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Introduction

The *Nonfiction and Fiction Comprehension Connections* series is a set of six kits of comprehension cards and lessons suitable for students from grades 2 through 8. The boxed sets provide supplementary materials to support and enhance existing reading programs. The range of levels within a box provides flexibility within the classroom and allows teachers to accommodate students' individual reading comprehension needs.

The reading cards feature both fiction and nonfiction texts, incorporating a wide variety of topics and themes. In addition, all of the reading cards are Lexile and Guided Reading leveled, and the *Teacher Resource* book activities are correlated to Common Core State Standards. Students experience fiction and nonfiction reading using a wide range of genres and subject areas, and analyze text more closely as they respond to text-dependent questions. The *Teacher Resource* book provides additional activities to strengthen students' ability to use specific strategies to build comprehension.

The questions that accompany each card incorporate three levels of comprehension (Literal, Inferential, Applied) in a multiple-choice format. They also assess 12 comprehension skills. Separate answer cards allow the students to work and progress at their own rate while keeping a record for their own and teacher reference. The variety of materials included in the *Teacher Resource* book will assist with easy implementation and maintenance of the program.



Included on the inside back cover of this book is a CD containing reproducible PDF-formatted files for all of the reading cards, all student activity pages, and the Common Core State Standards for grades 7, 8, 9, and 10. These standards can also be accessed online. Visit www.bluestareducation.com for information regarding the standards. The reading card and student activity PDF files are ideal for group instruction using interactive whiteboards.



What's Included in *Comprehension Connections*?

- 210 full-color reading cards (3 copies of 70 different titles) per kit with related comprehension questions
- 144-page *Teacher Resource* book that includes complete instructions on how to use the kit components and comprehensive, guided unit lessons that introduce students to 12 comprehension skills for reinforcing reading strategies
- 70 answer cards for student self-evaluation and teacher assessment
- CD of all reading cards and *Teacher Resource* book student activities

How This Program Meets Today's Needs

Moving Toward Close Reading

The Partnership of Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) defines close reading as “uncovering layers of meaning that lead to deep comprehension.” The reading cards and questions, as well as the comprehension strategies units provided in this program, help students meet this need.

Among the ideas that support PARCC and move students toward deeper understanding of text are the following: analyzing meaning; paying more attention to the text, main ideas, and supporting details; discovering the meanings of specific words and sentences as they relate to the content; generating ideas about the text, and reflecting more on the contents and the intent of the reading. The reading cards and questions, as well as the comprehension strategies units provided in this program, help students meet these demands.

Using Short Texts

With today's emphasis on reading more demanding text and the inclusion of close reading to improve comprehension, it has been suggested that approaching close reading by using short texts can be helpful—especially when dealing with a wide range of reading levels among students. By using short texts and targeting a specific set of reading strategies, students are more able to acquire the tools they need to practice close reading. The reading cards provided in *Nonfiction and Fiction Comprehension Connections* provide short texts using a wide variety of themes and topics.

Reading a Variety of Genres

The Common Core State Standards emphasize the use of a variety of genres, as well as both informational and literary reading content. The standards also encourage the use of traditional literature, such as folktales, myths, legends, and fables. They suggest introducing students to short stories, poetry, plays, biographies, personal narratives, and articles as a way of approaching close reading. In order to meet this need, a variety of genres have been included in the *Nonfiction and Fiction Comprehension Connections* kits. Among them are the following categories:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| -narratives | -biographies | -procedure |
| -poems | -fables | -adventure stories |
| -discussions | -recounts | -folktales |
| -science fiction texts | -reviews | -expositions |
| -myths | -fairy tales | -humorous stories |
| -informational charts | -reports | -descriptions |
| -mysteries | -explanations | |
| -legends | -fantasy | |

How to Use the Cards and Resource Book

Using Comprehension Strategies With the Cards

A total of 12 comprehension strategies are addressed in each of the kits. By introducing students to these strategies and providing practice using them, students learn to apply the strategies as they work through the reading cards. The lessons for all 12 strategies are included in this book (see pages 35–144). Teachers can choose a plan for including these practice lessons in a way that best suits the needs of their students.

