

Module 2  
Participant Guide

Supporting All Students in Close  
Reading, Academic Language,  
and Text-based Discussion

## Activity 3

Connecticut Core Standards for  
English Language Arts and  
Literacy



Grades K–5

*Systems of Professional Learning*

### Connecticut Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning

The material in this guide was developed by Public Consulting Group in collaboration with staff from the Connecticut State Department of Education and the RESC Alliance. The development team would like to specifically thank Ellen Cohn, Charlene Tate Nichols, and Jennifer Webb from the Connecticut State Department of Education; Leslie Abbatiello from ACES; and Robb Geier, Elizabeth O’Toole, and Cheryl Liebling from Public Consulting Group.

The Systems of Professional Learning project includes a series of professional learning experiences for Connecticut Core Standards District Coaches in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Humanities, Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM), and Student/Educator Support Staff (SESS).

Participants will have continued support for the implementation of the new standards through virtual networking opportunities and online resources to support the training of educators throughout the state of Connecticut.

Instrumental in the design and development of the Systems of Professional Learning materials from PCG were: Sharon DeCarlo, Debra Berlin, Jennifer McGregor, Judy Buck, Michelle Wade, Nora Kelley, Diane Stump, and Melissa Pierce.

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Published 2014. Available online at <http://ctcorestandards.org/>



**Activity 3**

## Activity 3: Digging Deeply – Close Reading, Academic Language, and Text-dependent Questions

### Activity 3a: Reading the Text Closely

#### DESCRIPTION

Working in pairs, participants choose an excerpt from an appropriately complex text for which they will create segments of a close reading lesson. The text may be one they bring with them to the workshop, or they may choose from the nonfiction books in each location. They read the text closely and identify central ideas and core content, vocabulary, and particularly challenging parts of the text. They record this information in a 3-column Close Reading Organizer.

#### DIRECTIONS

In this activity, you will select and read closely a text or text excerpt. Within the text you will identify central ideas and core content, vocabulary, and challenging parts of the text. You will continue to use this text throughout today, creating parts of a close reading lesson: text-dependent questions, a discussion protocol, and student support.

1. Choose a text from our nonfiction collection (from Module 1), the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium sample texts in the Appendix of your Participant Guide on page 63, or a text you brought from your school or district.
2. If you are using an extended text, select a challenging excerpt of no more than 5 paragraphs for this exercise.
3. Number the paragraphs, lines, or sentences. (Some illustrated or primary texts are not divided by paragraphs.)
4. Read the text, making notes about central ideas, core content, vocabulary, and challenging parts of the text.
5. Use the 3-column Close Reading Organizer on the following page to capture notes you will later use to create text-dependent questions.

#### RESOURCES

SBAC sample texts found in the Appendix of your Participant Guide on page 63, an excerpt that you brought with you, or one you chose from the nonfiction books used in Module 1.

Close Reading Organizer

<b>CLOSE READING ORGANIZER</b>			
<b>Par., Line, or Sent. #</b>	<b>Central Ideas, Core Content and Related Key Details</b>	<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Difficult Section (Challenging Concepts or Complex Language )</b>
#			
#			
#			
#			
#			

## Activity 3b: Making Decisions about Vocabulary

### DESCRIPTION

Participants will review the vocabulary they selected in Activity 3a, revising their choices if necessary based on the information presented in slides 39-44. They make decisions about how they would teach each selected vocabulary word by placing it in a vocabulary quadrant organizer.

### DIRECTIONS

In this activity, you will review the vocabulary (words and phrases) you selected from your text excerpt (Activity 3a), deciding how, or if, you will include these words in your close reading lesson.

1. Consider each word you wrote in your Close Reading Organizer.
2. Place each word in the correct quadrant.
  - If the word is **critical** to understanding the central idea or core content of the text, or if it **can be leveraged** for future use, then it will go in either quadrant 2 or 4.
  - If the word is **not essential** to understanding the central idea or core content of the text, or if it **cannot be leveraged** for future use, then it will go in either quadrant 1 or 3.
  - If the **meaning** of the word can be determined from **context**, then it will go in quadrant 1 or 2.
  - If the **meaning** of the word **must be provided**, it will go in quadrant 3 or 4.
3. After doing this exercise, decide with your partner:
  - Which of these words will we address through text-dependent questions?
  - Which of these words might we just ignore without jeopardizing students' understanding of the text?
  - Which will we provide for students directly, without further instruction?
  - Which of these words would be useful enough (word families, cognates, future appearance in other texts) that we would likely address them in an extended lesson?

