Assessment

Story Comprehension Tests
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**Story Comprehension Tests**

**Overview**

Each test has seven multiple-choice questions. Questions reflect the following reading comprehension objectives:

- Students identify **explicit facts** that are stated in the story.
- Students identify **implicit facts** that can be inferred from the story.
- Students identify **word meaning** within the context of the story.
- Students identify the correct **sequence** of story events.
- Students identify the best **summary** of story events.

The answer key that follows each test provides the correct answers and the objective addressed in each multiple-choice question.

Each test also includes a short answer question about the story. Students are asked to provide an opinion and give two reasons for their answer, based on their personal experience or the story. Score answers using the rubric provided with each answer key.

**Instructions**

1. **Hand out** the test after completing the story unit. The tests are open book.
2. **Review** the test instructions with your students:
   - Read the question carefully.
   - Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
   - Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.
3. **Ask** students to complete the test. Encourage them to look back at the story to answer the questions.
4. **Collect** and grade the tests, using the answer key. Pass the tests back.
5. **Review** the test with the class, asking volunteers to explain why each correct answer is the best choice.
The Happy Lion

Instructions

• Read the question carefully.
• Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
• Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. What does Madame Pinson do when she sees the lion?
   A. She faints onto the sidewalk.
   B. She greets him politely.
   C. She throws her bag at him.

2. Who leads the happy lion back home?
   A. François
   B. a fireman
   C. the zookeeper

3. People probably scream and faint when the lion is out of his cage because
   A. they are scared of the lion.
   B. they think the zookeeper will get in trouble.
   C. they are afraid the lion will get hurt.
4. On page 18, foolish means about the same thing as
   A. sad.
   B. silly.
   C. smart.

5. Someone who is polite (p. 17) might
   A. eat a large meal.
   B. win a race.
   C. say thank you.

6. What happens right after the happy lion sees that his cage door is open?
   A. The happy lion decides to see his friends in town.
   B. The happy lion sees firemen coming toward him.
   C. The happy lion watches Monsieur Dupont faint.

7. What is the happy lion’s main problem in the story?
   A. The zookeeper has left the door of his cage open.
   B. All his friends are afraid of him when he is out of his cage.
   C. He is worried that the firemen will use the hose on him.

8. Would you be scared if you saw the happy lion in the street? Give two reasons for your answer.

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   __________________________________________________________
Answer Key

The Happy Lion

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. C [explicit fact]
2. A [explicit fact]
3. A [implicit fact]
4. B [word meaning]
5. C [word meaning]
6. A [sequence]
7. B [summary]
8. Use the rubric below to score the response. Since the question asks for an opinion, students can provide supporting evidence from the story or from personal experiences or beliefs.

Short Answer Rubric

2 points The response consists of an opinion and two pieces of supporting evidence.
1 point The response consists of an opinion and one piece of supporting evidence.
0 points The response does not assert an opinion or does so without providing any supporting evidence.
Instructions

- Read the question carefully.
- Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
- Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. How does Nat know that Miss Maggie is doing all right in the winter?
   - A. He asks Grandad to check on her.
   - B. He sees smoke coming from her chimney.
   - C. He watches her in her vegetable garden.

2. Nat never finds a black snake in Miss Maggie’s house because
   - A. he isn’t sure how to catch the snake.
   - B. the snake isn’t awake in the daytime.
   - C. there isn’t really a snake living in her house.

3. On page 33, Miss Maggie’s eyes probably look red because
   - A. she was crying about the bird.
   - B. she is sick from the cold.
   - C. she got smoke in her eyes.
4. On page 30, Nat is careful to avoid the tricky board on Miss Maggie’s porch. When you avoid something, you
   A stay away from it.
   B step on it.
   C look hard at it.

5. On page 28, survived means the same thing as
   A died.
   B dropped.
   C lived.

6. Which of these things happens last in the story?
   A Nat runs away from Miss Maggie.
   B Nat brings Miss Maggie a snake.
   C Nat wraps up Miss Maggie’s bird.

7. Which sentence is the best summary of the story?
   A A boy becomes friends with an old woman.
   B A cold winter makes a boy and a woman unhappy.
   C A woman sees that it is hard to live by herself.

