



Close reading plan

The Raft by Jim LaMarche

Created by Sarah Forler, 2014 Connecticut Dream Team teacher

What makes this text complex?			
Text and Author	The Raft by Jim LaMarche	Where to Access Text	http://www.amazon.com/The-Raft-Jim-LaMarche/dp/0064438562/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1398536417&sr=8-2&keywords=the+raft Public Library
Text Description			
<p><i>The Raft</i> introduces the main character, Nicky, as an unhappy, adolescent boy who is sent to spend his summer vacation with his grandma. He becomes more despondent by the amount of chores he is given, as well as the lack of television. That all changes when one day while fishing unsuccessfully, Nicky spots a raft floating towards him. The raft presents him with the opportunity to explore new places, engage one-on-one with wild animals, connect with his grandmother, and find his inner artist. Ultimately Nicky discovers new things about himself, as well as the wonders of river life.</p> <p>As this is a longer text, it can be used as a read-aloud over several days. For the purposes of close reading, it is suggested that the teacher use the beginning and ending sections of the book only (Pages 1-10 and 29-32). This book does lend itself extremely well to the teaching of inferences as well as character development over time. Children may also find success with making text-to-self connections with this book, as the main character is reluctant at first to spend the summer with his grandmother, but his mind and feelings are changed after a surprising and significant event occurs.</p>			
Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	540L Grade 2	Text Length	40 pages with illustrations
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
The reader will view the central idea of the text as the dramatic changing of the main character from despondent to open-minded and engaged, over the course of the book. It can be implied that the raft is mystical and rather extraordinary and ultimately contributes to the main character's transformation.		Narrative text structure with detailed illustrations. Explicit drawings support understanding of the text. The story is told from the main character, Nicky's point of view, which makes it a first person narrative. Due to the fact that it is expressed from the main character's perspective, the reader is often impacted by his thoughts and feelings. For example, Nicky's strong feelings regarding his grandmother in the beginning of the text can make the reader feel biased towards her, as not much is really learned about her character until the end.	
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features	
A small amount about the hobby of fishing as well as specific animal names.		See vocabulary below. Largely conversational. Familiar and easy-to-understand, some content specific words. The author chooses to repeat the same word ("wait") several times on page 8 of the text, to both appeal to the reader's senses as well as to signify the passage of time. Figurative language can also be found on page 10 of the text in the form of a simile and imagery. Concept of dialect can found in the word "em" (page 4).	

Vocabulary

Tier Two Words (General academic vocabulary)

“Words that are far more likely to appear in written texts than in speech. [They] often represent subtle or precise ways to say relatively simple things—saunter instead of walk, for example.” (CCSS ELA Appendix A)

- river rat
- ancient
- em’ (them)

Tier Three Words (Domain-specific words)

“[Tier Three words]...are specific to a domain or field of study (lava, carburetor, legislature, circumference, aorta) and key to understanding a new concept within a text.” (CCSS ELA Appendix A)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tackle box • snorkel • cane pole • bobber | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spark plug • crane • reeds |
|--|--|

Potential Reader/Task Challenges

Students may find difficulty with inferring the deeper meaning of the raft and how specifically it played an integral role in the development of the main character.

Text-dependent questions

Question	Standard alignment	Page of this document
TDQ #1: At the beginning of the story, how does Nicky feel about spending the summer with grandma?	RL 2.3	#5
TDQ #2: On page 5 Jim LaMarche describes the grandma’s living room. What does his description tell us about the kind of person she is?	RL 2.7	#8
TDQ #3: How do the words and pictures on pages 29 & 30 show you how Nicky feels about the raft? Use specific evidence.	RL 2.7	#11
TDQ #4: What does Grandma mean when she says on the last page, “Now you’ll always be part of the river?”	RL 2.6	#14
TDQ #5: What lesson does Nicky learn as a result of his summer with grandma? Use evidence to support your answer.	RL 2.2	#17

Target Standards

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.2
Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3
Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.6
Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.7
Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