Below, and on pages 18–19, is a Scope and Sequence Chart that connects each reading card to the specific comprehension strategies upon which the card focuses. The chart includes the card number and color, the genre, the card title, and columns for each of the 12 strategies presented in this book.

For teaching purposes, the Scope and Sequence Chart is ideal for noting which cards address a specific strategy. For example, if students are having difficulty with a particular strategy, the teacher can reinforce it using the lesson pages for that strategy. It is also possible to choose one or more cards from the chart that address the strategy and use them as examples in a whole-class lesson. (An easy way to accomplish this is to use the cards from the PDF files on a whiteboard. For smaller groups, choose copies from the kit or reproduce and distribute copies from the CD.)

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE CHART— Cards and Strategies Correlations

Card Color and Number	Genre	Title	Understanding Words	Finding Information	Identifying the Main Idea	Sequencing	Finding Similarities and Differences	Predicting	Drawing Conclusions	Summarizing	Inferring	Cause and Effect	Fact or Opinion	Point of View and Purpose	Pronoun/Noun Agreement
Burgundy – 1	Fantasy	Isadora's Secret	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Burgundy – 2	Supernatural	Sleepless Sleepover	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Burgundy – 3	Narrative	Secret Sense	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Burgundy – 4	Folktale	A Tale of Two Brothers	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Burgundy – 5	Humour	Rudy Mentary's Math Problems	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Burgundy – 6	Myth	The Armadillo That Longed to Sing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Burgundy – 7	Recount	My "Good Luck, Bad Luck" Gran	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Burgundy – 8	Poetry	The Mysterious Animal	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Burgundy – 9	Fable	True to Nature	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Burgundy – 10	Folktale	The Mirror of Matsuyama	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

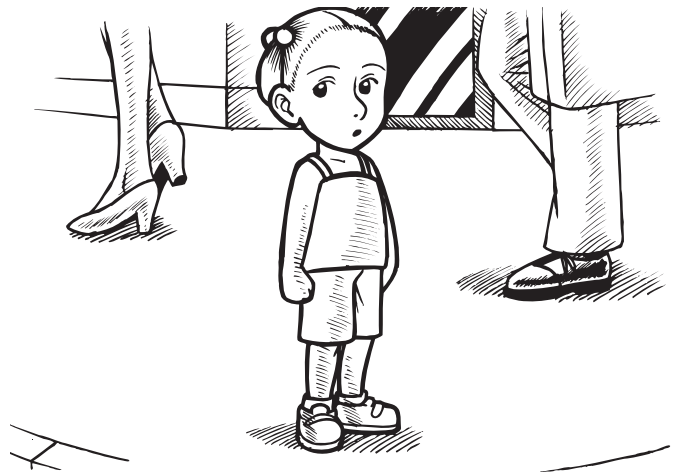
Name _____

As we read, it is important to think about what is happening and to predict what we think may happen next.

Activity: Read the story below and complete pages 84–86.

Lost!