8. Would you be friends with Miss Maggie? Give two reasons for your answer.

   ______________________________________________________________

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   ______________________________________________________________
Answer Key

Miss Maggie

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. B [explicit fact]
2. C [explicit fact]
3. A [implicit fact]
4. A [word meaning]
5. C [word meaning]
6. B [sequence]
7. A [summary]

8. Use the rubric below to score the response. Since the question asks for an opinion, students can provide supporting evidence from the story or from personal experiences or beliefs.

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Anancy and Dog and Puss and Friendship

Instructions

• Read the question carefully.
• Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
• Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. What does Bro Dog do to make up for hurting Bro Puss?
   A. He helps Bro Puss with chores.
   B. He teaches Bro Puss to swim.
   C. He gives Bro Puss money.

2. When Bro Puss climbs the tree with the food, he tells Bro Dog to
   A. come up and join him.
   B. leave without eating.
   C. invite his family.

3. On page 41, Anancy probably acts “friendly-friendly” when he talks to Bro Dog because he wants Bro Dog to
   A. get mad at Bro Puss.
   B. make up with Bro Puss.
   C. leave Bro Puss alone.
4. On page 41, Bro Dog feels ashamed when Anancy talks to him. This means he feels
   A. afraid of Anancy.
   B. angry about getting caught.
   C. sorry for what he did.

5. On page 44, when Bro Dog asks Bro Puss to come to the beach, Bro Puss doesn't want to refuse. To refuse means
   A. to say yes.
   B. to say maybe.
   C. to say no.

6. Which of these things happens first in the story?
   A. Bro Puss asks Bro Dog to a picnic.
   B. Anancy asks Bro Puss how he got hurt.
   C. Bro Dog and Bro Puss visit the beach.

7. This story is mostly about how
   A. Bro Puss and Bro Dog try to be friends.
   B. Bro Puss makes friends with other cats.
   C. Anancy and Bro Dog become friends.

8. Was Bro Puss right to try to teach Bro Dog a lesson? Give two reasons for your answer.

   _____________________________________________________________

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   _____________________________________________________________
Answer Key

Anancy and Dog and Puss and Friendship

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. A [explicit fact]
2. A [explicit fact]
3. B [implicit fact]
4. C [word meaning]
5. C [word meaning]
6. B [sequence]
7. A [summary]
8. Use the rubric below to score the response. Since the question asks for an opinion, students can provide supporting evidence from the story or from personal experiences or beliefs.

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Catalog Cats/Our Garden

Instructions
• Read the question carefully.
• Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
• Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. What does Julian tell Huey a catalog is?
   A a house where cats live
   B a book where cats come from
   C a seed that grows into a cat

2. What does Julian's father say that catalog cats do?
   A They move very fast.
   B They make friends.
   C They talk a lot.

3. On page 17, Julian probably thinks about “going someplace else” when the catalog comes because
   A he is scared the catalog cats will not like him.
   B he does not want to order seeds from the catalog.
   C he knows his father will find out about his lie.
4. On page 21, Julian’s father says you have to request catalog cats. This means you
   A pay for them.
   B ask for them.
   C talk about them.

5. On page 14, ordinary means the same thing as
   A common.
   B weak.
   C special.

6. Which of these things happens first in the story?
   A Julian visits the garden at night.
   B Julian tells Huey about catalog cats.
   C Julian’s father orders a catalog.

7. This story is mostly about what happens when
   A Julian tells Huey a made-up tale.
   B Huey begins dreaming about cats.
   C Julian’s father tells stories from his past.

8. Would you want Julian as a brother? Give two reasons for your answer.

   ______________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________
**Answer Key**

**Catalog Cats/Our Garden**

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. B [explicit fact]
2. A [explicit fact]
3. C [implicit fact]
4. B [word meaning]
5. A [word meaning]
6. C [sequence]
7. A [summary]

8. Use the rubric below to score the response. Since the question asks for an opinion, students can provide supporting evidence from the story or from personal experiences or beliefs.

