little scary?
 - What do performers (like dancers or actors) do?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about Rifka and what she might be doing.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to discuss how Rifka feels at different points in the story.
2. Identify when she is nervous and when she becomes more confident.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1)

1. Draw a picture of something new that you tried or would like to try.
2. Complete the sentence: “I feel brave when _____.”

3. Creative Extension: Act out a short performance (e.g., dance, song, or pose) as a class.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4)

1. Ask:
 - Why can trying new things feel scary?
 - What helps people to feel more confident?
2. Discuss times students had to be brave.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify Rifka's feelings at the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
2. Discuss what helps her to overcome her fears.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2)

1. Writing Response: How did Rifka feel before and after her performance? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a picture of yourself doing something brave.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4)

1. Ask: Why is it important to try new things, even if they feel scary?
2. Discuss how practice can help people to improve and gain confidence.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List character traits that describe Rifka (e.g., nervous, determined, brave).
2. Identify examples from the story that show these traits.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Rifka show bravery in the story? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Story Timeline Activity – Students create a four-box timeline, drawing a picture and writing one sentence for each box showing:
 - Rifka preparing for the performance
 - Feeling nervous
 - Performing on stage

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1) Theme: Courage and Confidence

1. Discuss: What does it mean to have confidence?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time that they had to be brave.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how Rifka's feelings change throughout the story.
2. Discuss how her actions show growth and courage.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Rifka's perspective before she goes on stage. Describe her thoughts and feelings.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a short skit or comic strip, showing a character overcoming a fear.

Rivka's First Thanksgiving by Elsa Okon Rael

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Social Studies — History/Culture)

1. Ask:
 - What is Thanksgiving?
 - What kinds of foods do people eat on Thanksgiving?
 - What does it mean to share a meal with others?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about Rivka and her family.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to discuss what is new or different for Rivka.

2. Identify how Rivka feels about celebrating a new holiday.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Draw a picture of a meal that you share with your family.
2. Complete the sentence: “I am thankful for _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class “Thankful Tree” with student responses.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — History/Culture)

1. Ask:
 - Why do people celebrate holidays?
 - How can traditions be different in different families?
2. Discuss how new experiences can feel exciting or unfamiliar.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify Rivka’s feelings about celebrating Thanksgiving for the first time.
2. Discuss what she learns about the holiday.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Writing Response: What did Rivka learn about Thanksgiving? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label your favorite holiday tradition.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — History/Culture)

1. Ask: Why do people create and celebrate traditions?
2. Discuss how people from different backgrounds celebrate holidays in unique ways.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List character traits that describe Rivka (e.g., curious, thoughtful, open-minded).
2. Identify examples showing how she adapts to a new tradition.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Rivka respond to celebrating a new holiday? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Compare & Contrast Activity – Students draw or write about:
 - A tradition from Rivka’s life
 - A tradition from their own life

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — History/Culture)

Theme: Traditions and New Experiences

1. Discuss: How can people honor their own traditions while learning new ones?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a family or cultural tradition.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how Rivka’s understanding of Thanksgiving develops.
2. Discuss how her experiences reflect both change and continuity.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Rivka’s perspective about her first Thanksgiving experience.
2. Creative Extension: Create a comic strip showing someone experiencing a new holiday or tradition.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Social Studies — History/Immigration)

Theme: Immigration and Cultural Adaptation

1. Ask: What challenges might people face when moving to a new country?
2. Discuss how traditions can change or stay the same in a new place.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key moments that show Rivka adapting to a new culture.
2. Analyze how her family balances old traditions with new ones.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — Immigration)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how Rivka’s experience reflects adapting to a new culture. Use details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a “Then and Now” chart, comparing traditions from Rivka’s past and present.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — Immigration/Culture)

Theme: Identity, Tradition, and Belonging

1. Discuss: How do traditions shape identity?
2. Students write a short reflection about a tradition that is important to them and why.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track Rivka’s experience using a chart: New Experience | Challenge | How She Responds | What She Learns
2. Discuss how her story reflects broader immigrant experiences.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Immigration/Culture)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how Rivka balances her original traditions with new ones in America. Include examples from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students explore how different cultural groups celebrate Thanksgiving or similar harvest holidays.
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom “Cultural Traditions” display, highlighting diverse family traditions.

