



THE
LEARNING
INSTITUTE

An Instructional Guide for Teachers

Related Readings Instructional Guide

The Great Fire

by

Jim Murphy

For use in a TLI Model Literacy Unit
Grade 6/Informational

About the TLI Model Literacy Units

The Learning Institute (TLI) is pleased to offer Model Literacy Units in 2012-13. Based on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Model Content Frameworks, the TLI units are designed to facilitate full implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in the classroom. The units focus instruction on one anchor text that is supported by a TLI Core Reading Guide (CRG) and several shorter texts that are supported by a TLI Related Readings Instructional Guide (RRIG). Both the TLI Core Reading Guide and the Related Readings Instructional Guide include a variety of student reading and writing activities integrating the anchor text and the related selections.

The Model Literacy Units are designed to cover approximately seven weeks of instruction. Each TLI Model Literacy Unit allows approximately one week of instruction per section of the Core Reading Guide that supports the anchor text in the unit. Recommended timeframes are given for any background and supporting materials as well as the Related Readings in the Related Readings Instructional Guide. While a summary and purpose for reading are provided for *all* resources in the RRIG, full instructional support, including Student Activity Sheets (SAS), are included *only* for each of the five Related Readings. (NOTE: The approach in each instructional unit may vary somewhat according to the content of each CRG that supports the anchor text as well as the types of shorter texts included in the RRIG.)

TLI offers four Model Literacy Units (two literature/two informational) for Grades 3-12 for the following titles. Additional Model Literacy Units will be available 2013-14.

MODEL LITERACY UNIT TITLES: 2012-13

GRADE 3

LITERATURE UNITS	<i>Charlotte's Web</i> by E.B. White (Unit 1) <i>Stone Fox</i> by John Reynolds Gardiner (Unit 3)
INFORMATIONAL UNITS	<i>If You Sailed the Mayflower in 1620</i> by Ann McGovern (Unit 2) <i>The Magic School Bus: Inside the Earth</i> by Joanna Cole (Unit 4)

GRADE 4

LITERATURE UNITS	<i>The Lightning Thief</i> by Rick Riordan (Unit 1) <i>The Trumpet of the Swan</i> by E.B. White (Unit 3)
INFORMATIONAL UNITS	<i>The Story of Sacajawea: Guide to Lewis and Clark</i> by Della Rowland (Unit 2) <i>Discovering Mars: The Amazing Story of the Red Planet</i> by Melvin Berger (Unit 4)

GRADE 5

LITERATURE UNITS	<i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> by C.S. Lewis (Unit 1) <i>Bud, Not Buddy</i> by Christopher Paul Curtis (Unit 3) <i>What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?</i> by Jean Fritz (Unit 2)
INFORMATIONAL UNITS	<i>Quest for the Tree Kangaroo: An Expedition to the Cloud Forest of New Guinea</i> by Sy Montgomery (Unit 4)

GRADE 6

LITERATURE UNITS	<i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i> by Mark Twain (Unit 1) <i>The Miracle Worker</i> by William Gibson (D) (Unit 3)
INFORMATIONAL UNITS	<i>The Great Fire</i> by Jim Murphy (Unit 2) <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> by Frederick Douglass (Unit 4)

GRADE 7

LITERATURE UNITS	<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i> by Madeleine L'Engle (Unit 1) <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i> by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett (D) (Unit 3)
INFORMATIONAL UNITS	<i>Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott</i> by Russell Freedman (Unit 2) <i>Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad</i> by Ann Petry (Unit 4)

GRADE 8

LITERATURE UNITS *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding (Unit 1)
Twelve Angry Men by Reginald Rose (D) (Unit 3)

INFORMATIONAL UNITS *Mythology* by Edith Hamilton (Unit 2)
Travels with Charley: In Search of America by John Steinbeck (Unit 4)

GRADE 9

LITERATURE UNITS *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (Unit 1)
Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare (D) (Unit 3)

INFORMATIONAL UNITS *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer (Unit 2)
Life on the Mississippi by Mark Twain (Unit 4)

GRADE 10

LITERATURE UNITS *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain (Unit 1)
Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare (D) (Unit 3)

INFORMATIONAL UNITS *The Power of Myth* by Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers (Unit 2)
The Prince by Machiavelli (Unit 4)

GRADE 11

LITERATURE UNITS *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway (Unit 1)
Macbeth by William Shakespeare (D) (Unit 3)

INFORMATIONAL UNITS *A River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean (Unit 2)
America's Constitution: A Biography by Akhil Reed Amar (Unit 4)

GRADE 12

LITERATURE UNITS *Frankenstein* by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Unit 1)
King Lear by William Shakespeare (D) (Unit 3)

INFORMATIONAL UNITS *1776* by David McCullough (Unit 2)
What They Fought For 1861-1865 by James M. McPherson (Unit 4)

In the Related Readings Instructional Guide, each Related Reading and resource includes an **Access Point**. The Access Point will offer one of three options:

- 1) a permalink to the Arkansas State Library (ASL), a free service to AR educators/students;
 - 2) a URL address to a specific Web site; or
 - 3) a text version of the source provided in its entirety within the guide.
- (Rarely, the RRIIG may include an additional resource that is a print source from a library.)

TLI recommends that for permalinks to the ASL or to Web sites, teachers check their access prior to the time of instruction. Teachers may want to make copies of materials (class sets or individual copies) so that students may interact with the texts on paper rather than via a computer.

TLI has taken great care to procure materials that are free and easy to access. For those materials in the Related Readings Instructional Guide that are not available via the Web or through the ASL, TLI has obtained rights and permissions to include those texts here in the guide.

Accessing the Arkansas State Library



The Arkansas State Library (ASL) offers a Traveler Online Database Program accessible to teachers and students through public and school libraries as well as to all Arkansas residents. Please see the following link for more information about how your school library can complete its free registration: [ASL What is Traveler pdf](#).

Traveler provides access to a large volume of full-text information from magazines, journals, newspapers, e-books, primary historical documents, as well as maps, images, schematics, and charts. Any full-text articles and materials can be printed, saved, or e-mailed for later use. We encourage instructors to visit and explore the databases and features available for free through the ASL.

RELATED READINGS INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

The Great Fire by Jim Murphy

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(Blank lined paper is provided for student writing tasks at the end of the RRIg.)	

Teaching with the Related Readings Instructional Guide

***The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy**

Please be sure to read the selections/materials to determine their appropriateness for use with your students. Since *The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy, the Related Readings, and several of the Additional Resources (including Web sites) refer to tragic fires—the Great Fire in Chicago, the Triangle Factory Fire in New York City, the Peshtigo Fire in Wisconsin, and a deadly wildfire in California—the material may be disturbing to some students. (**Note:** The Web site links provided in the guide direct students to a specific location; please be aware that the site may contain sensitive information on other pages to which students are not directed.) All of the sources in the guide relate in some way to *The Great Fire*; you may wish to use all or some of the selections/materials, depending on sensitivity issues, the needs of your students, and the amount of instructional time available.

The Core Reading Guide that supports *The Great Fire* divides the book into three manageable sections. Allowing approximately one week of classroom instruction for each section of the book and the CRG activities and tasks, instructional timeframes are assigned to the background and supporting material as well as each Related Reading to fulfill approximately seven weeks of instruction. Teachers are encouraged to review and adjust if necessary the suggested timeframes in a unit's CRG and RRIIG before beginning instruction.

Instructional Recommendations

Before reading <i>The Great Fire</i>	
Background Materials: Chicago Map/Timelines "Heat" "Ways Combusting Manure Can Ignite Fire" "Spontaneous Combustion of Haystacks"	1-2 days
During reading of <i>The Great Fire</i>	
Based on the TLI Core Reading Guide for <i>The Great Fire</i> by Jim Murphy, allow approximately three weeks of instruction to cover the anchor text.	
Supporting Materials: "Decades of Immigrants" "Maps: Chicago on Fire" "Did a Cow Cause Chicago Fire?" "The O'Leary Legend"	1-2 days
After reading <i>The Great Fire</i>	
Research Project:	5-7 days
Related Readings:	
Related Reading 1: "October 8, 1871": The Great Chicago Fire"	1-2 days
Related Reading 2: "Pack on My Back"	2-3 days
Related Reading 3: "Fire in the Night"	4-5 days
Related Reading 4: "Fire and Friendship"	3-4 days
Related Reading 5: "The Fury of Fire: One Family's Terrifying Wildfire Story "	1-2 days
TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL TIME: 33 – 42 days	

BACKGROUND RESOURCES (before reading *The Great Fire*)

Instruction Time: approximately 1-2 days

Before reading the anchor text, *The Great Fire*, provide some context so that students will better understand the time, place, and circumstances surrounding the Great Fire in Chicago, Illinois, in 1871.

Background Resource(s) 1: Chicago, Illinois

[CC: RI.6.7]

Current Map

Access Point: online at [World Atlas Chicago IL Map](#)

Source: World Atlas

Timelines

Access Point: online at [World Atlas Chicago IL Timeline](#)

Source: World Atlas

Access Point: online at [PBS AmEx Chicago City of the Century Timeline](#)

Source: *PBS American Experience: Chicago City of the Century*

Teacher Suggestion: Point out that Chicago is located on one of the Great Lakes, Lake Michigan. The Mississippi River forms the entire western border of the state of Illinois. Although Chicago is a large city (2,695,598 in 2010), Springfield is the capital of the state.

Explain to students that as the United States grew in the early 1800s, increasingly more people moved from the east coast to explore and settle the untamed territories west of the Mississippi River. Chicago was perfectly situated to grow as a result of this westward expansion.

Before becoming an incorporated city in 1837, Chicago was a small trading post and home to Fort Dearborn, a U.S. outpost, in 1795. Canals and then railroads helped make Chicago a central hub for goods traveling north and south as well as east and west, especially prepared meats. From the Civil War until the 1920s, Chicago was known as the meatpacking capital of the United States, if not the world. (Today, Chicago is still a major center for trade; 50% of U.S. railway freight passes through Chicago.)

Because of its growing industries, Chicago grew rapidly as a young city. By 1850, the population of Chicago reached 29,963, and 15,682 of those were immigrants, mostly Irish and German, pursuing the American dream. In order to meet the demand of this growth, the city of Chicago quickly constructed many buildings, streets, and sidewalks of wood, a cheap and easy resource compared to brick or stone.

The next three background resources provide information on how heat energy moves, thus spreading fire, as well as how combustible materials, such as hay and manure, can ignite fires. Given that many structures in Chicago at the time of the Great Fire were made of wood and the source of the fire was located in a barn, these articles will help to explain some basic concepts of how a disaster such as the Great Fire can begin and spread with devastating consequences.

Background Resource 2: “Heat”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.9]

Access Point: Discovering Collection (GALE) via the Arkansas State Library; on the “Search Types” bar at the top of the page, select “Advanced.” Enter the following Gale Document Number in the “Enter a Document Number” field: EJ2121000022. Select “search.”

Genre: nonfiction; article

Author: John T. Tanacredi and John Loret

Source: *Experiment Central*. Vol. 2

Summary: The article explains three different ways in which heat can move from one substance to another: conduction, convection, and radiation. **Note:** The text includes science experiments in addition to the article.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Read to discover how the scientific explanation of convection helps you better understand the rising column of hot air that Murphy describes on p. 60 of *The Great Fire*.

Background Resource 3: “Ways Combusting Manure Can Ignite Fire”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.7]

Access Point: online at [ABC News Ways combusting manure can ignite fire](#)

Genre: nonfiction; article or video

Author: Bob Banfield

Source: ABC News/KABC Local News

Summary: This piece discusses how wet organic material such as manure or stacks of baled hay can spontaneously produce heat and begin to burn through a chemical reaction when the material reaches “ignition temperature.”

Set a Purpose for Reading/Viewing: Read to learn how the weather can affect the likelihood of a fire caused by spontaneous combustion in a manure pile.

Background Resource 4: “Spontaneous Combustion of Haystacks”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3]

Access Point: online at [AgriBusiness Spontaneous Combustion of Hay Stacks](#)

Genre: nonfiction; article

Author: Kristin Taylor

Source: Westfield Insurance AgriBusiness Division

Summary: This article warns of wet conditions that can lead to the spontaneous combustion of haystacks and describes how stacks of baled hay can reach a dangerous temperature and can ignite.

Set a Purpose for Reading: According to Chapter 1 of Murphy’s book, *The Great Fire*, the loft in the O’Leary’s barn “held over three tons of timothy hay, delivered earlier that day.” Read to learn about how fire in a haystack can start by spontaneous combustion.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES (during reading of *The Great Fire*)

Instruction Time: approximately 1-2 days

The following supporting resources may be covered at any point and in any order (determined by the instructor) during the reading of *The Great Fire*. The PBS Web site can help students understand the size and make-up of the city of Chicago at the time of the fire as well as aid their understanding of the scope of the fire. Two other resources provide information on the possible explanations for the start of the Great Fire.

Supporting Resource 1: “Decades of Immigrants”

[CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.7]

Access Point: online at [PBS AmEx Chicago City of the Century Immigrants](#)

Genre: Web site

Source: *PBS American Experience, Chicago: City of the Century*

Summary: The Decades of Immigrants Web site discusses how immigrants survived by forming mutual aid societies and settling in neighborhood groups. The site provides annual statistics on top immigrant groups living in Chicago from 1850–1990. Information on the total population of Chicago during the same decades is also given.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Explore the links on the Web site that pertain to the time period just prior to the Great Fire of 1871 to learn more about immigrant groups that settled in Chicago.

Supporting Resource 2: “Maps: Chicago on Fire”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.7, RI.6.9]

Access Point: online at [PBS AmEx Chicago City of the Century Fire Map](#)

Genre: Web site

Source: *PBS American Experience, Chicago: City of the Century*

Summary: The Web site contains an hour-by-hour visual and sound presentation of the fire spreading through Chicago, a text-only version of the same information with firsthand accounts of the fire, and a video re-creation of the Great Chicago Fire.

