

MAKE LEARNING FUN!



10 high-interest passages & activities themed to make learning engaging!

GERTRUDE'S MYSTERY BOOKS
Gertrude Chandler Warner is the author of *The Boxcar Children Mysteries*. Since she was five, she dreamed of becoming an author. She would write stories as gifts for her grandfather each Christmas. Gertrude loved mysteries and began to imagine her own stories. When she was sick and bored, from school, she would write stories to read to her grandfather.

GERTRUDE'S MULTIPLE CHOICE
Name: _____

1. What main quality about Gertrude as a child contributed most to her becoming an author?
A) Determination
B) Imagination
C) Fearlessness
D) Curiosity

2. Which theme best describes *The Boxcar Children* series?
A) Friendship and loyalty
B) Creativity and imagination
C) Following rules and guidance
D) Independence and problem-solving

3. What inspired Gertrude to come up with the idea for *The Boxcar Children*?
A) Watching trains from home
B) Her trips on trains as a child
C) Stories from her grandfather
D) Reading mystery books

4. What does the passage imply about Gertrude's personality when she faced criticism?
A) She was discouraged and stopped writing.
B) She changed her stories to make adults happy.
C) She ignored the feedback.
D) She cared about the criticism and altered her work.

5. What did Gertrude mean when she said, "That's why children like me?"
A) Kids enjoy stories with adults telling them what to do.
B) Kids prefer stories about everyday life.
C) Kids like realistic stories where they have more freedom.
D) Kids like stories with a happy ending.

6. Which is the best synonym for "rebellious" in the context of the passage?
A) Defiant
B) Humble
C) Spirited
D) Compassionate

7. Why might adults in Gertrude's series be along the story about...?
A) They are often the ones who are the most interested in the stories.
B) They are often the ones who are the most bored by the stories.
C) They are often the ones who are the most curious about the stories.
D) They are often the ones who are the most skeptical about the stories.

8. What is most likely the author's purpose in writing this story about...?
A) To entertain readers with a fun mystery.
B) To inform readers about the author's life.
C) To persuade readers to read the author's books.
D) To describe the author's writing process.

9. Why do you think Gertrude wrote stories about children solving problems on their own?
A) She believed in autonomous kids to think for themselves.
B) She thought adults wouldn't be interested.
C) She wanted to write books that adults would enjoy.
D) She wanted kids to feel brave.

10. What is the structure of the passage as it relates to Gertrude's life accomplishment?
A) Compare and contrast
B) Cause and effect
C) Chronological
D) Problem and solution

Write A, B, C, or D in each box.

THE COMPUTER MYSTERY
In the summer of 1986, Sergei, a computer software designer, was helping the computer industry develop in the Soviet Union. He had just installed a microcomputer at a railroad station that was a major shipping center for the U.S.S.R. This computer would help route train cars and cargo to their destinations. Unfortunately, there was a computer bug that caused random failures so the cars and cargo weren't being moved.

THE COMPUTER MYSTERY
First, read the story. Then, put the events in order below from #1 to #8 by writing a number at the top of each box. Put a #1 in the box that comes first and a #8 in the box that comes last.

3	7	1	5
A. He suspected the issue was due to a bug that...	B. He tested the train cars to confirm his...	C. A computer software designer named Sergei was helping develop the computer industry in the Soviet Union at railroad stations by installing microcomputers that routed train and cargo cars.	D. He eventually noticed a connection: the crashes only happened when train cars carrying live cattle arrived from Ukraine and Russia.
8	6		
E. ...a list of...	G. After fixing the...	H. Sergei realized the recent Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant disaster had released radiation into the environment that contaminated the cattle train cars.	

AN UNLIKELY THIEF
In Massachusetts, the Franklin Police Department was faced with a thief. The police officers worked hard to collect toys for kids during the holiday season but found that some of them were disappearing. The officers were confused. Who would be stealing children's toys and why? However, the thief soon revealed himself when he was caught on camera with a big smile on his face.
It was their own fault. The thief was a dog named Ben. He was playing with the toys in his mouth, and he was stealing them. Unfortunately, the police officers didn't know that. When Ben saw James Mill explained he was playful and will not come into the toy store. "He has the run of the mill always shows up at the store even if you're having a bad day. Clearly, Chief Mill will use his own toys."

AN UNLIKELY THIEF
Name: _____

WORD BANK:

- therapy
- camera
- Ben
- dog
- changes
- slobber
- sunshine
- doll

Fill in the crossword puzzle using the clue cards.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE:

Across: 1. MASSACHUSETTS, 2. DOLL, 3. DOG, 4. BEN, 5. THERAPY, 6. CAMERA

Down: 1. SUNSHINE, 2. DOLL, 3. DOG, 4. BEN, 5. THERAPY, 6. CAMERA

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

You can use these passages:

- for classroom transformations
- during your ELA block
- as partner/small group activities
- skill practice
- as assessments
- for test prep
- remediation
- enrichment
- themed days
- fast finisher activity
- and more!

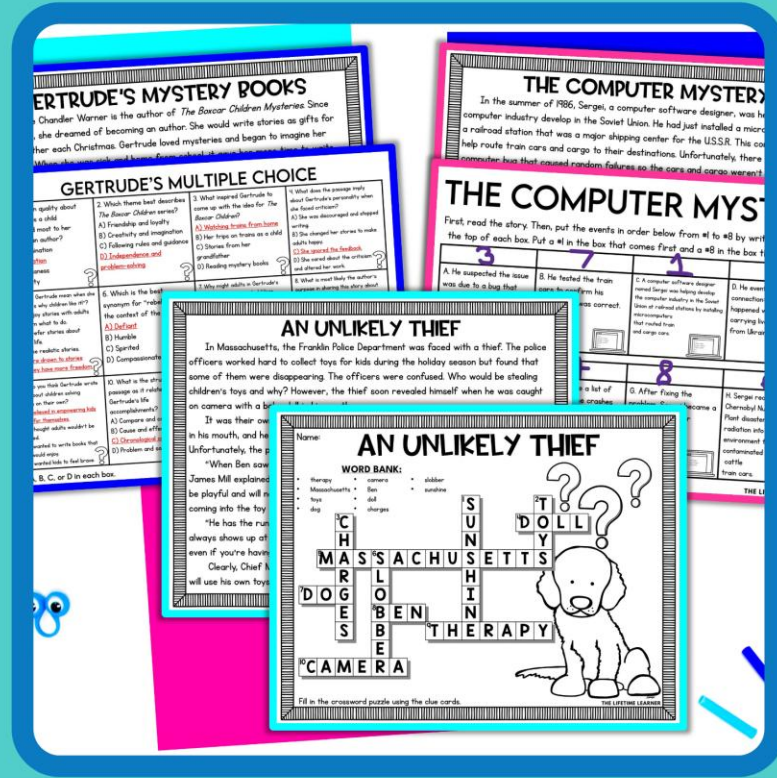


WHAT'S AN ADD-ON PACK?