**Short Answer Rubric**

- **2 points** The response consists of an opinion and two pieces of supporting evidence.
- **1 point** The response consists of an opinion and one piece of supporting evidence.
- **0 points** The response does not assert an opinion or does so without providing any supporting evidence.
Carlos and the Cornfield

Instructions

• Read the question carefully.
• Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
• Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. In the story, the correct way to plant corn is to put _______________ in each hole.
   • A one seed
   • B six seeds
   • C three seeds

2. How does Carlos get the money to buy more corn seed?
   • A He finds five dollars on the street.
   • B He gets a job planting bean seeds.
   • C He sells his knife back to Señor López.

3. Why does Carlos plant the corn seeds during the night?
   • A It is too hot to work during the day.
   • B Carlos wants what he is doing to be a secret.
   • C Corn grows faster when you plant it at night.
4. On page 38, pleaded means the same thing as
   A. thought.
   B. begged.
   C. laughed.

5. On page 37, Carlos desperately pulls out some of the corn sprouts and replants them. Desperately means
   A. in a calm way.
   B. in a happy way.
   C. in a worried way.

6. What happens **right after** Carlos returns the knife to Señor López?
   A. Carlos buys a bag of corn seed.
   B. Carlos pulls up the corn sprouts.
   C. Carlos has lunch with his friends.

7. What is Carlos’s main problem in the story?
   A. He has to fix his mistake.
   B. He has to make new friends.
   C. He has to sell his knife back.

8. Do you think Carlos handled his problem in a good way?
   Give two reasons for your answer.

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   __________________________________________
Answer Key

Carlos and the Cornfield

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. C [explicit fact]
2. C [explicit fact]
3. B [implicit fact]
4. B [word meaning]
5. C [word meaning]
6. A [sequence]
7. A [summary]

8. Use the rubric below to score the response. Since the question asks for an opinion, students can provide supporting evidence from the story or from personal experiences or beliefs.

Short Answer Rubric

2 points The response consists of an opinion and two pieces of supporting evidence.
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The Wedding Basket

Instructions

• Read the question carefully.
• Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
• Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. Nyami’s daughter stays to talk to the rich man because
   A  the man holds onto her.
   B  her sisters tell her to.
   C  she is bored living in the sky.

2. What does the rich man do when he looks in his wife’s basket?
   A  He cries.
   B  He laughs.
   C  He shouts.

3. The most likely reason the rich man’s cows go dry is that
   A  the sky maidens take milk from the cows.
   B  the rich man milks the cows too much.
   C  the cows don’t get enough grass to eat.
4. Someone who is fortunate (p. 43) is
   A scared.
   B smart.
   C lucky.

5. On page 45, the rich man is astonished to find that his cows have no milk. Astonished means
   A angry.
   B glad.
   C surprised.

6. What happens right after the rich man hides in his stables?
   A The rich man’s cows stop giving milk.
   B The maidens climb down their golden threads.
   C Nyami’s daughter promises to marry the rich man.

7. Which sentence is the best summary of the story?
   A A rich man learns to respect others.
   B A rich man learns to be proud of what he has.
   C A sky maiden learns to share her basket.

8. Do you think Nyami’s daughter was right to leave the rich man? Give two reasons for your answer.

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____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________________
**Answer Key**

**The Wedding Basket**

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. A [explicit fact]
2. B [explicit fact]
3. A [implicit fact]
4. C [word meaning]
5. C [word meaning]
6. B [sequence]
7. A [summary]

8. Use the rubric below to score the response. Since the question asks for an opinion, students can provide supporting evidence from the story or from personal experiences or beliefs.

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The Jade Stone

Instructions

• Read the question carefully.
• Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
• Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. How does the emperor say he will decide Chan Lo’s punishment?
   A. He will let Chan Lo decide.
   B. He will let his dreams decide.
   C. He will let his advisers decide.

2. At the end of the story, what does Chan Lo want as a reward from the emperor?
   A. He wants to carve a dragon for the emperor.
   B. He wants to be paid for carving the carp fish.
   C. He wants to go home and carve what he hears.

3. On page 22, how does Chan Lo probably feel as he talks to the emperor?
   A. happy
   B. scared
   C. proud
4. On page 20, when Chan Lo begins to carve the jade stone, this means that he
   A) cuts it.
   B) paints it.
   C) sells it.

