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**New York State Assessment
Language Arts
Grade 4**

This sample includes the following:

Student Book pages (9 pages)

- Cover and Table of Contents
- Guided Practice pages
- Partner Practice pages
- Independent Practice pages

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Grade

4

New York State Assessment

Student Book



Preparing for Next Generation Success in

English Language Arts

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Seeing How Characters Change

Lesson Focus

I can find the central message of a story by noticing how characters change and grow because of problems.

1. What are problems characters can face in stories?

Notice When Characters Change

1. Find the problem in the story.
2. Notice how the character changes. Ask yourself, “How are they acting, speaking, or thinking differently than before?”
3. Name what a character learns.

Guided Practice

Pay attention to the steps your teacher takes as they identify the problem a character faces.

The Golden Staff: A South American Myth

- 1 Long ago, at the dawn of time, the sun god, Inti, looked down on the people, and he felt pity for them. He decided that the cleverest of his four sons and his daughter should rule over everyone and teach them how to live in a better way. Their names were Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo.
- 2 However, Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo didn’t realize their other three brothers wanted to rule the new empire all by themselves. Just as Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo set out on their journey, the brothers stepped out of a nearby cave.
- 3 Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo thought their siblings had come to help them, so they greeted their brothers warmly and set out together to teach the people. But they hadn’t been gone long when one of their brothers, Ayar Cachi, made fun of the humans.
- 4 “Look at them!” he sneered. “Who would want to teach them? What a waste of my powers! I can knock down hills with a single shot of my sling!” And Ayar Cachi destroyed a hill with his slingshot, injuring the people who lived there.
- 5 Manco Cápac was so angered by his brother, he used his powers to send Ayar Cachi back to the cave where he came from and sealed him inside. On seeing this, the second brother, Ayar Uchu, grew fearful of Manco Cápac’s strength.
- 6 “Perhaps I will go back to the cave and look after the people from there.” And he ran back to the cave as quickly as he could. When Inti, the sun god, saw this, he turned Ayar Uchu into stone to punish him for his cowardice.
- 7 The third brother, Ayar Auca, was, by now, quaking with fear. He ran off into the forest and was never seen again!
- 8 And so, as Inti first intended, only Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo remained. The brother and sister traveled far and wide, uniting many different tribes, teaching them how to build their own homes and villages, how to farm and weave and cook, and how to read and write.

Seeing How Characters Change

Directions: Use the text on page 6 to answer the questions.

1 What is a theme in the story?

- A** Family is important.
- B** Listen to your parents.
- C** Jealousy can make you angry.
- D** Use your power to help, not harm.

2 Paragraph 5 shows an important character trait of Manco Cápac when he...

- A** wishes to be just like his father when he grows up.
- B** realizes he must protect the people from his brothers.
- C** does not trust his sister anymore after she harms the humans.
- D** decides to listen to his father's directions.

3 Which quotation **best** supports the theme of the story?

- A** "...he used his powers to send Ayar Cachi back to the cave where he came from and sealed him inside." (paragraph 5)
- B** "And so, as Inti first intended, only Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo remained." (paragraph 8)
- C** "When Inti, the sun god, saw this, he turned Ayar Uchu into stone..." (paragraph 6)
- D** "He ran off into the forest and was never seen again!" (paragraph 7)

4 Which detail would be **most** important to include in a summary of the story?

- A** Inti wants his two children to build him a temple.
- B** Inti chooses his smartest son and daughter to help the humans.
- C** Humans are not very smart yet.
- D** Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo trust their brothers.

Seeing How Characters Change

Partner Practice

Directions: Read the story “Alone in the Woods” with a partner. As you read together, practice the steps modeled by your teacher during the Guided Practice.

Alone in the Woods

- 1 Samantha lay on her back and looked up at the leaves. The pain in her leg remained excruciating. It felt like she had been stung by a thousand bees or like her leg was on fire.
- 2 In addition to feeling pain and having the constant urge to throw up, she felt confused. It was hard to keep track of time. Sometimes, it felt like she had been alone in the woods for hours, but other times it felt like it had just been a few minutes.
- 3 Her ankle and calf were swollen and turning black. She untied her shoe and took off her sock. The bite was still bleeding.
- 4 *Why did this have to happen?* she thought. *I hope Mom and Dad don't blame Hickory. It's not his fault.*
- 5 *I wonder if he's actually getting help,* Samantha thought. She pictured Hickory lost in the woods or happily splashing around in a different part of the creek.
- 6 Hickory was a sweet dog, but he was still learning how to behave. Sometimes, he was too happy for his own good. He was always jumping on chairs and tables and people. The Petersons were watching videos about how to train him, but they hadn't gotten very far.
- 7 Samantha tried to keep thinking about the dog so that she would not have to think about her situation. She pictured how Hickory sometimes tried to climb into her lap. Then, the pain grew so strong that it jumbled all her thoughts.
- 8 She looked at her leg again. The swelling had increased. *I don't think I can just stay here and wait,* she thought to herself. *I need to try to get home.*
- 9 Samantha saw a long branch a few feet away that would make a good walking stick. She crawled toward it and grabbed it with both hands.
- 10 Using the walking stick, Samantha propped herself up. She was so dizzy and disoriented that she almost fainted, but she closed her eyes and waited for her head to stop spinning.
- 11 *One step at a time,* she thought. She took one slow step toward home, leaning on the stick. Then, she took another shaky, hesitant step. Her legs were weak and unsteady. She took a few more steps, then stopped to rest against a tree.
- 12 For the first time in her ordeal, Samantha started to cry.
- 13 That's when she heard the bark.
- 14 *That's Hickory,* she thought. *I hope he brought help!*
- 15 Now, she could hear the dog approaching, tearing through bushes and barking the whole time. She lifted her head and saw him bounding toward her. She was so relieved. Behind Hickory, a small figure was barely visible coming through the woods. It was Tim! Samantha had never been so happy to see her brother.
- 16 “Samantha, what happened?” he asked with a terrified look on his face.
- 17 “I got bit by a poisonous snake. You need to get Mom or Dad, and I need to go to a hospital.”