You can use this resource two ways:



Use the reading passages to supplement your Detective Room Transformation



OR use these reading passages for students to enjoy during your ELA block on a regular day

You don't have to do a room transformation to use this resource. These 10 passages are no-prep and print & go. Use them anytime during your ELA block!

THE CONTENT:

10 high-interest passages & activities in 2 formats: hands-on & no prep!

Hands-On Centers


WHAT IS A "FAIRY CIRCLE"?


Across the deserts of South Africa, strange circles called "fairy circles" appear on the ground. A fairy circle is a mysterious, round patch of bare earth, often with grass growing around its edges. People once thought these circles were magical or made by "fairies," but scientists now believe they are made by nature. Fairy circles are **fascinating** because they make the land look like it's covered in polka dots!


At first, people thought fairy circles were **randomly** placed, but research suggests there might be an organized **arrangement**. **Mathematician** Corina Tarnita studies patterns like these to learn about an ecosystem's health. She explains that patterns, like fairy circles, could be clues about how ecosystems function. An **ecosystem** is a community of living things (like plants, animals, and insects) that **interact** and rely on each other to survive. Tarnita believes that "fairy circles" show us what's happening with plants, animals, and insects in South Africa's ecosystem.


Scientists developed two main **theories** about why fairy circles form. The first is that plants compete for **scarce** water, causing grass areas to dry up and form circles. The second theory is termite colonies under the soil fight for space, leaving bare gaps where plants can't grow. It took time, but scientists realized both are true. Plants and termites shape these "fairy circles," creating a unique **landscape** in the desert.


THE LIFETIME LEARNER


1.  **Fascinating**

C.  Something very interesting that captures your attention.

2.  **Randomly**

K.  Something that doesn't follow a pattern and seems to happen by chance.

3.  **Arrangement**

H.  This is when things are placed or organized in a specific way.

No-Prep Printables

Name: **WHAT IS A "FAIRY CIRCLE"?**

1. fascinating C	2. randomly K	E. A person who studies and works with math to solve problems and understand patterns.	M. It's limited supply or hard to find.
3. arrangement H	4. mathematician E	H. This is when things are placed or organized in a specific way.	F. A community of living things that depend on each other and their environment to survive.
5. ecosystem F	6. interact D	A. Ideas or guesses based on observations and evidence that try to explain something.	C. Something very interesting that captures your attention.
7. theories A	8. scarce M	D. They work together or affect each other in some way.	I. A large area of land that has certain natural features, like hills, rivers, or forests.
9. landscape I			K. Something that doesn't follow a pattern and seems to happen by chance.

Write the correct number on each dirt mound.

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

With this version, students read the passage. Then, they complete a hands-on center activity you can laminate and re-use for years to come.

Or in this version, students read the passage. Then, they complete the activity in worksheet form. This version is NO PREP and PRINT & GO! Just as much fun as the hands-on centers!

2 Versions of Every Passage Included for Students

GERTRUDE'S MYSTERY BOOKS

Gertrude Chandler Warner is the author of *The Boxcar Children Mysteries*. Since she was five, she dreamed of becoming an author. She would write stories as gifts for her grandfather each Christmas. Gertrude loved mysteries and began to imagine her own stories. When she was sick and home from school, it gave her more time to write.

The idea for *The Boxcar Children* came from watching trains pass by her house. She would see things inside the cabooses, like a stove or cups, and wonder about living in a train car. This idea inspired her story of children who live alone in a boxcar and solve mysteries together. She shared her story with kids in her Sunday school class, and they loved it! Her one story turned into a whole mystery series that kids everywhere enjoyed.

However, at first, some parents didn't like the stories. This was a different time, and many adults felt kids shouldn't read about children acting on their own without adults. They worried that reading the books might make kids think they didn't need supervision or make them act more rebellious.

GERTRUDE'S MYSTERY BOOKS

Gertrude Chandler Warner is the acclaimed author of *The Boxcar Children Mysteries*. At five years old, she already dreamed of becoming an author and would give stories to her grandfather as a gift each Christmas.

Being a fan of mysteries, Gertrude soon began to explore mystery writing. She was often ill and had to stay home from school, but that gave her more time to write. The idea of *The Boxcar Children* soon came to her which was inspired by her childhood fantasies. She would watch the trains go by near her home and sometimes, she would see a stove, an old table, and a few cups inside of the caboose.

Seeing these objects made her daydream about how much fun it would be to live inside a boxcar and have her own little world. Inspired by this idea, she started writing the story of children living alone in a boxcar and solving mysteries together. She shared her story with the Sunday school classes she taught, and the students loved it. Soon, one story grew into a mystery series loved by readers everywhere. The mystery series was born, with lots of books being written. The stories were about kids who lived alone in a train boxcar and solved mysteries together.

However, not everyone liked these stories at the beginning. This was a different time than today, and some parents and librarians were concerned. Parents feared that children reading about kids living alone without adults might start to think they didn't need supervision themselves. Adults worried young readers would feel encouraged to ignore their parents and act on their own. Many believed that the lack of parental supervision in the stories would lead to children becoming rebellious.

But Gertrude didn't let that bother her. She wrote to her fans, "Perhaps you know that the original *Boxcar Children* raised a storm of protest from librarians who thought the children were having too good a time without any parental control! That is exactly why children like it! Most of my own childhood exploits, such as living in a freight car, received very little cooperation from my parents."

Gertrude's stories might not have been popular at first. But today, her books are popular among young readers who love the mysteries that keep them excited for each new book. Her series inspired generations of young readers and encouraged other authors to write mystery books for kids.

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

AN UNLIKELY THIEF

In Massachusetts, the Franklin Police Department was faced with a thief. The police officers worked hard to collect toys for kids during the holiday season but found that some of them were disappearing. The officers were confused. Who would be stealing children's toys and why? However, the thief soon revealed himself when he was caught on camera with a baby doll in his mouth.