Saving Lady Liberty by Claudia Friddell

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Social Studies — Civics/History)

1. Ask:
 - What is a symbol?
 - Have you ever seen a statue or monument?
 - What do you think the Statue of Liberty stands for?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the statue and the people.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to discuss the problem in the story (i.e., raising money to build the statue).
2. Identify how people work together to help.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Draw a picture of something important in your community.
2. Complete the sentence: “I can help by _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class poster about helping others.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — Civics/History)

1. Ask:
 - Why are symbols important to a country?
 - How can people work together to solve a problem?
2. Discuss what it means to help your community.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify the main problem in the story.
2. Discuss how different people help to solve it.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Writing Response: How did people help to build the Statue of Liberty? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a way you can help your community.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — History/Civics)

1. Ask: Why do countries create monuments?

2. Discuss how communities can come together to support big projects.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Identify key people involved in helping build the statue.
2. Describe character traits such as teamwork, generosity, and determination.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Writing Prompt: Why was it important for people to help to raise money for the statue? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Sequence Activity – Students create a four-step timeline showing:
 - The need for money
 - People learning about the problem
 - Communities helping
 - The statue being completed

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — Civics/History)

Theme: Teamwork and National Symbols

1. Discuss: Why are national symbols important?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a symbol that represents something important to them.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how the problem of funding the statue is introduced and solved.
2. Discuss how teamwork plays a role in the outcome.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Journal Entry: Write from the perspective of a child who helped to raise money for the statue.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Social Studies — U.S. History)

Theme: Civic Engagement and History

1. Ask: How can ordinary people make a difference in history?
2. Discuss how communities contribute to important national projects.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key events that led to the completion of the Statue of Liberty.
2. Analyze how individuals and groups contributed to solving the problem.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — U.S. History/Civics)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how teamwork and community effort helped to complete the Statue of Liberty. Use details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a newspaper-style article about the campaign to fund the statue.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — U.S. History/Civics)

Theme: Civic Responsibility and Collective Action

1. Discuss: What responsibilities do citizens have in a democracy?
2. Students write a short reflection about a cause that they would support and why.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track the historical problem and solution using a chart: Problem | Actions Taken | People Involved | Outcome
2. Discuss how the story reflects civic engagement and public participation.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — U.S. History/Civics)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how citizens helped to make the Statue of Liberty possible and why this is important in a democracy. Include evidence from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about another U.S. monument or symbol and present how it was created.
3. Creative Extension: Create a campaign poster, encouraging people to support a community project.

The Key from Spain by Debbie Levy

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.4, Social Studies — Culture/History)

Understanding Objects and Stories

1. Ask:
 - What is a key? What does it do?
 - Do you have something special at home?
 - How can an object remind us of people or places?
2. Show the cover and ask:
 - What do you see?
 - What do you think the key is for?

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.2)

Noticing People and Meaning

1. Pause to identify:
 - Who is in the story
 - What the key is
2. Discuss how the character feels about the key.
3. Ask:
 - What is happening now?
 - Why is the key important?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA RL.K.2, ELA L.K.1 & L.K.2, Social Studies — Culture)

Responding Through Drawing and Sharing

1. Drawing & Dictation: Students draw a special object and explain why it matters (teacher writes their words).
2. Class Discussion: How did the key help to tell a story?
3. Creative Extension: Create a class “Special Objects” chart with drawings and simple descriptions.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — Culture/History)

1. Ask:
 - What is a key used for?
 - Can objects hold special meaning or memories?
 - What is a family story?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the key and what it might represent.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify who the story is about and what the key represents.
2. Discuss how the key connects the character to their past.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Writing Response: Why is the key important in the story? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label an object that is special to you and explain why.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — Culture/History)

Understanding Objects and Memory

1. Ask:
 - How can an object tell a story?
 - Why are family memories important?
2. Turn and talk: Share an object that reminds you of a person or place.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