Set a Purpose for Reading/Viewing: Explore the links on the Web site map and the associated video to expand your understanding of how the Great Fire spread throughout the city.

Supporting Resource 3: “Did a Cow Cause Chicago Fire?”

[CC: RI.6.7, RI.6.8]

Access Point: online at [Travel Channel Cause of Chicago Fire](#)

Genre: video

Source: The Travel Channel

Summary: The short 3-minute video from The Travel Channel debunks the idea that Mrs. O’Leary’s cow caused the Great Fire and discusses other theories for the fire’s cause.

Set a Purpose for Viewing: Watch to discover the various theories that try to explain how the Great Fire started, including how the story of Mrs. O’Leary’s cow came to be.

Supporting Resource 4: “The O’Leary Legend”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.7]

Access Point: online at [Chicago History Museum OLeary Legend](#)

Genre: Web site

Source: The Chicago History Museum/The Great Chicago Fire & the Web of Memory

Summary: The Web site presents information on the legend of Mrs. O’Leary’s cow and why this story has become a legend.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Read to learn more about the legend of Mrs. O’Leary’s cow.

RELATED READING 1 (after reading *The Great Fire*)

“October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire” by Sean Potter

Instructional Time: approximately 1-2 days

Introducing the Related Reading

Access Point: EBSCO Middle Search Plus via the Arkansas State Library; see [October 8 1871 The Great Chicago Fire Weatherwise](#) (Note: This article is offered in pdf format.)

Genre: nonfiction; article

Author: Sean Potter

Source: *Weatherwise*, Sep/Oct 2010, Vol. 63 Issue 5

Educators: Please be sure to read the selection to determine its appropriateness for use with your students.

Summary

“October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire” is a retrospect on the Great Fire. The article uses statistics and journal entries kept by the U.S. Army Signal Service to explain how weather patterns and conditions in the upper midwestern United States in the months before the Chicago Fire contributed to the fire’s rapid spread.

Before Reading Related Reading 1

Introduce Vocabulary [CC: RI.6.4, L.6.6]

Discuss the following vocabulary words with students before they read the selection.

barometer *n.* an instrument that measures the pressure of the atmosphere and is useful in helping to predict weather

meteorological *adj.* having to do with the science of forecasting the weather

propagated *v.* extended; spread out to a wider area



Set a Purpose for Reading [CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3]

Assign students to read Related Reading 1 with this purpose in mind:

Read to discover the role that weather patterns and conditions played in the Great Chicago Fire.

Related Reading 1: Text Features

Text Features [CC: RI.6.5, RI.6.7, RI.6.10, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Text features are elements that writers use to help readers better understand the ideas and events presented in the text. **Tables** are one type of text feature that present data in rows and columns. The article, “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire,” contains a table of weather observations from October 8, 1871, which show conditions in Chicago and the Midwest on the day of the Great Chicago Fire. The article also contains a weather **map** of the United States.



Distribute the **Related Reading 1: Text Features SAS** and direct students to complete it as they read “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire.”

After Reading Related Reading 1

Review the Text Feature [CC: SL.6.1, SL.6.2]

Have students take out their completed **Selection 1: Text Feature SAS**. Discuss the table and map from the article “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire.” Call on several volunteers to share their answers to the questions on the **SAS**.

Related Reading 1: Text Feature SAS Answer Key

1. What do you learn about the air pressure from the barometer readings on October 8, 1871? [CC: RI.6.7, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The air pressure fluctuates throughout the day from 30.06 in. to 29.89 in. to 29.94 in.

2. What were the wind conditions about the time that the Great Fire began? [CC: RI.6.7, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The wind was blowing from the SSW at 18 mph.

3. From the information in the article as well as from what you have read in *The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy, how can you explain the entry for the weather as “smoky” at 7:35 a.m. EST on the morning of the Great Fire? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.7, RI.6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The “smoky” weather refers to the smoke in the air from the fire in Chicago on the previous night of October 7, 1871. The Great Fire didn’t begin until about 8:45 p.m. on October 8, 1871.



Distribute the **Related Reading 1: Comprehension and Analysis SAS** and have students work individually to complete it as they read “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire.”

Related Reading 1: Comprehension and Analysis SAS Answer Key

1. At the time of the fire, the *Chicago Tribune* stated that the city was “swept by a conflagration which has no parallels in the annals of history, for the quantity of property destroyed, and the utter and almost irremediable ruin which it wrought.” What can you infer about the meaning of the words “conflagration” and “irremediable” based on context clues in paragraph two of the article? Which statistics from the article support the statement? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.4, RI.6.5, RI.6.8, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: “Conflagration” means a fire. “Irremediable” means not able to be corrected or fixed. The sentence says that a “conflagration” swept the city and almost completely destroyed it. The fire burned more than 2,000 acres and destroyed the central business district. It burned 1,600 stores, 28 hotels, and 60 churches. More than 200 people died and 90,000 (1/3 of the population) were left homeless.

2. When was the National Weather Service established? Under the guidance of which agency was it first established? What purpose did the organization serve at the time of the Great Fire? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.3, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The National Weather Service was established in 1870 under the guidance of The U.S. Army Signal Service. The agency’s purpose was to collect data about weather patterns and conditions across the United States.

3. On p. 20 of Murphy’s book *The Great Fire*, Murphy describes both the Great Fire of October 8th and the fire on the previous night: “On Saturday the seventh, the night before the Great Fire, a blaze destroyed four blocks and took over sixteen hours to control. What made Sunday the eighth different and particularly dangerous was the steady wind blowing in from the southwest.” Which specific weather conditions in the Midwest and in Chicago contributed to the rapid spread of the fire? Use data from the article and table to support your answers. What purpose do the data serve after the Great Fire? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.7, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The weather had been unusually dry for the two months leading up to the fire. Only 0.11 inches of rain fell in the 22-day period before the fire. From July 1, 1871, until October 8, 1871, Chicago received only 5.27 inches of rain. Also, at the time of the Great Fire, the wind was blowing SSW at 18mph. The data collected about weather patterns help to explain how the fire spread and why it was impossible to put out.

4. According to James Mackintosh, an observer in charge of the Chicago Signal Service station, why were Chicagoans who observed the fire between 10:30 and midnight not alarmed when it first began? [CC: RI.6.1, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: Observers weren’t too concerned at this time because the fire in Chicago that occurred on the previous night was much larger, and it was stopped by the Chicago River.

5. Using Mackintosh’s journal entry, contrast how the fire spread before 1:00 a.m.

with how it spread after 1:00 a.m. Compare Mackintosh’s explanation of how the fire spread after 1:00 a.m. with that of Murphy’s description of a convection column on p. 60 of *The Great Fire*. Evaluate Murphy’s information on the convection column. Does Murphy’s information seem reliable? Explain. [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.3, RI.6.7 – 6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *Before 1 a.m., the fire spread through contact with the flames.*

Mackintosh’s journal states:

Hitherto the fire had been propagated, and with no great velocity, merely by contact with the flames, but toward 1 a.m. the heat of the fire had become so intense as greatly to increase the power of the wind in the immediate neighborhood of the flames. This was especially the case on the east and west of the fire toward the front, the wind blowing straight toward the fire in all directions.

Macintosh goes on to say, “This caused a decided whirling motion in the column of flame and smoke, which was contrary to the hands of a watch.”

Murphy’s account also reports a convection column:

. . . The wind had increased in velocity, and burning chunks of wood were being carried for many blocks before they fell to earth. No accurate measure of the wind’s velocity was made during the fire, though many eyewitnesses claimed it was as strong as a hurricane. It’s likely that the wind was blowing at a steady 30 miles per hour with some ferocious gusts. The stronger winds, the ones people remembered best, were probably caused by rising convective heat.

As the fire burned and heated up an area (sometimes to 1500 degrees), the hot air rose and formed a column hundreds of feet tall. Oxygen-rich air was sucked into the column at the base, where it mixed with the burning fuels and also rose, twisting and whirling around as it did. Sometimes giant bubbles of unburned gases rose within the column and then exploded high in the sky. The wind generated from such a column could reach out hundreds of feet and might attain hurricanelike speeds.

At its fiercest, such a whirlwind could rip a roof off a house and pick up the building’s contents. In addition, many people had hauled furniture from burning buildings and abandoned it in the streets in hopes of saving it. Burning mattresses and dressers were scooped up by the furious gale and hurled hundreds of feet. A block that was safe and fire free one moment, might burst into flames a second later. . . “

Murphy’s information seems reliable because it is supported by reasons and facts, as well as the firsthand account given by Mackintosh.

6. What happened to the local Chicago Signal Office during the Great Fire? How quickly was the local office reestablished after the fire? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.3, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *The Great Fire destroyed the Signal Service Office in Chicago and its instruments and records. A new office in Chicago reopened on October 12 with new equipment sent from Washington, D.C. and a new printing press from New York.*

7. What information in the article supports the claim that the rain on the morning of October 10 had little effect on putting out the fire? How does the information about rain in the article compare with the information about rain in *The Great Fire* on pp. 95-97? How might you explain the difference of opinion about the rain’s effect on putting out the fire? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.7 – 6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *According to the article, only 0.1 inches of rain fell on the city that morning, which was not enough to put out the fire. Murphy mentions that a drizzle began around 11:00 and about 3:00 a.m., “a steady rain was coming down.” That rain “soaked the leaves and shrubs and grass and halted the fire.” In Murphy’s book, he quotes Mary Fales, a woman who survived the Great Fire, as saying, “I never felt so grateful in my life as to hear the rain pour down at three o’clock this morning. That stopped the fire.” Murphy goes on to say that “The fire’s rapid spread had been halted, but pockets of fire would burn in places all through the night and for days afterward. Contained at last, the fires could be dealt with, with real effect.” It’s possible that different amounts of rain fell on different parts of the city. In Lincoln Park, where many Chicagoans headed to escape the fire, the rain was sufficient to “soak the leaves and shrubs” and “halt the fire.” Murphy does state, though, that the “pockets of fire” continued to burn for days.*

8. What would you say is the overall purpose of the article? [CC: RI.6.2, RI.6.6, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *The purpose is to show the effect that weather patterns and conditions in Chicago had on the Great Fire.*

Related Reading 1: Additional Resource

After students have completed the above instructional material for “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire,” they may wish to explore the following resource as time permits.

Additional Resource: “1971 . . . Commemorative Year of America’s Most Disastrous Forest Fire”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3]

Access Point: online at [USDA Forest Service Fire Control Notes](#) (Note: This article is in pdf format. Please see page 16 of the file.)

Genre: nonfiction; article

Author: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service

Source: *Fire Control Notes*/Fall 1971/Volume 32, No. 4, p 16

Summary: The article focuses on the weather patterns in the Midwest on October 8, 1871, when another disastrous fire—the Peshtigo Fire in Wisconsin—occurred on the

same day as the Chicago Fire and claimed 1300 lives.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Read to learn about the similarities and differences between the Peshtigo Fire and the Great Chicago Fire.

RELATED READING 2 (after reading *The Great Fire*)

“Pack on My Back” by Hilda Polachek

Instruction Time: approximately 2-3 days

Introducing the Related Reading

Access Point: online at [Fed Writers Project Pack on My Back H Polacheck](#)

(**Note:** Because the online text comes from an interview, page breaks in the original transcription are noted. We suggest reading from the beginning of the interview up to page 4: “You see, I was a newspaper and a department store.”)

Genre: nonfiction; oral history

Author: Hilda Polacheck

Source: American Life Histories: Manuscripts from The Federal Writers’ Project, 1936-1940

Educators: Please be sure to read the selection to determine its appropriateness for use with your students.

Summary

A Russian immigrant who has newly arrived to Chicago relates his experience during the Great Fire.

Background

Explain to students that “Pack on My Back” is an oral history. In an oral history, an interviewer (Hilda Polacheck) collects information by giving her subject (a Russian immigrant) the opportunity to recall memories of life events which have historical significance. Oral histories may be recorded on video or audio equipment and later transcribed and preserved. The selection “Pack on My Back” came from the Federal Writers’ Project, a Great Depression-era/WPA project to fund writers. This interview is conducted by Hilda Polacheck, a Polish immigrant who settled in Chicago’s West Side. Polacheck benefited as a child from offerings at Hull-House (founded by Jane Addams, a well-known social reformer from Chicago) and went on to become an activist as well as a writer.

Before Reading Related Reading 2

Introduce Vocabulary [CC: RI.6.4, L.6.6]

Discuss the following vocabulary words with students before they read the selection.

peddler *n.* a person who travels around selling goods

commerce *n.* the buying and selling of goods

dry goods *n.* clothing or other products made of cloth

lodging *n.* a rented room in someone's home



Set a Purpose for Reading [CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3]

Assign students to read Related Reading 2 with this purpose in mind:

Read to discover how a Russian immigrant describes his experience of surviving the Great Fire.



Distribute the **Related Reading 2: Comprehension and Analysis SAS** and have students work individually to complete it as they read “Pack on My Back.”

After Reading Related Reading 2

Related Reading 2: Comprehension and Analysis SAS Answer Key

(Note: The Russian immigrant being interviewed will be referred to as the subject.)

1. How does the subject first learn about the Great Fire in Chicago? What is his reaction? How does his reaction compare with what Murphy says about spectators on p. 31, paragraph 2 of *The Great Fire*? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.7, RI.6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample Answer: The subject is about to go to sleep for the night when he hears the fire bells ringing. He wants to go out to see the fire and asks his two roommates whether they would also like to see it. The subject's reaction is similar to Murphy's description of the spectators at the Great Fire: "Most stood by watching the yellow-orange flames leaping from roof to roof and listening to the horrible crackle pop of dry pine being consumed. Fires were extremely common back then and thought to be as exciting and dramatic as a night at the theater."