It was their own therapy dog, Ben! The officers chased Ben when they saw the doll in his mouth, and he ended up leading them back to his stash of the rest of the toys. Unfortunately, the police could not retrieve them because of Ben's slobber.

"When Ben saw the toys, he thought they belonged to him," Deputy Police Chief James Mill explained. He would take them back to his bed under a desk. Ben is known to be playful and will not be facing any charges. However, the police said he is banned from coming into the toy room from now on.

"He has the run of the station, and it's amazing. He's like one of those friends who

AN UNLIKELY THIEF

The Franklin Police Department in Massachusetts was dealing with an unusual mystery: toys collected for children during the holiday season were mysteriously disappearing from the station. Officers had been gathering the toys to bring joy to local kids. So, when they noticed some missing, they were determined to figure out what was going on. The officers wondered who would steal toys meant for children. Why would someone do such a thing? They were puzzled and on high alert, ready to catch the culprit.

The thief, however, didn't remain hidden for long. One day, the officers spotted him in action. He was caught on the station's security camera walking down the hallway with a baby doll in his mouth. To the officers' surprise, the "thief" was none other than their own beloved therapy dog, Ben! Ben had managed to sneak into the toy room and had been "borrowing" toys one by one. He was caught carrying them back to his bed under a desk in the station on the security tapes.

Upon discovering the stash, the officers tried to recover the toys. Unfortunately, most of them were

Differentiate and give your students the version best for them!

CENTER 1

Multiple Choice

GERTRUDE'S MYSTERY BOOKS
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Name: _____

GERTRUDE'S MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. B ?	2. D ?	3. A ?	4. ?
5. ?	6. ?	7. ?	8. ?
9. ?	10. ?	11. ?	12. ?

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

What main quality about Gertrude as a child contributed most to her becoming an author?
 A) Determination
 B) Imagination
 C) Fearlessness
 D) Curiosity

1. ?

Which theme best describes *The Boxcar Children* series?
 A) Friendship and loyalty
 B) Creativity and imagination
 C) Following rules and guidance
 D) Independence and problem-solving

2. ?

Hands-On Center:

Students choose A, B, C, or D on each card.



No Prep Printable Worksheet!

CENTER 2

Crossword Puzzle

AN UNLIKELY THIEF
 The Franklyn Police Department was faced with a thief. The police officers collected toys for kids during the holiday season but found that the toys were disappearing. The officers were confused. Who would be stealing the toys and why? Help the police by solving the crossword puzzle.
 "When Ben saw the toys James Mill explained. He was playful and will not be far from coming into the toy room from the store."
 "He has the run of the store always shows up at a party even if you're having a party."
 Clearly, Chief Mill has a plan. He will use his own toys before the police find them.

Name: _____

AN UNLIKELY THIEF

WORD BANK:

- therapy
- Massachusetts
- toys
- dog
- camera
- Ben
- doll
- charges
- slabber
- sunshine

3 2 ? ?

5 6

7 8

10

SUNSHINE

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

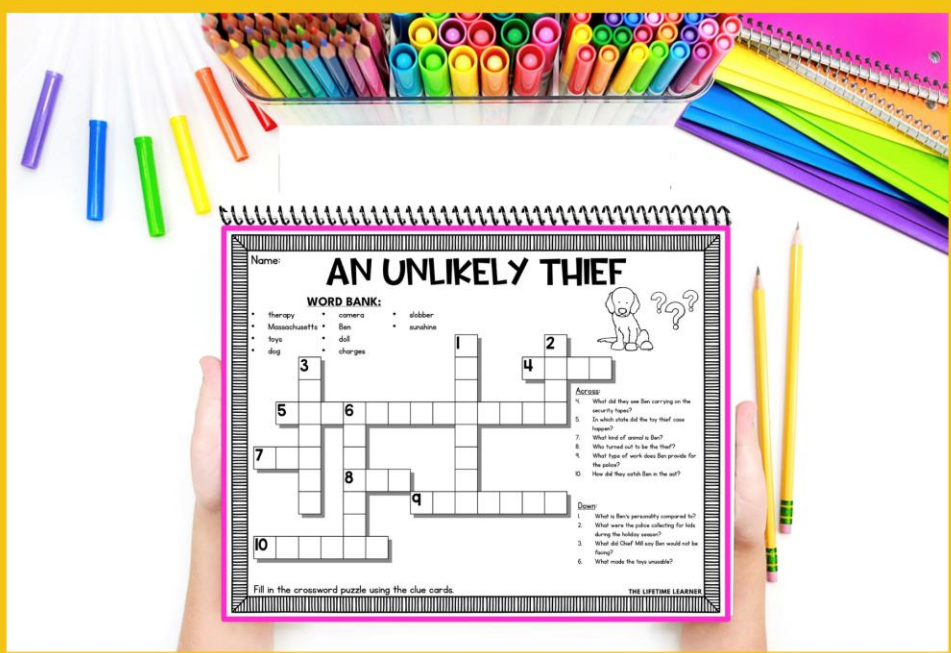
3 DOWN ↓
 What did Chief Mill say Ben would not be facing?

10 ACROSS →
 How did they catch Ben in the act?

1 DOWN ↓
 What is Ben's personality compared to?

Hands-On Center:

Students use the clue cards to fill in the crossword puzzle.



No Prep Printable Worksheet!

CENTER 3

Pairs Activity







WHAT IS A "FAIRY CIRCLE"?

In the deserts of South Africa, strange circles called "fairy circles" appear on the ground. A fairy circle is a mysterious, round patch of bare earth, often with grass growing around its edges. People once thought these circles were magical or made by "fairies," but scientists now believe they are made by nature. Fairy circles are fascinating because they make the land look like it's covered in polka dots!

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THE LIFETIME LEARNER

1. 		C. Something very interesting that captures your attention.
Fascinating		
2. 		K. Something that doesn't follow a pattern and seems to happen by chance.
Randomly		
3. 		H. This is when things are placed or organized in a specific way.
Arrangement		

Hands-On Center:

Students put the two sides together to match each word and definition.



Name: _____

WHAT IS A "FAIRY CIRCLE"?