5. On page 27, the emperor says that Chan Lo has disobeyed him. This means that Chan Lo
   A) bowed deeply before the emperor.
   B) said what the emperor wanted to hear.
   C) did not do what the emperor asked.

6. Which of these things happens last in the story?
   A) Chan Lo asks to return to his village.
   B) Chan Lo carves the carp fish.
   C) Chan Lo is put in a prison cell.

7. What is Chan Lo’s main problem in the story?
   A) He is not sure he is good enough to carve jade.
   B) He cannot carve what he does not hear.
   C) He does not like to carve things for others.

8. Would you have carved what the emperor wanted or what you heard? Give two reasons for your answer.

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________
Answer Key

The Jade Stone

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. B [explicit fact]
2. C [explicit fact]
3. B [implicit fact]
4. A [word meaning]
5. C [word meaning]
6. A [sequence]
7. B [summary]
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The Girl and the Chenoo

Instructions

- Read the question carefully.
- Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
- Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. What does Little Listener do when she sees the Chenoo’s tracks?
   - A. She makes some stew.
   - B. She runs away.
   - C. She tells her brothers.

2. When Little Listener’s brothers first see the Chenoo, she tells them to
   - A. go get help.
   - B. tie him up.
   - C. greet him kindly.

3. The Chenoo probably helps Little Listener and her brothers because
   - A. they have scared him.
   - B. they have been kind to him.
   - C. they have told him to.
4. Little Listener **usually** (p. 29) takes care of the camp. **Usually** means
   A. only once.
   B. sometimes.
   C. most of the time.

5. On page 38, Little Listener is glad that the Chenoo has **recognized** her. This means she is glad that
   A. the Chenoo does not look scary.
   B. the Chenoo knows who she is.
   C. the Chenoo has brought food.

6. What happens **right before** the Chenoo turns into an old man?
   A. The Chenoo goes into the sweat lodge.
   B. The Chenoo coughs up a piece of ice.
   C. The Chenoo eats Little Listener’s stew.

7. Which sentence is the best summary of the story?
   A. Three brothers go on a hunting trip.
   B. A monster learns that he likes stew.
   C. A girl finds a way to keep her family safe.

8. Was Little Listener right to keep her plan to meet the Chenoo a secret from her brothers? Give two reasons for your answer.

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
Answer Key

The Girl and the Chenoo

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. A [explicit fact]
2. C [explicit fact]
3. B [implicit fact]
4. C [word meaning]
5. B [word meaning]
6. A [sequence]
7. C [summary]
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Jack and the Beanstalk

Instructions

• Read the question carefully.
• Read all the answers carefully. You can look back at the story to answer the question.
• Fill in the circle next to the answer you choose.

1. When Jack shows his mother the magic beans, she is
   A  scared of Jack.
   B  angry with Jack.
   C  proud of Jack.

2. What is the ogre doing each time Jack steals from him?
   A  He is sleeping.
   B  He is out hunting.
   C  He is reading.

3. Jack probably does not hide in the oven on his third visit to the ogre’s house because
   A  he thinks another boy is hiding in the oven.
   B  he cannot get to the oven in time.
   C  he knows the ogre’s wife will look for him in the oven.
4. On page 55, **tremble** means the same thing as
   A. yell.
   B. shake.
   C. fall.

5. On page 63, a **rogue** is someone who
   A. likes to make people scared.
   B. lies and plays tricks.
   C. gets angry a lot.

6. Which of these things happens on Jack’s second trip up the beanstalk?
   A. Jack steals the golden hen.
   B. Jack steals the bag of gold.
   C. Jack steals the golden harp.

7. This story is mostly about
   A. an ogre who eats little boys and grows fat.
   B. a mother who learns to trust her son.
   C. a boy who gets rich by tricking an ogre.

8. Do you think Jack is a good person? Give two reasons for your answer.

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________


**Answer Key**

**Jack and the Beanstalk**

Assign one point per correct answer.

1. B [explicit fact]
2. A [explicit fact]
3. C [implicit fact]
4. B [word meaning]
5. B [word meaning]
6. A [sequence]
7. C [summary]
8. Use the rubric below to score the response. Since the question asks for an opinion, students can provide supporting evidence from the story or from personal experiences or beliefs.