Seeing How Characters Change

Partner Practice

Directions: Use the text on page 8 to answer the questions.

- 1** What is a theme in the story?
 - A** Always pay attention in the woods.
 - B** Help may come when you least expect it.
 - C** Always listen to your family.
 - D** Keep trying until you succeed.

- 2** Which quotation **best** supports the theme in the story?
 - A** “*I need to try to get home.*” (paragraph 8)
 - B** “For the first time in her ordeal, Samantha started to cry.” (paragraph 12)
 - C** “Her ankle and calf were swollen and turning black.” (paragraph 3)
 - D** “She pictured Hickory lost in the woods or happily splashing around...” (paragraph 5)

- 3** Paragraph 15 supports a theme of the story by showing that Hickory...
 - A** brings help.
 - B** gets lost in the forest.
 - C** is playing with Samantha’s brother.
 - D** loves Samantha.

- 4** Which detail would be **most** important to include in a summary of the story?
 - A** Samantha tries to get home on her own.
 - B** A snake bites Samantha.
 - C** Hickory leaves Samantha to find help.
 - D** Hickory is an untrained and playful dog.

Seeing How Characters Change

Independent Practice

Directions: Read the excerpt from the story “Backup Arrives” independently. As you read, practice the steps for “Notice When Characters Change” on page 6.

Backup Arrives

1 “Victoria, why are your brothers’ library books in your room?”

2 I was horrified to see Rita, my stepmom, holding my secret stash of football books.

3 “She’s probably studying the game to improve her cheerleading,” said Blake. He was my favorite brother.

4 “Blake’s right,” I agreed. With eight eyes on me, it was the best answer possible. And it satisfied Rita, who asked, “Are you practicing routines with Katie at the park today?”

5 “Going to the park now,” I replied truthfully as I ran out the door. I felt terrible lying, but I couldn’t tell Rita the whole truth. I hadn’t practiced cheerleading in weeks. The *truth* was that I wasn’t practicing high kicks at the park; I was kicking off football games!

6 “You played great, Victoria,” Junior complimented me after our pick-up game, “and not just for a girl!”

7 The other players nodded in agreement, and I felt proud, like I had won the Super Bowl. Then, I heard three familiar and rowdy voices that made me freeze—my brothers were at the park!

8 “I gotta go!” I threw the football to Junior and ran home.

9 At home, I stuffed my dirty clothes in a secret backpack and hopped in the shower. As I exited the bathroom, Blake was waiting for me.

10 “I saw you playing football. You’re really good.” Blake’s kindness was too much to believe.

11 “Technically, football teams our age have boy and girl players,” Blake quietly informed me back in my room. “There aren’t any girls right now...you could be the first!”

12 This sounded wonderful but impossible, so I buried my excitement. “Tomorrow is your last game, so I missed everything,” I answered angrily. “Besides, Rita would lose it!”

13 “Next season starts in six weeks, and tryouts are in a month,” he said. “Don’t worry about Mom. Remember Mom’s mantra?” Blake said, rolling his eyes.

14 We said it together in our most sarcastic tone. “Teamwork makes the dream work!” We both fell over laughing, happier than we had been in a long time.

Seeing How Characters Change

Independent Practice

Directions: Use the text on page 14 to answer the questions.

- 1** What is a theme in the story?
 - A** Keeping a secret can be hard work.
 - B** People may surprise you.
 - C** Follow your parents' advice.
 - D** Girls can play football, too.

- 2** Which quotation **best** supports the theme in the story?
 - A** "I felt terrible lying..." (paragraph 5)
 - B** "You played great, Victoria, ... 'and not just for a girl!'" (paragraph 6)
 - C** "Blake's kindness was too much to believe." (paragraph 10)
 - D** "Remember Mom's mantra?" Blake said, rolling his eyes." (paragraph 13)

- 3** Paragraph 11 supports a theme of the story by showing that Blake...
 - A** supports Victoria playing football.
 - B** does not think girls should play football with boys.
 - C** wants to tell Rita the truth.
 - D** plans to help Victoria practice football.

- 4** Which detail would be **most** important to include in a summary of the story?
 - A** Victoria hates the color pink.
 - B** Victoria skips cheerleading practice to play football.
 - C** Victoria does not get along with her stepmom, Rita.
 - D** Blake is the nicest triplet.

- 5** How does the writer show us that Victoria changes?