1. fascinating	2. randomly	E. A person who studies and works with math to solve problems and understand patterns.	M. It's limited supply or hard to find.
C	K		
3. arrangement	4. mathematician	H. This is when things are placed or organized in a specific way.	F. A community of living things that depend on each other and their environment to survive.
H	E		
5. ecosystem	6. interact	A. Ideas or guesses based on observations and evidence that try to explain something.	C. Something very interesting that captures your attention.
F	D		
7. theories	8. scarce	D. They work together or affect each other in some way.	I. A large area of land that has certain natural features, like hills, rivers, or forests.
A	M		
9. landscape			K. Something that doesn't follow a pattern and seems to happen by chance.
I			

Write the correct number on each dirt mound.

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

No Prep Printable Worksheet!

CENTER 4


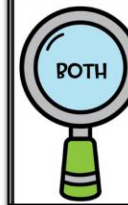
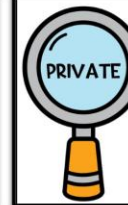





Compare & Contrast

PRIVATE DETECTIVES

Do you see a detective on TV? Did you know that there are different kinds of detectives in real life? They do many different jobs. Public detectives work for the government and are paid with tax money to keep the community safe. They often investigate theft and assault and work as law enforcement officers. Public detectives have access to government tools and databases, which help them solve cases more quickly. They can even make arrests when necessary.

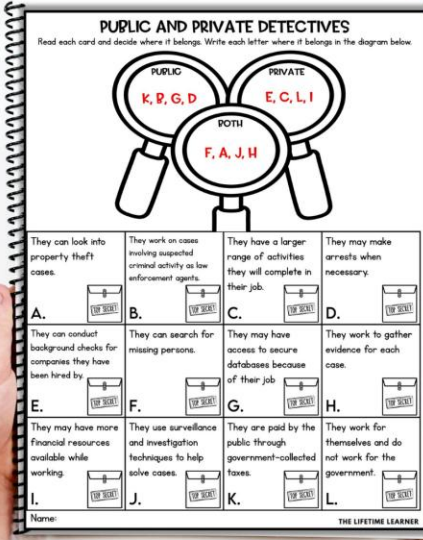
Private detectives, on the other hand, are hired by people or companies and do many different jobs. Sometimes, they look into personal matters like checking on suspicious activity, or finding missing persons when the police can't. Private detectives might also be hired by a company to investigate employee behavior or possible theft. They may have more money to spend because they are funded by the individuals that hire them. Private detectives work to find missing items or people, track down problems. While public detectives can use special government resources, private detectives have the support of those who hire them and may have more resources to investigate. Both play an important role in keeping people safe in the community.

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

		
They may make arrests when necessary.	They can look into property theft cases.	They have a larger range of activities they will complete in their job.
D. 	A. 	C. 
They work on cases involving suspected criminal activity as law enforcement agents.		They work for themselves and do not work for the government.
B. 		L. 

Hands-On Center:

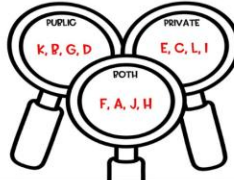
Students sort the details where they belong by comparing and contrasting.















Name: _____

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DETECTIVES

Read each card and decide where it belongs. Write each letter where it belongs in the diagram below.



They can look into property theft cases.	They work on cases involving suspected criminal activity as law enforcement agents.	They have a larger range of activities they will complete in their job.	They may make arrests when necessary.
A. 	B. 	C. 	D. 
They can conduct background checks for companies they have been hired by.	They can search for missing persons.	They may have access to secure databases because of their job.	They work to gather evidence for each case.
E. 	F. 	G. 	H. 
They may have more financial resources available while working.	They use surveillance and investigation techniques to help solve cases.	They are paid by the public through government-collected taxes.	They work for themselves and do not work for the government.
I. 	J. 	K. 	L. 

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

No Prep Printable Worksheet!

CENTER 5

3 Choices

AN UNKNOWN ARTWORK STOLEN!

Mysteries are solved. One of the most interesting unsolved cases is the theft of artwork from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. This robbery happened on a single night in 1990, when several pieces of art were stolen. Security guards at the museum allowed the thieves because they were dressed as police officers. Once inside, the criminals tied up the guards and spent an hour looting without interruption.

During the heist, the thieves stole paintings by famous artists such as Johannes Vermeer, Rembrandt, Govert Flinck, Degas, and Manet. Thirteen artworks were taken in total. Their empty frames still hang in the museum today as a reminder of the missing pieces. Experts remain puzzled that the thieves chose to leave some of the museum's most valuable paintings behind. However, they did take *The Concert* by Johannes Vermeer, one of the world's most expensive paintings, worth an estimated \$250 million.

The FBI estimates the total value of the stolen artwork to be around \$500 million. The museum has offered a \$10 million reward for any information leading to the recovery of the paintings. No one has come forward. To this day, not a single piece of the stolen artwork has been recovered, and no arrests have been made. Despite the efforts of both law enforcement and the museum, the mystery of who stole the art remains unsolved.

1. What made the thieves' entrance into the museum possible?

A. They knew the security guards. B. They disguised themselves as police officers. C. They entered during a public event.

2. Which piece of artwork is considered one of the most valuable missing pieces?

A. The Concert by Johannes Vermeer. B. A painting by Manet. C. A sculpture by Degas.

3. Why do some experts find the thieves' choices puzzling?

A. The thieves stole all the museum's most valuable artwork. B. The thieves left some valuable paintings behind. C. The thieves only stole sculptures.

Hands-On Center:

Students put a finger on the correct answer for each question.

3 CHOICES: ART THEFT

Circle the correct letter to answer each question.

1. What made the thieves' entrance into the museum possible? A. They knew the security guards. B. They disguised themselves as police officers. C. They entered during a public event.

2. Which piece of artwork is considered one of the most valuable missing pieces? A. The Concert by Johannes Vermeer. B. A painting by Manet. C. A sculpture by Degas.

3. Why do some experts find the thieves' choices puzzling? A. The thieves stole all the museum's most valuable artwork. B. The thieves left some valuable paintings behind. C. The thieves only stole sculptures.

4. What was the estimated total value of the stolen artwork? A. \$10 million. B. \$250 million. C. \$500 million.

5. Why do the empty frames still hang in the museum? A. They are part of a new art exhibit. B. To remind visitors of the unsolved mystery. C. Because the museum had not replaced the stolen art.