1. "Now wait right here and look after Megan. We'll only be a few minutes."
2. Flynn watched his mom and dad disappear into the souvenir shop. He sighed. He was getting really sick of walking around cities on this vacation. Why couldn't they spend an afternoon hanging out at the hotel just watching free inhouse movies? That would be much more fun than looking at boring historical sites and museums. He glanced at his brother, who was happily taking photographs of a fountain. Aaron loved history, just like their parents.
3. Megan was grasping Flynn's hand tightly. "Horsie!" she called out, pointing to a horse and carriage trotting down the street.
4. "Yeah, big deal." Megan was only three, but she was so annoying, always chattering away—often to animals and complete strangers, much to his mom's horror.
5. "Horsie!" Suddenly, Megan wrenched her hand away and took off down the street after the carriage. In an instant, she'd disappeared around the corner.
6. "Megan!" Flynn yelled. He tapped Aaron on the shoulder. "Help me get her!" He took off with Aaron hot on his heels.
7. "Not again," he heard Aaron mutter behind him. Flynn wasn't sure if he was referring to Megan taking off or him neglecting to look after her properly. He didn't have time to think too much as he darted through a group of people and rounded the corner.
8. There was no sign of Megan.
9. "Where is she?" Flynn could feel familiar panic rising. A million plans flashed through his mind. Should they go back and find their parents? Should he and Aaron split up and hunt down different streets? Should they...?
10. "Flynn." Aaron's sensible voice brought him to his senses. "Here's what we'll do. She could only have gone in two directions—either farther along this street or down the alleyway. I'll take the alleyway. I'll meet you back here in five minutes."
11. Flynn nodded. He looked at his watch and then ran off down the street, dodging the crowd. The street came to a dead end after about 100 yards. He turned back. A sick feeling hit him. What if someone had kidnapped her?
12. "Flynn!" He squinted ahead and saw Aaron waving at him. Megan was by his side, grinning.
13. Flynn jogged up to them. He felt sudden anger boil up inside him, and he screamed at her. "Megan! Don't you dare run off like that again!"
14. Her face turned red, and she started to bawl. She clung to Aaron, and he picked her up and cuddled her. He shook his head and rolled his eyes at Flynn and walked past him around the corner back to their parents. They were standing outside the souvenir shop with worried looks on their faces.
15. Flynn just knew he'd be in trouble again.



Name _____

Follow the steps below to learn how to make a prediction about what may happen next.

- The answers are not found in the text, but there is information for you to use and think about.
- You need to find information related to the question. (This could be underlined.)
- Think hard! What is the writer suggesting might happen?
- Always consider all possible answers before making a decision.

1. Which of these things are Flynn's parents most likely to say to him when they first find out that Megan ran away?
 - (a) "Are you having a good day?"
 - (b) "Isn't Megan naughty?"
 - (c) "I'm sure you feel bad about Megan running away."
 - (d) "Flynn! Why weren't you watching Megan?"
2. Choose the best answer. Think about each choice carefully.
 - (a) Flynn's parents are unlikely to make such a casual comment after finding out that their daughter had run away. This is not a good answer.
 - (b) Flynn's parents will probably think that Flynn is at least partly to blame for Megan running away, so they are unlikely to say such a thing.
 - (c) Flynn's parents will probably want Flynn to explain how Megan got away. They would not likely empathize with how he is feeling. This is not the answer.
 - (d) Flynn's parents would want an explanation for Megan's disappearance. They are feeling worried, so they will probably speak sharply to Flynn. This is the best answer.

1. Which of these things would Megan most likely do if she saw a dog and its owner?
 - (a) hide behind her mother
 - (b) watch the dog
 - (c) run over and talk to them
 - (d) scream in terror
2. Choose the best answer. Think about each choice carefully.
 - (a) The text suggests that Megan is confident for a three-year-old, and she likes animals. This is not a good answer.
 - (b) Megan obviously likes animals, so she might just watch the dog. However, when she saw the horse, she ran up to it. This is not a likely answer.
 - (c) When Megan saw the horse, she ran over to it. The text also says that she likes to chatter to animals and people. This is a good answer.
 - (d) Megan was not frightened to run up to a horse—a much larger animal than a dog. The text also says she likes chattering to animals. This is not a likely answer.

Name _____

Use the strategies you learned to help you predict what will happen. Use the clues in the “Think!” boxes to help you.

1. Which of these things is most likely to happen the day after the story finishes?

- (a) The family would do whatever Megan wanted to do.
- (b) The family would spend an afternoon at the hotel watching movies.
- (c) The family would visit a historical site or museum.
- (d) The family would look at horses.

Think!

Consider what most members of the family are enjoying on this vacation.

2. How might Megan behave towards Flynn for the rest of the day?

- (a) She would want him to cuddle with her.
- (b) She would stay away from him.
- (c) She would tease him to get a reaction out of him.
- (d) She would want him to look after her again.

Think!

Read about how Megan reacted when Flynn screamed at her.

3. What would Flynn most likely say and do if his parents were to ask him to look after Megan again?

Think!

Read about how Flynn reacted to Megan running away.

4. If Megan were to see the horse again, what do you think would happen?

Think!

Consider Megan's personality and what she did the first time she saw the horse.