Tracking Meaning and Connections

1. Identify:
 - What the key represents
 - How it connects to the character’s past
2. Record ideas on a chart: Object | What it Represents | Why it Matters

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Writing Response – Prompt: Why is the key important in the story? Students write 3–4 sentences including:
 - What the key is
 - What it represents
 - Why it matters to the character
2. Creative Extension: Create a labeled drawing of a meaningful object and write a few sentences about its story.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — History/Culture)

Theme: Memory, Identity, and Heritage

1. Discuss: How can objects tell stories about the past?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about an object that is meaningful in their family.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how the key symbolizes family history and identity.
2. Discuss how the character learns about their past through the key.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — History/Culture)

1. Journal Entry: Write from the perspective of the key, describing the journey it has taken.
2. Creative Extension: Create a short story about a special object that connects a family to its history.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, ELA W.4.10, Social Studies — History/Culture)

Theme: Heritage, Memory, and Identity

1. Discuss: How do objects help preserve to history and culture?
2. Students write a short reflection about an object that connects to their identity or family history.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.9)

Theme and Symbolism

1. Analyze how the key functions as a symbol of heritage and memory.
2. Identify how the character’s understanding of the key develops over time.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — History/Culture)

1. Analytical Writing – Prompt: How does the key represent the character’s connection to the past? Students write a structured paragraph including:
 - Claim
 - Evidence
 - Explanation
2. Creative Extension: Create a “History Object” display with a written explanation of its meaning and importance.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.1, ELA SL.5.1, ELA W.5.4, Social Studies — History/Culture)

Theme: Identity, Heritage, and Historical Memory

1. Discuss: Why is it important to remember and preserve family and cultural history?
2. Students write a short opinion response about how objects can carry meaning across generations.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

Critical Analysis

1. Track:
 - The role of the key throughout the story
 - What it represents at different moments
 - How it shapes the character’s understanding of identity
2. Create a chart: Moment in Story | Role of Key | Meaning

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.1, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — History/Culture)

1. Argument Writing and Reflection – Prompt: Is the key more important as an object or as a symbol of history and identity? Students write a structured response including:

- Claim
 - Evidence
 - Reasoning
2. Creative Extension: Students write a personal narrative about an object that represents their own family story or cultural identity.

The People's Painter by Cynthia Levinson

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Visual Arts — Expression)

1. Ask:
 - What is a painter?
 - What kinds of things do artists paint?
 - How can art tell a story?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the people and colors.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to identify what the artist is painting.
2. Discuss how the paintings show people's lives.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Visual Arts — Expression)

1. Draw a picture of your family or community.
2. Complete the sentence: "I can tell a story with art by _____."
3. Creative Extension: Create a class mural, showing your community.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Visual Arts — Expression)

1. Ask:
 - Why do artists create art?
 - How can pictures show feelings or stories?
2. Discuss how art can represent real life.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify what the artist chooses to paint.
2. Discuss how the paintings help us to understand people's lives.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Visual Arts — Expression)

1. Writing Response: What did the artist paint and why? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a picture that tells a story about your life.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — Culture/History, Visual Arts)

1. Ask: Why is it important to show people's lives in art?
2. Discuss how art can help us to learn about different communities.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Describe the artist's work and who is represented in the paintings.
2. Identify character traits such as creativity, empathy, and determination.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Culture, Visual Arts)

1. Writing Prompt: How did the artist show people's lives through art? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Art Activity: Students create a drawing that represents their community or a group of people.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — Culture/History, Visual Arts)

Theme: Art as Storytelling

1. Discuss: How can art tell stories about people and communities?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a picture or artwork that they have seen and what it showed.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how the artist's work reflects the lives of everyday people.