2. Read the following words spoken by one of the subject's roommates: "Why should I care where the fire is," one of the men said. "As long as our house is not on fire, I don't care what house is burning. There is a fire every Monday and Thursday in Chicago." Compare the statement spoken by the roommate with information about the number of fires in Chicago in 1870 and 1871, which is found in Chapter 1, pp. 19-21 of *The Great Fire*. Do the roommate's statements seem like a reasonable response to the fire? Use evidence from *The Great Fire* to support your answer. [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.3 – 6.5, RI.6.7, RI.6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample Answer: The subject's roommate says fires are so common in the city of Chicago that they no longer interest Chicagoans unless their own house is burning. The statement seems reasonable because the Great Fire on October 8, 1871, was only one of many fires in Chicago that year. In 1870, firefighters answered almost 600 alarms. In 1871, even more fires occurred because of the extremely dry weather. In October of 1871, "as many as six fires were breaking out every day." On the night before the Great Fire, firefighters struggled for 16 hours to control a blaze that destroyed four blocks.

3. Why isn't the subject too concerned for his safety when he goes out to see the fire?

What does he do next? Connect his reaction regarding his safety with what James Mackintosh says about the Chicago River on p. 2 of the Related Reading 1 article “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire.” [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.7, RI.6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample Answer: The fire is on the other side of the river. The subject isn't worried because he doesn't think the fire can cross the river, so he goes home to bed. His reaction seems typical. In the article, “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire,” James Mackintosh says that when he observed the Chicago Fire before midnight on the night it had begun, “Still, no one felt alarmed, except those in the immediate vicinity. I myself was present, and had seen the much larger fire of the previous night checked by the river.”

4. The subject and his roommates flee to Lincoln Park to escape the fire. Evaluate their decision based on information you have learned in *The Great Fire*. Use the index in Murphy's book to look up “Lincoln Park” and find page references for that information. Also, look at the map on pp. 88-89 from Chapter 5 of *The Great Fire* and locate Lincoln Park. In Murphy's book *The Great Fire*, what additional information do you learn about Lincoln Park from the photo and caption on p. 108? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.7, RI.6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample Answer: The subject and his roommates go to Lincoln Park. It was a good decision. As the fire approached the edge of the wooded Lincoln Park, light rain began to fall. The rain increased after several hours and put out the fire. Lincoln Park was saved. From the caption you learn that 30,000 people set up temporary homes in Lincoln Park after the fire.

5. What does the subject take with him when he flees the fire? What possessions are others trying to save? What is the subject's opinion of the things he sees others trying to save? What do you learn about people who have only a few moments to decide what to save during a disaster? Use details from the selection to support your answer. [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.3, RI.6.6, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample Answer: The subject ties his clothes in a sheet and carries them on his back. Other people try to save their cats, dogs, and goats. One woman carries a pot of soup that is spilling onto her dress. Another woman carries her framed wedding veil and wreath because it would be bad luck to leave it behind. The subject thinks people are unreasonable because they try to save “crazy things,” like a pot of soup and a framed wedding veil and wreath. Some people like the subject are practical and flee with useful items such as clothes. Others are sentimental and save a framed wedding veil and wreath. Still others are not thinking clearly and try to save a pot of soup that is impossible to carry without spilling.

6. Marshall Field is having goods removed from his store Marshall Field and Company. Where is he sending them? Evaluate his decision using both the information in “Pack on My Back” and the map on pp. 88-89 from Chapter 5 of *The Great Fire*. Note that Twelfth Street is located on the far left of the map. What does this incident with Field illustrate about the difference between the rich and the poor? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.3, RI.6.5, RI.6.7, RI.6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample Answer: *Marshall Field sends his goods to street-car barns near Twentieth and State. According to the map in Murphy’s book, the fire never reaches Twentieth and State. The fire ends on State and Harrison. Twentieth Street is several blocks south of Harrison. Also, the fire is blowing north, not south, so Field’s decision proves to be a good one. The subject says that a few weeks after the fire, Marshall Field began selling his goods out of the street-car barns. Unlike the poor who flee with little more than the clothes on their backs, Marshall Field has many resources available to him—men and boys load the wagons with goods from his store and take them to the street-car barns. The subject notes that Marshall Field “must have been one of the owners of the street-car company. Otherwise, why would the street-car people have allowed him to bring his goods there.”*

7. How does the fire present an opportunity for the subject? Based on information in “Pack on My Back,” do you think he regretted immigrating to Chicago? Use evidence from the selection to support your opinion. [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.6, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample Answer: *The subject peddles his goods to rural farmers who are glad to see him because they don’t have access to stores, mail, or newspapers. He mentions no regrets. He seems content with his decision to leave Russia and start a new life in Chicago. After the fire, he seems content with peddling his goods to rural farmers and sharing news of the city with them.*

8. On the night of the fire, the subject gathers with others on the streets of Chicago. He overhears people talking about the cause or reason for the fire. Who are some people blaming for the Great Fire? Evaluate these reasons and causes. Is any evidence given in the text to support them? How do these causes and reasons compare with those that Murphy presents in *The Great Fire*? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.8, RI.6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample Answer: *The subject hears people give religious reasons for the cause of the fire. A minister says that God sent the fire as a warning to the people of Chicago for their wickedness because there were too many saloons in Chicago. Another woman says that since Jesus was born in a barn and the fire started in a barn, then the fire is a “direct warning from God.” A man who lives next door to the O’Learys says that the fire began when Mrs. O’Leary went to the barn to milk her cow. O’Leary’s cow kicked over a lamp and started the fire. The religious reasons claiming the fire was an act of God are not based on any evidence. Instead, they are based on faith. There is no evidence to support that the man who claims to live next door to the O’Learys really is their neighbor. It seems unlikely that the subject would have bumped into a neighbor of the O’Learys. Perhaps the man is repeating a story he had heard. Murphy says that the newspapers blamed the Great Fire on the poor. They claimed that Catherine O’Leary was “poverty stricken,” and that the firefighters were “drunken.” Murphy suggests that the disaster was the result of different factors: mistakes that sent firefighters to the wrong location of the fire, the city’s lack of emergency planning, poor building regulations that allowed buildings and their decorations to be made of wood, streets made of pine blocks, wooden sidewalks, a record drought, and the gusting wind.*

Related Reading 2: Additional Resource

After students have completed the above instructional material for “Pack on My Back,” they may wish to explore the following resource as time permits.

Additional Resource: “The Bells”

[CC: RL.6.1 – 6.5]

Access Point: online at [Literature Network The Bells EA Poe](#)

Genre: poetry

Author: Edgar Allan Poe

Summary: “The Bells” by Edgar Allan Poe describes various types of bells, including an alarum bell in stanza III of the poem.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Read to discover the emotional impact Poe conveys with the ringing of various types of bells, including alarum bells. Have students pay attention to Poe’s use of alliteration, onomatopoeia, repetition, and rhyme as they read.

RELATED READING 3: (after reading *The Great Fire*)

“Fire in the Night” by Frank O’Rourke

Instruction Time: approximately 3-4 days

Introducing the Related Reading

Access Point: available on page 53 of the Related Readings Instructional Guide

Genre: fiction; short story

Author: Frank O’Rourke

Source: *Saturday Evening Post*/January 12, 1946

Educators: Please be sure to read the selection to determine its appropriateness for use with your students.

Summary

A young boy acts responsibly when a fire at his father’s lumberyard threatens several businesses in a small town. In the course of the story, the boy matures, and his father views him differently.

Before Reading Related Reading 3

Introduce Vocabulary [CC: RL.6.4, L.6.6]

Discuss the following vocabulary words with students before they read the selection.

draymen *n.* workers who use a cart or wagon to move heavy loads from place to place
demmurage *n.* money paid to a freight carrier for a delay in the loading or unloading of freight
bellowed *v.* shouted in a loud and powerful voice



Set a Purpose for Reading [CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3]

Assign students to read Related Reading 3 with this purpose in mind:

Read to discover how a young boy takes a step toward adulthood when a fire breaks out in his town.



Distribute the **Related Reading 3: Comprehension and Analysis SAS** and have students work individually to complete it as they read “Fire in the Night.”

After Reading Related Reading 3

Related Reading 3: Comprehension and Analysis SAS Answer Key

1. What conversation about the lumberyard does Bill overhear between his mother and father? How does Bill's father respond when Bill asks him why business is bad? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: Bill hears his father tell his mother that business is bad and they might be better off if their lumberyard burned down so they could collect the insurance money on the business. Bill's father says that his son wouldn't understand if he tried to explain why business is bad.

2. How would you evaluate the volunteer fire department's response to the fire in the lumberyard? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.5, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The firefighters' response is timely, and the volunteers are competent. The men are organized and quickly arrive at the scene of the fire even though they must run and pull the fire wagon to the lumberyard. The firefighters are organized into nozzle men, hose men, and hydrant men—all with their own duties and responsibilities for fighting the fire. The village marshal and fire chief give orders to the firefighters.

3. Why does Bill's father order the men to break the front window of the hardware store? What other order does Bill's father give his men? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The men are trying to save the hardware stocked in the store by carrying it outside, but the process is too slow. Bill's father tells the men to break the front window because they can hand the items out the window much more quickly than by using the door. Bill's father says to "get the books"; he is referring to the accounting records kept for his lumber business.

4. From which location do Bill and his friends watch the fire? Why is this location important in the story? [CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3, RL.6.5, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The boys are watching the fire from the roof of the grocery store that is located across the alley from the lumberyard. The location is important because burning cinders from the fire land on the roof of the grocery store; the boys are already up on the roof and stamp out the embers with their shoes. Bill's friend, Chuck Williams, tells the grocer they need water to soak the roof. The grocer hands the boys buckets of water, and they use them to put out the burning cinders on the roof.

5. Authors use a character's words and actions to reveal that character's traits or personal qualities. What does Bill's father tell the firefighters from North Fork when they arrive? What does his statement reveal about the father's character? How does Hans, the foreman of the lumberyard, risk his life to save the business books and ledgers from the fire? What might Hans' actions reveal about him? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.4, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *Bill's father realizes that they can't put out the fire in the lumberyard because it is too big. He tells the firefighters to save the rest of the town. His statement reveals his concern for others even in the face of his own loss. Hans runs from the store with the last load of business books and records as the roof begins to cave in. Hans is a dedicated employee who respects his boss Jim Adams.*

6. Read the paragraph from the story.

He saw the fire chiefs and his father poke at some object in the northwest corner of the shed, where the fire had begun. They yanked something black and misshapen from a nest of coals and walked toward him, talking rapidly and holding whatever it was at the end of a stick. When they came closer he heard Earl Potts say, 'Oil can, by golly.'

What is the significance of the oil can that the fire chiefs and Bill's father find in a corner of the shed? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.5, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *Someone may have used the oil in the can to start the fire intentionally.*

7. Setting refers to when and where a story takes place. Which details in the story help you determine the setting? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *The story takes place in 1945 in a small town of about 400 people and 16 dogs. The reader knows the exact year of the setting because Henry tells Billy about the grain elevator fire they had in 1935, which Henry says was ten years ago. The town is somewhere in Northeast Nebraska. Bill knows everyone in town. He and his friends swim in a local creek. They play Cowboys and Indians. Bill's father wears suspenders to hold up his trousers. The fire department does not have a motorized fire truck, but the fire truck that arrives from North Folk, Nebraska is motorized. The fire department in Bill's town is made up of volunteers who run and pull the fire wagon to the scene of the fire.*

8. A simile is a figure of speech in which a writer uses *like* or *as* to compare two different things. The following quotation from the story contains a simile: "They heard the faint crackling of the fire, like a thousand mice running over dry corn in a grain bin." Which two things are being compared? Why might an author use such a simile? [CC: RL.6.4, RL.6.5, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *The author compares the faint crackling sound of the fire to that of many mice running over dry corn in a grain bin. The author uses the simile to make the story come alive by helping readers "hear" the sound of the fire.*

9. Conflict refers to a problem or struggle that the main character faces. A conflict can be external or internal. In an external conflict, the character struggles with an outside force, such as the fire in the lumberyard. In an internal conflict, the character must resolve a struggle in his or her mind. Which detail about his father's old brown trousers worries Bill and why? How does Bill react to the discovery? Think about how Bill resolves his internal conflict. Which details from the story help him resolve the conflict? Does the resolution seem reasonable? [CC: RL.6.3, RL.6.5, RL.6.6, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: Bill notices that his father’s trousers smell of kerosene. He recalls his father telling his mother that business was bad, and they might be better off collecting the insurance if the lumberyard burned down. Bill had a sick feeling in his stomach as he connects the kerosene on his father’s trousers to the oil can found in the shed. He wonders whether his father had purposely set fire to the lumberyard. Bill relaxes, however, when he hears his mother mention that Bill’s father can’t wear the old brown trousers because they smell of kerosene. Bill’s father wore them when he was cleaning the oil stove before the fire started. Bill’s conflict is resolved when he realizes that his father did not set fire to his lumberyard. The resolution seems reasonable based on the information that Bill overhears his mother saying about why the trousers smell of kerosene.

10. What similarities are there between the fire in the lumberyard and the Great Chicago Fire? What differences are there between the two fires? How do the texts “Fire in the Night” and Murphy’s *The Great Fire* compare/contrast in their approach to the topic of fire? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.9, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: Similarities: Burning embers carried by the wind help to spread both fires. The fire destroys people’s businesses. In both fires, people try to save their possessions by carrying them out of burning buildings. Differences: Unlike the Great Chicago Fire, no one is killed or seriously injured in the fire at the lumberyard. Murphy’s book follows the experiences of four characters during the fire; “Fire in the Night” focuses on one family’s loss. Although Murphy’s book is nonfiction and “Fire in the Night” is fiction, both books show how people react when fire breaks out in the night.

Related Reading 3: Writing Tasks



Distribute the **Related Reading 3: Writing Task SAS**. Have students complete one or both writing tasks in class or as homework. Depending on time constraints, allow students time for planning, drafting, and revising. Blank lined paper is provided at the end of the Related Readings Instructional Guide.