### RESOURCES

Vocabulary Quadrant Organizer from <http://achievethecore.org/page/61/which-words-do-i-teach-and-how>

Close Reading Organizer from Activity 3a

## Academic Vocabulary Organizer

	These words merit less time and attention	These words merit more time and attention (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part of a word family)
Meaning can be learned from context	1	2
Meaning needs to be provided	3	4

Adapted from <http://achievethecore.org/page/61/which-words-do-i-teach-and-how>

## Appendix

### Text Excerpts

#### THE SECRET GARDEN

by Frances Hodgson Burnett, 1911

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/17396>

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#### CHAPTER I

#### THERE IS NO ONE LEFT

When Mary Lennox was sent to Misselthwaite Manor to live with her uncle everybody said she was the most disagreeable-looking child ever seen. It was true, too. She had a little thin face and a little thin body, thin light hair and a sour expression. Her hair was yellow, and her face was yellow because she had been born in India and had always been ill in one way or another. Her father had held a position under the English Government and had always been busy and ill himself, and her mother had been a great beauty who cared only to go to parties and amuse herself with gay people. She had not wanted a little girl at all, and when Mary was born she handed her over to the care of an Ayah, who was made to understand that if she wished to please the Mem Sahib she must keep the child out of sight as much as possible. So when she was a sickly, fretful, ugly little baby she was [Pg 2] kept out of the way, and when she became a sickly, fretful, toddling thing she was kept out of the way also. She never remembered seeing familiarly anything but the dark faces of her Ayah and the other native servants, and as they always obeyed her and gave her her own way in everything, because the Mem Sahib would be angry if she was disturbed by her crying, by the time she was six years old she was as tyrannical and selfish a little pig as ever lived. The young English governess who came to teach her to read and write disliked her so much that she gave up her place in three months, and when other governesses came to try to fill it they always went away in a shorter time than the first one. So if Mary had not chosen to really want to know how to read books she would never have learned her letters at all.

One frightfully hot morning, when she was about nine years old, she awakened feeling very cross, and she became crosser still when she saw that the servant who stood by her bedside was not her Ayah.

"Why did you come?" she said to the strange woman. "I will not let you stay. Send my Ayah to me."

The woman looked frightened, but she only stammered that the Ayah could not come and when Mary threw herself into a passion and beat and kicked her, she looked only more frightened and repeated that it was not possible for the Ayah to come to Missie Sahib.

There was something mysterious in the air that morning. Nothing was done in its regular order and several of the native servants seemed missing, while those whom Mary saw slunk or hurried about with ashy and scared faces. But no one would tell her anything and her Ayah did not come. She was actually left alone as the morning went on, and at last she wandered out into the garden and began to play by herself under a tree near the veranda. She pretended that she was making a flower-bed, and she stuck big scarlet hibiscus blossoms into little heaps of earth, all the time growing more and more angry and muttering to herself the things she would say and the names she would call Saidie when she returned.



"Pig! Pig! Daughter of Pigs!" she said, because to call a native a pig is the worst insult of all.

She was grinding her teeth and saying this over and over again when she heard her mother come out on the veranda with some one. She was with a fair young man and they stood talking together in low strange voices. Mary knew the fair young man who looked like a boy. She had heard that he was a very young officer who had just come [Pg 4] from England. The child stared at him, but she stared most at her mother. She always did this when she had a chance to see her, because the Mem Sahib—Mary used to call her that oftener than anything else—was such a tall, slim, pretty person and wore such lovely clothes. Her hair was like curly silk and she had a delicate little nose which seemed to be disdainful things, and she had large laughing eyes. All her clothes were thin and floating, and Mary said they were "full of lace." They looked fuller of lace than ever this morning, but her eyes were not laughing at all. They were large and scared and lifted imploringly to the fair boy officer's face.

"Is it so very bad? Oh, is it?" Mary heard her say.

"Awfully," the young man answered in a trembling voice. "Awfully, Mrs. Lennox. You ought to have gone to the hills two weeks ago."

The Mem Sahib wrung her hands.

"Oh, I know I ought!" she cried. "I only stayed to go to that silly dinner party. What a fool I was!"

