

Lesson 8: Reading for Gist and Determining the Lesson: *Nasreen's Secret School*



CCS Standards

- **RL.3.1:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **RL.3.2:** Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- **RL.3.3:** Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.



Daily Learning Targets

- I can determine the gist of *Nasreen's Secret School*. (RL.3.1, RL.3.3)
- I can identify the central message, lesson, or moral of *Nasreen's Secret School*. (RL.3.2)

Ongoing Assessment

- Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story: *Nasreen's Secret School* (RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3)

Agenda

1. Opening

- A. Reading Aloud: *Nasreen's Secret School* (20 minutes)
- B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

2. Work Time

- A. Reading for Gist and Determining the Lesson: *Nasreen's Secret School* (30 minutes)

3. Closing and Assessment

- A. Overcoming Learning Challenges (5 minutes)

4. Homework

- A. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.
- B. For ELLs: Complete the Language Dive: Part I Practice in your Unit 1 homework.

Teaching Notes

Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- This lesson follows a similar structure to Lesson 3–4. Students listen to a new text read aloud (*Nasreen's Secret School*), then reread it in triads and work together to complete the Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story note-catcher and determine the story's central message or lesson. This story is set in Herat, Afghanistan, and focuses on the challenges a girl named Nasreen has both at home and in trying to go to school. Be aware that students with family

members who have lived in or are currently living in Afghanistan may be sensitive to this story or may have other stories about the country that they want to share.

- In this unit, the habit of character focus is working to become ethical people. The characteristic students are reminded of in this lesson is respect. Compassion and empathy also are introduced because of the sensitive nature of the text in relation to potential student experiences and family/cultural backgrounds.
- Similar to Lessons 3–4, students revisit the module guiding question: “Why are education, reading, and books important?” to consider why school and education are important to Nasreen and her grandmother, and to the students themselves. Recall that students may have a range of feelings about the importance of school and education based on their personal or cultural values and experience, so be sensitive to this.
- This lesson continues the use of the Think-Pair-Share protocol. Since students work in triads throughout this lesson, the protocol is modified to Think-Triad-Share, as it was in Lesson 4.
- Continue to use Goal 1 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation.
- The research reading that students complete for homework will help build both their vocabulary and knowledge pertaining to overcoming challenges in access to education, books, and reading near and far. By participating in this volume of reading over a span of time, students will develop a wide base of knowledge about the world and the words that help describe and make sense of it.

How it builds on previous work:

- This lesson is very similar to Lessons 3–4 in structure: Students hear the book read aloud, reflect on it, and determine the gist and central message, moral, or lesson.
- This lesson is very similar to Lessons 3–4 in structure, although for gradual release, in this lesson students determine the central message or lesson themselves.

Areas where students may need additional support:

- Some students may need additional support filling in their Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story note-catcher. Consider using technology to support those students (see Technology and Multimedia).

Assessment guidance:

- Review students’ Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story note-catchers to determine whether they fully understand the story and its lesson/message/moral.
- Review students’ vocabulary logs to ensure they have been set up appropriately; help them correct any issues.

Down the road:

- In the next lesson, students will closely read this text to more deeply understand how the central message or lesson is conveyed through details.

In advance:

- Consider whether any students may be sensitive to the issues that this book raises based on cultural background and family history. Consider explaining to families that this book will be read aloud to students so that they can appropriately prepare them and discuss it afterward.

- Prepare a small label with the book title and author to attach to a pin and place on the world map. This needs to be large enough to see, but not too large to cover up too much of the map.
- Predetermine triads based on reading ability. Students read the text and complete the Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story note-catcher in these groups, so each group will need at least one skilled reader.
- Review the Think-Pair-Share protocol. (Refer to the Classroom Protocols document for the full version of the protocol.)
- Post: Learning targets, Guiding Questions anchor chart, Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart, Experiences with Overcoming Challenges anchor chart, Close Readers Do These Things anchor chart, and Overcoming Learning Challenges anchor chart.