Informative/Explanatory Writing Task [CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3, W.6.2, W.6.4 – 6.6, W.6.9, W.6.10, L.6.1 – 6.3, L.6.6]

Write one or two paragraphs in which you explain how Bill’s relationship with his father has changed because of the fire. Use details from “Fire in the Night” to support your answer. What would you say is the story’s theme or main idea?

Narrative Writing Task [CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3, W.6.1, W.6.4 – 6.6, W.6.10, L.6.1 – 6.3, L.6.6]

In “Fire in the Night,” people face difficult circumstances and have to quickly decide what to do. Write a narrative—real or imagined—in which the main character encounters a difficult circumstance and must act quickly. Use descriptive details that help your reader picture the setting and the characters. Try to include dialogue that

reflects how your characters would actually speak. Organize the events in your narrative in chronological order. The events should lead to a logical conclusion.

Criteria for the Writing Activity

Before students complete the writing portion of the assignment, clarify the criteria and expectations by reviewing the corresponding TLI Writing Scoring Rubric with them.

Related Reading 3: Additional Resource

After students have completed the above instructional material for “Fire in the Night,” you may wish to explore the following resource as time permits.

Additional Resource: *Children of the Fire*

[CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.7, W.6.2, W.6.4 – 6.10]

Access Point: Please check your school or local library.

Genre: fiction

Author: Harriette Gillem Robinet

Source: Aladdin Paperbacks, an imprint of Simon & Schuster/2001

Educators: This novel contains a racial slur that may be offensive to some readers. In addition, the story contains some disturbing material as the main character witnesses the Great Fire and people die, including children. The main character also is burned during the fire. Please be sure to read the book to determine its appropriateness for use with your students.

Summary: Robinet’s novel *Children of the Fire* follows the experiences of a young African American orphan named Hallelujah, who begs her foster parents to allow her to go and see the Great Fire on the night that it began. At first, she thinks of the fire as an entertainment, and she watches it with great excitement. However, as familiar buildings in downtown Chicago are engulfed in flames, she senses how dangerous the fire is. When the pumps at the city’s water works are also destroyed, Hallelujah begins to realize that there’s no putting out this fire. During the ordeal, she encounters Mr. Baker, a family friend who asks her to keep safe a large canvas sack and take it to the lakefront. There she befriends a wealthy, young white girl named Elizabeth, who has become separated from her family. Through her experiences during the fire, Hallelujah learns that people are not so different after all.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Read about a young African American girl’s experiences when she goes alone to watch the Great Fire.

Short Research Task: After students have read *Children of the Fire*, ask them to think about the Courthouse Building in Chicago where Hallelujah sees the prisoners being set free during the Great Fire. Hallelujah recalls that President Abraham Lincoln had lain in state in that Chicago Courthouse after his assassination in 1865.

In this task, have students write a short newspaper article in which they describe the scene of Lincoln’s funeral procession on May 1, 1865. The following Web sites may be helpful, but students are not limited to using these sources:

- The Civil War in Art: Funeral Procession Outside Cook County Court House, May 1, 1865 online at [Civil War in Art](#)
- Chicago Historical Society Northwestern University “Return to the scene of the crime: The earthly remains” online at [Chicago History.org Return to the Scene of the Crime](#)

RELATED READING 4: (after reading *The Great Fire*)

Fire and Friendship by Renée Rebman

Instruction Time: approximately 4-5 days

Introducing the Related Reading

Access Point: EBSCO Middle Search Plus via the Arkansas State Library; see [Fire and Friendship Rebman](#) (Note: This drama is offered in pdf format.)

Genre: fiction; drama

Author: Renée Rebman

Source: *Plays-The Drama Magazine for Young People*/March 2009/Vol.68/Issue 5

Educators: Please be sure to read the selection to determine its appropriateness for use with your students.

Summary

In this play, a mother relates to her daughter her experience of surviving the tragic 1911 Triangle Factory Fire in New York City. The fire, which killed many young immigrant women who worked at the garment factory, led to workers' reforms.

Background Information

What is a shirtwaist?

Scene II of the drama *Fire and Friendship* takes place in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. Explain to students that a shirtwaist is a woman's blouse that was popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although designed like a man's shirt, the shirtwaist was decorated with lace and other frills. For an illustration and further information about the shirtwaist and the Triangle Factory Fire, visit the PBS American Experience Web site at [PBS AmEx Triangle Factory Fire Shirtwaist](#). For more information on the Triangle Factory Fire, visit [PBS AmEx Triangle Factory Fire](#).

The Great Depression

The setting for the drama *Fire and Friendship* is New York, 1935, during The Great Depression. Explain to students that The Great Depression was an economic crisis that began in the United States, but the crisis affected the whole world. It began in New York on October 29, 1929. On that day, the stock market lost 23% of its value. The day is known in history as "Black Tuesday." During the Great Depression many people lost their jobs and could not find work. Many businesses closed, and people lost their homes. When President Franklin Delano Roosevelt became president in 1933, almost a quarter of workers in the United States were unemployed. The rate of unemployment for African Americans was even higher. The Great Depression finally ended about 1939.

The following Web sites contain further information on The Great Depression:

[Britannica Great Depression](#)

[NY Times Great Depression](#)

Before Reading Related Reading 4

Introduce Vocabulary [CC: RL.6.4, L.6.6]

Discuss the following vocabulary words with students before they read the selection.

reluctantly *adj.* unwillingly

dock *v.* to take away a portion of wages

pandemonium *n.* a situation of disorder and confusion

disoriented *adj.* mentally confused



Set a Purpose for Reading [CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3]

Assign students to read Related Reading 4 with this purpose in mind:

Read to discover what happened in 1911 at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory that triggered workplace reforms.



Distribute the **Related Reading 4: Comprehension and Analysis SAS** and have students work individually to complete it as they read *Fire and Friendship*.

After Reading Related Reading 4

Related Reading 4: Comprehension and Analysis SAS Answer Key

1. Setting refers to the place and time where a story occurs. Identify the two settings in the play. Which details help create each setting? [CC: RL.6.1, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *Scenes 1 and 3 take place during The Great Depression in May 1935, in New York State. In addition to the information about the setting at the beginning of Scene 1, the following details establish that the story occurs during The Great Depression: Fiona Adler complains about never having any money. Myles Adler, Fiona’s father, has many friends who are out of work. Grandmother tries to partly explain Fiona’s anger by telling her daughter Alana that “this Depression is difficult for everyone.”*

Scene 2 takes place on March 25, 1911, in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory on the 9th floor of the Asch Building in New York City. The factory is crammed with so much cloth that there isn’t any place left to store it. On the 9th floor, the doors to the stairway and the fire escape are locked while the young women are at work. The fire occurs on a Saturday—fifteen minutes before the end of the workday.

2. Which conflicts are established in Scene 1? How does the author introduce the

conflicts? [CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3, RL.6.5, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *Fiona had a fight with her best friend Harriet Gilbert. She's also angry about not having any money, and she doesn't like having to share a room with her grandmother. One way that the author establishes the conflict between Fiona and Harriet is through stage directions, although it isn't yet evident why Fiona is angry: "FIONA ADLER enters briskly left, carrying school books. She is angry and goes past GRANDMOTHER to enter the house." The author introduces the conflict between Fiona and her Grandmother through dialogue. When Fiona comes home and ignores her Grandmother, Fiona's Grandmother says, "Hello, Grandmother. How are you today?"*

3. How does Fiona learn that her mother was in the Triangle Factory Fire? Why hasn't Mrs. Adler told her daughter sooner about her experience in the fire? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.5, RL.6.6, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *When Mrs. Adler is sitting on the porch, she raises the hem of her skirt to cool off during the August heat. Fiona notices the horrible scar on her mother's leg for the first time. Fiona's grandmother then tells Fiona to get the wooden box that holds the yellowed newspaper article about the Triangle Factory Fire. Fiona starts to read the article, but she is confused. Her mother tells her that she was in the factory when the fire started. Mrs. Adler hadn't told her daughter sooner because it was a painful memory.*

4. In Scene 2, what do you learn about the lives of the young women who work in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory? What can you conclude about the working conditions at the factory? Use details to support your answer. [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.2, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *The women have difficult lives. Although they are young— some as young as thirteen-year-old Grace—they must work to help their families survive. Working conditions are dangerous. The young women are also poor. They work 60 hours a week, and some earn as little as \$4 a week. They must also work on Saturdays. The workplace is very crowded with not enough room to store the cloth.*

5. How do the factory owners discourage workers from complaining about the working conditions? Use details to support your answer. [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.2, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *When one of the factory workers named Thelma Jones complained, she was accused of stealing spools of thread and her handbag was searched. Her pay was docked because she was told that she took too long of a bathroom break.*

6. Whose point of view does the drama represent—that of the workers or the owners? Use details from the play to support your answer. [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.6, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *Details about the workers' low pay, long hours, unfair treatment, and unsafe working conditions, such as working in a room with locked doors, support the point of view of the workers and indicate that the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory was an unsafe place to work.*

7. What conditions in the factory and the building result in the fire being so deadly?

[CC: RL.6.1, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *On the 9th floor where the young women work, the door to the stairs and the door to the fire escape are both locked. The room is crowded with piles of cloth so fire spreads quickly. The fire hose in the hall has no water pressure to put out the blaze. The building is too tall for the firefighters' ladders to reach the people trapped on the 9th floor.*

8. What happens to Alana's friend Fiona and many of the other factory workers during the fire? How does this event better help you understand the tragedy of the fire? [CC: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.5, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *Fiona tries to escape the fire by going down the fire escape, but it pulls away from the building from the weight of so many people. Fiona dies in the tragedy, along with 145 other garment workers. When Alana loses her friend Fiona, readers understand the sadness Alana feels.*

9. Scene 3 returns to the present. What reforms occurred as a result of the Triangle Factory Fire? Think about how Fiona Adler has changed in the play. What lesson about friendship does Fiona learn from her mother's experience? What does Fiona Adler discover about her own name? [CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3, RL.6.6, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: *Media attention to the fire exposed the unsafe working conditions in the factory. After the tragic Triangle Factory Fire, laws were passed to improve safety in factories. From her mother's painful experience of losing her friend Fiona in the Triangle Factory Fire, Fiona realizes how important friendship is. Fiona will apologize to her friend Harriet for being mean to her and will invite her to dinner. Fiona learns that her mother named her in honor of the friend she lost in the Triangle Factory Fire.*

Related Reading 4: Writing Task



Distribute the **Related Reading 4: Writing Task SAS**. Have students complete the writing task in class or as homework. Depending on time constraints, allow students time for planning, drafting, and revising. Blank lined paper is provided at the very end of the Related Readings Instructional Guide.

Narrative Writing Task [CC: RL.6.1 – 6.3, W.6.3 – 6.6, W.6.10, L.6.1 – 6.3, L.6.6]

In the drama *Fire and Friendship*, Fiona Adler learns an important lesson about friendship. Write a narrative—real or imagined—that involves a conflict between two friends. Your story can take place in the present or in the distant past. Use descriptive details and images that appeal to the senses to help your reader picture the characters and the setting. Add dialogue to help your reader hear how your characters speak. Be sure to include a resolution to the conflict that follows naturally from the sequence of events.

Criteria for the Writing Activity

Before students complete the writing portion of the assignment, clarify the criteria and expectations by reviewing the corresponding TLI Writing Scoring Rubric with them.

Related Reading 4: Additional Resources

After students have completed the above instructional material for “Fire and Friendship,” they may wish to explore one or both of the following resources as time permits.

Additional Resource 1: “My First Job”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.7, RI.6.8, W.6.2, W.6.4, W.6.6 – 6.8, L.6.1 – 6.3, L.6.6]

Access Point: online at [Cornell.edu Triangle Fire Testimonials Rose Cohen](http://Cornell.edu_Triangle_Fire_Testimonials_Rose_Cohen)

Genre: nonfiction; testimonial

Author: Rose Cohen

Source: Cornell University Library/Kheel Center

Educators: Be sure to preview the information on the Web site to determine its appropriateness for use with your students. Information on the Web site other than Rose Cohen’s testimonial accessed through the link above may contain gruesome details.

Summary: “My First Job” is a firsthand account of a young girl’s life working in a sweatshop in New York City. Rose Cohen, the girl, describes how her boss in a small garment shop takes unfair advantage of his employees. The selection also explains why she remains on the job despite the difficulties. Although Rose Cohen was a survivor of The Triangle Factory Fire, this selection does not focus on her experience in the fire.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Read to discover why a young immigrant girl remains at her job despite its many difficulties.

Short Research Task: After students have finished reading the testimonial of Rose Cohen, have them explore the Web site [Cornell.edu Triangle Fire](http://Cornell.edu_Triangle_Fire) to discover more about the Triangle Factory Fire. The Web site includes links to other testimonials as well as letters, reports, newspaper and magazine articles, transcripts of the criminal trial against the factory owners, and transcripts of public lectures. Have students read the information on one of the links and write a short report that summarizes what they have learned.

Additional Resource 2: “Paid by the Piece”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3]

Access Point: EBSCO Middle Search Plus via the Arkansas State Library; see

[Paid by the Piece DeAngelis Cobblestone](#)

Genre: nonfiction; article

Author: Gina DeAngelis

Source: *Cobblestone*/February 2004/Volume 25/Issue 2

Summary: “Paid by the Piece” explains the unsafe labor conditions in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th century. The article also covers the concept of “piecework,” in which a worker is paid by the number of pieces completed. In 1909, in protest over working conditions, U.S. garment workers organized a massive strike called “The Uprising of the Twenty Thousand.” As a result of the strike, changes in working conditions at some shirtwaist factories were made. Larger companies like the Triangle Shirtwaist Company did not agree to workers’ demands.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Read to learn about the dangerous conditions in factories where children worked and how employers took unfair advantage of their workers.