At that very moment such a loud sound of wailing broke out from the servants' quarters that she clutched the young man's arm, and Mary stood shivering from head to foot. The wailing grew wilder and wilder. [Pg 5]

"What is it? What is it?" Mrs. Lennox gasped.

"Some one has died," answered the boy officer. "You did not say it had broken out among your servants."

"I did not know!" the Mem Sahib cried. "Come with me! Come with me!" and she turned and ran into the house.

After that appalling things happened, and the mysteriousness of the morning was explained to Mary. The cholera had broken out in its most fatal form and people were dying like flies. The Ayah had been taken ill in the night, and it was because she had just died that the servants had wailed in the huts. Before the next day three other servants were dead and others had run away in terror. There was panic on every side, and dying people in all the bungalows.

During the confusion and bewilderment of the second day Mary hid herself in the nursery and was forgotten by every one. Nobody thought of her, nobody wanted her, and strange things happened of which she knew nothing. Mary alternately cried and slept through the hours. She only knew that people were ill and that she heard mysterious and frightening sounds. Once she crept into the dining-room and found it empty, though a partly finished meal was on the table and [Pg 6] chairs and plates looked as if they had been hastily pushed back when the diners rose suddenly for some reason. The child ate some fruit and biscuits, and being thirsty she drank a glass of wine which stood nearly filled. It was sweet, and she did not know how strong it was. Very soon it made her intensely drowsy, and she went back to her nursery and shut herself in again, frightened by cries she heard in the huts and by the hurrying sound of feet. The wine made her so sleepy that she could scarcely keep her eyes open and she lay down on her bed and knew nothing more for a long time.

Many things happened during the hours in which she slept so heavily, but she was not disturbed by the wails and the sound of things being carried in and out of the bungalow.

When she awakened she lay and stared at the wall. The house was perfectly still. She had never known it to be so silent before. She heard neither voices nor footsteps, and wondered if everybody had got well of the cholera and all the trouble was over. She wondered also who would take care of her now her Ayah was dead. There would be a new Ayah, and perhaps she would know some new stories. Mary had been rather tired of the old ones. She did not cry because her nurse had died. She was not an affectionate child and had never cared much for any one. The noise and hurrying about and wailing over the cholera had frightened her, and she had been angry because no one seemed to remember that she was alive. Every one was too panic-stricken to think of a little girl no one was fond of. When people had the cholera it seemed that they remembered nothing but themselves. But if every one had got well again, surely some one would remember and come to look for her.

But no one came, and as she lay waiting the house seemed to grow more and more silent. She heard something rustling on the matting and when she looked down she saw a little snake gliding along and watching her with eyes like jewels. She was not frightened, because he was a harmless little thing who would not hurt her and he seemed in a hurry to get out of the room. He slipped under the door as she watched him.

"How queer and quiet it is," she said. "It sounds as if there was no one in the bungalow but me and the snake."

Almost the next minute she heard footsteps in the compound, and then on the veranda. They were men's footsteps, and the men entered the bungalow and talked in low voices. No one went to meet or speak to them and they seemed to open doors and look into rooms. [Pg 8]

"What desolation!" she heard one voice say. "That pretty, pretty woman! I suppose the child, too. I heard there was a child, though no one ever saw her."

Mary was standing in the middle of the nursery when they opened the door a few minutes later. She looked an ugly, cross little thing and was frowning because she was beginning to be hungry and feel disgracefully neglected. The first man who came in was a large officer she had once seen talking to her father. He looked tired and troubled, but when he saw her he was so startled that he almost jumped back.

"Barney!" he cried out. "There is a child here! A child alone! In a place like this! Mercy on us, who is she!"

"I am Mary Lennox," the little girl said, drawing herself up stiffly. She thought the man was very rude to call her father's bungalow "A place like this!" "I fell asleep when every one had the cholera and I have only just wakened up. Why does nobody come?"

"It is the child no one ever saw!" exclaimed the man, turning to his companions. "She has actually been forgotten!"

"Why was I forgotten?" Mary said, stamping her foot. "Why does nobody come?"

The young man whose name was Barney looked [Pg 9] at her very sadly. Mary even thought she saw him wink his eyes as if to wink tears away.

"Poor little kid!" he said. "There is nobody left to come."

It was in that strange and sudden way that Mary found out that she had neither father nor mother left; that they had died and been carried away in the night, and that the few native servants who had not died also had left the house as quickly as they could get out of it, none of them even remembering that there was a Missie Sahib. That was why the place was so quiet. It was true that there was no one in the bungalow but herself and the little rustling snake.