6. What conclusion can be drawn about the security measures of the museum at the time of the robbery? A. The security was easily evaded by the thieves. B. The museum had highly advanced security systems. C. The security guards resigned the thieves as "known visitors."

7. What would likely motivate someone to come forward with information about the stolen artwork? A. To receive a museum tour. B. To claim the \$10 million reward. C. To get an autograph from museum staff.

8. What does the passage suggest about law enforcement's ability to solve the case? A. Law enforcement has made several arrests related to the case. B. Law enforcement recovered some of the stolen artwork. C. Despite efforts, the case remains unsolved with no solid leads.

Head over to the "no-prep printables" file if you'd like to use the print-and-go page with this activity!

CENTER 6

Color by Code

THE MYSTERY OF BLOOD FALLS

Not only detectives solve mysteries. Scientists solve them too! One mystery, called "The Mystery of Antarctica's Blood Falls," was solved by scientists after a long time. In 1911, an explorer named Griffith Taylor discovered a waterfall in Antarctica that had red water. **For several months, scientists studied the water and could not explain why it was red.** However, many years later, scientists realized that the red water in "Blood Falls" was caused by iron. **When iron is exposed to air, it creates the top of the water, it rusts and turns red.** Still, no one knew where the iron-filled water was coming from, or even how Blood Falls was formed.

One group of scientists decided to try and solve the mystery. **They drilled across the ice and found a hidden lake beneath the surface. The iron was in a hidden underground lake behind the falls.** As water flowed from the underground lake to the surface, it picked up iron from the rocks. **The scientists were overjoyed. They published what they'd found out, and the next year, a drilling team came to Blood Falls.** The team drilled up where the hidden lake should be and confirmed that it was there. The Mystery of Antarctica's Blood Falls took a long time to solve, but it was answered in the end. Now, scientists know a lot more. **The information they learned can help solve more mysteries in the future.**

1. What steps did the scientists take after solving this significant mystery?

2. Color the answer light blue.

3. Color the answer light green.

Why does iron in water create a red color when it reaches the surface of the falls?

1. Color the answer red.

Hands-On Center:

Students use the coloring task card questions to color in answers in the text.

THE MYSTERY OF BLOOD FALLS

Not only detectives solve mysteries, scientists do, too! One mystery, called "The Mystery of Antarctica's Blood Falls," was solved by scientists only after many years of research and study. Blood Falls is a strange red-colored waterfall located in the McMurdo Dry Valleys of Antarctica. **In 1911, an explorer named Griffith Taylor first discovered the unusual waterfall.** He noticed that the water flowing from it appeared bright red. Taylor and his team were puzzled, and **for several months, scientists studied the water and could not explain why it was red.** However, many years later, scientists realized that the red water in "Blood Falls" was caused by iron. **When iron is exposed to air, it creates the top of the water, it rusts and turns red.** Still, no one knew where the iron-filled water was coming from, or even how Blood Falls was formed.

One group of scientists decided to try and solve the mystery. **They drilled across the ice and found a hidden lake beneath the surface. The iron was in a hidden underground lake behind the falls.** As water flowed from the underground lake to the surface, it picked up iron from the rocks. **The scientists were overjoyed. They published what they'd found out, and the next year, a drilling team came to Blood Falls.** The team drilled up where the hidden lake should be and confirmed that it was there. The Mystery of Antarctica's Blood Falls took a long time to solve, but it was answered in the end. Now, scientists know a lot more. **The information they learned can help solve more mysteries in the future.**

Head over to the "no-prep printables" file if you'd like to use the print-and-go page instead of the hands-on version.

CENTER 7

Text Structure Task Cards

Earhart's disappearance is one of the 20th century's most enduring mysteries. Earhart was an airline pilot known for her long-distance flights. She set many records and became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. While attempting to fly around the world with Fred Noonan, she vanished over the Pacific Ocean.

Description

2. Earhart is like no other pilots of her time, and her determination sets her apart. While most aviators chose shorter flights, Earhart took on long-distance flights that no woman had attempted before. She did flights that many people considered too dangerous. Unlike other pilots, she also supported women's participation in aviation.

Compare and Contrast

3. Earhart's flight led to awful consequences. As she neared the end of her journey, the crew encountered difficulties. They ran into poor weather and a lack of communication with their planned refueling stops. This lack of contact led to their disappearance. The Coast Guard couldn't pinpoint her position.

Cause and Effect

Name: _____

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF AMELIA EARHART

1. Text Structure Used: Description
Hints From the Text to Show Proof: This paragraph uses a description structure by giving details about who Amelia Earhart was and her achievements as a pilot.

2. Text Structure Used: _____
Hints From the Text to Show Proof: _____

3. Text Structure Used: _____
Hints From the Text to Show Proof: _____

4. Text Structure Used: _____
Hints From the Text to Show Proof: _____

5. Text Structure Used: _____
Hints From the Text to Show Proof: _____

Write the type of text structure used in each box and any clues that helped you figure it out.

Hands-On Center:

Students read each task card and write a response.



No Prep Printable Worksheet!

CENTER 8

Write a Sentence

FLIES + BUBBLES = MYSTERY?

Scientists recently solved a mystery about tiny flies living at Mono Lake, California. Alkali flies have an amazing ability to dive underwater in the lake's salty, alkaline water. Most animals can't survive in Mono Lake's water because it's so harsh. How do these tiny flies survive? Michael Dickinson found the answer.

To investigate, they collected alkali flies and tested them in tanks containing freshwater and Mono Lake's alkaline water. His observation that the flies use a special layer of wax on their bodies when they dive underwater.

"You can think of it as a dry suit, or a superhero's scuba suit," Van Breugel explained. "The flies crawl into the water, and the wax on their bodies lets the flies stay dry and breathe while underwater. The flies then use the bubbles to stay afloat."

This discovery solves a mystery and could help scientists understand how to create better scuba equipment or suits that protect people in difficult underwater conditions.

1. Why is Mono Lake's water considered harsh for most animals?

Because it's salty and highly alkaline, making it hard for most animals to survive.

Write the answer on the blank lines.