RELATED READING 5: (after reading *The Great Fire*)

“The Fury of Fire: One Family’s Terrifying Wildfire Story” by Kristin Lewis

Instruction Time: approximately 1-2 days

Introducing the Related Reading

Access Point: EBSCO Primary Search via the Arkansas State Library; see: [The Fury of Fire One family's terrifying wildfire story](#) (Note: This article is offered in pdf format.)

Genre: nonfiction; article

Author: Kristin Lewis

Source: *Storyworks*/Nov-Dec 2011/Volume 19/Issue 3

Educators: Please be sure to read the selection to determine its appropriateness for use with your students.

Summary

The article describes the harrowing experience of a young boy and his family when they must evacuate their home during a deadly wildfire in Southern California in October of 2003. The article also explains what happens after his family is allowed to return home.

Before Reading Related Reading 5

Introduce Vocabulary [CC: RI.6.4, L.6.6]

Discuss the following vocabulary words with students before they read the selection.

flee *v.* move quickly away from danger

treacherous *adj.* dangerous

embers *n.* pieces of burning material, such as wood, leftover from a fire

arsonist *n.* one who deliberately starts a fire

epic *adj.* unusually large in size or range

siege *n.* a continuous attack

scorched *adj.* burned

ordeal *n.* a difficult experience

debris *n.* broken pieces that remain after a destructive event



Set a Purpose for Reading [CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3]

Assign students to read **Related Reading 5** with this purpose in mind:

Read to discover how a young boy and his family react when they are awakened in the middle of the night by the smell of smoke.



Distribute the **Related Reading 5: Comprehension and Analysis SAS** and have students work individually to complete it.

After Reading Related Reading 5

Related Reading 5: Comprehension and Analysis SAS Answer Key

1. A simile is a type of figurative language that uses the words *like* or *as* to compare two different things. A metaphor compares two different things but does not use the words *like* or *as*. Writers use comparisons to help make their ideas clear. As you read the following passage from “The Fury of Fire,” notice the comparisons the writer uses to describe the wildfire.

Wildfires can move at speeds of up to 60 miles an hour, as fast as a car on the highway. They burn as hot as 2,600 degrees Fahrenheit—hot enough to melt gold. The front of a wildfire is an invisible wave of heat that blisters skin and turns hair to ash in one second. After four seconds, clothing bursts into flame. And this is all before the actual blaze arrives.

Identify the simile and metaphor in the above passage. What is the main idea of the passage? Which details convey the main idea? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.4, RI.6.5, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: A simile is used to compare the speed of a wildfire to the speed of a car traveling 60 mph down a highway. A metaphor is used to compare the heat of the wildfire to “an invisible wave.” The main idea is that a wildfire is dangerous and deadly. It travels very quickly and burns at an incredibly hot temperature—hot enough to melt gold. Even the invisible wave of heat that travels ahead of the fire itself is deadly.

2. How is Kevin’s family in Valley Center, California, alerted to the wildfire? What possessions do they take with them as they flee their home? How do they alert others? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.3, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The town of Valley Center, California, does not have an alert system to notify its residents of a disaster. Kevin’s mother wakes him up. Kevin’s family takes their dogs and cats, three frightened horses, food and water, clothes, schoolbooks, and Kevin’s guitar. They drive up and down their street and sound their horn to wake others.

3. For how long is Kevin’s family unable to return to their home? How does Kevin describe his reaction when his family returns to their neighborhood to discover that their home is still standing? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.3, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: Kevin’s family stays with friends for four days. When Kevin’s family returns to their neighborhood, Kevin says that seeing his home was one of the greatest

moments of his life. He claims that memory will always stay with him.

4. What positive things came out of the wildfire disaster? What lessons were learned from it? [CC: RI.6.1, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: Kevin’s family and neighbors helped one other. They cleaned up their town and shared clothing and supplies. The town of Valley Center created an alert system to evacuate residents quickly, and the system worked. They used it when another wildfire occurred in 2007.

5. What similarities do you notice between the situations described in “The Fury of Fire” and those described in Murphy’s book *The Great Fire*? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.7, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: Both fires occur at night. In 2003, Kevin and his family are part of a group of many Californians fleeing the wildfire just as many people fled the Great Fire in Chicago in 1871. Dry weather conditions and the wind are factors in the spread of both fires. Both fires burn uncontrollably. More than one fire occurs within a short period of time. People take just a few items that are important to them as they flee the fires.

6. Examine the map that appears with the selection. Where does the first fire begin? How does the map in the article work with the text to contribute to your understanding of the wildfires? [CC: RI.6.1, RI.6.5, RI.6.7, W.6.9, W.6.10]

Sample answer: The first fire, Cedar Fire, begins east of the city of San Diego in Cleveland National Forest. The text explains that firefighters were busy putting out that fire, so they weren’t fighting the second fire at the time Kevin’s family awoke and fled their town. Paradise Fire was started by an arsonist, and it was headed straight toward Valley Center where Kevin’s family live. The map shows the location of Paradise Fire and several wildfires. The map is a visual reminder of how dangerous the situation was for people living in Valley Center.

Related Reading 5: Writing Task



Distribute the **Related Reading 4: Writing Task SAS**. Have students complete the writing task in class or as homework. Depending on time constraints, allow students time for planning, drafting, and revising. Blank lined paper is provided at the end of the Related Readings Instructional Guide.

Short Research/Writing Task [CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, W.6.2, W.6.4 – 6.10, L.6.1 – 6.3, L.6.6]
(Note: Because this task involves research from multiple sources, students should include proper in-text citations and a Works Cited page.)

After reading “The Fury of Fire: One family’s terrifying wildfire Story,” research how firefighters in the United States battle wildfires. Consult at least two sources and write a short report explaining what you have learned.

Criteria for the Writing Activity

Before students complete the writing portion of the assignment, clarify the criteria and expectations by reviewing the corresponding TLI Writing Scoring Rubric with them.

Related Reading 5: Additional Resource

After students have completed the above instructional material for “The Fury of Fire: One Family’s Terrifying Wildfire Story,” they may wish to explore the following resource as time permits.

Additional Resource: “The Science of Wildfires”

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3]

Access Point: EBSCO Middle Search Plus via the Arkansas State Library; see [The Science of Wildfires L Bradford](#)

Genre: nonfiction; article

Author: Laura Bradford

Source: *Time*/August 2002/Volume 160/Issue 6

Summary: “The Science of Wildfires” explains the benefits of fire and why it is part of the natural rhythm of the forest. The article also contains information on how wildfires begin and spread (including the weather they create), how to fight them, and how people must learn to tolerate them.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Read to learn how fire serves a necessary purpose in the life of a forest and how people can deal with fire.

Additional Resources for Exploration and Research

Educators: The following list of materials contains information on the history of Chicago and the way the city rebuilt after the Great Fire. These materials may be useful to students as they complete their Research Project. Please be sure to preview the materials to determine their appropriateness for use with your students.

Rebuilding of Chicago after the Great Fire to Modern Day

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.7 – 6.10, W.6.2, W.6.4, W.6.7 – 6.10, L.6.1 – 6.3, L.6.6, SL.6.4 – 6.6]

Use these Web sites for further exploration and research:

- “Then and Now” has pictures of buildings/areas in Chicago before and after the Great Fire; accessed online at [PBS AmEx Chicago City of the Century Then and Now](#)
- PBS/American Experience Web site (see “People and Events” for list of possible research topics) accessed online at [PBS AmEx Chicago City of the Century People Events](#)
- The Great Chicago Fire & The Web of Memory offers information not only about the Great Fire but how the fire has been remembered. Students can access a timeline, primary documents, photographs, and take a tour of Chicago today showing landmarks with connections to the Great Fire; accessed online at [The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory](#).
- Chicago’s Public Art Attractions (born out of Daniel Burnham’s ideas for public consumption of a great city, i.e., parks, public space); accessed online at [Explore Chicago Public Art Program](#). View [The Chicago Public Art Guide](#) (pdf) for information on specific public art pieces, in particular, Kris Yokoo’s “History of Chicago: From Great Fire, 1871 to Rebirth” sculpture on page 16 of the guide.
- Daniel Burnham, the visionary behind the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition and the city of Chicago itself; accessed online at [PBS Make No Little Plans Daniel Burnham](#)
- Cows on Parade is a display of public artwork and a reminder that Chicago was a former meatpacking center; photos and text can be accessed online at [River City Road Cows on Parade](#). Also, see a *Christian Science Monitor* article online: [CS Monitor Chicagoans say 'holy cow'](#).
- City Gallery in surviving Water Tower; accessed online at [Chicago Traveler City Gallery Water Tower](#) and the “Pillar of Fire” statue by Egon Winer outside of the Chicago Fire Academy; accessed at [Pillar of Fire Sculpture Chicago Fire Academy](#).

Research Project Guidelines

The Related Readings Instructional Guide presents many opportunities to explore various topics in greater depth. The above list of Web sites and others mentioned throughout the guide offer rich opportunities for research and discovery.

The research project should require multiple sources, include a Works Cited page, and follow a standard format such as MLA (see Documentation Guidelines that follow). Ample time should be given to students for each step in the research process (see Step-by-Step Research Process that follows).

TLI recommends allowing approximately 5-7 days for a research paper or a research presentation. Teachers may want to assess their students' access to library and home computers prior to assigning the research project.

RESEARCH PAPER

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.7 – 6.10, W.6.2, W.6.4 – 6.10, L.6.1 – 6.3, L.6.6]

Allow for time between each step for students to do additional work outside of class.

1. Explore possible topics and choose research focus: 1 day
2. Gather information/take notes in computer lab/library: 1-2 days
3. Begin the rough draft: 1 day
4. Participate in Peer/Teacher review: 1 day
[Allow time for students to consider revisions.]
5. Produce final paper in computer lab: 1-2 days

RESEARCH PRESENTATION

[CC: RI.6.1 – 6.3, RI.6.7 – 6.10, W.6.7 – 6.10, L.6.1 – 6.3, L.6.6, SL.6.2, SL.6.4 – 6.6]

Allow for time between each step for students to do additional work outside of class.

(Note: The presentation option should still require a written component.)

1. Explore possible topics and choose research focus: 1 day
2. Gather information/take notes in computer lab/library: 1-2 days
3. Produce final presentation in computer lab/classroom: 1-3 days
4. Deliver final presentations: Teachers should determine time limits for presentations.

Step-by-Step Research Process

- **Explore Possible Topics**

Allow students time to explore some of the links provided as well as sources they discover on their own. Students might want to explore the timeline on the PBS *American Experience* Web site ([PBS AmEx Chicago City of the Century Timeline](#)) to discover information about the history, people, and events associated with the city of Chicago. For example, clicking on the “Jane Addams” link in the timeline for 1889 will take students to a Web site that explains how Addams was influenced to start Hull-House in Chicago based on her visit to a settlement house in London. College educated, Jane Addams sought to improve the lives of immigrants in Chicago. Hull-House offered educational opportunities to immigrants, but later Addams also worked to improve the neighborhoods where immigrants lived.

Clicking on the link “World’s Columbian Exposition” in the timeline for 1893 will introduce students to Frederick Law Olmsted and Daniel Burnham. In addition to the subject of architecture, students will learn about some of the new inventions that were introduced at the World’s Columbian Exposition, such as the electric sidewalk and Thomas Edison’s first moving pictures.

For other possible topics, students can look at the “People & Events” link on the PBS Web site to read about key historical figures such as Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet, Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, Abraham Lincoln, as well as prominent Chicagoans such as Cyrus McCormick, George Pullman, Marshall Field, and Louis Sullivan.

- **Choose a Topic and Gather Information**

Students will choose a topic and gather information from reliable sources. To determine whether or not an Internet source is reliable, suggest that students use reputable Web sites, such as an .edu, .gov, or .org sites. They can also use books and magazine articles. When in doubt, students can ask their teacher or librarian if they have questions about a source’s reliability. Remind students that the information for their research project should come from various media, including Web sites, books, newspaper or magazine articles, etc.

- **Focus the Central Idea for the Research Report**

Students will focus their research around a central idea, or thesis. For example, if students investigate the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893, they might create the following thesis statement: “The World’s Columbian Exposition introduced many new ideas and inventions to the public.” If students have chosen to research Louis Sullivan, their focus might be the following: Louis Sullivan made several important contributions to Chicago architecture.

- **Take Notes***

Have students take notes as they read. Remind them to paraphrase the information and record it on note cards. They should include several important quotations and

be sure to use quotation marks correctly. Source information for a book should include basic bibliographic information, such as the author, title, city of publication, the publisher, the year the book was published, and the page number(s) for specific pieces of information. Source information for a Web site should include the title; the author and sponsor, if given; the home page; and the date accessed.

- **Write a First Draft**

After students have recorded their information on note cards, have them organize the information in some logical fashion. For example, they might arrange the note cards by putting the information in chronological order or in order of importance. Students will need to write an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and a conclusion. The body paragraphs should develop the thesis statement by including facts, reasons, details, and examples. Be sure to review the TLI Writing Scoring Rubric with students if used for grading purposes.

- **Edit and Revise**

Have students reread their first drafts. Have they included an introduction that tells what the research report is about? Does the introductory paragraph contain their central focus or thesis statement? Do the body paragraphs all develop and support the thesis statement? Are there places where adding facts, examples, or more details will help develop the topic more fully? Is the information organized in a way that makes sense? Have they written a conclusion that naturally brings the report to an end? Students might also benefit from a peer review session.

- **Proofread**

After students have revised their research report, have them proofread their writing. They should look for and correct any errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar.

- **Make a Clean Copy***

After students have finished revising and proofreading their research report, have them make a clean copy. If possible, students should create the final copy of their research paper using a keyboard. Students should add a Works Cited page to the end of the report, in which they list the sources they actually used in writing their research report.