Name _____

Use the strategies you have been practicing to help you make predictions about what may happen.

- 1. Most likely, what would have happened if Aaron hadn't been nearby when Megan ran away?
 - (a) Megan would have ran back to their parents.
 - (b) Flynn would have checked the alleyway.
 - (c) Megan would have found Flynn.
 - (d) Flynn would have panicked.

- 2. Explain how you think both Aaron and Flynn would react to their parents suggesting they go on a walking tour of the historical parts of the city that afternoon.

- 3. Which of these things would most likely have happened if the boys hadn't found Megan within five minutes?
 - (a) Aaron would have come up with another plan.
 - (b) They would have checked the alleyway and the street again.
 - (c) Flynn would have told Aaron to go away.
 - (d) Megan would have found her way back to the souvenir shop.

- 4. Explain what you think Aaron will do once the boys reach their parents and what Flynn's reaction might be.

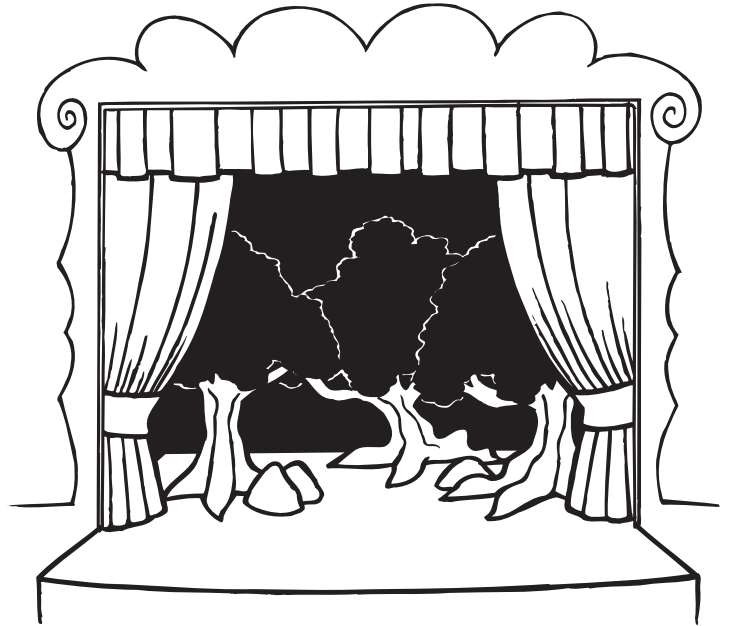
Name _____

Activity: Read the diary entry below and complete page 88.

Moonlight Forest

Dear Diary,

1. It's almost here! Tomorrow is the opening night of "Moonlight Forest." Even though I have acted in so many of our community theater group's plays before, this is the first time I have had the lead role.
2. I usually feel quite confident about acting, but this time I am really nervous. When I get nervous, my mind tends to go blank. I am so worried that I will forget all of my lines. Mrs. Sinclair, the acting coach, says that is ridiculous. She says that I have only ever forgotten one line at a rehearsal—and that didn't matter because I covered it so well! I suppose she's right—I've taken acting classes for so many years that I can make things up on the spot. But I still worry about it!
3. The other thing I worry about is the costumes. I haven't even tried mine on yet! Mr. Johns, who is in charge of costumes and props, has been sick for the last two days and hasn't been able to get to the theater. My costume is supposed to be a fairy dress. I am hoping for a long, floaty dress in a pale color, but the last time I hinted about that to Mr. Johns, he wrinkled up his nose and said that he had a "much better idea" for my costume. He then talked loudly to the other cast members about how much he liked tutus and bright colors. My stomach dropped to my knees. I hope he was joking.
4. The thing I worry about least is the other actors. Most of them are very experienced, and I know they'll help me out if something goes wrong on stage. Mr. Johns, who apart from doing props and costumes, is also playing a goblin. He sometimes makes up lines as he goes along as a joke, but I overheard Mrs. Sinclair warning him not to do that this time. The only person I worry about in the cast is Jeremy. He's six years old, and he's playing an elf. He is super-confident and giggles all the time when he's on stage, so he misses some of his lines. I think he got the part because he's Mrs. Sinclair's nephew. She won't yell at him, so the rest of us have to. But he doesn't listen to anyone. He just jumps around until it's his turn to go on stage. Often, he's so busy jumping that he misses his cue and barges on stage at the wrong time.
5. I think the set and the music are some of the best things about our play. We are having a string quartet coming in to play for us. They are excellent. One of them is my cello teacher! They played the music for our production last year, and they sold a lot of their CDs to the audience members afterwards.
6. The set has been made by the senior art class at the local high school, and I think it's perfect. Everyone who has seen it stops and stares in amazement. How they used chicken wire, paper, and paint to make such a realistic and spooky-looking forest, I really don't know. I am terrible at arts and crafts.
7. I had better go to the dress rehearsal now. Wish me luck!



