

Grades 5-8

TEKS & Common Core Aligned

STAAR

Reading Comprehension Practice

Includes: *4 Week Outline
*20 Short Practice Paragraphs
*Answer Key * Common STAAR Vocabulary

Week	State Standard & Focus	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
1	Plot Development 6EA, 7BB, 8BA	Day 1 Beginning Characters responses, motivation - internal and external, and setting and Conflict	Day 2 Middle Events, rising action, and climax	Day 3 Theme Author's Purpose, Central Message, Message, most likely
2	STAAE Vocabulary	Day 4 Climax Summarizing, identifying, describing, and evaluating (Detail support)	Day 5 Falling Action, Turning Point, Internal Conflict, main conflict	Day 6 Point of View Point of view, setting, and characterization
3	Inference and Drawing Conclusions 6C, 6D, 7A- 7C, 8A	Day 7 Resolution Summarizing, identifying, describing, and evaluating (Detail support)	Day 8 Point of View Point of view, setting, and characterization	Day 9 Theme Author's Purpose, Central Message, Message, most likely
4	STAAE Vocabulary	Day 10 Climax Summarizing, identifying, describing, and evaluating (Detail support)	Day 11 Falling Action, Turning Point, Internal Conflict, main conflict	Day 12 Point of View Point of view, setting, and characterization

Name _____

Day 1 - Plot diagram

Brianna did not like many of her roommate's habits. Tory regularly dropped dirty clothes on the floor. Once she even left the front door unlocked when she went for a run in the neighborhood! Brianna even thought about looking for a new roommate. However, Tory had been one of her best friends for the past 5 years. Brianna decided tomorrow, she would just talk to Tory about it.

- What is Brianna's main problem?
 - Tory is her best friend
 - Tory dropped dirty clothes on the floor
 - Tory had habits that were bothering her
 - Tory would not change
- The setting of the paragraph is most likely at....
 - Brianna and Tory's apartment
 - the school Brianna and Tory attend
 - their parent's house
 - in the neighborhood

Name _____

Day 3 - Theme

Before Taylor was born, his father climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, a famous mountain in Africa. Taylor wanted to climb it when he was a little older. Taylor was now in 8th grade. His father said if his grades were good and his parent teacher conference went well he would take him that summer. Taylor worked extra hard that year and getting all A's on his final report card.

- What is the theme?
 - if you work hard it will pay off
 - if at first you don't succeed try again
 - those who wait will receive more
 - Taylor got the trip to Kilimanjaro
- What was the author's purpose in writing this story?
 - To describe what it's like to climb Kilimanjaro
 - To persuade the reader to get good grades
 - To entertain the reader with an exciting story about Africa
 - To inform the reader by teaching them a lesson

Name _____

Day 4 - Plot diagram

As the referee blew the whistle Sarah's heart beat rapidly in her chest. She knew the game was on the line. If she made this free throw her team would win the game. Sarah bounced the ball three times, got set, and followed through with her wrist. She watched as the ball hit the rim, bounced up against the backboard, and fell through the hoop. Sarah and her teammates jumped up and down. "We won," Sarah thought, as her teammates ran in to hug her. "We won!"

- What is the falling action?
 - Sarah shot the basketball.
 - The ball bounced off the backboard.
 - Sarah's teammates ran to hug her.
 - Sarah was nervous since the game was on the line.
- What is the resolution?
 - Sarah shot the free throw.
 - They won the basketball game.
 - Sarah made the free throw.
 - Her team was proud of her.

STAAR Reading Comprehension practice

Great for introducing topics as well as end of year review before STAAR Testing!

Includes: 4 week outline with 20 short practice passages, with answer key.

STAAR Concepts: Plot (Problem, Setting, rising action, turning point, falling action, and resolution), Theme, Author's purpose, Detail vs. Main idea, Summary, Point of view, Inference, and Fact vs. Opinion.

