

Contents

Introduction	5
Teaching Routine for Close Reading and Text Marking	9
National Curriculum Correlation	10
Comprehension Skill Summary Cards	11

Texts and Questions

Character

.....

1 The Walking Stick (510L)	Folktale	14
2 Anansi and the Pot of Wisdom (550L)	African Myth	16

Point of View

.....

3 I'm Not Scared! (N/A)	Poem	18
4 Follow the Instructions (680L)	Realistic Fiction Story	20

Setting/Mood

.....

5 The Coast Path (660L)	Travel Story	22
6 The First Ferris Wheel (780L)	Historical Fiction Story	24

Key Events & Details

.....

7 Where's the Bus? (600L)	Urban Story	26
8 A Bulky Baby (650L)	Tall Tale	28

Sequence of Events

9	The Talking Football (600L).....	Sports Story.....	30
10	Before the Hip-Hop Show (690L).....	Dance Story.....	32

Problem & Solution

11	The Giant Turnip (570L).....	Russian Folktale.....	34
12	The Missing Flags (770L).....	Mystery.....	36

Context Clues

13	Under the Sofa (570L).....	Science-Fiction Story.....	38
14	A Musical Family (770L).....	Music Story.....	40

Compare & Contrast

15	Change of Heart (550L).....	Pet Story.....	42
16	Peacock and Crane (790L).....	Fable.....	44

Make Inferences

17	Chess Champ (620L).....	Chess Story.....	46
18	Night Sounds (770L).....	Suspense Story.....	48

Summarise

19	An Odd Discovery (730L).....	Descriptive Story.....	50
20	More Than a Ride (820L).....	Environmental Story.....	52

Answers	54
----------------------	-----------

Introduction

Texts For Close Reading and Deep Comprehension

Close reading involves careful study of a short text passage to build a deep, critical understanding of the text. By developing children's comprehension and higher-order thinking skills, you can help them make sense of the world.

"A significant body of research links the close reading of complex text – whether the student is a struggling reader or advanced – to significant gains in reading proficiency, and finds close reading to be a key component of college and career readiness."
(Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, 2012, p7)

Reading and Re-Reading For Different Purposes

The texts in *Close Reading* are carefully selected and deliberately short. This focuses children on purposeful reading, re-reading and responding. They learn about the topic through rich vocabulary development and deep comprehension.



Children re-read and analyse the text through questioning to explore:

- text structure and features
- key ideas and details
- connections/conclusions
- predictions/inferences
- words and phrases in context.

Children actively respond to the text using:

- higher-order thinking skills
- paired discussion
- written responses.

Text Marking: A Powerful Active-Reading Strategy

To improve their comprehension of literary texts, children must actively engage with the material. Careful and consistent text marking by hand is one valuable way to accomplish this. The true goal of teaching text marking is to help children internalise an effective close-reading strategy, not to have them show how many marks they can make on a page. Text-marking skills are encouraged in each passage.

The Walking Stick

Read the folktale.

Then follow the instructions in the Text-Marking box.

A stick set out to see the world and find work. He said goodbye to the trees and headed west, wondering whom he might meet.

Clacking and clicking, he walked until he saw a worm. "May I work for you?" the stick asked hopefully. Saying nothing, the worm squirmed under a leaf.

Clacking and clicking, the stick walked on until he met a mole. He cheerfully asked, "Have you need of my services?" Saying nothing, the mole scooted down a hole.

Clacking and clicking, on he travelled with no thought of giving up. Soon he came upon an ox. "Have you a job for me?" asked the stick. Silently, the ox kept grazing at the grass beneath its feet.

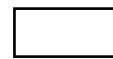
The stick clacked and clicked along until he encountered a woman. "Do you know where I can find work?" asked the stick.

"I certainly do!" answered the woman. "I am old and have trouble walking, which you do easily. Would you be my helper?" Happily, the stick tucked itself into the woman's hand. So the two walked along together, chatting and clacking and clicking.



Text Marking

Identify who the folktale is about.



Box the main character.



Circle two details about this character.



Underline words that describe the main character.

The Walking Stick

▶ Answer each question. Give evidence from the folktale.