—Ella

Name _____

Use the strategies you learned and practiced in *Lost!* to help you make predictions.

Remember:

- You need to find and underline the information related to each question.
- The answer is not in the text, but there is information you can use and think about.
- The writer will suggest, rather than tell, what is likely to happen.
- Check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. If Ella were to participate in the theater group’s next production, what would she be least likely to do?
 - (a) act
 - (b) help make the set design
 - (c) help with the music
 - (d) help Mrs. Sinclair

Think!

Read Ella’s comments on each of these things to find out which one she dislikes or is the least talented at.

2. Which of these things is most likely to happen if Ella goes blank on stage?
 - (a) She will run offstage.
 - (b) The other cast members will laugh at her.
 - (c) She will make up lines on the spot.
 - (d) She will laugh about it.

3. What kind of costume do you think Ella will end up wearing? Give reasons for your answer.

4. If something were to go wrong on the opening night of the play, which of these things is it most likely to be?
 - (a) The musicians will forget their music.
 - (b) Ella’s costume won’t fit her.
 - (c) Mr. Johns will refuse to go on stage.
 - (d) The audience will laugh at the set.

5. Do you think Jeremy will completely spoil the play on opening night? Explain why/why not.

Name _____

Activity: Read the story below, and use pages 90–92 to show how well you can sequence, find similarities and differences, and predict.

Terrible Twins' Tale to Hit Big Screen

- American director Brock Coleson announced in an interview yesterday that he is going to make a movie based on the true story of Belinda and Isabel Kidd.
- Born in 1970 in a small town in New Zealand, Belinda and Isabel were labeled as “geniuses” by their teachers. Belinda had a particular interest in and talent for art, while Isabel concentrated on mathematics and history. Isabel then went on to study art history and archaeology at a university, while Belinda did courses in makeup artistry and painting, excelling at both. She was also able to sell many of her paintings. According to their few friends, both girls were described as “shy” and “the sort of girls who kept to themselves.” The twins were not identical, and apart from their red hair, they did not even look like sisters.
- After Isabel finished her college degree, the girls decided to go to Europe, using the money they had saved from their part-time jobs in fast food and Belinda’s earnings from selling her artwork. The trip was supposed to last six weeks. But it was not to be. A few weeks into their vacation, much to their family and friends’ surprise, the Kidds were appearing in European newspapers. The twins claimed that while vacationing in France, they had found two paintings by famous artists that had never been seen before. The art world was amazed and curious. The paintings were inspected by a renowned art expert and declared to be genuine. Promptly, they were sold for millions of dollars at auction. The girls then seemed to disappear. Over the next six months, their parents back in New Zealand received occasional letters from Isabel saying that she and Belinda were well and happy and continuing with their travels. They had rejected the offer of interviews from the media, as they both “didn’t want to be famous,” she said.
- But the truth was about to come out. The paintings were examined again by another art expert, and to the new owner’s horror, they were found to be clever fakes. Investigation by police revealed that the first art expert had been in on the twins’ hoax. In return for declaring the paintings to be real, the twins had promised him half the money they made. But they had vanished too quickly, and he had never been able to claim his money. He said that he had met only Belinda in person when she had turned up at his London office and explained their plan. He said he didn’t have a clue where the twins were now.
- Police are still hunting for the twins to this day. Family and friends claim they have had no contact with them.
- In the meantime, Coleson has great plans for his movie. “The movie will be based on some of the events in the Kidds’ lives,” he said in the interview. “Other events will be fictionalized to make the story more exciting. One interesting fact that I will take into account is that I believe the twins’ parents received a letter just a few weeks ago that seemed to be in Isabel’s handwriting. It said that she and Belinda were sorry for what they had done and were planning to make amends for their crime. However, the parents have denied the letter exists.” Coleson would not say who the target audience for his movie is but said he was hoping to attract a “younger” audience.



