

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Practice Reading Passage: Presidents' Day	7
Practice Comprehension Questions	8
Common Core State Standards Correlation	9
Reading Levels Chart	10
Science Passages	
Unit 1: The Salty Truth	11
Unit 2: The Breeds and Traits of Dogs	14
Unit 3: Hop Along or Fly High	17
Unit 4: Now Hear This!	20
Unit 5: George Eastman Invents the Kodak Moment	23
Geography Passages	
Unit 6: Mine Fires That Keep Burning	26
Unit 7: Cold and Hot Deserts	29
Unit 8: Mighty Meteors	32
Unit 9: The Life Cycle of a Pond	35
Unit 10: Eerie Earthquakes	38
History Passages	
Unit 11: Pacific Northwest Native Americans	41
Unit 12: The U.S. Constitution	44
Unit 13: The Bill of Rights	47
Unit 14: Oral Lee Brown Opens the Door	50
Unit 15: Condoleezza Rice, Former U.S. Secretary of State	53
Language Arts Passages	
Unit 16: Guinea Pigs (Journal Entries)	56
Unit 17: Dr. Seuss Loved Green Eggs and Ham (Biography)	59
Unit 18: Delicious Discoveries (Magazine Article)	62
Unit 19: Beyond Belief (Website)	65
Unit 20: The Miracle on the Hudson (Newspaper Article)	68
Answer Sheet	71
Comprehension Questions and Answers	72
Master Answer Key	112

Introduction

If you are like most teachers, your classroom includes a wide variety of scholars: average students, English language learners, gifted students, and learning disabled students. You may be expected to get your diverse student population, including special education students and those for whom English is a second language, to master grade-level, content-area material. That's a challenging task and one that requires grade-level, content-area materials written at several levels. The *Differentiated Nonfiction Reading* kit was designed with that in mind.

Each unit in the *Differentiated Nonfiction Reading* kit covers a grade-level appropriate curriculum topic in science, geography, history, or language arts. One set of comprehension questions and answers is provided (in the back of the Teacher Resource Book) for each unit. This enables your students to access the text and concepts at their instructional—rather than frustration—level, while requiring them to meet objective standards, just as they must do on standardized assessments.

This kit contains 20 units, each with four sets of cards written at three different levels (240 cards), and a Teacher Resource Book which includes a Comprehension Questions page for each unit and a corresponding page with the answers. Students can fill in the answers on the unit question page or fill in the standard bubble Answer Sheet provided on page 71. A one-page Master Answer Key for all units is also provided on page 112. The kit's accompanying CD includes an Enhanced Teacher Resource eBook and the Common Core State Standards.

Prepare Your Students to Read Content-Area Text

Each day you can prepare your students to read the passages in the *Differentiated Nonfiction Reading* kit by reading aloud a short nonfiction selection from another source. Reading content-area text aloud is critical to developing your students' ability to read it themselves.




Discussing content-area concepts with your class is also very important. Remember, however, that discussion can never replace reading aloud since people do not speak using the vocabulary and complex sentence structures of written language.

Readability

All of the passages in the *Differentiated Nonfiction Reading* kit have a reading level that has been calculated by the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Formula. This formula, built into Microsoft Word®, determines a text's readability by calculating the number of words, syllables, and sentences.

Each passage is presented at three levels: easy, average, and challenging. *Easy* is below grade level; *average* is at grade level; and *challenging* is above grade level. The chart on page 10 shows you the specific reading levels of every passage.

To ensure that only you know the reading level at which each student is working, the levels are not printed on the passages. Instead, at the top of the card is a pair of books with a specific pattern that will allow you to quickly match students and passages.

Reading Level	 Easy (below grade level)	 Average (at grade level)	 Challenging (above grade level)
---------------	--	--	---

Introduction (cont.)

Essential Comprehension Skills

Comprehension is the primary goal of any reading task. The *Differentiated Nonfiction Reading* kit will help your students build a foundation for comprehension skills necessary for a lifetime of learning.