Technology & Multimedia

- Work Time A: Students complete their note-catchers in a word-processing document, such as a Google Doc, using speech-to-text facilities activated on devices or using an app or software like Dictation.io (<https://dictation.io/speech>)

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 3.I.B.6, 3.I.B.7

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs with opportunities to celebrate cultural, linguistic, and educational diversity; apply strategies introduced in previous lessons to a new complex text, *Nasreen's Secret School*, by reading for gist using a supportive graphic organizer; experience gradual release as they determine the central message with their peers; and notice and enjoy how Jeanette Winter, the author of *Nasreen's Secret School*, weaves Pashto sentences and script into the story.
- ELLs may find it challenging to listen to and comprehend a story all the way through. Stop periodically to check for comprehension. Reassure students that they need not understand every word to comprehend the gist of the text. See levels of support and the Meeting Students' Needs column for additional supports.
- In Work Time A, ELLs are invited to participate in the first of a series of two connected Language Dive conversations (optional). The conversations invite students to unpack complex syntax—or “academic phrases”—as a necessary component

of building both literacy and habits of mind. This first conversation guides them through the meaning of a key complex sentence from *Nasreen's Secret School*. It also focuses student attention on subject-predicate structure and the use of *because*. Students may draw on this sentence when writing about challenges later in the unit. A consistent Language Dive routine is critical in helping all students learn how to decipher complex sentences and write their own. In addition, Language Dive conversations hasten overall English language development for ELLs. Preview the Language Dive Guide and consider how to invite conversation among students to address the questions and goals suggested under each sentence strip chunk (see supporting materials). Select from the questions and goals provided to best meet your students' needs. Consider providing students with a Language Dive log inside a folder to track Language Dive sentences and structures and collate Language Dive note-catchers.

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- During Work Time A, invite students to generate their own sentence frames to use as they reflect after reading *Nasreen's Secret School*.
- Before providing additional support throughout the lesson, observe student interaction and allow students to grapple. Provide supportive materials and suggestions only after students have grappled with the task and with the language. Observe the areas in which they have trouble to target appropriate support in future lessons.

For heavier support:

- During Work Time B, distribute a partially filled-in copy of the Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story note-catcher. This will provide students with models for the kind of information they should enter, as well as reduce the volume of writing required.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation:** To be successful during the Work Time of this lesson, students will need a strong understanding of the text, *Nasreen's Secret School*. Help facilitate comprehension by providing varied opportunities to engage with the text during the read-aloud. For instance, model making inferences through think-alouds. Also, strategically select sections of the text to pause and have students conduct a Think-Pair-Share to help clarify any complexities. Refer to the Meeting Students' Needs column for more strategies.
- **Multiple Means of Action and Expression:** The focus of this lesson is to support students' comprehension of a new text, *Nasreen's Secret School*. For students who may need additional support with comprehension skills: Consider ways to support them as they grapple with this new text. Example: Provide prewritten sticky notes with various options of the gist that they can match on the Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story note-catcher.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement:** Build student excitement about the new text by introducing information from multiple media sources about Afghanistan. This can include representations of culture such as art, music, dance, or literature. This will

help build engagement so that students are invested in tackling a challenging text. Furthermore, it will provide another means of representation to build background knowledge and facilitate greater comprehension.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

■ N/A

Materials

- ✓ Guiding Questions anchor chart (begun in Lesson 1)
- ✓ Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (begun in Lesson 2; added to during Opening A)
- ✓ Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Nasreen's Secret School (book; one per student)
- ✓ World map (from Lesson 3; one to display)
- ✓ Labeled pin (one to display)
- ✓ Compass points (from Lesson 3; one to display)
- ✓ Experiences with Overcoming Challenges anchor chart (begun in Lesson 3; added to during Opening A)
- ✓ Close Readers Do These Things anchor chart (from Lesson 3)
- ✓ Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story: *Nasreen's Secret School* (one per student and one to display)
- ✓ Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story: *Nasreen's Secret School* (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Equity sticks (class set; one per student)
- ✓ Language Dive Guide I: *Nasreen's Secret School* (optional; for ELLs; for teacher reference)
 - Language Dive Sentence strip chunks I and II: *Nasreen's Secret School* (optional; for ELLs; one to display)
 - Online paper or translation dictionary (one per student in home language)
 - Vocabulary logs (from Lesson 5; one per student)
 - Language Dive Note-catcher I and II: *Nasreen's Secret School* (optional; for ELLs; one per student and one to display)
 - Blue and red markers (optional; for ELLs; one of each per student)
- ✓ Overcoming Learning Challenges anchor chart (begun in Lesson 3; added to during Closing and Assessment A)
- ✓ Overcoming Learning Challenges anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)