- **Display or Present**

Students can display their research reports in the classroom, or they may present the information to their classmates in the form of an oral report. Depending on the research topic, students may want to incorporate the use of digital media in their presentation.

***see Documentation Guidelines below**

Documentation Guidelines

The Common Core State Standards require that students conduct research, determine the credibility of source material, incorporate research by directly quoting or paraphrasing information, and provide appropriate documentation for any information used that is not authored on their own **[CC: W.6.8]**.

Students should be aware that different areas of study require particular documentation styles. For instance, most humanities, including English Language Arts, follow the conventions of the Modern Language Association (MLA) style. Other disciplines may use American Psychological Association (APA), *The Chicago Manual of Style*, or others. For more information on the various documentation styles, please see: [Bedford St Martin's Research and Documentation](#).

For any writing activities in the Related Readings Instructional Guide that require using multiple sources, direct students to follow a given format for parenthetical citations as well as a Works Cited page. See the following MLA model bibliographic entries and in-text citations pages.

MLA Model Bibliographic Entries

Model bibliographic entries for certain types of sources follow. A Works Cited page should follow your paper to list the sources used during research.

PRINT SOURCES

A Book by a Single Author

Harris, Celia. Interesting Habitats. Chicago: Grayson, 1996. Print.

A Book by More Than One Author

Barr, Ann, and Rosa Garcia. *Marsh Birds of the West*. New York: Wenday, 1982. Print.

An Encyclopedia Entry (without author)

"Dwarfed Trees." *Encyclopedia Americana*. 5th ed. 1958. Print.

An Encyclopedia Entry (with author)

Doe, Jean. "Lone Wolves." *Encyclopedia of Animals*. 2009. Print.

A Magazine Article

Chen, David. "Floating Down the River." *Our Wildlife* 9 July 1988: 120-25. Print.

A Book Issued by Organization Identifying No Author

National Wildlife Association. *Swamp Life*. Washington: Natl. Wildlife Assoc., 1985. Print.

ONLINE SOURCES

An Entire Web Site (with author)

Smith, Penelope Lynn. *Dance for Fitness*. Penelope Lynn Smith, 1999. Web. 2 Jan 2010.

A Short Work from a Web site (with author)

Miller, Sue. "Types of Asthma." *HealthToday*. HealthToday. 2009. Web. 2 Jan. 2011.

Note: MLA does not require a Web address (URL) in citations; however, if an instructor requires a URL, place it at the end of the entry in angle brackets < >. If the URL address must be divided at the end of a line, do so after a slash (/). Do not use a hyphen.

For more information on other types of MLA bibliographic entries (print and online sources), see: [MLA List of Works Cited](#).

MLA Model In-Text Citations

Model in-text citations for various situations follow. In-text citations occur in the body of your paper and direct readers to the Works Cited page. A **signal phrase** often accompanies the information taken directly from a source (a direct quotation or paraphrase) and may or may not contain the author's name. A **parenthetical reference** (i.e., a reference "in parentheses") comes from the cited material and is included at the end of the sentence. Most of the time, the parenthetical reference includes the page number on which the information is found. However, sometimes the parenthetical reference includes the author's name if it is not included in the signal phrase. See some examples below.

In-text Citations for Direct Quotations

"Quality is more important than quantity" (Keller 67).

As Keller states, "Quality is more important than quantity" (67).

In-text Citations for Paraphrased Information

The crux of the argument is that quality is more important than quantity (Keller 67).

As Keller points out, the crux of the argument is that quality is more important than quantity (67).

For more information on other types of MLA in-text citations (print and online sources), see: [MLA In-Text Citations](#).

Grade 6 Writing Scoring Rubric for Common Core - Argumentative

Standard 1 – Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

DOMAIN	FEATURES	4 Consistent control of almost all of the domain's features	3 Reasonable control of most of the domain's features	2 Inconsistent control of several of the domain's features	1 Little or no control of most of the domain's features
Introduction	Introduce claim(s).				
Organization	Organize the reasons and evidence clearly.				
Support	Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.				
Sentence Formation	Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.				
Conventions and Style	Establish and maintain a formal style. Conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 6.				
Conclusion	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.				

Grade 6 Writing Scoring Rubric for Common Core – Informative/Explanatory

Standard 2 - Write informative/ explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

DOMAIN	FEATURES	4 Consistent control of almost all of the domain's features	3 Reasonable control of most of the domain's features	2 Inconsistent control of several of the domain's features	1 Little or no control of most of the domain's features
Introduction	Introduce a topic.				
Organization	Organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/ contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.				
Support	Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.				
Sentence Formation	Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.				
Conventions and Style	Establish and maintain a formal style. Conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 6.				
Conclusion	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.				

Grade 6 Writing Scoring Rubric for Common Core – Narrative

Standard 3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

DOMAIN	FEATURES	4 Consistent control of almost all of the domain's features	3 Reasonable control of most of the domain's features	2 Inconsistent control of several of the domain's features	1 Little or no control of most of the domain's features
Introduction	Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters. Organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.				
Organization	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.				
Narrative Techniques	Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one timeframe or setting to another.				
Conventions and Style	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events. Conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 6.				
Conclusion	Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.				



SAS: Related Readings

Student Activity Sheets

Name _____

Teacher/Period _____



SAS/ Related Reading 1: Text Feature: Tables

“October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire” by Sean Potter

Text features are elements that writers use to help readers better understand the ideas and events presented in the text. **Tables** are one type of text feature that present data in rows and columns. The article, “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire,” contains a table of weather observations from October 8, 1871, which show conditions in Chicago and the Midwest on the day of the Great Chicago Fire.

1. What do you learn about the air pressure from the barometer readings on October 8, 1871?

2. What were the wind conditions about the time that the Great Fire began?

3. From the information in the article as well as from what you have read in *The Great Fire*, how can you explain the entry for the weather as “smoky” at 7:35 a.m. EST on the morning of the Great Fire?

Name _____

Teacher/Period _____



SAS/ Related Reading 1: Comprehension/Analysis Questions

“October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire” by Sean Potter

1. At the time of the fire, the *Chicago Tribune* stated that the city was “swept by a conflagration which has no parallels in the annals of history, for the quantity of property destroyed, and the utter and almost irremediable ruin which it wrought.” What can you infer about the meaning of the words “conflagration” and “irremediable” based on context clues in paragraph two of the article? Which statistics from the article support the statement?

2. When was the National Weather Service established? Under the guidance of which agency was it first established? What purpose did the organization serve at the time of the Great Fire?

3. On p. 20 of Murphy’s book *The Great Fire*, the author describes both the Great Fire of October 8th and the fire on the previous night: “On Saturday the seventh, the night before the Great Fire, a blaze destroyed four blocks and took over sixteen hours to control. What made Sunday the eighth different and particularly dangerous was the steady wind blowing in from the southwest.” Which specific weather conditions in the Midwest and in Chicago contributed to the rapid spread of the fire? Use data from the article and chart to support your answers. What purpose does the data serve after the Great Fire?



SAS/ Related Reading 1: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

4. According to James Mackintosh, an observer in charge of the Chicago Signal Service station, why were Chicagoans who observed the fire between 10:30 and midnight not alarmed when it first began?

5. Using Mackintosh's journal entry, contrast how the fire spread before 1:00 a.m. with how it spread after 1:00 a.m. Compare Mackintosh's explanation of how the fire spread after 1:00 a.m. with that of Murphy's description of a convection column on p. 60 of *The Great Fire*. Evaluate Murphy's information on the convection column. Does Murphy's information seem reliable? Explain.

6. What happened to the local Chicago Signal Office during the Great Fire? How quickly was the local office reestablished after the fire?



SAS/ Related Reading 1: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

-
7. What information in the article supports the claim that the rain on the morning of October 10 had little effect on putting out the fire? How does the information about rain in the article compare with the information about rain in Murphy's book on pp. 95-97? How might you explain the difference of opinion about the rain's effect on putting out the fire?

8. What would you say is the overall purpose of the article?

Name _____

Teacher/Period _____



SAS/ Related Reading 2: Comprehension/Analysis Questions

“Pack on My Back” by Hilda Polacheck

1. How does the subject first learn about the Great Fire in Chicago? What is his reaction? How does the subject’s reaction compare with what Murphy says about spectators on p. 31, paragraph 2 of *The Great Fire*?

2. Read the following words spoken by one of the subject’s roommates: “Why should I care where the fire is,” one of the men said. “As long as our house is not on fire, I don’t care what house is burning. There is a fire every Monday and Thursday in Chicago.” Compare the statement spoken by the subject’s roommate with information about the number of fires in Chicago in 1870 and 1871, which is found in Chapter 1, pp. 19-21 of *The Great Fire*. Do the roommate’s statements seem like a reasonable response to the fire? Use evidence from *The Great Fire* to support your answer.

3. Why isn’t the subject too concerned for his safety when he goes out to see the fire? What does he do next? Connect his reaction regarding his safety with what James Mackintosh says about the Chicago River on p. 2 of the Related Reading 1 article, “October 8, 1871: The Great Chicago Fire.”



SAS/ Related Reading 2: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

4. The subject and his roommates flee to Lincoln Park to escape the fire. Evaluate their decision based on information you have learned in *The Great Fire*. Use the index in Murphy's book to look up "Lincoln Park" and find page references for that information. Also, look at the map on pp. 88-89 from Chapter 5 of *The Great Fire* and locate Lincoln Park. In Murphy's book *The Great Fire*, what additional information do you learn about Lincoln Park from the photo and caption on p. 108?

5. What does the subject take with him when he flees the fire? What possessions are others trying to save? What is his opinion of the things he sees others trying to save? What do you learn about people who have only a few moments to decide what to save during a disaster? Use details from the selection to support your answer.

6. Marshall Field is having goods removed from his store Marshall Field and Company. Where is he sending them? Evaluate his decision using both the information in "Pack on My Back" and the map on pp. 88-89 from Chapter 5 of *The Great Fire*. Note that Twelfth Street is located on the far left of the map. What does this incident with Field illustrate about the difference between the rich and the poor?



SAS/ Related Reading 2: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

7. How does the fire present an opportunity for the subject? Based on information in “Pack on My Back,” do you think he regretted immigrating to Chicago? Use evidence from the selection to support your opinion.

8. On the night of the fire, the subject gathers with others on the streets of Chicago. He overhears people talking about the cause or reason for the fire. Who are some people blaming for the Great Fire? Evaluate these reasons and causes. Is any evidence given in the text to support them? How do these causes and reasons compare with those that Murphy presents in *The Great Fire*?

RELATED READING 3: “Fire in the Night” by Frank O’Rourke

Bill Adams watched his younger brother get into bed, scrotch around twice like their dog, pull the covers up to his nose, blink his eyes protestingly against the light, and fall immediately asleep. Bill wished he could sleep that quickly, but with him it was lying on his back with the soft shadow of the night obliquing through the window across his face, dreaming in a pleasant half doze about the day slipping away into the night’s final hours and the brand-new day coming next morning. He thought about his father’s lumber shed and remembered that a car of pine and shingles had pulled in from Washington that afternoon, smelling strongly of resin and pitch and clean dry wood.

He loved watching the draymen, two old, stout Germans both named Gus, unload the lumber from the freight car onto their stake wagons and drive around from the switch track to the alleyway. His father had them unload the lumber rapidly to save demurrage on the freight car, and for this reason the draymen stacked all the lumber in the alleyway of the shed, and later on during the week his father’s foreman, Hans, would stack the boards neatly in the deep bins, lathing every layer to prevent warping.

Thinking about the lumber made him remember his father and mother talking in the living room after supper. He and Jimmy were playing Chinese checkers and he heard snatches of their conversation, his father mentioning something about business being bad and insurance rates high and how they might be better off if the lumberyard burned down and they collected the insurance money.

He had turned and asked, “Why is business bad, father?” and his father looked over his reading glasses, frowning intently for one silent moment, and answered, “You wouldn’t understand, Bill. Time for you and Jimmy to be in bed. Off with both of you.”

He thought about the lumber and how he would hurry down to the yard bright and early in the morning and watch the freight car grow magically empty and the fresh stacks in the alleyway mount higher and higher while the two Guses swore lusty German oaths at their gray geldings and took time off for beer twice in the morning; and in the late afternoon, about five, when the sun was slipping low and the air was cooling, the gang would come by and he would go with them for a swim in the creek, under the second bridge where the water was three feet over his head in the big pool. They would swim in the raw, ducking and splashing and playing tag and king-of-the-hill on the south bank, and when the five-o’clock passenger snorted in from North Fork they would yell at the engineer and the passengers, exposing their brown upper bodies and arms. And then they would dress, their overalls sticking wet against their skin, and walk the rails to town and hurry home for supper; and again he would think how wonderful summer vacation was.

It was a bright August night and the gnats were flying against the window screen, hitting

with sharp little pings. He rolled over on his right side and looked out on the street, dusty while under the moon, and the houses squatting solidly among the blue tree shadows. Because it was a small town, four hundred people and sixteen dogs—he had counted the dogs two weeks ago—he could name every house and its occupants. Down the street he saw the flagpole in the square and the bell tower over the fire-cart house. He had played on the hose drying racks that afternoon after the volunteer fire department had held their monthly drill, walking importantly up and down the stretched hose in his bare feet, squishing water from the lower end and talking to the village marshal, who sat against the cart house on a nail keg, nodding sleepily in the warm sunshine.

He had said, “Why do you dry the hose, Henry?”

“Keep it from rotting,” Henry explained. “Can’t reel it up on the cart wet, Bill.”

“Henry,” he asked, “do we ever have a real fire here?”

Henry grinned sleepily. “Sure, Bill, when you were a baby we had one, the grain elevator in ’35, just ten years ago. But not lately. We don’t have much trouble that way, thank goodness.”

He had asked, “Could we put it out if we had a real fire?”

Henry hesitated a moment, and then answered cheerfully, “I think so, Bill, if we got to it in time.”