The passage questions and answers can be found in this Teacher Resource Book or in the Enhanced eBook. Run off copies for each student or use the E-copies on an interactive white board or computer. The questions following each passage always appear in the same order and cover six vital comprehension skills:

1. **Locating facts**—Questions based on exactly what the text states—who, what, when, where, why, and how many
2. **Understanding vocabulary in context**—Questions based on the ability to infer word meaning from the syntax and semantics of the surrounding text, as well as the ability to recognize known synonyms and antonyms for a newly encountered word
3. **Determining sequence**—Questions based on chronological order—what happened first, last, and in between
4. **Identifying conditions**—Questions that ask students to identify similarities and differences or notice cause-and-effect relationships
5. **Making inferences**—Questions that require students to evaluate, make decisions, and draw logical conclusions
6. **Analyzing and visualizing**—Questions that make students draw upon their schema and/or visualization skills to select the correct response (Visualization reinforces the important skill of picturing the text.)


How to Use the Unit Cards and the Teacher Resource Book

You can choose to do whole class, small group, or independent practice:

Whole Group—For whole-group practice, you can do the following:

1. Distribute the cards (or copies) based on students' instructional reading levels.
2. Have students read the text silently and answer the questions either on the Unit Comprehension Questions page or on the Answer Sheet on page 71.
3. Collect all of the papers and score them.
4. Return the comprehension questions pages or answer sheets to the students and discuss how they determined their answers.
5. Point out how students had to use their background knowledge to answer certain questions.

You may distribute the passages without revealing the different levels. If you do not want your students to be aware that the passages are differentiated, organize the passages in small piles by seating arrangement. Then, when you approach a group of desks, you'll have the levels you need. An alternative is to make a pile of passages from diamonds to polka dots. Put a finger between the top two levels. Then, as you approach each student, pull the passage from the top (easy), middle (average), or bottom (challenging) layer. Do this quickly and without much hesitation.

Unit 11 Reading Passage—History

Pacific Northwest Native Americans

The Pacific Northwest Native Americans once lived in what is now Oregon and Washington. They lived in parts of Canada and Alaska. They ate elk, deer, and bears. They ate sea mammals. They got oil from fish. The oil was used to fry food. It was used as medicine, too.

The tribes used animal hides to make clothes. The women trimmed the clothes with porcupine quills. Both men and women wore earrings. They wore made of shark's teeth.

Many people think that a family is rich when it owns a lot of things. But the Pacific Northwest Native Americans did not. They said that those who gave away a lot were rich. Giving gifts was part of a party. This party was called a potlatch. Each guest got the same gift. Sometimes the family gave away blankets. Some gave red cedar baskets. Some even gave away canoes!


Potlatches were held for births, deaths, and marriages. At some, the hosting families would tell stories of their animal ancestors. Each family said it came from an eagle, wolf, crane, frog, or killer whale. If you were born into the frog clan, then that was part of your name. You wore the frog crest. You carved it on your bows, forks, spoons, and totem pole. No one from outside the frog clan was allowed to use the frog crest.

A potlatch was held if a new totem pole was raised. The poles were made of red cedar logs. Each one stood in front of a house. The pole told each family's history. It had animals and spirits carved on it. People looked at the bottom of the pole most often. The clan chose its best artist to carve that part.

Music meant a lot to the people. They loved to sing. Each song was valued. Only the person who came up with a song could sing it! He or she could choose to let others sing it, too. There were special dances. The dancers wore shells on their clothes. The shells hit each other. They made music when the dancers moved.

Russians arrived on the Pacific Coast in 1741. They traded with the natives to get sea otter fur. The Russians took the first back home. Everyone wanted them! So the Russians came back for more. The number of sea otters dwindled. The sea otter almost went extinct.

The Native Americans were in danger, too. Many caught Russian sicknesses. They had never had these sicknesses before. Thousands died from illness.