Question 1

Question #1	TDQ #1: At the beginning of the story, how does Nicky feel about spending the summer with grandma?	
Standard(s) covered:	RL 2.3: Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.	
	Example response(s) that meets standard	Look-fors
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nicky felt really mad when he first got to his grandma's. He wasn't happy about the chores he had to do there and he even lists the chores that his grandma made him do. He had to help her stack firewood, clean out the rain gutters and change the spark plugs on her truck. His grandma even wants Nicky to catch fish for their dinner, but he says, "There's no fish in this stupid river." 2. Nicky was really upset about staying with his grandma. He was mad that she didn't have a TV. On the first page of the story, Nicky even says, "There's nobody to play with. She doesn't even have a TV." 3. At first, Nicky was feeling sad. I can tell by his face in the pictures, especially in the picture on page 4. Nicky looks really upset and unhappy in that picture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Accurately answers the question, describing the characters' feelings using text evidence as support. For example:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annoyed that he will have to do chores. • Irritated to spend the summer at grandmas. • Lonely that he has to spend time with just his grandma. • Understands that key details can be found within the text's words and illustrations.
If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:		
Objective	In this lesson you will learn how to describe a characters' response to a major challenge in a text by locating key details and information.	
Prior knowledge to review	Key details – small parts of the text that relate to the main topic. Feelings	
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction	
1) Reread the text and look for key details to answer the question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hmm...I wonder what key details I should be looking for to help me answer the question? • Well right in the question it says "in the beginning of the story," so I will flip to that part of the book first. • Now I'm going to look for any illustrations or text that shows me how Nicky is feeling. • When I find a picture or sentence that gives me a clue of what Nicky might be feeling, I am going to reread it, highlight it, and ask myself this question: what does this tell me about the characters' feelings? 	

<p>2) Highlight the key details and ask yourself: “What does this tell me about the characters’ feelings?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay let’s start our search! Oh look! Right on page 1, the text says that Nicky complains about there being no one to play with and that his grandma doesn’t even have a TV...so I’m going to highlight those first two sentences. Now I need to ask myself: what does this tell me about the characters’ feelings? Hmm...I think he feels upset and discouraged that he has to spend the summer with his grandma. • Let’s see what other evidence we can find! The picture on page 4 shows Nicky standing beside a tree, while his grandma is waving goodbye to his father. The expression on his face shows tear-filled eyes and tight lips. That is good evidence to include, but remember I have to ask myself: from looking at this picture, what do I think Nicky is feeling? I think he is feeling disappointment and sadness about having to stay behind with his grandma. • Okay let’s keep on looking! On page 7 there is a line that says, “Dad was right – Grandma found plenty for me to do” and then it lists all of the chores Nicky did. I am certainly going to highlight that information. Again, now I’m going to ask myself: what does this tell me about the characters’ feelings? Well Nicky certainly isn’t happy about having to do all those chores, and in fact he might be feeling bored and lonely because there is no one to play with and he is stuck with his grandma all day.
<p>3) Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that I went back into the text to find the key details that shows how Nicky was feeling, I can record my answer. • I am going to write complete sentences...my highlights will help me. • Looking at all of my highlights, I am going to ask myself, “How does Nicky feel about spending the summer with his grandma?” I want to be sure and include evidence from the text to support my answer that he feels upset and disappointed at having to spend the summer with his grandmother. So I will write “I think in the beginning of the story that Nicky feels...” • Here’s where I will look over my highlights again to decide on a feeling(s) that Nicky might be experiencing. Hmm... most of my highlights show Nicky feeling upset, sad, or lonely. I think I will choose some of those words to describe his mood. • So let’s complete the sentence...”I think in the beginning of the story that Nicky feels sad and lonely about having to spend the summer with his grandma.” • Now I need to include a sentence with text evidence from the story to back up what I think Nicky is feeling. I will look over my highlights again, this time taking bits and pieces of the evidence to include in my sentence. “I think Nicky feels this way because he complains about her not having a TV, about the amount of chores that she makes him do, and by the clear look on his face on page 4.”

<p>Extension and practice</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If students are having difficulties identifying the feelings of the main character, they could work together in partnerships to identify a list of feelings and their characteristics (facial expressions). Then they can refer to their list to see if any of the feelings they described, matches the feelings of the main character. • If students are having difficulties locating and highlighting appropriate key details from the text, show them “Answer a Question about a Text by Finding Evidence at: http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1991-answer-a-question-about-a-text-by-finding-evidence. Have students work together in partnerships to read through and locate key details in shorter passages (paragraphs or small sections of a familiar text). 	