Week	State Standard & Focus	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Plot Development 6.6A, 7.6B, 8.6A	Day 1 Beginning: Characters responses, motivation - internal and external, and setting, and Conflict	Day 2 Middle: Main Events, rising action, and climax	Day 3 Theme	Day 4 End: Falling action and Resolution	Day 5 Main idea and Summary of the text
	STAAR Vocabulary	Problem, Plot, setting	Rising Action, Turning Point, internal Conflict, main conflict	Author's Purpose, Central Message, Message, most likely	Resolution	Main idea and detail
2	Summarizing 6.10A, 7.10C, 8.10A	Day 6 Summarizing: Somebody, Wanted, But, So, Then (Main idea vs. Detail support)	Day 7 Text Organization	Day 8 Point of View	Day 9 Non-fiction 5 w's	Day 10 Main idea and detail
	STAAR Vocabulary	Summary, mainly about	Selection, paragraph, excerpt, statement, phrase	Point of view, 1st, 2nd, 3rd omniscient/limited	Support, evidence, influence, italicized	conversation, quotation, dialogue
3	Inference and Drawing Conclusions 6.7, 6.9, 7.4- 10, 8.11	Day 11 Fiction: Drawing a conclusion	Day 12 Non-Fiction: Drawing a conclusion	Day 13 Poetry: Drawing a conclusion	Day 14 Persuasive Writing: Drawing a conclusion	Day 15 Author's Purpose: Drawing a conclusion
	STAAR Vocabulary	Conclude, Assumption, Infer, ironic, insight	emphasizes, significant, important	Imagery, Metaphor, simile, stanza, line	Claim, Argument, Fact vs. Opinion, repetition	speaker, narrator,
4	Review and practice Strategies	Day 16 NF Practice Review Main Idea	Day 17 Fiction Practice Review Theme	Day 18 Poem: Practice Review metaphor and simile	Day 19 NF: Practice Review inference	Day 20 NF Practice Review Author's Purpose
	STAAR Vocabulary	Show: convey, reveal, explain, describe, identify	Show: expressed, communicates, indicates, include	Show: highlight, represent, illustrate	Question: suggests, effect, understand Play: Playwright, stage direction, scene	Questions: intends to, according to, mostly to

Name _____

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2. The setting of the paragraph is most likely at....
 - a. Brianna and Tory's apartment
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 - d. in the neighborhood

Name _____

Day 2 – Plot diagram

Zack loved running on the trail near his house. One morning he noticed a dog without a collar. Zach slowly walked over to the dog to see if the owner was around. As he approached the animal it turned and began to growl, showing its teeth. Zach stopped suddenly so he wouldn't startle the dog. Just when the dog looked as though he was going to lunge at Zach, someone shouted, "Trey, come!" The dog relaxed and followed the man who called.

3. What is the rising action in the story?
 - a. Zack's run on the trail was ruined by a dog
 - b. Zach slowly approached the dog
 - c. The dog almost lunged at Zach
 - d. The owner called the dog away
4. What is the turning point in the story?
 - a. The dog relaxed and follow its owner
 - b. Zach suddenly stopped
 - c. Zach went for a run
 - d. Someone shouted, "Trey, come!"

Name _____

Day 3 –Theme

Before Taylor was born, his father climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, a famous mountain in Africa. Taylor wanted to climb it when he was a little older. Taylor was now in 8th grade. His father said if his grades were good and his parent teacher conference went well he would take him that summer. Taylor worked extra hard that year getting all A's on his final report card.

5. What is the theme?
 - a. if you work hard it will pay off
 - b. if at first you don't succeed try again
 - c. those who wait will receive more
 - d. Taylor got the trip to Kilimanjaro
6. What was the author's purpose in writing this story?
 - a. To describe what it's like to climb Kilimanjaro
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Day 4 – Plot diagram

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7. What is the falling action?
 - a. Sarah shot the basketball.
 - b. The ball bounced off the backboard.
 - c. Sarah's teammates ran to hug her.
 - d. Sarah was nervous since the game was on the line.
8. What is the resolution?
 - a. Sarah shot the free throw.
 - b. They won the basketball game.
 - c. Sarah made the free throw.
 - d. Her team was proud of her.