## SBAC Practice Test Item, Grade 3

<http://sbac.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Grade3ELA.pdf>

The Ten-Thousand Stroke Chinese Character, by Diana C. Conway

Little Liang lived in China a long time ago. When he turned seven, his father said, “Tomorrow you will start school and learn to write.”

“No, thank you,” said Little Liang. “I like playing outside better.”

“School tomorrow, my boy. Not another word from you.”

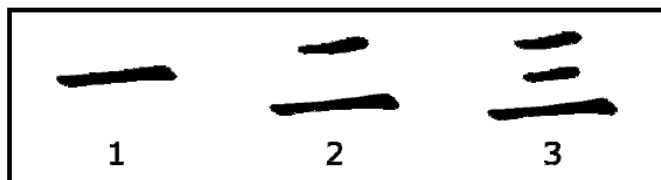
So the next morning Little Liang went off to school, writing brush in hand. His teacher showed him how to make one stroke to write the number one.

“This is easy,” said Little Liang.

The next day he learned to make two strokes to write the number two.

“Well,” he said, “who needs to go to school? I’ll bet I can write the number three all by myself.”

Sure enough, on the third day of school, the teacher wrote “three” on the paper just the way he expected.



“That’s all the learning I need!” said Little Liang. He sneaked out of school and went looking for birds in the woods.

The next day he left home with his schoolbag. But he didn’t go to school. “I know all there is to know,” he said. “I’ll just go fishing.” Off he walked to the river.

On the way he met Old Mr. Wan.

“Why aren’t you in school today, Little Liang?”

“I know all there is to know, Mr. Wan.”

“That’s wonderful,” said the old man. “I myself never learned many characters. Will you help me write a letter to my son?”

Little Liang went to Mr. Wan's house. He took his brush and ink from his schoolbag.

"I'll write the address first. What's your son's name?"

"Wan Bai Qian."

In Chinese, "wan" means ten thousand, "bai" means one hundred, and "qian" means one thousand.

Little Liang began to make brush strokes. One, two, three, four, five . . . ten . . . fifteen . . . twenty . . . thirty.

Soon his hand hurt from so much writing.

"Look how many strokes I've made! Why is your son's name Mr. Ten Thousand instead of Mr. One?"

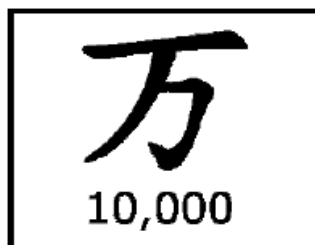
"I'm so sorry, Little Liang. Why don't you use my hair comb? You can dip it in the ink and make many lines at once."

Just then the schoolteacher walked past the door. He heard the name "Little Liang." He looked inside and saw a boy writing with a comb.

"What have we here?" he asked.

"I'm writing Mr. Wan's name."

The teacher picked up the brush and made three strokes.



"This is the way to write the number ten thousand," he said.

"Only three strokes?" Little Liang's face got as red as a cherry.

"Only three strokes," said the teacher.

*"The 10,000 Stroke Chinese Character" reprinted by permission of Spider, May 1995, text © by Diane C. Conway.*

**SBAC Practice Test Item, Grade 3**

<http://sbac.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Grade3ELA.pdf>

The Dragon Hunter, by Keith Wilson

I am a dragon hunter. Dragonflies, that is! My name is Keith Wilson. I'm an odonatologist. That's a scientist who studies dragonflies. I hunt to discover. So far, I have helped to find many new species, or kinds, of dragonflies.

**Flying Colors**

About 5,500 dragonfly species buzz around the world. Hunting them is not easy. Many of them live deep in rain forests. To find them, I have to walk through thick bushes. I have to put up with leeches. I even have to watch out for hungry crocodiles.

So why do I look for dragonflies? The answer is simple. I love them! They can speed by. They can make sharp turns and sudden stops. They can hover. They can even fly backward.

Best of all, dragonflies are beautiful. They come in many colors and patterns. Who doesn't like looking at these amazing insects? Take the tropical rockmaster, for example. It is one of my favorites. It has a blue coloring on its body. Other kinds are even more colorful. Some have green, red, or yellow bodies. One even has orange wings.