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to other fictional pieces to teach describing how characters in a story respond to major events or challenges. (RL 2.3)

See more examples of how to teach describing how characters in a story respond to major events or challenges. (RL 2.3)

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to describe a characters' response to a major challenge in a text by locating key details and information.

Step 1: Reread the text and look for evidence to answer the question.

Step 2: Highlight the evidence and ask yourself: "What does this tell me about the characters' feelings?"

Step 3: Record your answer in your own words, using key details from the text.

1. Describe how characters respond to events in a story at: <http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/2183-describe-how-characters-respond-to-events-in-a-story>
2. Identify character traits by finding words that show how a character is feeling at: <http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1980-identify-character-traits-by-finding-words-that-show-how-a-character-is-feeling>

Question 2

Question #2	TDQ #2: On page 5 Jim LaMarche describes the grandma’s living room. What does his description tell us about the kind of person she is?
Standard(s) covered:	RL 2.7: Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
1) Nicky’s grandma is an artist because the author tells us that she has sketches on the walls and a half-finished carving of a bear in the middle of her living room. 2) The grandma is a very messy person because Nicky explained that her living room had stuff scattered everywhere: from books, to fishing supplies, to charts of the river and stuffed fish found on the walls. 3) The grandma character loves living near the river and spending time outdoors. The author describes her living room as a “river rat’s workroom” with “several fishing poles hung on the wall with a tackle box, a snorkel, and a mask on the floor beneath them.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Accurately answers the question, describing the character’s personality using evidence from the story as support. For example:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artistic with all of the sketches and bear carving. • Untidy for having her stuff scattered all around. • Outdoorsy because of all the fishing gear. • Understands that key details can be found within the text’s words and illustrations.

If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:

Objective	In this lesson you will learn how to describe a character’s personality by using details from the text.
Prior knowledge to review	Key details – small parts of the text that relate to the main topic. Personality traits_ Illustrations can provide additional information beyond what the text states.
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction
1) Reread the text and look for places when the author describes a character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hmm...I wonder what key details I should be looking for to help me answer the question? • Well right in the question it says “on page 5” so I will flip to that page first. • Now I’m going to look for the exact text that describes the grandma’s living room. • When I find a sentence that gives a description of her living room, I am going to reread it, highlight it, and ask myself these questions: “what does this tell me about the character’s personality?” “What kind of person would do this?”

<p>2) Highlight the key details and ask yourself: “What does this tell me about the character’s personality?” “What kind of person would do this?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay let’s start our search! Oh look! Right in the fourth paragraph on this page, the text says that “there were books scattered everywhere – on the tables, on the chairs, even on the floor”...so I’m certainly going to highlight that sentence. Now I need to ask myself: “what does this tell me about the character’s personality? What kind of person would do this?” Hmm...I think there could be two reasons that someone would have books scattered around their room. One reason could be that she loves to read, and the other reason might be that she is a messy person. • Let’s see what other evidence we can find! If we continue reading from the same paragraph on page 5, we’ll see two sentences that describe stuffed fish on the walls, fishing poles hung with tackle boxes, and many other fishing supplies found in the grandma’s living room. That is good evidence to highlight and include, but remember I have to ask myself: from reading these sentences...what does this tell me about the character’s personality? What kind of person would do this? I think from this evidence that the grandma loves living near the river and enjoys fishing, otherwise she wouldn’t have all of those things right in her living room. • Okay let’s keep on looking! The last line of that same paragraph describes, “in the middle of everything was a half-finished carving of a bear”. I am certainly going to highlight that information. Again, now I’m going to ask myself: what does this tell me about the character’s personality? What kind of person would do this? Well I also remember that we read earlier in the paragraph that the grandma had sketches on the walls, and now we find out that she also has a carving of a bear in her living room, so I would think that someone who enjoys drawing and creating things, such as an artist, would have these kinds of things in their living room.
<p>3) Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text by writing “The character is the kind of person who _____ because _____.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that I went back into the text to find the key details that describe Nicky’s grandma’s personality, I can record my answer. • I am going to write complete sentences...my highlights will help me. • Looking at all of my highlights, I am going to ask myself, “What does the description of Nicky’s grandma’s living room tell us about the kind of person she is?” I want to be sure and include evidence from the text to support my answer, so first I will write “Nicky’s grandma is the kind of person who...” • Here’s where I will look over my highlights again to decide on a personality trait(s) that will describe the grandma. Hmm... most of my highlights show Nicky’s grandma being interested in either fishing or the river. I think I will include those details in my answer. • So let’s complete the sentence...”Nicky’s grandma is the kind of person who enjoys living by the river and spends a majority of her time fishing or in the water. • Now I need to include text evidence from the story to back up what I think about the kind of person that Nicky’s grandma is. I will look over my highlights again, this time taking bits and pieces of the evidence to include in my sentence. “I think Nicky’s grandma is the kind of person who enjoys the river and fishing because the author describes her living room walls as being filled with “stuffed fish, charts of the river, several fishing poles hung from the wall with a tackle box, a snorkel, and a mask on the floor.”