Name _____

Day 5 –Main idea/detail

Rock, Paper, Scissors is sometimes used to reach a decision. Two players count to three as they pound one fist into the other, and then each extends a hand in the shape of one of three symbols: scissor (two-finger "V"), paper (flat hand), or rock (closed fist). These rules determine the winner: 1) scissor cuts paper; 2) paper covers rock; 3) rock breaks scissor.

9. Which of these is a detail from the text?

- a. If you want to reach a decision play Rock, Paper, Scissors
- b. Here's how you play Rock, Paper, Scissors
- c. Scissor (two-finger "V")
- d. Scissor always beats paper

10. What is the main idea?

- a. To explain how to play Rock, Paper, Scissors
- b. To tell people how to reach a decision
- c. To entertain the reader with an exciting way to reach a decision
- d. To describe the hand symbols in Rock, Paper, Scissors

Name _____

Day 6 – Summary

It was finally summer vacation. Brian would be able to go over to his friend's house to play video games and stay up late into the night. Brian ran downstairs and said, "Bye mom, I'm going over to Tom's house." Just as Brian opened the front door his mom came down the hallway. "Brian," she said, "did you clean your room?" "But Mom, its summer!" Brian gave his mom his best sad face, but she was not going to change her mind. Brian marched back up stairs." I guess summer vacation will have to wait a few more minutes," Brian said to himself as he began picking up clothes off his bedroom floor.

11. Summarize the story below....

Somebody _____

Wanted to _____

But _____

So _____

Then _____

12. What is the selection mostly about?

- a. Brian cleaning his room because his mother told him he needed to
- b. Summer vacation finally arriving
- c. Tom and Brian playing video games
- d. Brian wanting to go to his friend's house, but he needs to clean his room first

Name _____

Day 7 – Organization

In 1849, gold was discovered in California. At that time California only had 14,000 people. The dream of striking it rich caused thousands to head west. However, very few actually found gold. Most people struggled to survive in their new home. In 1855, the Gold Rush was over. By that time almost half a million people lived in California.

13. What is this paragraph mainly about?
 - a. The Gold Rush changed California forever
 - b. Gold can be found in California
 - c. Many people moved to California
 - d. California's population increased
14. Based on the following Statement from the selection, what do you think the author is trying to say?

"...very few actually found gold."

 - a. People found gold in California
 - b. If you wanted to get rich in 1849 you needed to go to California
 - c. The Gold Rush made only a very small number of Americans rich
 - d. Most Americans looking for gold ended up struggling to survive

Name _____

Day 8 – Point of view

Erin loved her middle school art class. She enjoyed letting her creative side come out. It was the only time in the day where she truly felt like herself. It was the only time she had choices. On top of that, Mrs. Smith her art teacher, was such an amazing artist! Her watercolor paintings looked so real. Erin was going to love this year and learn so much from Mrs. Smith.

15. What point of view is the paragraph told from?
 - a. Erin's 1st person point of view
 - b. 1st person
 - c. 3rd person
 - d. 3rd person omniscient
16. From the author's point of view we learn that Erin...
 - a. loves to draw
 - b. enjoys her middle school art class
 - c. is in middle school
 - d. Mrs. Smith is the best art teacher Erin has ever had

Name _____

Day 9 – NF 5w's

Lyndon B. Johnson addressed the American people on September 29, 1967 about the war in Vietnam. At this time many Americans were concerned about our involvement with the war. Johnson addressed their concerns. Many lives had been lost in this ongoing war. However, Johnson asked America, "what if we leave and let Communism spread? Could we really take that risk?" Johnson believed we should fight now to minimize the current conflict and not let it grow and carry over into future generations.

17. Summarize the passage below.

Who: _____

What: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

18. President Johnson tried to influence Americans to believe.....

- a. many lives had been lost in the war
- b. that communism is bad
- c. in the war in Vietnam
- d. they are needed in Vietnam

Name _____

Day 10 – Main Idea

Great White Sharks can be 20 feet long and weigh around 4,000 pounds. They have special sensors in their noses that help them find prey. Great White Sharks can also swim at very high speeds, and sometimes even jump right out of the water to catch their prey! They prefer to eat seals and dolphins, but they'll attack any warm-blooded creature, including humans.