2. Discuss how the artist uses art to communicate important messages.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — Culture, Visual Arts)

1. Journal Entry: Write from the perspective of a person in one of the artist's paintings.
2. Creative Extension: Create a comic strip or drawing that tells a story about a community.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Social Studies — U.S. History/Culture, Visual Arts)

Theme: Art and Social Change

1. Ask: How can art influence how people think or feel?
2. Discuss how artists can highlight important issues in society.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key moments that show the artist's purpose and message.
2. Analyze how the artwork represents social issues or everyday life.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA RL.4.6, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — Culture, Visual Arts)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how the artist used painting to tell stories about people's lives. Use details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students design a poster or artwork that raises awareness about an issue in their community.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — Culture/Civics, Visual Arts)

Theme: Representation, Voice, and Expression

1. Discuss: Why is it important for artists to represent different communities and experiences?
2. Students write a short reflection about how art can give people a voice.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track the artist's goals and impact using a chart: What He Painted | Who Was Represented | Message | Impact
2. Discuss how the artist's work reflects broader social and cultural themes.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Culture/Civics, Visual Arts)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how the artist used art to represent people and communicate important ideas. Include evidence from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about another artist who used art to tell stories or inspire change.
3. Creative Extension: Create a personal artwork accompanied by a written explanation of its message and purpose.

Tía Fortuna's New Home by Ruth Behar

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Social Studies — Culture/Community)

1. Ask:
 - What is a home?
 - What makes a place special to you?
 - How do families remember important places?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about Tía Fortuna and her home.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to discuss how Tía Fortuna feels about leaving her home.
2. Identify what makes her home meaningful.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Draw a picture of a place that is special to you.

2. Complete the sentence: “My home is special because _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class collage of “special places.”

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — Culture/Community)

1. Ask:
 - Why can it be hard to leave a place that you love?
 - What memories do we keep from special places?
2. Discuss how families pass down stories and traditions.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify Tía Fortuna’s feelings throughout the story.
2. Discuss what she remembers about her past.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Writing Response: Why is Tía Fortuna’s home important to her? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a memory from your home or family.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — Culture/History)

1. Ask: Why are memories important?
2. Discuss how people remember their past through stories, objects, and traditions.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. List character traits that describe Tía Fortuna (e.g., nostalgic, loving, thoughtful).
2. Identify details that show her connection to her home and history.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Writing Prompt: How does Tía Fortuna feel about leaving her home? Why? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Memory Map Activity: Students draw a “map” of a special place and label important memories connected to it.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — Culture/History)

Theme: Memory and Identity

1. Discuss: How do places shape who we are?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a place that is important to them and why.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how Tía Fortuna reflects on her memories throughout the story.
2. Discuss how her past and present are connected.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — Culture)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Tía Fortuna’s perspective about leaving her home.
2. Creative Extension: Create a short story about a character moving to a new place and remembering their old home.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Social Studies — Immigration/Culture)

Theme: Change, Memory, and Cultural Identity

1. Ask: How do people maintain their identity when they move or experience change?
2. Discuss how traditions and memories connect people to their past.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key moments that show Tía Fortuna’s emotional connection to her home.
2. Analyze how the setting influences the story and its meaning.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — Culture/Identity)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how Tía Fortuna’s memories help to preserve her identity. Use details from the text.

2. Creative Extension: Students create a “Memory Box” (drawn or real) with items representing important parts of their lives.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — Culture/Identity)

Theme: Identity, Memory, and Belonging

1. Discuss: How do memories and places shape identity?
2. Students write a short reflection about a place that has influenced who they are.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track Tía Fortuna’s experiences using a chart: Past Memories | Present Situation | Feelings | Meaning
2. Discuss how her story reflects broader themes of change and belonging.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Culture/Identity)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how Tía Fortuna’s connection to her home shapes her identity. Include evidence from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students explore how different cultures preserve memories and traditions when people move.
3. Creative Extension: Write a personal narrative about a meaningful place and how it has impacted your life.