1 The stick left home to _____.

- ▶ A explore ▶ C make friends
- ▶ B find a job ▶ D meet different animals

What helped you answer? _____

2 Which word best describes how the woman felt after meeting the stick?

- ▶ A grateful ▶ B annoyed ▶ C lonely ▶ D active

What helped you answer? _____

3 Tell how context clues can help you understand the meaning of **encountered** (paragraph 5).

4 What makes this folktale a nonsense story?

1 Character Name _____ Date _____

The Walking Stick

Read the folktale.
Then follow the instructions in the Text-Marking box.

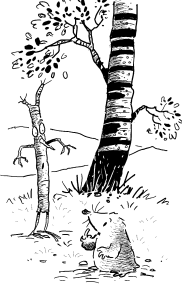
A stick set out to see the world and find work. He said goodbye to the trees and headed west, wondering whom he might meet. Clacking and clicking, he walked until he saw a worm. "May I work for you?" the stick asked hopefully. Saying nothing, the worm squirmed under a leaf.

Clacking and clicking, the stick walked on until he met a mole. He cheerfully asked, "Have you need of my services?" Saying nothing, the mole scooted down a hole.

Clacking and clicking, on he travelled with no thought of giving up. Soon he came upon an ox. "Have you a job for me?" asked the stick. Silently, the ox kept grazing at the grass beneath its feet.

The stick clacked and clicked along until he encountered a woman. "Do you know where I can find work?" asked the stick.

"I certainly do!" answered the woman. "I am old and have trouble walking, which you do easily. Would you be my helper?" Happily, the stick tucked itself into the woman's hand. So the two walked along together, chatting and clacking and clicking.



Text Marking

Identify who the folktale is about.

Box the main character.

Circle two details about this character.

 Underline words that describe the main character.

14 Close Reading Fiction Ages 8+

◀ Sample Text Markings

Passage 1: The Walking Stick

- 1 B; *Sample answer:* I picked B because the story said so in the first sentence.
- 2 A; *Sample answer:* The woman sounded pleased that the stick was looking for exactly the kind of work she needed.
- 3 *Sample answer:* In the other places in the story where the stick talks to an animal, there are words that mean 'met', so since this situation is the same, I worked out that 'encountered' means the same as 'met' or 'came upon'.
- 4 *Sample answer:* Sticks cannot walk or talk, and they don't go off to see the world and look for work.

2 Character Name _____ Date _____

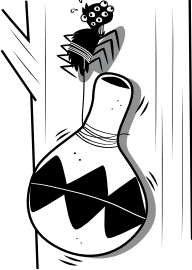
Anansi and the Pot of Wisdom

Read the African myth.
Then follow the instructions in the Text-Marking box.

Long ago, people knew nothing because the Sky-God Nyame had all the world's wisdom. Anansi the spider begged for some. Nyame agreed to give Anansi wisdom in a clay pot. "You must share wisdom with others," the Sky-God commanded. Anansi promised.

Anansi learned amazing things from the pot, but soon he grew greedy. He thought, "Wisdom is too valuable to share. I'll keep it all for myself. I'll hide the precious pot in a tree." So Anansi spun some rope. He tied one end to the pot, the other to his waist and began climbing.

It annoyed Anansi that the clay pot kept bumping him. His daughter, watching from below, called, "Father, tie the pot to your back!" Anansi tried her idea, and it worked. Then he thought, "I hold all the wisdom, yet my girl is more clever than I am." Anansi angrily threw down the pot, which smashed to bits. All the wisdom flew out. Nobody got it all, but everybody got some. To this day, people give and take wisdom whenever they share ideas.



Text Marking

Identify who the story is about.

Box the main character.

Circle the minor characters.

 Underline details about each character.

16 Close Reading Fiction Ages 8+

◀ Sample Text Markings

Passage 2: Anansi and the Pot of Wisdom

- 1 D; *Sample answer:* I picked D because the second paragraph says he thought, "Wisdom is too valuable to share."
- 2 B; *Sample answer:* All the other choices are stated or suggested by Nyame's actions in the story.
- 3 *Sample answer 1:* Anansi's daughter was a minor character. She appears only once, telling her father to tie the clay pot to his back. This showed Anansi that people could be wise even without the pot of wisdom. *Sample answer 2:* Nyame the Sky-God was a minor character. He is in the story only at the beginning when he gives Anansi all the world's wisdom but tells Anansi to share it.
- 4 *Sample answer:* Nyame the Sky-God gave all the wisdom to Anansi and made him promise to share it. Anansi wasn't going to share it, but in anger he smashed the jar. That's how wisdom flew all over the world for everyone to share.