19. Which of these is not a detail from the story?

- a. Great Whites can weigh around 4,000 pounds
- b. Great Whites can smell their prey
- c. Great Whites can swim at very high speeds
- d. Great Whites prefer seals and dolphins

20. What is the main idea?

- a. Great White Sharks are dangerous animals
- b. Great White Sharks have sharp teeth
- c. Great White Sharks attack humans
- d. Great White Sharks swim at high speeds

Name _____

Day 11 – Infer

The Rodriguez family takes a vacation in a different state every year. Last summer they went to Florida. "I think the beach is the best place on earth," Tara said. "It's so beautiful!" Brian started to speak, "my favorite part is building..." "I love how warm it is and how the sun feels," Allison interrupted.

21. We can assume that Brian was about to say...

- a. sand castles
- b. fire pits
- c. sand forts
- d. ocean water tunnels

22. We can infer that....

- a. Tara is bossy
- b. Tara is older
- c. Tara is Brian's sister
- d. Tara got to pick the vacation spot

Name _____

Day 12 – Infer

Many schools are making their students' health a top priority. They are making changes. Vending machines that once held junk food and sugary treats now offer more healthy options. You will no longer see sodas or candy bars, but water and granola bars. Schools hope these small changes will inspire students to make healthier choices and prevent children from gaining too much weight.

23. It is likely that...

- a. Soda does not contain sugar.
- b. These new choices are welcomed by students.
- c. Students cannot afford vending machine snacks.
- d. Soda and candy are unhealthy choices.

24. What important message is the author trying to get across?

- a. All students need to eat healthier food
- b. Schools play an important role in helping students become more healthy
- c. All public schools need to offer better food choices
- d. Vending machines cause kids to gain too much weight

Name _____

Day 13 – Poetry

The Mask by Charlene Valladares

I look in the mirror at the beginning of each day, and ask myself
what mask I should place on my face today.

No not the sad one it's too revealing, I don't want to show the
world my true feelings.

For the mask that you can see camouflages the true me.
It's my public face that I remove each night, when I bare my
soul the mirrors light.

It's the one meant for only my eyes to see it speaks of all my
history.

It tells of my youth and girlish ways, my adolescence and my
young woman's dreams.

It tells of good times of which I had my share of love lost and
pain so hard to bear.

So I choose my mask so carefully, to cover the face that was
given to me, the one that was meant for only my eyes to see.

25. In the poem the author compares her face to a
mask. What is this an example of?

- a. Personification
- b. A simile
- c. A Metaphor

26. What can you infer based on the poem?

- a. The author believes we hide our true emotions.
- b. The author wears a mask.
- c. The author is sad.
- d. The author is shy.

Name _____

Day 14 – Persuasive text

Vote for me, Jason Miller 7th grade class president.
I believe I will make an awesome president! Who's
tired of the cafeteria menu? And Sloppy Joes?
Well, as class president I'll make sure your voice is
heard. Also, as a member of the basketball team
I'll work hard to start fundraisers so we can finally
get those new uniforms we've been hoping for.
Finally, I'm a nice guy and that will make working
with me a whole lot easier. Vote for me, Jason
Miller 7th grade class president.

27. Which of the following is an opinion
expressed in the passage?

- a. I'm a nice guy.
- b. Jason is running of class president.
- c. Vote for me, Jason Miller.
- d. The cafeteria menu is not tasty.

28. What is Jason's main claim in his speech?

- a. He will get a new cafeteria menu.
- b. He will make a good class president.
- c. He will get the basketball team new uniforms.
- d. He is a nice guy.

Name _____

Day 15 – Author's Purpose

Hi! I'm Sarah. I'm in 8th grade at Sweetwater Middle School. It's May and I'm so excited to be in high school next year! It seems crazy for ME to be saying that. Back in 5th grade, I was so scared to move to the middle school I pretended to be sick. However, middle school turned out to be amazing! I met Jessica, my best friend, made the volleyball team, and learned a lot about myself along the way. Now, I am definitely ready to take on high school and all the new experiences it brings!