Watch the Stars Come Out by Riki Levinson

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Social Studies — Culture/Community)

1. Ask:
 - What do families do together at the end of the day?
 - What happens when the sun goes down?
 - What do you see in the sky at night?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the setting and people.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to notice the sequence of events from day to night.
2. Identify what the family is doing together.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Science — Earth/Space)

1. Draw a picture of the sky at night.
2. Complete the sentence: “At night I see _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class mural showing day turning into night.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Science — Earth/Space)

1. Ask:
 - What changes happen from day to night?
 - Why is nighttime special for families?
2. Discuss routines that families have in the evening.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify the sequence of events in the story.
2. Discuss how the setting changes over time.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Science — Earth/Space)

1. Writing Response: What happens in the story as it gets dark? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label your nighttime routine.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Science — Earth/Space)

1. Ask: Why does the sky change from day to night?
2. Discuss how families and communities have different evening traditions.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Describe the setting at different points in the story.
2. Identify details that show the passage of time.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Science — Earth/Space)

1. Writing Prompt: How does the setting change from day to night in the story? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Sequence Activity – Students create a four-part sequence showing:
 - Daytime activities
 - Sunset
 - Evening activities
 - Night sky with stars

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Science — Earth/Space)

Theme: Daily Routines and the Natural World

1. Discuss: How does nature affect our daily routines?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about what they do at night.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how the setting and mood change throughout the story.
2. Discuss how the author shows the passage of time.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Science — Earth/Space)

1. Journal Entry: Write from the perspective of someone watching the stars come out.
2. Creative Extension: Create a comic strip showing a family’s evening routine from sunset to bedtime.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Science — Earth/Space)

Theme: Observation and Patterns in Nature

1. Ask: What patterns do we notice in nature each day?
2. Discuss how the movement of the Earth causes day and night.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify descriptive language that shows changes in the sky and environment.
2. Analyze how the setting influences the mood of the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Science — Earth/Space)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how the story shows the transition from day to night using descriptive details.
2. Creative Extension: Students create a labeled diagram showing the stages of sunset and nighttime.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Science — Earth/Space)

Theme: Patterns, Observation, and Reflection

1. Discuss: Why is it important to observe patterns in nature?
2. Students write a short reflection about how nighttime feels different from daytime.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track the progression of time and events using a chart: Time of Day | What Happens | Description of Setting | Mood
2. Discuss how the author uses imagery to describe the natural world.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Science — Earth/Space)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how the author uses descriptive language to show the transition from day to night. Include examples from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about stars and why they are visible at night.
3. Creative Extension: Write a descriptive paragraph or poem about watching the stars come out.

What Zeesie Saw on Delancey Street by Elsa Okon Rael

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.4, Social Studies — History/Immigration)

Understanding Neighborhoods and Senses

1. Ask:
 - What is a street?
 - What do you see when you walk outside?
 - What sounds do you hear in your neighborhood?
2. Show the cover and ask:
 - What do you see?
 - What do you think Zeesie will see?

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.2)

Noticing Sights and Sounds

1. Pause to identify:
 - What Zeesie sees and hears
 - How she feels (e.g., excited, curious, overwhelmed)
2. Students act out sounds or movements from the street.
3. Ask:
 - What is happening now?
 - What do you notice?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA RL.K.2, ELA L.K.1 & L.K.2, Social Studies — Culture)

Responding Through Drawing and Sharing

1. Drawing & Dictation: Students draw a street scene and describe what they see.
2. Class Discussion: What did Zeesie see? What would you see on your street?
3. Creative Extension: Create a class mural of a busy street with labeled drawings.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — History/Immigration)

Understanding Community and Observation

1. Ask:
 - What is a neighborhood?
 - What do you see on your street?
 - How might a busy street feel?
2. Students draw and share something that they see in their neighborhood.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

Noticing Details

1. Identify:
 - Things Zeesie sees
 - Things she hears
 - How she feels
2. Discuss how the street is busy and full of activity.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Culture)

Writing and Drawing Response

1. Prompt: What did Zeesie see on Delancey Street? Students write 2–3 sentences including
 - One thing she saw
 - How it made her feel
2. Creative Extension: Draw a scene from Delancey Street and label details.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — History/Immigration)

1. Ask:
 - What is a neighborhood?
 - What kinds of things might you see on a busy street?
 - How might life have been different in a city long ago?
2. Show the cover and have students predict what Zeesie might see and experience.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Identify details about what Zeesie sees, hears, and experiences on Delancey Street.
2. Discuss how the setting helps us to understand her life and community.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Immigration/Culture)