Name _____

Remember:

- Make sure you know which events you need to sequence, then find and underline them.
- Determine how they are related. Look for time-marker words.
- Check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. What did Isabel and Belinda do after Isabel finished her degree?

- (a) They saved up their money.
- (b) They went to a small town in New Zealand.
- (c) They went to Europe.
- (d) They sold some of Belinda’s paintings.

2. In order, list three things that happened in between the two events below.

- The two paintings were inspected by the first art expert and declared to be genuine.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- The paintings were inspected by the second art expert.

3. What happened a few weeks into Isabel and Belinda’s vacation?

- (a) The police began hunting for them.
- (b) They went to France.
- (c) They were labeled as “geniuses.”
- (d) They appeared in European newspapers.

4. Write the numbers 1 to 4 to place these events in the order in which they happened in “real life.”

- Coleson announced he was going to make a movie based on the Kidds’ lives.
- Isabel wrote that she and Belinda didn’t want to be famous.
- The paintings were found to be clever fakes.
- Belinda did a course in makeup artistry.

Name _____

Remember:

- Make sure you understand the question and underline the keywords.
- Use a chart or Venn diagram if you need to.
- Check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. Which of these two things did the twins have in common?

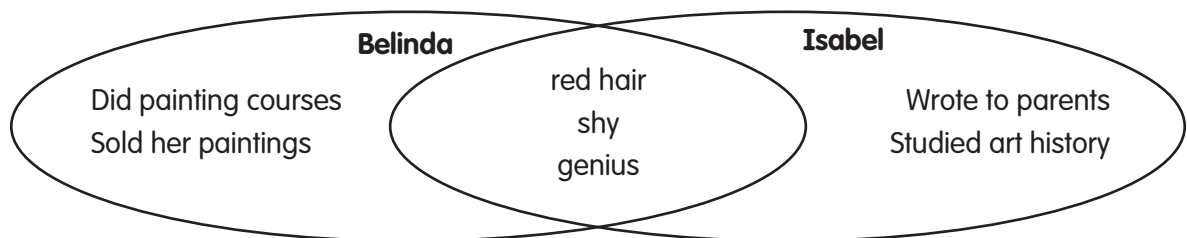
- (a) excellent at painting and red-haired
- (b) interested in mathematics and excellent at painting
- (c) red-haired and shy
- (d) shy and interested in mathematics

2. Isabel and Belinda are different because:

- (a) only Belinda did a course in art history.
- (b) only Isabel kept to herself at school.
- (c) only Belinda met the first art expert.
- (d) only Isabel is being hunted by the police.

3. Explain the difference between the first and second art experts.

4. Use the Venn diagram to help you to answer the questions below.



- (a) Who was shy and sold her paintings? _____
- (b) Who studied art history and had red hair? _____
- (c) Who was a genius and shy? _____
- (d) Who had red hair and did a painting course? _____

Name _____

Remember:

- You need to find and underline the information related to each question.
- The answer is not in the text, but there is information you can use and think about.
- The writer will suggest, rather than tell, what is likely to happen.
- Check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. If the first art expert were to find the twins, which of these things would he be most likely to do?
- (a) turn them into the police
 - (b) tell them about the movie
 - (c) pay them money
 - (d) plan another art hoax with them

2. Do you think the twins will try another art hoax? Explain why/why not.

3. Write how you think Belinda and Isabel would react to the news of the movie being made. Give reasons.

4. Most likely, which of these scenes would Coleson most want in his movie?
- (a) Belinda and Isabel eating lunch
 - (b) the police chasing and very nearly catching the twins
 - (c) Belinda selling her paintings
 - (d) the twins working in their classroom at school