Extension and practice

- If students are having difficulties identifying appropriate personality traits, they could work together in partnerships to identify a list of possible traits or descriptions that match with the personalities of their fellow classmates. Then they can refer to their list to see if any of the traits they chose, match the description of the grandma’s living room.
- If the students continue to find difficulty in determining which personality traits match with the key details from the text, the teacher may find it easier to complete this activity in a whole group setting. A T-chart can be created as a visual, with one side listing the actual details found in the text, while the adjoining side could have a heading of “what kind of person would do this?” The teacher can brainstorm with the students several different personality traits that might match the description, and then discuss with the students which would be the most appropriate to describe the grandmother’s character.
- If students are having difficulties locating and highlighting appropriate key details from the text, show them “Answer a Question about a Text by Finding Evidence at: <http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1991-answer-a-question-about-a-text-by-finding-evidence>. Have students work together in partnerships to read through and locate key details in shorter passages (paragraphs or small sections of a familiar text).

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to other fictional pieces to teach describing a character’s personality by using details from the text.
(RL 2.7)

See more examples of how to teach using information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. (RL 2.7)

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to describe a character’s personality by using details from the text.

Step 1: Reread the text and look for key details to answer the question.

Step 2: Highlight the key details and ask yourself: “What does this tell me about the character’s personality?” “What kind of person would do this?”

Step 3: Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text.

1. Understand a character’s personality traits at:
<http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/2110-understand-a-characters-personality-traits>
2. Describe a character’s personality using details from the text at:
<http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1975-describe-a-characters-personality-using-details-from-the-text>

Question 3

Question #3	TDQ #3: How do the words and pictures on pages 29 & 30 show you how Nicky feels about the raft? Use specific evidence.	
Standard(s) covered:	RL 2.7: Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.	
	Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
	<p>1) I think Nicky feels the raft is a beautiful object because he takes his time adding his own drawing to it.</p> <p>2) I think Nicky feels the raft is very special because when he finished his drawing on the raft, he knew that it was just right.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Accurately answers the question, describing the characters’ feelings using evidence from the story as support. For example:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretty when he takes his time. • Important because his drawing has to be just right. • Understands that key details can be found within the text’s words and illustrations.
If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:		
Objective	In this lesson you will learn how to describe a characters’ feelings by looking closely at the story’s illustrations and text.	
Prior knowledge to review	Key details – small parts of the text that relate to the main topic. Feelings Illustrations can provide additional information beyond what the text states.	
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction	
1) Reread the text and look for key details to answer the question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hmm...I wonder what key details I should be looking for to help me answer the question? • Well right in the question it says “on pages 29 & 30,” so I will flip to those pages first. • Now I’m going to look for any illustrations or text that might show me how Nicky is feeling about the raft. • When I find a picture or sentence that gives me a clue of what Nicky might be feeling, I am going to reread it, highlight it, and ask myself this question: what do his words and actions tell me about how Nicky feels about the raft? 	