**Super Sizes**

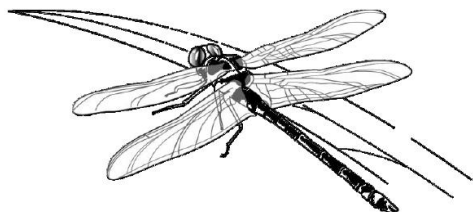
Dragonflies come in many sizes. The smallest one is the size of your thumbnail. The largest one would cover your face.

I recently looked for one of the heaviest dragonflies in the world—the giant petaltail. It lives in Australia.

You might think such a large bug would be hard to miss. The petaltail, however, is very rare. Few people have ever seen it. After looking for a week, I spotted several of them zooming around.

**Built to Hunt**

The hungry petaltails were hunting. Dragonflies are built to hunt. They have two compound eyes. Each eye is made of up to 30,000 smaller eyes.



All those eyes help a dragonfly see everything. Some dragonflies can spot a tasty meal from up to 18 feet away.

Dragonflies have six legs. The insect cannot walk on its legs, however. It uses its four wings to get around. It can soar through the sky at 30 miles an hour, looking for prey.

### From Water to Air

A dragonfly begins its life underwater. It hatches from an egg and becomes a larva. A larva is a young dragonfly. It can swim, but it cannot fly.

A larva lives in a lake or stream. It can grow for several years. Then it crawls out of the water. It sheds its hard skin and becomes an adult.

An adult dragonfly doesn't have much flying time. Some adults live for only a few weeks. Others are around for several months. During that time, a dragonfly is very busy. It flies. It hunts. It eats. If the dragonfly is female, it also lays eggs. Soon there will be more young dragonflies.

### Dragonflies in Danger

I worry about dragonflies. People are cutting down forests where the bugs live. That could cause some species to die out. I want to protect these tiny dragons for others to see and enjoy.

*“Dragonfly Hunter” from National Geographic Explorer, copyright © 2005 Keith Wilson/National Geographic Image Collection.*

**SBAC Practice Test Item, Grade 4**

<http://sbac.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Grade4ELA.pdf>

**The Grand Discovery**

Imagine you are an ancient hunter and gatherer. You follow animals and move with the seasons to gather berries, roots, and other natural foods. Imagine you are traveling to a new land with your people, seeking a better place to find these foods. As you are walking, you see that there is a gap in the earth in the distance. It is difficult at first to see how wide it is. As you walk closer, you see that it is not a simple gap, but an enormous drop from where you stand. When you peer over the edge into the gorge below, you feel your heart beating quickly and a shiver runs through you. You are looking down into a mile-deep canyon that is 18 miles wide. This hole in the earth is the Grand Canyon, though it will not be called by that name for thousands of years to come. How might you feel stumbling by accident upon this great, deep gap in the earth? What might you think? Would you see a wall that stops you? Or a place for shelter? Perhaps you might go tell others to visit and experience such a breathtaking sight?

People have had all of those reactions over the years as they “discovered” the Grand Canyon. It is impossible to know who the first human to see the great canyon was. In fact, it seems that it was rediscovered several times.

Archaeologists think that people have been familiar with the Grand Canyon for at least 10,000 years. The first people seemed to only pass through, as they chased large game throughout the Southwest. Since then, other groups have settled in and around the canyon and then moved away. They left evidence of their presence along the river and in the caves. In about 500 AD, a tribe known as the Puebloan or Anasazi came to the Grand Canyon. They settled the area and introduced agriculture: growing corn, beans, and squash. They built and lived in low apartment-like buildings made of large stones set together like bricks. Perhaps because of lack of rainfall, these people left the Grand Canyon in about 1200 AD.

Several other groups came and went over the next few centuries. By the time the first Europeans arrived in 1540, no one was living permanently in the Grand Canyon. Spanish explorer Garcia Lopez de Cardenas and his men may have felt as if they were discovering something new. However, the group was far more annoyed than pleased to meet with the stunning gorge. Cardenas had split off from a larger party, all searching for the mythical City of Gold. When he arrived at the Grand Canyon, he was frustrated that it would take so much effort to cross. He decided not to try and turned back.

Since then, the area has been settled by many different peoples. In the late 1800s, many people started visiting the Grand Canyon just to see it. They had seen paintings and read reports about it and started to travel great distances to actually stand on its edge. The US government decided to take steps to protect the area. In 1919, it became a national park. People can still have an exciting adventure in the canyon, but they cannot live within it.