1. Writing Prompt: What did Zeesie see on Delancey Street? How did it make her feel? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Sensory Activity – Students create a chart: See | Hear | Smell | Feel and fill it with details from the story.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — History/Immigration)

Theme: Community and Daily Life

1. Discuss: What can we learn about people by observing their neighborhood?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about what their neighborhood says about their community.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

Analyzing Setting and Perspective

1. Track:
 - Details about Delancey Street
 - What those details show about daily life
2. Discuss how Zeesie’s perspective shapes what we notice.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — Immigration/Culture)

1. Writing Response – Prompt: What does Zeesie’s experience show about life on Delancey Street? Students write a paragraph including:
 - Details from the story
 - What those details reveal about the community
2. Creative Extension: Create a sensory paragraph describing a busy place and using vivid details.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, ELA W.4.10, Social Studies — Immigration/U.S. History)

Theme: Immigration and Urban Experience

1. Discuss: How does the place where people live shape their daily experiences?
2. Students write a short reflection about how their environment influences their lives.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.9)

Theme and Setting Analysis

1. Analyze how the author uses descriptive details to develop the setting.
2. Identify how life on Delancey Street reflects immigrant experiences.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — Immigration/U.S. History)

1. Analytical Writing – Prompt: How does the setting of Delancey Street help us to understand Zeesie’s life? Students write a structured paragraph including:
 - Claim
 - Evidence
 - Explanation
2. Creative Extension: Design a detailed map or illustration of Delancey Street with labeled features and descriptions.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — Immigration/U.S. History)

Theme: Immigration and Urban Life

1. Discuss: What was life like for immigrants living in cities in the past?
2. Students write a short reflection about what challenges immigrants might face in a new country.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track key details about daily life on Delancey Street using a chart: Setting Detail | What It Shows About Life | Zeesie’s Perspective
2. Discuss how the author uses descriptive language to bring the setting to life.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Immigration/U.S. History)

1. Informative Writing: Explain what Zeesie’s experiences reveal about immigrant life on Delancey Street. Include details from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about immigrant neighborhoods in New York City during the early 1900s and compare them to today.
3. Creative Extension: Write a first-person narrative from Zeesie’s perspective, describing a day on Delancey Street.

When Jessie Came Across the Sea by Amy Hest

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Social Studies — Family/Community)

1. Ask:
 - What does it mean to move to a new place?
 - How might you feel leaving your home?
 - What helps people to feel safe in a new place?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about Jessie and where she might be going.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to discuss Jessie’s feelings at different points in the story.
2. Identify when she feels scared, hopeful, or brave.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Social Studies — Community)

1. Draw a picture of a place where you feel safe.
2. Complete the sentence: “I feel brave when _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Role-play welcoming someone new to the class.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — Community)

1. Ask:
 - Why might someone move to a new country?
 - How can we help someone to feel welcome?
2. Discuss how change can feel both exciting and scary.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify Jessie’s feelings at the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
2. Discuss how she adjusts to her new life.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Community)

1. Writing Response: How did Jessie feel when she came to a new place? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label ways to help a new student feel welcome.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — Immigration/Community)

1. Ask: Why do people move to new countries?
2. Discuss challenges and opportunities of starting a new life.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Describe Jessie’s journey and the changes she experiences.
2. Identify character traits such as bravery, determination, and hope.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Immigration)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Jessie show courage in the story? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Sequence Activity – Students create a four-step timeline showing:
 - Life before leaving home
 - The journey across the sea
 - Arriving in a new place
 - Adjusting to a new life

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — Immigration/History)

Theme: Courage and New Beginnings

1. Discuss: What does it mean to start over in a new place?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time that they experienced change.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track Jessie’s emotional journey throughout the story.
2. Discuss how her experiences shape her growth.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — Immigration)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Jessie’s perspective during her journey across the sea.
2. Creative Extension: Create a comic strip showing Jessie’s journey and new life.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Social Studies — Immigration/U.S. History)