©Blue Star Education41#51213G Differentiated Nonfiction Reading

Introduction (cont.)

How to Use the Unit Cards and the Teacher Resource Book (cont.)

You can also announce to your class that all students will read at their own instructional levels. Do not discuss the technicalities of how the reading levels were determined. Just state that every person is reading at his or her own level and then answering the same comprehension questions. If you find that a student is doing well, try giving him or her a higher-level passage the next time. If he or she displays frustration, be ready to slip the student the lower-level passage. Remember, the cards look very similar and all three have the same photographs or illustrations.

Working in Centers and Independently—If you prefer to have the students work independently or in centers, try this procedure:

1. Create a folder for each student.
2. Make photocopies of the Answer Sheet for each class member and staple it to the back of each student folder. Replace as needed.
3. Each time you want to use a passage, place a unit card for the appropriate reading level and the related Comprehension Questions page in each student's folder.
4. Have each student retrieve his or her folder, read the passage, and answer the questions on the questions page or on the Answer Sheet.
5. Go over the answers together, or check the students' folders at a convenient time.
6. You may wish to provide a laminated copy of the Master Answer Key in the center, allowing students to check their own responses.

Teaching Multiple-Choice Response

It's a good idea to practice as a class how to read a passage and respond to the comprehension questions. In this way, you can demonstrate your own thought processes by "thinking aloud" to figure out each answer. Essentially, this means that you tell your students your thoughts as they come to you.

Make copies of the practice comprehension questions on page 8 and distribute them to your class. Then, display the practice reading passage on page 7. You may wish to use the Enhanced eBook to show it to the class on an interactive board. Or, you might use a document camera or an overhead transparency to show the page. Read the passage chorally. Studies have found that students of all ages enjoy choral reading, and it is especially helpful for English language learners. Choral reading lets students practice reading fluently in a safe venue because they can read in a whisper or even drop out if they feel the need.

Remember to demonstrate how to "darken" the answer bubbles on the question page or answer sheet. It is important that students learn to clearly mark their answers.

Discuss Question 1: After you've read the passage together, ask a student to read the first question aloud. Tell the student NOT to answer the question. Instead, read all of the answer choices aloud. Emphasize that reading the choices first is always the best way to approach any multiple-choice question. Since this question is about *locating facts*, reread the first paragraph of the passage aloud as the class follows along. Have the students reread the question silently and make a selection based on the information found. Ask a student who gives the correct response (A) to explain his or her reasoning. Explain that the first question is always the easiest because the fact is stated right in the passage.

Discuss Question 2: The second question is about the *vocabulary* word shown in boldfaced print in the passage. Ask a student to read the question aloud. Teach your students to reread the sentence before, the

Introduction (cont.)

Teaching Multiple-Choice Response (cont.)

sentence with, and the sentence after the vocabulary word in the passage. This will give them a context and help them to figure out what the word means. Then, have them substitute the word choices given for the vocabulary term in the passage. For each choice, they should reread the sentence with the substituted word and ask themselves, “Does this make sense?” This will help them to identify the best choice. One by one, substitute the words into the sentence, and read the sentence aloud. It will be obvious which one makes the most sense (C).

Discuss Question 3: The third question asks about *sequence*. Ask a student to read the question aloud. Write the choices on chart paper or the board. As a class, determine their order of occurrence, and write the numbers one through four next to them. Then, reread the question and make the correct choice (B).

Discuss Question 4: The fourth question is about *cause and effect* or *similarities and differences*. Ask a student to read the question aloud. Teach your students to look for the key words in the question (“*after the war*”) and search for those specific words in the passage. Explain that they may need to look for synonyms for the key words. For this question, ask your students to show where they found the correct response in the passage. Have students explain in their own words how they figured out the correct answer (B). This may be time-consuming at first, but it is an excellent way to help your students learn from each other.