Now imagine you are exploring the Grand Canyon today. How would you choose to see it? You might ride a mule or hike down the steep side of the canyon. You might take a guided rafting trip down the river that runs 1000 miles at the floor. Perhaps it would be enough adventure just to stand on the edge and feel as if you have discovered something new and amazing.

*Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Practice Test Scoring Guide, Published August 26, 2013. Prepared by the American Institutes for Research®. © Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2013*

**SBAC Practice Test Item, Grade 4**

<http://sbac.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Grade4ELA.pdf>

**Coyote Tries to Steal the Honey**

At the beginning of the long days of summer, Coyote had seen Bear slowly walk up to a lonely tree that sat in an open field. The branches of this tree remained bare throughout the warm months. When the sun was high it cast shadows in the shapes of strange insects upon the grass. It was here the bees kept their treasure. They kept it buried in the base of this old hollow tree.

Coyote wore a smile as wide as the sky, for he knew what he had to do to have a taste of the bees' sweet honey. He knew that Bear was able to simply take the honey from the base of the tree. The bees made angry noises, but that did not seem to bother Bear one bit. They swarmed around his big dark body as he sat and ate. When he was finished he shook them off, got up, and walked away. Coyote thought about this all summer. If he could just make a suit that looked like Bear's, he would be able to dip his paw into the base of the tree and out would come sweet golden honey.

It took Coyote all morning to make the suit. He gathered large pieces of bark from the trees to make the arms and legs. He found thin vines to tie the different pieces of the suit together. Then he shredded smaller pieces of bark against a rock and mixed these with dried pine needles so it looked like fur.

Right before he went to visit the bees' lonely tree he covered the solid parts of the suit in mud and added the fur. He put it on and walked into the open field. The parts hung loosely on his body. The sun was high in the sky. The shadows danced. Coyote could not see what he looked like, but he imagined his shadow matched that of Bear on the day he took the honey.

As he neared the hollow tree he heard a growing hum. He made a similar noise and he saw one or two bees land on his bear suit. As he drew closer there was more and more buzzing around him. Coyote could tell that the bees were not happy. He did not care one bit. He wanted a taste of the honey so badly.

It wasn't until he attempted to put his paw down into the tree's belly that he felt the first sting. It felt like when he had gotten stuck by the thorn bush while he tried to bury his nose in the sweet-smelling flowers. As his paw sank deeper into the tree and the buzz grew louder, Coyote began to feel more and more sharp pains. He yelped and drew his paw away, but the buzzing and pain just grew.

All thoughts of honey faded, and he fled. He was nothing more than a howling spot of darkness moving quickly across the field. A trail of angry bees followed him. The bear suit fell away as he ran. He made his way to the river and dove in. The bees had long stopped chasing him. The cool water soothed his stings, but Coyote knew for then and forever that honey was not for him.



## SBAC Practice Test Item, Grade 5

<http://sbac.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Grade5ELA.pdf>

## A Cure for Carlotta, by Bart King

A boy stood on deck and sniffed the salty sea air as the ship pitched back and forth. The smell of the sea was familiar and comforting. The boy's earliest memories were of being at sea with his father. They would fish for hours, just the two of them, surrounded by the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

Now Enzo and his family were on a giant ship crossing the Atlantic. Also on board were hundreds of other people, mostly Italians like Enzo's family. There were more people on board than lived in his entire village back home in Trevilla.

Enzo clattered down the iron steps to the steerage deck and dove into his bunk. He rested his head against his pillow. Trevilla wasn't his home anymore. Gone was the fishing boat. Gone was the Mediterranean blue that he'd always taken for granted. Who knew what kind of home America would be?

One of the passengers was a girl named Carlotta. Her family was from Rome. Carlotta had been quick to tell him this on the first day of the voyage. "New York will not be so different from Rome," Carlotta had said. "They are both great cities, but of course Rome is better. My father has already been to America twice. He is going to open a big department store downtown. My father had a successful business in Rome; all the wealthy ladies would buy from him."

Carlotta loved to talk about herself, her family, and the rich and powerful people they knew. With so many hours to fill, Enzo did not mind. He noticed—but didn't really mind—that she never asked about him or his family. Enzo was especially hungry for any details about America. He loved hearing Carlotta's tales about life in a big city. It sounded exciting and a little scary.

Today, Carlotta was unusually quiet. Her face was pale, and she clutched her stomach with one hand and the ship's rail with the other. "Up and down, up and down, will it never stop?" she groaned.