He was getting sleepy now, his eyes falling toward his cheeks, drowsing over this past pattern of the spent day, wondering if the lumber car would have more new names scrawled on its inside walls, saying “Mike McGuire” or Gus Jones” and the names of towns like Walla Walla and Cascade and then some greeting that made them and the town sound romantic. He wondered what would happen if they ever had a fire in town, and how he would feel watching it. He heard the midnight freight puff up the west grade from North Fork, gain the summit and coast down into town; he looked and could faintly see, above the tree tops, the rectangular outline of the cars against the darker shadow of Frevert’s Hill, and see the round sausage of smoke, with an occasional spark from the firebox, rising lazily above the smokestack; and then he fell back against the pillow and rubbed his nose, dropping off into dreamless sleep.

He was jerked from sleep by the harsh cacophonous clanging of the fire bell. He listened a moment, half groggy and uncomprehending, and then sat bolt upright, wide-awake and dry-mouthed with fear, thinking, “It’s a fire, a real fire!” The bell was ringing fast, not stopping, and downstairs the telephone shrilled loudly in the darkness and he heard the quick thud of bare feet as his father ran from the bedroom.

He heard his father's voice. "Yes, yes . . . the lumberyard . . . I'll be right down."

His mother was up now, her voice worried and excited. "Jim, is it the yard?" and his father, already at the front door, called, "Don't worry, dear," and then the door slammed and he looked through the window and saw his father running down the street, buttoning his trousers and pulling at his suspenders.

He waited no longer, but jumped from bed and stood at the window, pressing his nose against the screen, watching the town jump awake all at once. Lights flashed on in every house and the front door of Dutch Lofter's bungalow across the street banged open and Dutch came running out, pulling up a pair of pants as he headed for the cart house. Porch lights were snapping on and he heard loud shouts ringing out downtown and then he looked up, above the housetops and trees, and saw the bright red glare flickering and rising and falling from the rear of the lumber shed. Johnny Wax came running down the street, barefooted and he yelled, "Johnny, wait for me!"

Johnny skidded to a stop and looked at his window and called, "Hurry up, Billy!"

He dressed as he ran downstairs, slipping into overalls and sneakers, and behind him his brother said sleepily, "Don't make so much noise, Billy," and then he slipped between his mother's skirt and the door jamb before she could stop him, and joined Johnny in the middle of the street. Chuck Williams came catty-cornered from his house across the street, and Chuck's father, pounding heavily along the sidewalk, shouted, "Be careful, boys," and went on downtown.

"Come on," Johnny cried, "it's a real fire. Gosh, you know what it is, Billy?"

"The lumberyard," he said. "They called dad."

"Golly," Chuck said. "Look!"

They could see plainly, as they ran, the flames riding above the store buildings, red and leaping, black smoke threading through the jumping pattern of flame, and they heard the faint crackling of the fire, like a thousand mice running over dry corn in a grain bin. It had a good start, he thought, and wondered if the volunteer fire department would do as good as Henry said they could. Then they reached the square and stopped beside the flagpole, watching the firemen gathering around the cart house.

Everything was a confused picture for a few moments, with men in all sorts of clothes milling wildly before the doors of the cart house; and order materialized suddenly from chaos as the marshal's voice, harsh and authoritative now, bellowed, "Clear the track!" and from the cart house came the red hose cart, pulled in front by six men and pushed from behind by as many more. Bill knew the hose cart from bow to stern; it had high wooden wheels with steel rims, and on the spool was wound many lengths of fire hose.

Stuck on knobs were the nozzles, and in the big tool box hanging between the wheels were pipe wrenches and the other equipment. Because the town was so small a man could run from one end to the other in two minutes, they had no need for a truck. The hose cart could be pulled to any fire in five minutes. The cart rushed by the flagpole, the men straining and swearing as they pulled and pushed, and the boys fell in behind, running fast to keep up, their breath short, their faces red now with the reflected glare from the flames.

“They sure run fast,” Chuck gasped.

“Comes from practice,” Johnny said. “They ain’t so bad as I thought.”

He could hear cars now, coming from farther back in the town, and people were running from all directions, gathering across the street from the front of the lumberyard. He saw then that the organization and drilling of the fire department was not so foolish as it had appeared, and that the horseplay of the young men on the department was horseplay with a reason behind it. He saw the nozzle men pulling their own nozzles from their knobs and heading for the front of the lumber shed; and the hose men were unreeling the white hose from the spool, two of them pulling an end toward the nozzle men, while two others caught the loose end as it unwound from the spool and headed for the nearest hydrant. The hydrant men were already in position beside the hydrants, wrenches ready to turn and release the water. The marshal and the fire chief, Earl Potts, had the first hose connected to their nozzle and were halfway down the alley beside the lumber shed. The marshal called, “Turn her on!” and the hydrant man gave his wrench a full, quick turn and water swelled and rushed through the hose, tightening it fat and hard. The water shot out of the nozzle in a solid white stream, and the marshal and the fire chief turned the stream directly on the northwest corner, where the fire evidently had started and was burning highest.

Johnny Wax said, “Let’s shinny up on the grocery-store roof and watch,” and ran across the sidewalk behind the grocery store, which stood just across the alley from the front of the lumberyard.

They knew how to get on top; it was a secret they used when playing cowboys and Indians, by climbing the old box-elder tree, grabbing the edge of the gutter drain and pulling themselves over the edge of the store to the flat-topped roof. They followed one another up the tree and scrambled onto the tarred roof, breathing hard, hearts pounding in their throats, and ran across the roof to the north side.

“Gosh, it’s burning high,” Johnny said.

“I don’t think they can put it out,” Chuck Williams said.

Cinders and ashes were already falling on them; they could feel the heat of the flames beating against their faces. Johnny said, “They got to put it out.”

“Maybe they will,” Chuck said, “but they got to work fast.”

Billy heard the hoarse, tight voices of the men, the words thrown over shoulders and across flame-swept alleys, the very sound and sparsity of the words significant. He saw the men of the town in this excitement, transformed from everyday nonentity to surprising summits of endurance, skill and strength. The grocery clerk was handling his nozzle with the skill of a veteran, playing the water in advantageous spots and not shrinking from the flames or falling timbers; words, sharp and acutely outlined against the noise of the fire, came up to his ears:

“Get that hose over here.”

“Look out, Joe, watch that roof.”

“More pressure.”

“Watch it, boys. She’s going down any minute.”

“Give me a hand with this wrench.”

They were simple words and in them was no dramatic quality, but the night with the fire and the noise and the newness of the thing made the words mean a great deal.

He saw his father then, in front of the lumberyard, waving his arms and shouting directions to a group of men. He saw Hans, his father’s foreman, run to the front door of the store, and unlock it; and then all the men rushed through the door into the store, which made up the front half of the lumberyard, and began carrying out great loads of stuff. They carried his father’s desk and typewriter and all the guns, and the office equipment and paint and wash boilers and nail kegs and bolts and wagons—everything in the store—out into the street and stacked them in big piles. His father yelled, “Too slow; break the front windows!” and Hans smashed the big plate-glass windows on each side of the door, and the men handed hardware through the windows, working faster now.

The fire chief had turned his nozzle over to Butch Becker and was standing beside his father, calling for more hose. He saw their faces in the leap and dance of the mounting flames, tight and afraid, and their eyes reflected this fear. He knew then that Chuck was right; they couldn’t stop this fire.

“Get all the hose on every hydrant you can reach,” the chief shouted. “Hurry it up.”

“Got all the hardware out?” his father yelled.

Hans answered, “Almost everything, Jim.”

“Get the books,” his father called.

Hans nodded and vanished into the store. Smoke was beginning to curl up from the store roof now; and suddenly the fire broke through the shed roof right behind the wall where the store and the shed joined together.

Johnny said, "Golly, lookit!"

The fire broke from the front shed door in a solid wall of flame and smoke, driving the hose men toward the street. They had four streams of water pouring into the shed but the flames mounted higher, licking along the ridgepole, popping the window glass as it heated and snapped in its frames. It broke through the shed roof in a dozen places, blazing and smoking and crackling loudly. He thought of all the beautiful lumber in those cool dark bins, stacked so carefully and smelling so sweet, and the shingles stacked a square at a time in the biggest bin, and all the lath and sash in the cement room and the big cans of paint and pitch in the paint storeroom. He thought of all this going up in flames and he was sick inside, for he loved it all.

He heard the fire chief call to a man, "Joe, call North Fork and tell 'em we need help."

Then he knew for sure that the fire was beyond control and why his father had ordered all the hardware carried from the store. The fire was licking greedily at the rear of the store and climbing the roof and snaking toward the chimney. The water poured into the shed and seemed to do no good; the fire was too bright; it had too much fuel to burn; it was not going to be put out. And then, unexpectedly, hot glowing cinders began falling on the grocery store roof, and they heard a wild yell and saw the grocer waving his arms and calling for water. Chuck Williams said, "Beat 'em out with your shoes," and ran across the roof toward a cinder the size of a half dollar.

The grocer saw them and yelled, "Boys, stomp on those cinders."

"Yes sir," Chuck called, "but you need water up here on this tar roof."

"I'll get it," the grocer shouted. "Keep stomping."

The fire chief was shouting more orders now, the words lost against the increasing roar of the fire, and he saw men running from the crowd and moving up the business block, placing ladders against the buildings and climbing up. Other men were grabbing galvanized milk pails from the stack carried out of the store and filling them with water at a tap and carrying them to the men on the rooftops. The chief ran underneath them and he heard the words, "Man on the roof, one on the ground. Keep them roofs soaked down good."

The depot agent, Mr. Chase, was on top of the depot, straddling the ridgepole and playing a weak stream of water from a garden hose on the smoking, steaming slate roof. He stopped every few seconds and yelled, "Water, water!" and Butch Becker turned a nozzle from the lumber shed and blasted the depot roof and Mr. Chase with the stream.

Mr. Chase let out a wild yell and sat down, grabbing the ridgepole, and the water walked along the roof, cooling it off. Butch swung the stream back to the fire, and Mr. Chase stood up again and yelled, "Thanks, Butch. I needed a bath."

A cinder hit Billy's cheek as he stomped on a live one, and he brushed at the pain and passed a full bucket of water to Chuck Williams. Chuck grabbed the bucket and ran across the roof, sloshing small dribbles on live cinders. Chuck emptied the bucket, turned in the bright red glare and threw it to Bill. He caught the handle and tossed it to the grocer, who handed him another full bucket and dropped the empty to someone on the ground.

"Can you hold out?" the grocer yelled hoarsely.

"I think so," Chuck called. "You should have a hose up here."

"I'll get one," the grocer shouted. He disappeared down the ladder, swearing and grunting.

He heard the siren in the west, rolling up and down and across the hills, flattening out against the wall of sound thrown up by the fire. That was the North Fork fire truck; help was on the way, but staring at the lumberyard, burning now like a pine cone, he knew that all the fire departments in Northeast Nebraska would not be enough. Below him, the fire chief was running up and down the street, directing hoses, shouting orders, calling more men.

Chuck Williams wiped his sweating face and gasped, "We can't stand this heat much longer," and started for the ladder. Chuck was the serious boy in their gang, and if he said it was too hot that was the last word. Billy called, "You going down, Chuck?" and Chuck yelled, "Come on, you guys. They need a hose up here."

They met the grocer at the bottom of the ladder, struggling with the coiling and twisting of a long garden hose, full of water right up to the shut-off nozzle and leaking in a dozen places. Chuck said, "Hurry up, Mr. Ruhlow; you need water bad on the roof."

The grocer said, "Thanks, boys, thanks a lot. I won't forget your help," and scampered up the ladder like a scared monkey.

Billy remembered something in a book about how men who were stiff and wobbly in the joints sometimes burst forth with new energy in a crisis because of their glands manufacturing a substance called adrenalin. Chuck said, "Let's go around in front."

The fire truck from North Fork drove into town, crossing the railroad tracks and sliding to a stop in the street, uniformed firemen already running for hydrants with long hoses and others carrying chemical tubes. Their chief, a tall, lanky man in a black raincoat, with a red scoop-shaped hat pulled almost over his nose, splashed through the water and

cinders and said hello to Bill's father and the chief. He was close enough to hear the North Fork chief say, "Hell, we can't save the shed," and his father answered, "Save the rest of the town, boys," and then he knew the shed was gone.

The car of new lumber on the switch track was burning fiercely, sparks flying into the air and the sides of the freight car warping out and cracking as the flames sneaked through the roof and floor and attacked the lumber and shingles inside. For a brief moment he thought of the smell of fresh lumber and all the new names he would never read, and that was as bad as the entire lumberyard burning. Two firemen deflected their hose and soaked the car; the fire sputtered and went out and the car stood blackened and dripping in the red light. But it was too hot and too near the big fire to stay out; already it smoked and steam rose where water had struck, and small flames licked around the roof.

The depot agent yelled from the depot roof, "Can I have some water up here, Earl?"

"In a minute," the chief called.

His father was standing spread-legged beside a table dragged from the office, and all his ledgers and other business books were piled helter-skelter on the table. Hans ran from the store with a last load of books, and behind him the roof caved in and a long sigh went up from the crowd, for Hans had just cleared the scale when it fell. His father stacked the books on top of the others and said, "You took a chance that last time, Hans."

Hans wiped his face; it was black with smoke and grime. "Not much, Jim. I coulda went through the side window."

His father looked down and saw him beside the table, and he smiled. "You did a good job on the grocery-store roof, Bill. Did it get too hot?"

He said, "Yes, sir. We almost roasted."

His Father laughed, and he wondered, with some deep-plumbed apprehension, how his father could laugh when their beautiful, sweet-smelling lumberyard was burning up. And then his father ceased laughing abruptly and he caught the flicker of pain and anger behind the grime on his father's face.

The fire chief said, "I wonder how it started, Jim."

His father shook his head slowly. "I wish I knew, Earl. You think someone set it?"