<p>2) Highlight the key details and ask yourself: “What do the characters’ words and actions tell me about their feelings?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay let’s start our search! Oh look! Right on page 30, the text says that Nicky finishes his crayon drawing of the deer, and when it is complete, Nicky knows that it is just right. I am going to highlight that last sentence as evidence of what Nicky might be feeling. Now I need to ask myself: what do his words and actions tell me about how Nicky feels about the raft? Hmm...I think he feels that the raft is very special, and that he needed to contribute his own details to it. • Let’s see what other evidence we can find! The picture on page 29 shows Nicky lying down on the raft; drawing a picture of the fawn that he has just encountered. The expression on Nicky’s face shows the beginnings of a smile and he is certainly focused on his crayon drawing. That is good evidence to include, but remember I have to ask myself: from looking at this picture, what do his actions tell me about how Nicky feels about the raft? I think he is feeling that the raft is a beautiful thing, and he is really happy with his own beautiful fawn drawing.
<p>3) Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text: “I think the character feels _____ because _____.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that I went back into the text to find the key details that describe Nicky’s feelings about the raft, I can record my answer. • I am going to write complete sentences...my highlights will help me. • Looking at all of my highlights, I am going to ask myself, “What do his words and actions tell me about how Nicky feels about the raft?” I want to be sure and include evidence from the text to support my answer, so first I will write “I think Nicky feels the raft is _____ because _____.” • Here’s where I will look over my highlights again to decide on a feeling that Nicky might be having about the raft. Hmm... my two highlights show him feeling that the raft is special and beautiful. I think I will include those details in my answer. • So let’s complete the sentence...“I think Nicky feels the raft is a very special and beautiful object. • Now I need to include text evidence from the story to back up what I think Nicky is feeling about the raft. I will look over my highlights again, this time taking bits and pieces of the evidence to include in my sentence. “I think Nicky feels the raft is a very special and beautiful object because he focuses strongly on adding his own crayon drawing to the raft, and when he was finished, Nicky said that he, “Knew it was just right.”

Extension and practice

- If students are having difficulties identifying the feelings of the main character, they could work together in partnerships to identify a list of feelings and their characteristics (facial expressions). Then they can refer to their list to see if any of the feelings they described, matches the feelings of the main character.
- If students are having difficulties locating and highlighting appropriate key details from the text, show them “Answer a Question about a Text by Finding Evidence at: <http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1991-answer-a-question-about-a-text-by-finding-evidence>. Have students work together in partnerships to read through and locate key details in shorter passages (paragraphs or small sections of a familiar text).

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to other fictional pieces to teach describing a character's personality by using details from the text. (RL 2.7)

See more examples of how to teach using information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. (RL 2.7)

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to describe a characters' feelings by looking closely at the story's illustrations and text.

Step 1: Reread the text and look for key details to answer the question.

Step 2: Highlight the key details and ask yourself: "What do the characters' words and actions tell me about their feelings?"

Step 3: Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text: "I think the character feels _____ because _____."

1. Use information from illustrations to understand characters at: <https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/2092-use-information-from-illustrations-to-understand-characters>
2. Identify character traits by finding words that show how a character is feeling at: <https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1980-identify-character-traits-by-finding-words-that-show-how-a-character-is-feeling>

Question 4

Question #4	TDQ #4: What does Grandma mean when she says on the last page, “Now you’ll always be part of the river?”
Standard(s) covered:	RL.2.6: Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I think Grandma means that Nicky will always be attached to the river because he left behind his drawing of the fawn, as a reminder of his summer’s adventures. 2. I think Grandma meant that Nicky would always have a home at the river because he grew to love the river just as much as she did. 3. Grandma meant that Nicky left behind a piece of himself when he drew the picture of the fawn, so the river will always remember him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Accurately answers the question, describing the point of view and meaning of the character’s statement using evidence from the text.</u> <u>For example:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Attachment to the river through his drawing.</u> • <u>A second home due to his new found love for the river.</u> • <u>Remembrance of his summer adventures due to his raft drawing.</u> • Understands that key details can be found within the text’s words and illustrations.

If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:

Objective	In this lesson you will learn how to determine the character’s point of view about an event by paying close attention to their dialogue and actions.
Prior knowledge to review	Key details – small parts of the text that relate to the main topic. Character’s point of view. Figurative language (For example: Nicky is not physically a part of the river.)
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction
1) Reread the text and look for key details to answer the question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hmm...I wonder what key details I should be looking for to help me answer the question? • Well right in the question it says “on the last page,” so I will flip to that page first. • Now I’m going to look for any text that might show me what the Grandma is thinking or doing. • When I find a sentence that gives me a clue into the possible meaning of the Grandma’s statement, I am going to reread it, highlight it, and ask myself this question: how would someone thinking that or doing that, feel about what is happening?