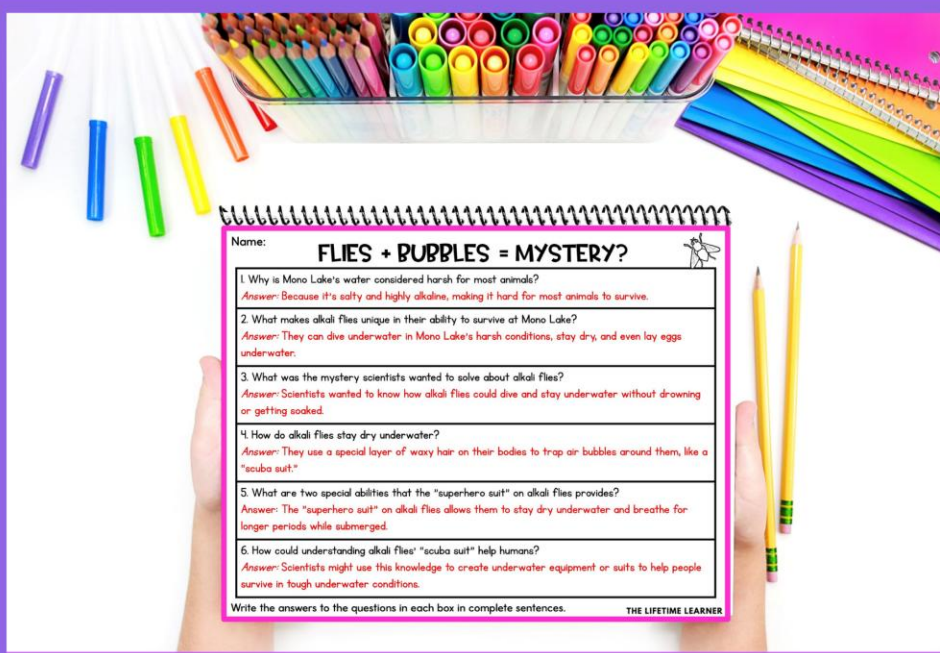
2. What makes alkali flies unique in their ability to survive at Mono Lake?

They can dive underwater in Mono Lake's harsh conditions, stay dry, and even lay eggs underwater.

Write the answer on the blank lines.

Hands-On Center:

Students write the answer to each prompt on the lines.



No Prep Printable Worksheet!

CENTER

9

Sequencing Puzzles

THE COMPUTER MYSTERY

In the fall of 1986, Sergei, a computer software designer, was helping the computer industry develop in the Soviet Union. He had just installed a microcomputer at a railroad station that was a major shipping center for the U.S.S.R. This computer would help route train cars and cargo to their destinations. However, a mysterious computer bug that caused random crashes occurred. Sergei was left bewildered. The next time everyone had gone home for the night, he would check the system. He detected a problem in certain circumstances. So, he gathered a list of the times the crashes occurred. The pattern revealed itself. The more he checked, the more he predicted when the next crash would occur. When live cattle were coming in from a plant near the station, the radiation levels were beyond normal. This radiation leaked into the cattle pens, and the cattle had become ill when it was nearby. The...

THE COMPUTER MYSTERY PUZZLE MAT

Place the puzzle pieces in order here on the mat.

Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4
C. A computer software designer named Sergei was helping develop the computer industry in the Soviet Union at railroad stations by installing microcomputers that routed train cars and cargo cars.	E. He noticed a mysterious computer bug caused random failures that prevented cars and cargo from moving that only happened at night.	A. He suspected the issue was due to a bug that appeared only under specific conditions.	
Event 5	Event 6	Event 7	Event 8

D. He eventually noticed a connection: the crashes only happened when train cars carrying live cattle arrived from Ukraine and Russia.

F. Sergei made a list of times when the crashes occurred, hoping to uncover a pattern.

G. After fixing the problem, Sergei became a hero for his clever detective work.

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

Hands-On Center:

Students put the puzzle pieces in chronological order.

THE COMPUTER MYSTERY

First, read the story. Then, put the events in order below from #1 to #8 by writing a number at the top of each box. Put a #1 in the box that comes first and a #8 in the box that comes last.

3 A. He suspected the issue was due to a bug that appeared only under specific conditions.	7 B. He tested the train cars to confirm his theory and was correct.	1 C. A computer software designer named Sergei was helping develop the computer industry in the Soviet Union at railroad stations by installing microcomputers that routed train cars and cargo cars.	5 D. He eventually noticed a connection: the crashes only happened when train cars carrying live cattle arrived from Ukraine and Russia.
2 E. He noticed a mysterious computer bug caused random failures that prevented cars and cargo from moving that only happened at night.	4 F. Sergei made a list of times when the crashes occurred, hoping to uncover a pattern.	8 G. After fixing the problem, Sergei became a hero for his clever detective work.	6 H. Sergei realized the recent Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant disaster had released radiation into the environment that contaminated the cattle train cars.

Name: _____

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

No Prep Printable Worksheet!

CENTER

10

Fill in the Blank

FUN FACTS ABOUT DETECTIVES

Detectives are experts in solving mysteries. A detective's job is to collect clues and follow evidence to solve cases. They might work in law enforcement or investigations. While public detectives work for the police, private detectives are hired by individuals for personal cases. Both types of detectives use skills to crack mysteries.

One of the most famous types of detectives is the "private eye." This detective is hired to find missing people, check into _____, or uncover secrets.

Detectives rely on tools to help them gather clues. They use _____ glasses to look closely at details, cameras to capture evidence, and computers to access databases. Detectives might also use _____ kits, binoculars, or recording devices. Recently, technology has become a huge help. Some detectives use drones or GPS trackers to follow _____.

The first known detective agency was in France. Eugène François Vidocq was a _____ criminal who turned his life around and became a detective. He helped solve cases with _____ work where he wore a disguise.

Some detectives become specialists. For instance, _____ detectives focus only on fire cases. _____ detectives are experts in collecting evidence from crime scenes. _____ detectives are trained in digital crimes.

Being a detective requires patience and problem-solving skills. Many detectives work long hours to solve cases and may face dangerous situations. Detectives play an important role in keeping _____ safe by solving mysteries and protecting the public.

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

WORD BANK:

Use the word bank to fill in the missing words from the passage.

- arson
- magnifying
- undercover
- communities
- evidence
- former
- backgrounds
- forensic
- suspects
- fingerprint
- cyber
- individuals

Students read the passage and use words from the word bank to fill in the blanks as they read.