Opening

A. Reading Aloud: *Nasreen's Secret School* (20 minutes)

- Move students into predetermined triads and invite them to label themselves A, B, and C.
- Focus students on the **Guiding Questions anchor chart** and reread the questions aloud.
- Focus students on the **Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart**.
- Remind them that sometimes the things we discuss in class or the texts we read can upset some students. Explain that sometimes this is a result of their previous experiences or their family background. Remind them that they have already been working hard on practicing respect to be sensitive to this.
- Ask students to turn and talk to their triad, and cold call students to share their responses with the whole group:

“When someone is upset about something, how does it make you feel? What can you do to help that person work through it?” (show empathy and compassion)
- If productive, cue students to expand the conversation by giving an example:

“Can you give an example?”
- Tell students that you want to focus on two strategies for being an ethical person. Add the following to the anchor chart:
 - “I show empathy. This means I understand and I share or take into account the feelings, situation, or attitude of others.”
 - “I show compassion. This means I notice when others are sad or upset and try to help them.”
- Refer to the **Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)** as necessary.
- Invite students to Think-Triad-Share, leaving adequate time for each partner to think, ask the question to their partner, and partner share:

“In your own words, what does empathy mean?” (to try to understand how others feel)

“When someone shows empathy, what does it look like? What will you see?” (Responses will vary.)

“When someone shows empathy, what does it sound like? What will you hear?” (Responses will vary.)
- As students share out, capture their responses in the appropriate columns of the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart.
- Invite students to Think-Triad-Share, leaving adequate time for each partner to think, ask the question to their partner, and partner share:

“In your own words, what does compassion mean?” (to notice when someone is upset and try to help him or her)

“When someone shows compassion, what does it look like? What will you see?” (Responses will vary.)

“When someone shows compassion, what does it sound like? What will you hear?” (Responses will vary.)
- As students share out, capture their responses in the appropriate columns of the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart.

- Add *empathy* and *compassion* to the Academic Word Wall. Invite students to add translations of the words in their home languages in a different color next to the target vocabulary.
- Show students the cover of *Nasreen's Secret School* and explain that this story is set in Afghanistan. Focus students on the **world map**.
- Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:
“Where is Afghanistan located on the map?” (Responses will vary.)
- Place the **labeled pin** on Afghanistan and explain that it is on the continent of Asia.
- Display the **compass points**. Remind students that they can use compass points to explain where places are. Read through each of the compass points.
- Point to the pin marking your location.
- Ask students to turn and talk to their triad, and cold call students to share their responses with the whole group:
“Which continent do we live on?” (Responses will vary.)
“Where are we in relation to Afghanistan?” (Responses will vary, but students should use the compass points.)
“Has anyone had any experience with Afghanistan that they would like to share?” (Afghanistan or neighboring countries may be the country of origin for some students. Because Afghanistan is in the news a lot in the United States, it may be helpful to process students’ feelings about it before reading the text.)
- While still displaying *Nasreen's Secret School*, complete a first read of the text, including the Author's Note and the Pashto script that the teacher is writing on the chalkboard in the middle of the book, as this is an opportunity to explain that in Afghanistan, the official languages are Pashto and Dari, not English. Point out that Pashto and Dari are read from right to left, unlike English, and acknowledge the beauty of the Pashto script, which is a form of Arabic script.
- After reading, invite students to spend 5 minutes reflecting silently. Reflection can include thinking or writing/drawing on paper. Students must be silent when they do this, though. Ask:
“What did this story make you think about?”
- Tell students they will now have the opportunity to share their reflections, if they would like to, with the whole group. Focus students on the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart and once again remind them of the habits of character respect, empathy, and compassion. Tell them that they need to be respectful as they listen to other students sharing. Explain that part of being respectful means treating others with care.
- Invite students to share their reflections with the whole group as they feel comfortable. Do not force anyone to share their ideas with the group, but provide those who desire it with the chance to voice their reflections.
- As students share out, capture any challenges they share on the **Experiences with Overcoming Challenges anchor chart**.