<p>2) Highlight the key details and ask yourself: “How would someone thinking that or doing that, feel about what is happening?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay let’s start our search! Oh look! Right on the last page, the text says, after Grandma saw Nicky’s drawing of the fawn on the raft, she said it was “perfect.” I am going to highlight that short sentence as evidence of what Nicky’s Grandma might be thinking or feeling at this time. Now I need to ask myself: “How would someone thinking that or doing that, feel about what is happening?” Hmm...I think she feels that Nicky’s drawing is a great addition to the raft and that it looks very realistic <u>because she said it looked perfect.</u> • Let’s see what other evidence we can find! After Nicky’s grandma sees the drawing of the fawn, she hurries back up to the house to get oil paint and brushes. She then helps Nicky trace his drawing with the oil paints and explains to him, “That’ll keep it.” That is good evidence to include, but remember I have to ask myself: “How would someone thinking that or doing that, feel about what is happening?” I think she is feeling two things; one, she was worried that Nicky’s drawing would wash away if it wasn’t traced in oil paints, and two I think she feels proud of Nicky, so she wants his drawing to last forever. <u>She is glad that he is finally enjoying the river because he was unhappy being at her house at first.</u> • Okay let’s keep on looking! One of the last lines after Nicky refers to himself and his grandma as river rats, his grandma laughs and agrees, “Just like me.” I am certainly going to highlight that information. Again, now I’m going to ask myself: “How would someone thinking that or doing that, feel about what is happening?” Well Nicky’s grandma is laughing, so I think she feels happy that Nicky compares himself to a river rat, and she knows that he has grown to love the river, just like her.
<p>3) Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text: “The character thinks _____ because _____.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that I went back into the text to find the key details that describe what Nicky’s grandma might mean by her statement: “Now you’ll always be part of the river.” I can record my answer. • I am going to write complete sentences...my highlights will help me. • Looking at all of my highlights, I am going to ask myself, “How would someone thinking that or doing that, feel about what is happening?” I want to be sure and include evidence from the text to support my answer, so first I will write “Grandma thinks _____ because _____.” • Here’s where I will look over my highlights again to decide on a point of view that Grandma might have about Nicky and the river. Hmm... my highlights show her feeling proud of and happy for Nicky. I think I will include those details in my answer. • So let’s complete the sentence...”Grandma thinks that Nicky will always have a home at the river and her house. • Now I need to include text evidence from the story to back up what I think Grandma means by her statement. I will look over my highlights again, this time taking bits and pieces of the evidence to include in my sentence. “Grandma thinks that Nicky will always have a home at the river and her house because she helps Nicky to trace his drawing in oil paints, helping it to last longer, and therefore she also lets Nicky know that the river and her home will always welcome him back.

Extension and practice

- If students are having difficulties identifying the feelings of the main character, they could work together in partnerships to identify a list of feelings and their characteristics (facial expressions). Then they can refer to their list to see if any of the feelings they described, matches the feelings of the main character.
- If students are having difficulties identifying the point of view of a specific character, you can show them: “Determine a Character’s Point of View” at: <https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/2105-determine-a-characters-point-of-view>. They can work together in small groups with short reading passages to determine the points of views of several characters, and back up their responses with evidence from the text.
- If students are having difficulties locating and highlighting appropriate key details from the text, show them “Answer a Question about a Text by Finding Evidence” at: <http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1991-answer-a-question-about-a-text-by-finding-evidence>. Have students work together in partnerships to read through and locate key details in shorter passages (paragraphs or small sections of a familiar text).
- [Students could also role-play the dialogue between the grandma and Nicky to help determine her point of view. When they read the dialogue, they should try to envision how the characters would be speaking and what facial expressions they would have.](#)

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to other fictional pieces to teach acknowledging differences in the points of view of characters.
(RL 2.6)

See more examples of how to teach “acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.” (RL 2.6)

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to determine the character’s point of view about an event by paying close attention to their dialogue and actions.

1. Reread the text and look for key details to answer the question.
2. Highlight the key details and ask yourself: “How would someone thinking that or doing that, feel about what is happening?”
3. Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text: “I think the character means _____ because _____.