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THE LIFETIME LEARNER

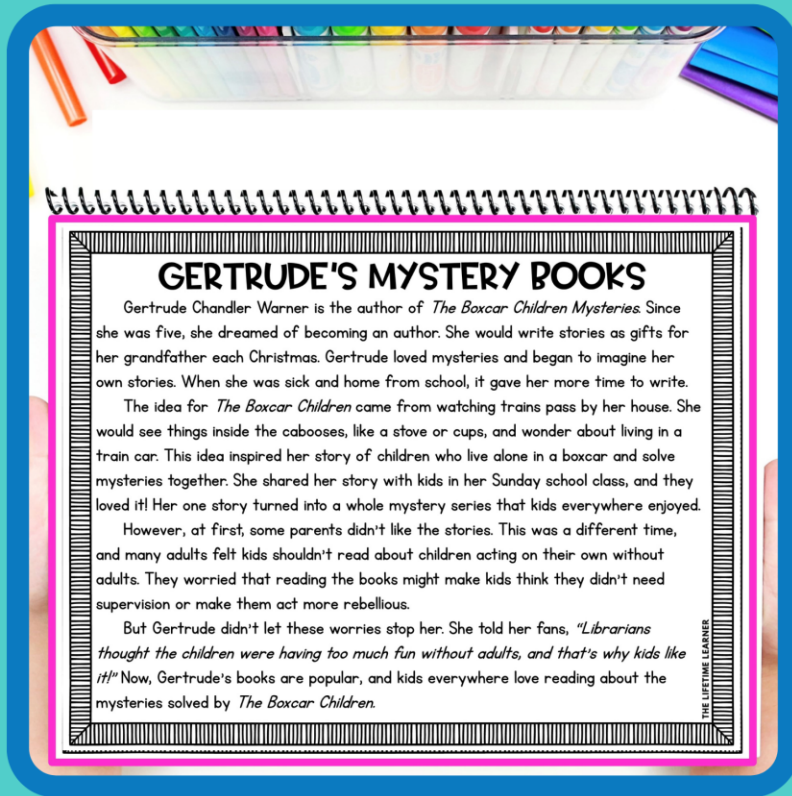
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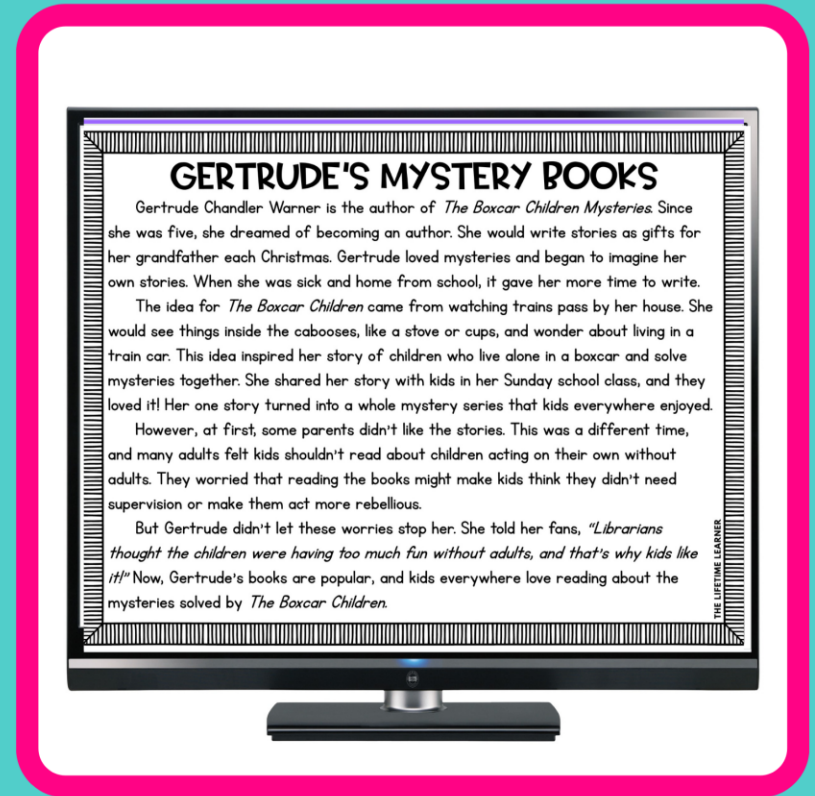
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No Prep Printable Worksheet!

PRINT & DIGITAL



Print & Go




Google Slides

Choose the format
that works best for you!

HOW TO USE THIS:

Ideas for Implementation:

- pick and choose the centers you want to use: do what works best for your class!
- give less than 10 centers to students if you are short on time
- give students the whole day to complete all 10 centers/activities OR spread the room transformation out over a couple of days
- use the hands-on centers during your room transformation and the no-prep printables as a review during your reading block



1. Amelia Earhart's disappearance is one of the 20th century's most enduring mysteries. Earhart was an airline pilot known for her long-distance flights. She set many records and became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. While attempting to fly around the world with Fred Noonan, she vanished over the Pacific Ocean.

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Cause and Effect

Name: _____

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Hints From the Text to Show Proof: _____

Write the type of text structure used in each box and any clues that helped you figure it out.

What Skills are Included?

Nonfiction Skills:

- Text Evidence
- Sequencing
- Character Traits
- Compare & Contrast
- Main Idea
- Context Clues
- Text Structures
- Pages Reviewing
- Multiple Skills

FAMOUS ARTWORK STOLEN!

Some mysteries remain unsolved for decades. One of the most interesting cases is the theft of priceless artwork from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Massachusetts. On the night of March 18, 1990, two men disguised as police officers entered the museum. The security guards on duty allowed them inside, believing they were responding to a call. The thieves immediately tied up the guards once they got in and left them in the basement. With the guards tied up, the thieves left the museum with the stolen artwork.

3 CHOICES: ART THEFT

Circle the correct letter to answer each question.

















1. What made the thieves' entrance into the museum possible?	A. They knew the security guards.	B. They disguised themselves as police officers.	C. They entered during a public event.
2. Which piece of artwork is considered	A. The Concert by	B. A painting by	C. A sculpture by

WHAT IS A "FAIRY CIRCLE"?

Across the deserts of South Africa, strange circles called "fairy circles" dot the ground. A fairy circle is a mysterious round patch of earth that pops up in dry desert areas. These circles have no plants growing in them, but there is usually grass growing around the edges. People used to think they were magical or made by "fairies." Now, we believe they are made by nature. Fairy circles are fascinating because they make the land look like it's covered in polka dots! People used to think that "fairy circles" were randomly placed, but it turns out, there may be an organized arrangement because of what's going on with plants, animals, and insects below the ground.