Enzo took Carlotta's hand from the rail. He pressed his fingers on the inside of her wrist, an inch or so from the palm of her hand. "Press this place here, on your wrist," Enzo said.

Carlotta looked at him miserably. Enzo could tell that only her illness kept her from arguing with him. How well he knew that look on her face. He'd seen it on the faces of many fishermen. He smiled encouragingly. "That's right. Keep pressing."

An hour later, Carlotta found Enzo. She was still holding her fingers to her wrist. "I do feel better," she admitted. "How did you know it would work? Is your father a doctor?" she asked.

Enzio explained that his father had come from a long line of fishermen who had passed down the remedy for seasickness. One of Enzio’s uncles always wore a braided wristband with a bead that pressed into his wrist.

Interested, Carlotta asked to hear more about Enzio’s family. He explained that they were sailing to meet his mother’s brothers. One was a successful stonemason in upstate New York. Another had helped construct the Brooklyn Bridge. Still another worked as a welder, joining the steel frames of the city’s rising skyscrapers.

Carlotta looked at Enzio with new respect. “Why didn’t you tell me any of this?”

Enzio shrugged. “You didn’t ask.”

Suddenly the blast of the ship’s horn startled them. Looking out the porthole, Carlotta shouted, “Look! The Statue of Liberty!”

They could hear the commotion of all the passengers talking at once. Soon the ship would dock at Ellis Island. Gazing out at the mighty but silent statue, Enzio wondered what marvelous things the statue might teach if only someone asked the right question.

**SBAC Practice Test Item, Grade 5**

<http://sbac.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Grade5ELA.pdf>

## New Homes for Hermit Crabs, by Bart King

Hermit crabs are nature’s recyclers. Like many other crabs, the hermit crab eats waste. By living on sea scraps, hermit crabs help keep oceans and shores clean. Some hermit crabs hide in reefs or live in shallow waters, while others scuttle on the ocean floor. There are also hermit crabs that spend most of their lives ashore.

Unlike other crabs, the hermit crab has a thin outer shell over its soft tail. This makes the hermit crab easy prey for hungry predators. Hermit crabs stay safe by living in old seashells. A hermit crab is picky; it tries on many shells until it finds one that fits just right. The hermit crab backs into its new home and uses its tail and rear legs to grab onto the shell and carry it. If a predator shows up, the crab retreats into its shell and blocks the entrance with its strong claws.

During a lifetime, one hermit crab will inhabit many different seashells. As a hermit crab grows, the crab leaves its home, upgrading to a larger shell. In recent years, however, many hermit crabs have had trouble finding their perfect homes. What is the problem? There are not enough shells to go around!

One reason for the seashell shortage is that ocean water is not as clean as it once was. This has caused chemical changes to seawater. Some sea animals, like snails, are affected by these changes. Now there are fewer snails making shells. People visiting the beach often take shells home as souvenirs. This is another problem. Other people even take shells for their own pet hermit crabs! They do not realize that hermit crabs in the wild need those shells too.

The hermit crabs in the ocean have learned to adapt to the changing housing situation. Like the good recyclers they are, hermit crabs started moving into small bottles, plastic cups, and other ocean litter. None of these are very good choices for crabs.

Now people are working to solve this hermit crab housing shortage. They are teaching beach-goers to leave seashells where they belong—at the seashore! Some people even make fake seashells that they hope the hermit crabs will like. For example, a group called Project Shelter invited people who visited their Web site to create different designs for hermit crab shells.

These designers had a lot to consider. What kind of material should be used to build a seashell? The material must be light enough for the hermit crab to carry, but strong enough to protect the crab from predators. The fake shells could not contain glue or any other substance that might harm a hermit crab. Another challenge with building a hermit crab home was the opening to the shell. Too big would mean

the crab would not feel safe. Too small would be uncomfortable, and the crab would not want to move in.

Project Shellter designs were tested on hermit crabs in two aquariums. That way, project leaders could watch the crabs to find out which shells were their favorites. The most popular of these new hermit crab homes are made of plastic, but they look like real seashells.

These artificial shells have two important purposes. First, people who own hermit crabs can give them to their pets. That keeps real seashells in the ocean, rather than in home aquariums. The Project Shellter shells are also placed in the wild for hermit crabs to find. Lucky hermit crabs can move into these new dream homes and leave those plastic cups behind