The fire chief frowned. "Don't know. Wait till it cools off and we'll poke around."

"There she goes," Hans said quietly.

He looked up and saw the entire roof fall with a heavy, rending crash; and the lumber shed was no longer a blazing building, only a pile of burning wood. Smoke and flames shot high into the air and a great pall of smoke puffed up, black and oily, and hung for a moment over the shed. Then the store roof, what was still standing, fell in and he heard a smaller crash and saw a little puff of smoke come up. The North Fork fire chief spoke to Earl Potts.

“We can use chemicals now, chief. How about your men turning all the water on the other buildings and saving them for sure. Mr. Adams, we can save a lot of that lumber underneath.”

“Good,” his father said. “But make sure the other buildings don’t go up.”

In the dying moments of the fire he watched the firemen pour water and chemical on the surviving small blazes cropping up throughout the fallen shed. The fire spat back at the firemen, but burned slowly into piles of glowing embers; the lumberyard was now a long lumpy mass of blackened boards and red coals. The freight car was a black pile of burning lumber atop the steel trucks and wheels.

Chuck Williams said, “You know what time it is?”

“Gosh,” Johnny said, “I dunno, but I’m awful tired.”

“Five o’clock,” Chuck said in an awed voice.

Billy said, “I’ve never been up this late before.”

He saw the fire chiefs and his father poke at some object in the northwest corner of the shed, where the fire had begun. They yanked something black and misshapen from a nest of coals and walked toward him, talking rapidly and holding whatever it was at the end of a stick. When they came closer he heard Earl Potts say, “Oil can, by golly.”

“I can’t think who would do it,” his father said.

“You got insurance?” The North Fork chief asked.

His father said, “Not enough. You always lose in a fire. That car of new lumber, two thousand dollars’ worth, carried none.”

“Yeah,” Earl said, “that is true.”

“We’ll look around some more,” the North Fork chief said, “soon as it cools off. I’ll bring my fire expert over this afternoon.”

"I wish you would," his father said. "Well, let's all get a little sleep."

"You go ahead," Earl Potts said. "You need a good drink, Jim."

His father looked up and saw him by the table. He said, "Come on, Bill, we'll go home and clean up. Your mother will be worried about you."

He asked, "Did someone start the fire, father?"

"Possibly," his father said shortly. "Don't think about it, Bill."

When they entered the house and sat down in the living room, his mother rubbed his face with a clean washrag and said, "My goodness, Bill, you're black as coal."

His father stretched out in front of the fireplace, sitting deep in his easy chair, hands on his head, legs sagging limply, and he realized then how tired his father was. His mother asked, "Is it all gone, Jim?"

"All but a little lumber underneath," his father answered.

"Well," his mother said brightly, "both of you must wash and change clothes. Bill---

"Yes, ma'am," he said quickly, fighting off sudden sleepiness.

"Get your father's robe and slippers from his closet."

"No," his father said, "I've got to help Hans get those ledgers put away. He's still watching them. Bill, bring me those old trousers I wear when we play catch. But I will have a cup of hot coffee, Virginia."

His mother said, "All right, Jim, but don't strain your back," and went out to the kitchen for the coffee.

He went into his father's room, smelling the face lotion and the pipe tobacco in the walnut canister on the dresser, and opened the closet door. He could hear his mother talking from the kitchen, asking if the fire was set, and his father answered, "Possibly. We found an oil can in the northwest corner where it started."

He searched through the clothes and found the old brown trousers, and when he pulled them from the hanger his nose, attuned sharply to smells by the night of fire, caught the strong odor of kerosene on the trousers, and in his ears he felt a heavy roaring as he remembered his father's words of the night before, "Better if it burned down and we got the insurance money," and he was suddenly sick and empty at the pit of his stomach. He didn't want to believe what he thought, but the trousers smelled of kerosene and he had them in his arms and his father's words were strong in his ears. He

leaned against the closet door, fighting against the feeling, and then his mother's voice came from the kitchen, raised in sudden remembrance: "My goodness, Jim, you can't wear those dirty old pants. You cleaned the oil stove yesterday, remember, and they are simply full of grease and oil. Bill!"

He called, "Yes, mother," and waited for her words, hearing as he waited the words she had just spoken about his father's pants, and feeling the pain leave his chest and his spirits bound high again, clearing his head and making him stand up straight and happy in the closet.

"Bring your father his old seersucker trousers," his mother called, "and throw those dirty ones down the clothes chute. I'll wash them Monday."

"Yes, mother," he cried. "I sure will."

He turned and dug into the closet, finding the seersucker pants, pulled them from the hanger and ran through the inside hall and dropped the brown pants down the chute. He skidded into the living room, grinning and feeling wonderful, and a little guilty for ever doubting his father's honesty; and handed the seersucker pants to his father, who had removed his wet shoes and shirt and was standing before the fireplace, swinging his arms and stamping his feet. His father grinned at him and took the pants. He said, "Virginia, we can be proud of Bill and his friends. They saved the grocery store from burning."

"He did!" his mother said, coming into the living room with hot coffee. "I was worried about you, Bill, afraid you might be burned."

"Oh, no," he said quickly. "We were careful mother. And we saw everything."

"You won't forget it for a long time, I'll wager," his father said. "Are you tired, son?"

That was the first time his father called him son in exactly that way, his father's voice rather low and very proud and possessive, and he felt a new importance and a great, strong wave of love swelling his throat, threatening to break forth in tears of joy if he wasn't big enough to keep them back. He was so proud that his father was—well, his father. He rubbed his nose awkwardly. "Yes, sir, I'm pretty tired."

"You wash up and go right to bed," his mother said. "And don't wake up all day."

He said, "Yes, mother," and turned to the stairs. He thought of something then and said, "Father, can I help you this afternoon?"

His father, getting into the seersucker pants and clean shirt, smiled and said, "You sleep for now, son. Tomorrow you can help me in the yard. We'll have a lot to do."

“Yes, sir,” he said happily. “Good night” –he grinned –“I mean, good morning.”

“Good morning,” his father laughed, and his mother came up and spanked him softly across the seat and he ran upstairs and washed for fifteen minutes, putting a big black ring around the tub and using two towels to dry his body. He tiptoed into the bedroom and stood beside his bed, looking through the window, seeing the town in the first light of early morning. Jimmy had slept through the entire night without waking and now he stirred restlessly and rolled over on his side, opening his eyes sleepily. He mumbled, “You getting up, Bill?”

He smiled, feeling much older and wiser than Jimmy. He said, “Go back to sleep. I just went to the bathroom.”

He got into bed and stretched out, feeling the weariness in his arms and legs and across his stomach, where the muscles were tired and sore. He knew he had aged in this night and had found a new understanding of his father; and he knew he was no longer just a boy and good only for playing in the lumber piles and going swimming down by the second bridge. And his father had called him “son” in that different, warm voice for the first time. He felt, somehow, with growing knowledge, that he had become almost a man in the six hours of the night, not only in his own mind but in his father’s eyes. He stared at the ceiling and over at Jimmy, already sleeping again, and he grinned at nothing in particular, shivered once with happiness, and felt sleep stealing over him, warm and soothing and tender.

“Fire in the Night” by Frank O’Rourke appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* January 1946 (Volume 218/Issue 28) published by Benjamin Franklin Literary & Medical Society, 1946.

Name _____

Teacher/Period _____



SAS/ Related Reading 3: Comprehension/Analysis Questions

“Fire in the Night” by Frank O’Rourke

1. What conversation about the lumberyard does Bill overhear between his mother and father? How does Bill’s father respond when Bill asks him why business is bad?

2. How would you evaluate the volunteer fire department’s response to the fire in the lumberyard?

3. Why does Bill’s father order the men to break the front window of the hardware store? What other order does Bill’s father give his men?

4. From which location do Bill and his friends watch the fire? Why is this location important in the story?



SAS/ Related Reading 3: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

5. Authors use a character's words and actions to reveal that character's traits or personal qualities. What does Bill's father tell the firefighters from North Fork when they arrive? What does his statement reveal about the father's character? How does Hans, the foreman of the lumberyard, risk his life to save the business books and ledgers from the fire? What might Hans' actions reveal about him?

6. Read the following paragraph.

He saw the fire chiefs and his father poke at some object in the northwest corner of the shed, where the fire had begun. They yanked something black and misshapen from a nest of coals and walked toward him, talking rapidly and holding whatever it was at the end of a stick. When they came closer he heard Earl Potts say, "Oil can, by golly."

What is the significance of the oil can that the fire chiefs and Bill's father find in a corner of the shed?

7. **Setting** refers to when and where a story takes place. Which details in the story help you determine the setting?



SAS/ Related Reading 3: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

8. A **simile** is a figure of speech in which a writer uses *like* or *as* to compare two different things. The following quotation from the story contains a simile: “They heard the faint crackling of the fire, like a thousand mice running over dry corn in a grain bin.” Which two things are being compared? Why might an author use such a simile?

9. **Conflict** refers to a problem or struggle that the main character faces. A conflict can be external or internal. In an **external conflict**, the character struggles with an outside force, such as the fire in the lumberyard. In an **internal conflict**, the character must resolve a struggle in his or her mind. Which detail about his father’s old brown trousers worries Bill and why? How does Bill react to the discovery? Think about how Bill resolves his internal conflict. Which details from the story help him resolve the conflict? Does the resolution seem reasonable?

10. What similarities are there between the fire in the lumberyard and the Great Chicago Fire? What differences are there between the two fires? How do the texts “Fire in the Night” and Murphy’s *The Great Fire* compare/contrast in their approach to the topic of fire?



SAS/ Related Reading 3: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

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SAS/ Related Reading 3: Informative/Explanatory Writing Task

“Fire in the Night” by Frank O’Rourke

Write one or two paragraphs in which you explain how Bill’s relationship with his father has changed because of the fire. Use details from “Fire in the Night” to support your answer. What would you say is the story’s theme or main idea?

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SAS/ Related Reading 3: Narrative Writing Task

“Fire in the Night” by Frank O’Rourke

In “Fire in the Night,” people faced difficult circumstances and had to quickly decide what to do. Write a narrative—real or imagined—in which the main character encounters a difficult circumstance and must act quickly. Use descriptive details that help your reader picture the setting and the characters. Try to include dialogue that reflects how your characters would actually speak. Organize the events in your narrative in chronological order. The events should lead to a logical conclusion.

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SAS/ Related Reading 4: Comprehension/Analysis Questions

“Fire and Friendship” by Renée Rebman

1. **Setting** refers to the place and time where a story occurs. Identify the two settings in the play. Which details help create each setting?

2. Which conflicts are established in Scene 1? How does the author introduce the conflicts?

3. How does Fiona learn that her mother was in the Triangle Factory Fire? Why hasn't Mrs. Adler told her daughter sooner about her experience in the fire?

4. In Scene 2, what do you learn about the lives of the young women who work in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory? What can you conclude about the working conditions at the factory? Use details to support your answer.



SAS/ Related Reading 4: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

5. How do the factory owners discourage workers from complaining about the working conditions? Use details to support your answer.

6. Whose point of view does the drama represent—that of the workers or the owners? Use details from the play to support your answer.

7. What conditions in the factory and the building result in the fire being so deadly?

8. What happens to Alana’s friend Fiona and many of the other factory workers during the fire? How does this event better help you understand the tragedy of the fire?



SAS/ Related Reading 4: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

9. Scene 3 returns to the present. What reforms occurred as a result of the Triangle Factory Fire? Think about how Fiona Adler has changed in the play. What lesson about friendship does Fiona learn from her mother's experience? What does Fiona Adler discover about her own name?

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SAS/ Related Reading 4: Narrative Writing Task

“Fire and Friendship” by Renée Rebman

In the drama “Fire and Friendship,” Fiona Adler learns an important lesson about friendship. Write a narrative—real or imagined—that involves a conflict between two friends. Your story can take place in the present or in the past. Use descriptive details and images that appeal to the senses to help your reader picture the characters and the setting. Add dialogue to help your reader hear how your characters speak. Be sure to include a resolution to the conflict that follows naturally from the sequence of events.

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SAS/ Related Reading 5: Comprehension/Analysis Questions

“The Fury of Fire: One Family’s Terrifying Wildfire Story” by Kristin Lewis

1. A **simile** is a type of figurative language that uses the words *like* or *as* to compare two different things. A **metaphor** compares two different things but does not use the words *like* or *as*. Writers use comparisons to help make their ideas clear. As you read the following passage from “The Fury of Fire,” notice the comparisons the writer uses to describe the wildfire.

Wildfires can move at speeds of up to 60 miles an hour, as fast as a car on the highway. They burn as hot as 2,600 degrees Fahrenheit—hot enough to melt gold. The front of a wildfire is an invisible wave of heat that blisters skin and turns hair to ash in one second. After four seconds, clothing bursts into flame. And this is all before the actual blaze arrives.

Identify the simile and metaphor in the above passage. What is the main idea of the passage? Which details convey the main idea?

2. How is Kevin’s family in Valley Center, California, alerted to the wildfire? What possessions do they take with them as they flee their home? How do they alert others?

3. For how long is Kevin’s family unable to return to their home? How does Kevin describe his reaction when his family returns to their neighborhood to discover that their home is still standing?



SAS/ Related Reading 5: Comprehension/Analysis Questions (cont.)

4. What positive things came out of the wildfire disaster? What lessons were learned from it?

5. What similarities do you notice between the situations described in “The Fury of Fire” and those described in Murphy’s book *The Great Fire*?

6. Examine the map that appears with the selection. Where does the first fire begin? How does the map in the article work with the text to contribute to your understanding of the wildfires?

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SAS/ Related Reading 5: Short Research/Writing Task

“The Fury of Fire: One Family’s Terrifying Wildfire Story” by Kristin Lewis

After reading “The Fury of Fire: One family’s terrifying wildfire Story,” research how firefighters in the United States battle wildfires. Consult at least two sources and write a short report explaining what you have learned.