Name: _____

WHAT IS A "FAIRY CIRCLE"?

1. fascinating 	2. randomly 	E. A person who studies and works with math to solve problems and understand patterns. 	M. It's limited supply or hard to find. 
3. arrangement 	4. mathematician 	H. This is when things are placed or organized in a specific way. 	F. A community of living things that depend on each other and their environment to survive. 
5. ecosystem 	6. interact 	A. Ideas or guesses based on observations and evidence that try to explain something. 	C. Something very interesting that captures your attention. 
7. theories 	8. scarce 	D. They work together or affect each other in some way. 	I. A large area of land that has certain natural features, like hills, rivers, or forests. 

The no prep printable questions are **100% editable!**

3 CHOICES: ART THEFT

Circle the correct letter to answer each question.

1. What made the thieves' entrance into the museum possible?	A. They knew the security guards.	B. They disguised themselves as police officers.	C. They entered during a public event.
2. Which piece of artwork is considered one of the most valuable missing pieces?	A. The Concert by Johannes Vermeer	B. A painting by Manet	C. A sculpture by Degas
3. Why do some experts find the thieves' choices puzzling?	A. The thieves stole all the museum's most valuable artwork.	B. The thieves left some valuable paintings behind.	C. The thieves only stole sculptures.
4. What was the estimated total value of the stolen artwork?	A. \$10 million	B. \$250 million	C. \$500 million
5. Why do the empty frames still hang in the museum?	A. They are part of a new art exhibit.	B. To remind visitors of the unsolved mystery.	C. Because the museum had not replaced the stolen art.
6. What conclusion can be drawn about the security measures at the museum at the time of the robbery?	A. The security was easily evaded by the thieves.	B. The museum had highly advanced security systems.	C. The security guards recognized the thieves as known visitors.
7. What would likely motivate someone to come forward with information about the stolen artwork?	A. To receive a museum tour.	B. To claim the \$10 million reward.	C. To get an autograph from museum staff.
8. What does the passage suggest about law enforcement's ability to solve the case?	A. Law enforcement has made several arrests related to the case.	B. Law enforcement recovered some of the stolen artwork.	C. Despite efforts, the case remains unsolved with no solid leads.

THE LIFETIME LEARNER

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THE LIFETIME LEARNER

edit any question!

10 Pre-Made
Centers
(Print & Go)

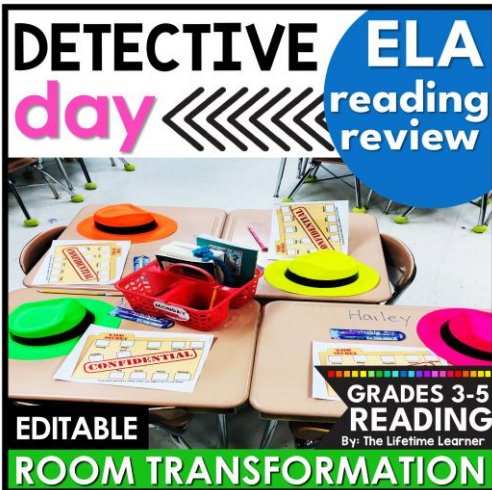
10 Pre-Made
Centers:
Editable Version

2 Versions Included

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Or, add in some math to your themed learning day!



DETECTIVE day ELA reading review

EDITABLE ROOM TRANSFORMATION

GRADES 3-5 READING

By: The Lifetime Learner

Hailey

CONFIDENTIAL

3.NF.1-3.NF.3



DETECTIVE day fraction review

EDITABLE ROOM TRANSFORMATION

3RD GRADE MATH

By: The Lifetime Learner

Hailey

CONFIDENTIAL

4.NF.1-4.NF.7



DETECTIVE day fraction review

EDITABLE ROOM TRANSFORMATION

4TH GRADE MATH

By: The Lifetime Learner

Hailey

CONFIDENTIAL

5.NF.1-5.NF.7



DETECTIVE day fraction review

EDITABLE ROOM TRANSFORMATION

5TH GRADE MATH

By: The Lifetime Learner

Hailey

CONFIDENTIAL



reading MEGA BUNDLE

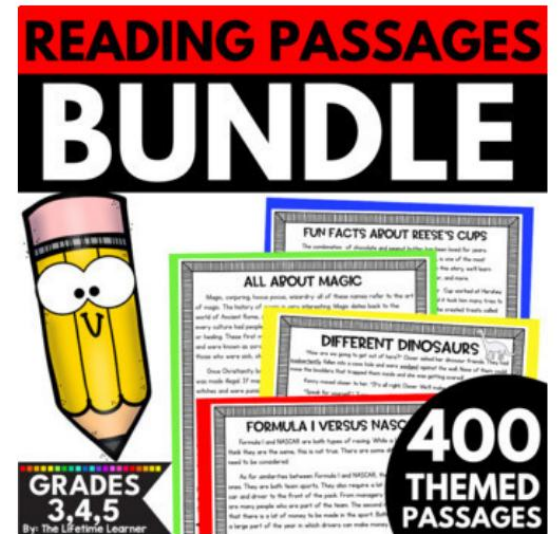
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ALL ABOUT MAGIC

DIFFERENT DINOSAURS

FORMULA I VERSUS NASCAR

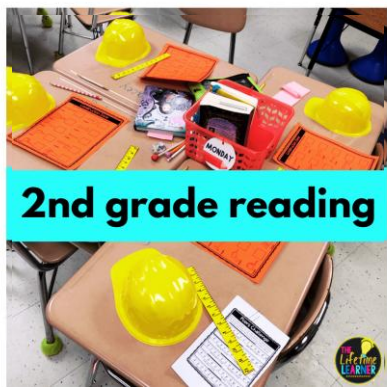
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classroom transformations

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K-5 MATH & READING



Please Note:

- **This is not a stand-alone room transformation.**
- **There are no decorations included.**
- **There are 10 reading passages and activities provided.**
- **The questions are editable. The passages are not.**
- **The digital version is provided in Google Slides.**
- **This Add on Pack aligns with my math & reading classroom transformations.**
- **Let me know if you have ANY questions! You can email me at lindsaythelifetimelearner@gmail.com**