1. Reading dialogue in the voice of the character at: <https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/2151-read-dialogue-in-the-voice-of-a-character>
2. Examine how characters interact through dialogue at: <https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1912-examine-how-characters-interact-through-dialogue>

Question 5

Question #5	TDQ #5: What lesson does Nicky learn as a result of his summer with grandma? Use evidence to support your answer.	
Standard(s) covered:	RL.2.2: Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.	
	Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I think the lesson Nicky learned was that you can have fun without a TV or even other kids to play with because in the story he has a great time with the raft and the wild animals. 2. The lesson Nicky learned in the story was not to judge his grandma by her looks because in the beginning of the story he thinks that a river rat is a bad thing, but by the end Nicky is referring to himself as one, and it had become a good thing. 3. Another lesson Nicky learned in the story was to be adventurous and not always do the same boring things, because in the story Nicky wanted to just watch TV all summer, and when he found out he couldn't he was really upset. By the end of the story, he had traveled the river on a raft, helped a baby fawn, and painted with his grandma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Accurately answers the question, describing the lesson learned by the main character using evidence from the text as support. For example:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good time can be had with nature and wildlife. • Do not judge based on looks because a river rat can be an enjoyable thing. • Try new things to become adventurous, such as traveling on a raft or painting with grandma. • Understands that key details can be found within the text's words and illustrations.
If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:		
Objective	In this lesson you will learn to determine the lesson a character learns by comparing their words and actions at the beginning of the text with those at the end of text.	
Prior knowledge to review	Key details – small parts of the text that relate to the main topic. Central messages or lessons of stories	

Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction
<p>1) Notice the characters' words, feelings, and actions at the beginning and end of the story.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hmm...I wonder what key details I should be looking for to help me answer the question? • Well I should probably start at the beginning that way I can highlight what Nicky says or does throughout the story. • When I find a sentence or illustration that gives me a clue into the possible lesson Nicky might have learned, I am going to reread it and highlight it. After I have jotted down what Nicky says and does in the story, I will look at my list of evidence and ask myself this question: "What is the lesson that the character might have learned?" • Okay let's start our search on the first page of the book! Right away I notice some unhappy dialogue between Nicky and his dad, and action that tells about tears filling up Nicky's eyes. I am going to highlight those sentences as evidence of what Nicky is saying and doing. • Let's see what other evidence we can find! On the next page, Nicky has no dialogue, but his facial expression in the illustration is worth noticing. He looks very upset while his grandma waves goodbye to his dad, and again tears are welling up in his eyes. Let's highlight that as something Nicky is doing. • On pages 5 and 6, Nicky has a little dialogue with his grandma, specifically mumbling about not liking what she had cooked for dinner. We can highlight that single sentence as something Nicky is saying. Also Nicky's expression in the illustration is important and we should note that he is staring with a bored expression at the half-finished carving of the bear in his grandma's living room. These are all important details to note about what Nicky is doing. • Let's keep on looking! If we turn to pages 7 & 8, we'll see that Nicky has very strong dialogue with himself explaining, "There's no fish in this stupid river." We will highlight this, as it is certainly a very important thing that Nicky is saying. He seems frustrated that there are no fish in the river. Once again the illustration on page 8 lets us see exactly how Nicky is feeling. His chin is resting on his knee, while he despondently holds his fishing pole out over the water. He does not look very happy. Again, let's add that to our list of things that he is doing. • Pages 9 & 10 have very little dialogue, but there are many places where Nicky is thinking or wondering about things. First we can highlight his thought, "Don't count it" in response to his grandma's high hopes that he would catch something in the river that day. Again that shows us just how unhappy his thoughts and actions are. A little further down the page, Nicky encounters the raft for the first time, and he compares it to finding presents under a Christmas tree, but all the while he wonders who drew the pictures and where had the raft come from? We can highlight those sentences as important things that he is saying. • All right we're almost there...let's flip to pages 29 & 30. There is no dialogue on this page either, just Nicky's thoughts. It is important to highlight that he drew a picture of the fawn on the raft, and we will highlight the sentence, "When I had finished, I knew it was just right." This is an important thing that Nicky said. The illustration also shows us the picture that Nicky drew, but it shows a new expression on Nicky's face as well. He is beginning to smile, and he is staring happily at his drawing. These are great details as to what Nicky does. • Okay we have reached the final two pages, let's see what details we can find! Nicky shows his grandma the drawing and tells her the story, so those are good details to highlight for what Nicky does. A little further down the page, Nicky says in response to his grandma, "Just like you Grandma, a river rat." We will highlight that statement, and remember as something important that Nicky says. Finally if we look at the picture, it shows Nicky and his grandma on the raft, while Nicky pushes it along with a large stick. It is sunset and the animals are starting to surround the raft. We can include that as a detail of something Nicky does.