Theme: Immigration and Adaptation

1. Ask: What challenges do immigrants face when arriving in a new country?
2. Discuss how people maintain hope during difficult transitions.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key events that show Jessie adapting to her new environment.
2. Analyze how her character develops over time.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — Immigration)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how Jessie changes from the beginning to the end of the story. Use details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students write a letter from Jessie to her grandmother, describing her new life.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — Immigration/U.S. History)

Theme: Identity, Resilience, and Opportunity

1. Discuss: How does immigration shape a person’s identity?
2. Students write a short reflection about opportunities that people seek when moving to a new country.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track Jessie’s journey using a chart: Stage | Challenge | Response | Outcome
2. Discuss how her story reflects broader immigrant experiences.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Immigration/U.S. History)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how Jessie demonstrates resilience and courage throughout her journey. Include evidence from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students explore real immigrant stories from the same time period and compare them to Jessie’s experience.
3. Creative Extension: Write a personal narrative, imagining your own journey to a new country and what you would experience.

You Are a Star, Ruth Bader Ginsburg by Dean Robbins

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Social Studies — Civics/Leaders)

1. Ask:
 - What is a leader?
 - How can one person help others?
 - What does it mean to stand up for what is right?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to discuss how Ruth helps others.
2. Identify moments when she is brave and determined.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Draw a picture of yourself helping someone.
2. Complete the sentence: “I can help others by _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Create a class chart of ways to be kind and fair.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — Civics/Leaders)

1. Ask:
 - Why is fairness important?
 - How can we stand up for others?
2. Discuss ways students can show fairness in school.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify what Ruth wanted to change in the world.
2. Discuss how she worked hard to make things fair.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Writing Response: How did Ruth help to make the world fair? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a way you can stand up for someone.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — Civics/Government)

1. Ask: Why are rules and laws important?
2. Discuss how leaders help to make fair rules for everyone.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Identify important events in Ruth’s life.
2. Describe character traits such as determination, fairness, and courage.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Writing Prompt: How did Ruth Bader Ginsburg help others? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Timeline Activity: Students create a simple timeline showing key moments in her life and work.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — Civics/Government)

Theme: Fairness and Justice

1. Discuss: What does justice mean?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about a time that they saw something unfair.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how Ruth worked to change unfair laws.
2. Discuss how her actions made a difference.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — Civics)

1. Journal Entry: Write from Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s perspective about why fairness matters.
2. Creative Extension: Create a poster about standing up for fairness and equality.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Social Studies — U.S. Government)

Theme: Leadership and Equal Rights

1. Ask: How can laws be changed to make society more fair?
2. Discuss the role of judges and courts in the United States.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key moments that show Ruth’s impact on laws and rights.
2. Analyze how her perseverance helped her to succeed.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — U.S. Government)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain how Ruth Bader Ginsburg helped to promote equality. Use details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students write a speech about a change that they would like to see in their community.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — U.S. Government/Civics)

Theme: Justice, Equality, and Civic Responsibility

1. Discuss: Why is equality important in a democracy?
2. Students write a short reflection about a right or freedom that they believe is important.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track Ruth’s achievements using a chart: Challenge | Action Taken | Outcome | Impact
2. Discuss how her work influenced laws and society.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — U.S. Government/Civics)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s work helped to create a more equal society. Include evidence from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about another leader who fought for fairness and compare their contributions.
3. Creative Extension: Create a classroom “Leaders for Change” display, highlighting individuals who worked for justice and equality.

You Never Heard of Sandy Koufax? by Jonah Winter

Kindergarten

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.1, ELA RL.K.7, ELA SL.K.1, ELA SL.K.2, Social Studies — Community/Identity)

1. Ask:
 - What is a sport?
 - Have you ever heard of baseball?
 - What does it mean to be proud of who you are?
2. Show the cover and ask students what they notice about the boy and the baseball player.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.K.3, ELA RL.K.4, ELA SL.K.1)

1. Pause to identify how the boy feels when others don’t know Sandy Koufax.
2. Discuss how he talks about someone important to him.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.K.2, ELA L.K.1, Social Studies — Identity)

1. Draw a picture of someone whom you admire.
2. Complete the sentence: “Someone I admire is _____ because _____.”
3. Creative Extension: Share about a favorite athlete or hero.