Discuss Question 5: The fifth question asks students to make an *inference*. Ask a student to read the question aloud. Tell your students your thoughts as they occur to you, such as: “Well, the article didn’t say the name of the capital city. I’ve got four choices: Washington, D.C., Lincoln, Boston, and Philadelphia. How can I figure this out if the article didn’t tell me? Oh, I know! I’ll reread the article one paragraph at a time to see if it gives me any clues. (Reread just the first paragraph.) Wait a minute! Look at the last line in that paragraph. It tells me that the capital is named for him. The article hasn’t even mentioned Lincoln yet, and there’s no one named Boston or Philadelphia in the article either. So it is named after George Washington. I am going to choose (A).

Discuss Question 6: The sixth question calls for *analysis* or *visualization*. With such questions, some of the answers may be stated in the passage, but others may have different wording. Sometimes one or more of the answers must be visualized to ascertain the correct response.

After having a student read the question aloud, you can say, “This one is tricky. It’s asking me to picture a calendar in my mind. This means I need to use what I already know. The answer isn’t in the passage. Hmm...what makes February different from other months? Let me read the answer choices. (Read choices aloud.) Okay, the answer has to be that all of the dates are odd, all of the dates are even, or the month is longer or shorter than all of the other months. Now, let me close my eyes and picture February. No month has only odd or even dates, so that’s not right. Is February longer than other months? Because it is winter, it can feel that way! But no, I think what makes February different is that it is shorter—shorter than any other month. Even when it is leap year, it only has 29 days! All of the other months have 30 or 31. So the correct answer must be (C).”

Frequent Practice Is Ideal

The passages and comprehension questions in *Differentiated Nonfiction Reading* are time-efficient, allowing your students to practice these skills often. The more your students practice reading and responding to content-area comprehension questions, the more confident and competent they will become. Set aside time to allow your class to do every passage. If you do so, you’ll be pleased with your students’ improved comprehension of any nonfiction text, both within your classroom and beyond its walls.

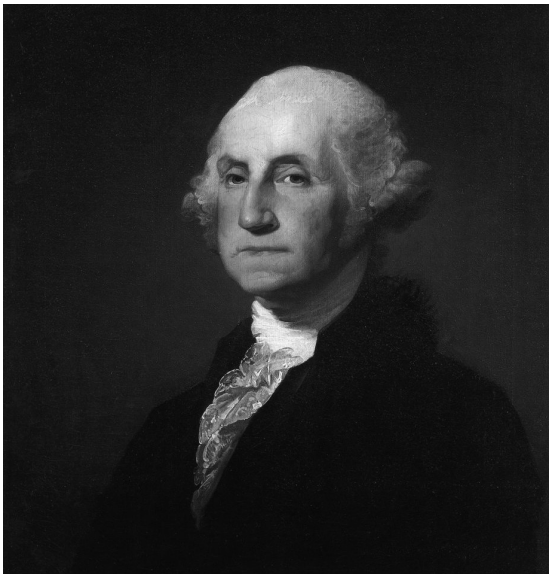


Presidents' Day

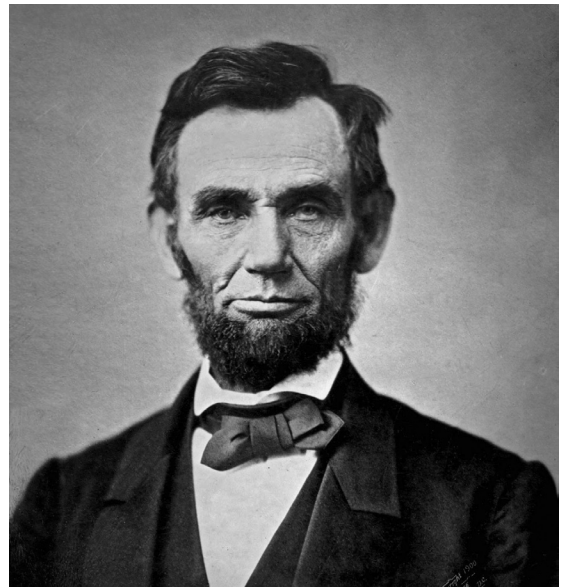
Over 200 years ago, Americans had to fight a war. They fought to break free from British rule. George Washington led the fight and won. Then, he led America for another eight years. He was the first president. We call him the Father of our Country. Our nation's capital is named after him.