<p>2) Compare the characters' words, feelings, and actions at the beginning and the end and ask yourself, "What is different?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that I went back into the text to find the key details that show what Nicky says and does throughout the story, I need to ask myself, "What is different about Nicky from the beginning of the story to the end?" • Well just from looking over our list that we compiled of Nicky's actions, words, and feelings from the beginning of the story to the end, I can notice a huge change in Nicky's feelings. He went from being very unhappy and upset at having to stay with his grandma, to excited and happy about leaving his mark on the raft and the river. • The things Nicky says throughout the book also change from the beginning to the end. At the start of the story, his dialogue is grumpy, short, and mean. By the end of the book, Nicky is politely and excitedly talking with his grandma about the animals, the raft, and the river. • Lastly, Nicky's actions change from the beginning of the story to the end as well. His actions towards his grandma in the beginning are short, rude, and sometimes impolite. At the end of the book, Nicky is engaged in conversations with his grandma, and even jokes around with her.
<p>3) Using the differences found in the characters' words, feelings and actions, ask yourself, "What is the lesson that the character might have learned?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that we have compared Nicky's actions, words, and feelings from the beginning of the story to the end, I can ask myself the all-important question: "What is the lesson that the character might have learned?" • As I'm thinking about the lesson that Nicky might have learned and looking over my notes from the story, I can also think about big life lessons that I have been through myself. Hmm...what lesson might Nicky have learned by the end of the story? • So if Nicky went from being miserable to happy and content, what lesson is that teaching? What does the author want me to learn? Maybe it's that you shouldn't give up on fishing. No. It seems like it's more than that. The author said that he was part of the river. So maybe the message is that you shouldn't judge a place before you try it out. Or maybe it's that we should try to do more interesting things than just watch TV. Or even that change or unfamiliar situations can seem hard at first, but if given a chance they can turn out to be very rewarding.
<p>4) Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text: "I think the character learned _____ because in the story _____.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay, I think I am ready to record my answer. • I am going to write complete sentences...my highlights will help me. • Looking at all of my highlights, I am going to ask myself again, "What is the lesson that Nicky might have learned?" I want to be sure and include evidence from the text to support my answer, so first I will write "I think the lesson Nicky learned was _____ because in the story _____. • Here's where I will look over my highlights again to decide on a lesson that Nicky learned. Hmm... my highlights show his feelings changing about spending the summer with his grandma. I think I will include those details in my answer. • So let's complete the sentence..."I think the lesson Nicky learned was to not assume that he would have a horrible summer with his grandma. • Now I need to include text evidence from the story to back up what I think the lesson Nicky learned was. I will look over my highlights again, this time taking bits and pieces of the evidence to include in my sentence. "I think the lesson Nicky learned was to not assume that he would have a horrible summer with his grandma because by the end of the story, he is excited to show off his raft drawing, and he even refers to himself as a river rat.

Extension and practice

- If students are having difficulties identifying the lesson(s) learned by characters in a story, have them work together in partnerships or small groups to brainstorm life lessons that they have encountered, and how they felt, as they were involved with them. They can refer to this list as they are rereading stories, and they can use it to help determine what similar lessons the books' characters might be going through.
- If students are having difficulties locating and highlighting appropriate key details from the text, show them "Answer a Question about a Text by Finding Evidence" at: <http://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1991-answer-a-question-about-a-text-by-finding-evidence>. Have students work together in partnerships to read through and locate key details in shorter passages (paragraphs or small sections of a familiar text).
- [Students can make a t-chart or use a graphic organizer to compare the main character's feelings at the beginning and end of the story.](#)

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to other fictional pieces to teach recounting stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.
(RL 2.6)

See more examples of how to teach "recounting stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral." (RL 2.6)

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to determine the lesson learned by a character by looking at what that character says and does.

1. Keep a list of what the characters say or do in the story.
2. Ask yourself, "What is the lesson that the character might have learned?"
3. Record your answer in your own words, using the key details from the text: "I think the character learned _____ because in the story _____."

1. Determine an author's message by noticing by characters say and do at:
<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1945-determine-an-authors-message-by-noticing-what-characters-say-and-do>
2. Identify the theme by asking what did the character learn at:
<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/916-identify-the-theme-by-asking-what-did-the-main-character-learn>