Grade 1

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.7, ELA SL.1.1, ELA SL.1.4, Social Studies — Identity/Community)

1. Ask:
 - Why do people have heroes?
 - How can someone be a role model?
2. Discuss what makes someone admirable.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.1.1, ELA RL.1.3, ELA SL.1.2)

1. Identify why the boy looks up to Sandy Koufax.
2. Discuss how the boy explains who Sandy Koufax is.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.1.2, ELA RL.1.6, ELA L.1.1 & L.1.2, Social Studies — Identity)

1. Writing Response: Why is Sandy Koufax important to the boy? Write 2–3 sentences.
2. Creative Extension: Draw and label a role model and what makes them special.

Grade 2

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.7, ELA SL.2.1, ELA SL.2.4, Social Studies — Culture/Identity)

1. Ask: Why is it important to learn about people from different backgrounds?
2. Discuss how athletes can inspire others.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.2.1, ELA RL.2.3, ELA SL.2.2)

1. Identify important facts about Sandy Koufax from the story.
2. Describe character traits such as determination, pride, and perseverance.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.2.2, ELA RL.2.6, ELA L.2.1 & L.2.2, Social Studies — Identity/Culture)

1. Writing Prompt: What makes Sandy Koufax a hero in the story? Write 3–4 sentences.
2. Timeline Activity: Students create a simple timeline of important moments mentioned in the story.

Grade 3

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.1, ELA W.3.2, ELA SL.3.1, Social Studies — Culture/Identity

Theme: Identity and Role Models

1. Discuss: How do role models influence who we are?
2. Students write 2–3 sentences about someone who inspires them.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.3.2, ELA RL.3.3, ELA SL.3.2)

1. Track how the boy describes Sandy Koufax and why he matters.
2. Discuss how identity and pride are important in the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.3.2, ELA RL.3.6, ELA L.3.1 & L.3.2, Social Studies — Identity)

1. Journal Entry: Write from the boy’s perspective, explaining why Sandy Koufax is a hero.
2. Creative Extension: Create a poster about a role model and what they represent.

Grade 4

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.1, ELA W.4.2, ELA SL.4.1, Social Studies — U.S. History/Culture)

Theme: Identity, Culture, and Representation

1. Ask: Why is representation important in sports and culture?
2. Discuss how public figures can represent communities and identities.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.4.2, ELA RL.4.3, ELA W.4.9)

1. Identify key details about Sandy Koufax’s life and career.
2. Analyze how the boy’s perspective shapes the story.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.4.2, ELA W.4.4, ELA W.4.9, ELA RL.4.6, ELA L.4.1 & L.4.2, Social Studies — Culture/Identity)

1. Informative Paragraph: Explain why Sandy Koufax is an important figure and role model. Use details from the text.
2. Creative Extension: Students write a short speech, introducing a role model to others.

Grade 5

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.1, ELA W.5.10, ELA SL.5.1, Social Studies — U.S. History/Culture)

Theme: Identity, Perseverance, and Influence

1. Discuss: How do athletes influence culture and identity?
2. Students write a short reflection about how role models shape their beliefs or goals.

DURING READING ACTIVITIES (ELA RL.5.2, ELA RL.5.3, ELA RI.5.6, ELA W.5.9)

1. Track key information using a chart: Fact About Sandy Koufax | Why It Matters | Impact on Others
2. Discuss how the story connects personal identity with a larger cultural figure.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES (ELA W.5.2, ELA W.5.4, ELA W.5.9, ELA RL.5.6, ELA L.5.1 & L.5.2, Social Studies — Culture/Identity)

1. Informative Writing: Explain how Sandy Koufax serves as a role model and why representation matters. Include evidence from the text.
2. Research Extension: Students learn about another athlete who made an impact on society and compare their contributions.
3. Creative Extension: Create a “Hall of Fame” display, highlighting influential figures and their impact.