Abraham Lincoln was another president. He did not want people to have **slaves**. He said that one person could not own another. The people in the North said that Lincoln was right. The people in the South said that he was not. This led to the U.S. Civil War. The men from the North fought the men from the South. The troops from the North won the war. When it was over, everyone was free.

Washington and Lincoln had a lot in common. Both believed in freedom. Both had to fight a war to make people free. Both have monuments that honor them. And both of these great leaders were born in February. Now, a day in February honors them. We call it Presidents' Day.



George Washington



Abraham Lincoln



Presidents' Day

Directions: Darken the best answer choice.

1. Who did George Washington fight against?
 - (A) the British
 - (B) Abe Lincoln
 - (C) the Southerners
 - (D) the Northerners

2. What are **slaves**?
 - (A) People who fight.
 - (B) People who do work.
 - (C) People who belong to another person.
 - (D) People who build monuments.

3. What happened first?
 - (A) Abe Lincoln was president.
 - (B) George Washington was president.
 - (C) The northern states and southern states fought each other.
 - (D) The British and the Americans fought a war.

4. After the Civil War,
 - (A) people started to own slaves.
 - (B) all slaves were set free.
 - (C) Americans had to fight the British.
 - (D) the Northerners and Southerners went to war.

5. The capital of the United States of America is
 - (A) Washington, D.C.
 - (B) Lincoln.
 - (C) Boston.
 - (D) Philadelphia.

6. Picture the month of February on the calendar. It has
 - (A) all odd numbers for its dates.
 - (B) all even numbers for its dates.
 - (C) fewer days than any other month.
 - (D) more days than any other month.

Common Core State Standards Correlation

Each passage and question in *Differentiated Nonfiction Reading* meets one or more of the following Common Core State Standards. © Copyright 2010 National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers. All rights reserved.

Informational Text Standards	Passage Title	Pages
Key Ideas and Details		
Standard 1: RI.3.1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	all passages	
Standard 2: RI.3.2. Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.	The Breed and Traits of Dogs	14–16, 74
	Mine Fires That Keep Burning	26–28, 82
	Oral Lee Brown Opens the Door	50–52, 98
	Dr. Seuss Loved Green Eggs and Ham	59–61, 104
Standard 3: RI.3.3. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.	The Salty Truth	11–13, 72
	Now Hear This!	20–22, 78
	The Life Cycle of a Pond	35–37, 88
	The Bill of Rights	47–49, 96
	Dr. Seuss Loved Green Eggs and Ham	59–61, 104
	Delicious Discoveries	62–64, 106
Craft and Structure		
Standard 4: RI.3.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a <i>grade 3 topic or subject area</i> .	all passages	
Standard 5: RI.3.5. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.	Eerie Earthquakes	38–40, 90
	Dr. Seuss Loved Green Eggs and Ham	59–61, 104
	Beyond Belief	65–67, 108
Standard 6: RI.3.6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.	Guinea Pigs	56–58, 102
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas		
Standard 7: RI.3.7. Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).	The U.S. Constitution	44–46, 94
	Oral Lee Brown Opens the Door	50–52, 98
	Beyond Belief	65–67, 108
	The Miracle on the Hudson	68–70, 110
Standard 8: RI.3.8. Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).	Hop Along or Fly High	17–19, 76
	Now Hear This!	20–22, 78
	George Eastman Invents the Kodak Moment	23–25, 80
	Cold and Hot Deserts	29–31, 84
	Pacific Northwest Native Americans	41–43, 92
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity		
Standard 10: RI.3.10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	all passages	