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Critical Thinking Rubric

Overview

The critical thinking rubric, which expands on the student learning spectrum for Shared Inquiry discussion, details the critical thinking skills developed through the use of Junior Great Books Series 2. The rubric is organized by three areas of critical thinking:

- **Idea**—generating and clarifying ideas about the story’s meaning
- **Evidence**—supporting these ideas, based on what is in the story
- **Response**—listening to and considering other students’ ideas

Instructions

1. **Decide** which area(s) of critical thinking to assess in a given discussion. As you and your class begin Junior Great Books, it may be helpful to assess one area at a time.

2. **Choose** one to three students you wish to assess, before the Shared Inquiry discussion. You might record the discussion (with audio or video) or have a colleague observe and make notes.

3. **Use** the rubric after the discussion to assess each student’s performance in the critical thinking area(s) you chose to focus on. To get a more complete picture of each student’s performance, review the following as you assess:
   - Notes you made on your seating chart (see p. 333)
   - Students’ completed Reader’s Journals
   - Observers’ notes about the discussion

4. **Confer** with students individually about their participation in the discussion.
## Critical Thinking Rubric

This rubric shows three major critical thinking areas—*idea*, *evidence*, and *response*—at four performance levels.

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<th>IDEA</th>
<th>EVIDENCE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
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| 4                 | OFFERS A DEVELOPED ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION  
• Makes inferences about motives and causes  
• To clarify, specifies meaning of words or phrases
| EXPLAINS HOW EVIDENCE SUPPORTS IDEAS  
• Habitually looks back at the story for evidence  
• Explains how specific parts of the story support an idea |
| DEVELOPS OWN ANSWER IN RESPONSE TO OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS  
• Understands that classmates’ ideas are valuable to the conversation  
• May be convinced by other students  
• Responds directly to other students without prompting |
| 3                 | OFFERS A MORE DETAILED ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION  
• Thinks carefully before answering  
• To clarify, says more or rephrases answer
| RECALLS OR LOCATES EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY TO SUPPORT IDEAS  
• Often looks back at the story without prompting  
• Recalls or locates relevant parts of the story |
| EXPLAINS AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS  
• Acknowledges differing ideas  
• Builds on or offers counterarguments to other students’ ideas  
• Responds directly to classmates with prompting |
| 2                 | OFFERS A SIMPLE ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION  
• Does not elaborate on answer, or offers a snap judgment  
• To clarify, repeats answer
| REFERS TO THE STORY IN GENERAL TO SUPPORT IDEAS  
• Looks back at the story when asked to do so  
• Recalls major story facts |
| AGREES OR DISAGREES SIMPLY WITH OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS  
• Allows classmates to speak  
• Reacts to other students’ ideas but does not give reasons for reactions  
• Speaks only to teacher and not directly to classmates |
| 1                 | STRUGGLES TO ANSWER THE FOCUS QUESTION  
• Does not answer when called on  
• Repeats other students’ answers
| HAS DIFFICULTY SUPPORTING ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY  
• Talks about things other than the story  
• Struggles to recall key story facts  
• Considers answer self-explanatory |
| HAS DIFFICULTY LISTENING TO OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS  
• Ignores or interrupts other students  
• Struggles to understand that classmates have differing ideas  
• Distracts other students or does not follow the discussion |
Activity Score Guidelines

Activity scores, which can be used with any activity, are a simple way to track your students’ participation.

1. **Choose** an activity you wish to score. Allot a few minutes during or after the activity to record scores.*

2. **Track** participation by asking yourself the following questions and marking your grade book accordingly:

   Was the student . . .
   - **Actively participating** or especially helpful to the class? Mark a **plus** (+).
   - **Participating**, but not in a way that stands out? Mark a **check** (√).
   - **Distracting** the class or not participating? Mark a **minus** (–).

3. **Assign** your own values to the scores later on when you calculate grades.

* NOTE: For the sharing questions and second reading activities, it may be easiest to record scores during the activity. For Shared Inquiry discussion, you might wish to wait until after class, when you can use your seating chart to remind yourself of students’ participation.