- Ensure students recognize that this story is a snapshot of time in one place in Afghanistan and that things in other places in Afghanistan may have been different, and also that things may be different now, as there has been a lot of change in the country due to war.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with comprehension: Buy or ask for large paint chips from a local hardware or paint store or print them online. Write the words *compassion*, *sympathy*, *empathy*, and *pity*, each on a different shade of the paint chip. Place them on the wall and discuss the shades of meaning in relation to the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart. (MMR)
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with comprehension:
 - Stop often to check for comprehension.
 - Stop at strategic points that require referencing and do a think-aloud to make your thought process explicit.
 - Stop at strategic points in the text to give students a chance to Think-Pair-Share about a complex idea in the text. Have students share out responses.
 - When necessary, paraphrase the events in more comprehensible language. (Example: "Then the soldiers came and changed everything. Some army fighters told everyone what to do and took away everyone's freedom.")
 - For written reinforcement, write and display brief notes describing the key sections of *Nasreen's Secret School* as you go.
 - Dictate lines for students to recite so that they practice using verbal language.
 - Photocopy *Nasreen's Secret School*. Cut apart the pictures from the text. Invite students to match the picture with the corresponding text. (MMR)
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with expressive language: While silently reflecting about the text, students can focus their thoughts by choosing one of several provided sentence frames. Invite them to read the sentence frames aloud before beginning to reflect. Examples:
 - "This story reminded me of ____."
 - "This story made me think about a time when ____."
 - "This story inspired me because ____."
 - "This story made me feel ____."
 - "This character reminds me of Thomas and Ana because ____." (MMAE).

B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

- Direct students' attention to the posted learning targets and select a volunteer to read them aloud:
 - "I can determine the gist of *Nasreen's Secret School*."**
 - "I can identify the central message, lesson, or moral of *Nasreen's Secret School*."**
- Focus students on the **Close Readers Do These Things anchor chart**. Remind them that the gist is what the text is mostly about.

- Point out that these are the same learning targets from Lessons 3–4 and tell students that they will do many of the same things they did in those lessons, but they will use a different text to do them.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with reading: Review understanding by asking a student to share the meaning of *gist* and *central message* in his or her own words. Call on a few more students to explain why they agree or disagree with the definitions. You may also use a Venn diagram as an anchor chart to record student responses. (MMR)

Work Time

A. Reading for Gist and Determining the Lesson: *Nasreen's Secret School* (30 minutes)

- Distribute *Nasreen's Secret School*.
- Distribute and display **Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story: *Nasreen's Secret School***.
- Remind students that they completed the same note-catcher in Lessons 3–4 for *Waiting for the Biblioburro* and *Rain School*. Read through each of the boxes and remind them of what they will record in each box. Remind students that they will record notes on this note-catcher, and that notes help them remember their thinking and do not have to be full sentences.
- Explain that students are going to reread the book together in triads, whisper-reading.
- Select a volunteer to demonstrate whisper-reading a page of the book to the group.
- Explain that when they have finished reading, each triad will use the book to discuss possible answers to write on the Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story note-catcher. Emphasize the importance of discussing answers before writing anything and referring back to the text when trying to figure out the answers.
- Invite students to begin whisper-reading.
- Circulate to support students in reading and completing their note-catchers. Refer to the **Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story: *Nasreen's Secret School* (example, for teacher reference)** as necessary. Consider meeting with any students who were particularly upset or concerned about this text to work in a group with you to talk through their concerns as they reread the story and complete their note-catcher.
- Refocus whole group and use **equity sticks** to select students to share what they recorded.
- Tell students to cover the questions and answers in the boxes at the bottom of their note-catcher.
- Remind them that often when an author writes a book, there is an important message that he or she wants you to take away or a lesson to learn relevant to the real world outside of the book. Remind students that sometimes the author explicitly states—or comes right out and says—the text's message or lesson. Other times, the message or lesson needs to be inferred from details in the text.
- Invite students to Think-Triad-Share, leaving adequate time for each partner to think, ask the question to their partner, and partner share:

“Use your note-catcher to think about what happened in this story. What message or

lesson relevant to the real world outside of the story do you think the author wants you to learn and take away from this story? What details make you think that?” (Responses will vary, but may include: Some people will take dangerous risks to go to school because learning is very important to them.)

- If productive, cue students to expand the conversation by saying more:
“Can you say more about that?” (Responses will vary.)
- Listen to student responses and ensure that they are thinking about a central message or lesson rather than single details. (Example: Girls were forbidden from going to school in Herat is a detail that contributes to a central message, but it is not the overall message.)
- As students share out, capture strong student responses on the board, so other students can choose from one of their peers’ ideas if they are still unsure themselves.
- Invite students to record the central message in the box at the bottom of their note-catcher. Explain that in the next lesson, they will consider the details in the text that worked together to convey that message or lesson.
- Refocus students on the learning targets. Read each one aloud, pausing for students to give a thumbs-up, thumbs-down, or thumbs-sideways to indicate how close they are to meeting that target now. Make note of those who may need additional support with each of the learning targets moving forward. Repeat, inviting students to self-assess against how well they showed respect, empathy, and compassion.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For ELLs: During or after Work Time A, lead students through Language Dive Part 1 (see supporting materials). Refer to the **Language Dive Guide: Part I (for teacher reference)**. Distribute and display the **Language Dive Note-catcher: Nasreen’s Secret School** and **sentence strip chunks**.
- For ELLs: Before students write, invite them to turn to an elbow partner and recount *Nasreen’s Secret School* in 1 minute or less. Remind them of the feedback you gave them when recounting *Rain School* in Lesson 4. Have them share out and give them feedback on their language use and summarizing skill. Then, invite them to turn to their partner and summarize once again, this time in 30 seconds or less. Repeat the feedback process.
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with writing: Read aloud and rephrase the prompt on the Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story note-catcher. Invite students to sketch rather than write their responses if writing is a barrier to identifying the gist. (MMAE).
- For students who may need additional support with fine motor skills: Offer choice with Reading for Gist and Recounting the Story: *Nasreen’s Secret School* by providing a template that includes lines. (MMR, MME)
- For ELLs: Consider pairing students with another who speaks the same home language to foster equity and support language processing. Invite them to begin by discussing their responses in their home language, moving to responding in English.

Students without a home language in common can be invited to think or write in their home language first.

Closing and Assessment

A. Overcoming Learning Challenges (5 minutes)

- Focus students on the **Overcoming Learning Challenges anchor chart**.
- Invite students to Think-Triad-Share, leaving adequate time for each partner to think, ask the question to their partner, and partner share:

“What challenge did Nasreen face?” (not allowed to go to school; not allowed to go outside; lost her father and mother; lives in a scary place with a lot of unfair laws and rules)

“How was the challenge overcome?” (Nasreen and her grandmother went to a secret school.)

- As students share out, capture their responses on the Overcoming Learning Challenges anchor chart. Refer to the **Overcoming Learning Challenges anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)** as necessary.
- Emphasize that Nasreen and her grandmother took a big risk by going to a secret school because it was forbidden and that if they had been caught, they would have faced punishment for breaking the law.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who are unsure of the answers to these questions at first, ask them to repeat or rephrase what their peers say. (MMAE)

Homework

A. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.

B. For ELLs: Complete the Language Dive: Part I Practice in your Unit 1 homework.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with writing: Discuss and respond to your prompt orally, either with a partner, family member, or student from grades 2 or 4, or record a response. Read the prompts aloud and brainstorm possible responses with your teacher. If you have trouble writing sentences, write words or make sketches in your responses, or your teacher can give you sentence starters. (MMAE)