29. What do you think the speaker is trying to tell us?
- a. she is afraid to go to high school
 - b. she wants to stay in middle school
 - c. she is a confident person
 - d. she has changed and is now excited about the new experiences each school year brings
30. What message do you think best fits with what the speaker is saying?
- a. Middle school is not as bad as people make it out to be
 - b. High school will be the best experience of your life so look forward to it
 - c. Don't be afraid of new experiences for they may turn out differently than you think
 - d. Believe in yourself

Name _____

Day 16 – Main Idea

George Washington is best known for being our first president. He laid the foundation for the great country we live in today. Before he took on this important role, he was a leader in many other ways. He was an officer in the French and Indian war, in 1775 he became the commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, and he presided over the Constitutional Convention. All of these important experiences helped mold Washington into the man he became as our president.

31. What message is the author trying to convey?
- a. Washington was a great president
 - b. Washington lead the Continental Army
 - c. Washington did many important things in addition to being the first president
 - d. Washington did many important things
32. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
- a. Washington led our country in many different roles
 - b. Washington was more than just our president
 - c. The United States would not be what it is today without George Washington
 - d. Washington was a president, leader of the army, and organizer for the Constitutional Convention

Name _____

Day 17 – Theme

You've probably heard the saying "the early bird gets the worm." I never really understood the meaning. Who would want a worm? But, a week ago I experienced it. My friend Juan and I found out that our favorite band was playing a free concert in Town Square. We made a plan to show up at 10am. The concert would begin at 6pm. Our goal was front row seats. Juan brought snacks and I brought blankets. We were the first ones there, had an amazing time hanging out all day in the sun, and got front row seats. We were the early birds and got the "worm" front row seats!

33. Why did the author include the saying "The early bird gets the worm?"
- a. to teach the reader about birds
 - b. to let the reader make a connection between the saying and character's experience
 - c. to let the reader come to their own conclusion
 - d. to teach the reader a lesson
34. Which answer best fits with the theme of the story?
- a. It's important to arrive at a concert early
 - b. Make sure you show up early
 - c. Always plan to arrive early
 - d. If you plan ahead and arrive early you will be at an advantage

Name _____

Day 18 – Poem

from "**A Birthday**" by Christina Rossetti

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickest fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

35. Which is not a simile in the poem?
- a. My heart is like a singing bird
 - b. My heart is gladder than all these
 - c. My heart is like a rainbow shell
 - d. My heart is like an apple-tree
36. What is the author trying to illustrate in the poem?
- a. She's describing her heart
 - b. She's drawing a visual for us through words
 - c. She's trying to show us how happy her heart is through comparisons
 - d. She's describing her love

Name _____

Day 19 – Infer

Facebook is a commonly known website for social networking. Do you know about its beginning? Facebook was founded on February 4, 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg with a few of his Harvard roommates. They started the site so students could keep in touch with each other online. Facebook became so popular they opened the network to other colleges and then nationwide users. They continued to grow in popularity. Now, 10 years later, Facebook has over 1.2 billion users.

37. The passage suggests that....

- a. Facebook quickly became popular
- b. Facebook is only for college students
- c. Facebook is the best way to stay in touch with your friends
- d. Facebook is slowing down in popularity

38. We can infer that....

- a. Facebook will lose users
- b. Facebook will continue to gain users
- c. Facebook will stay the same
- d. Facebook will close down

Name _____

Day 20 – Author's purpose

The NBA or National Basketball Association is the leading league worldwide. It was founded back in 1946. The league has developed and evolved over the years to become the league we know today. The NBA began with only 11 teams and now has 30 teams nationwide.

39. According to the author the NBA has....

- a. decreased in popularity
- b. is the best sport to watch on TV
- c. made needed change
- d. grown and changed over its existence

40. What is the author's purpose?

- a. To entertain
- b. To persuade
- c. To inform
- d. To describe

Answer Key

1. C

2. A

3. B

4. D

5. A

6. D

7. C

8. B

9. C

10. A

11. **Somebody:** Brian

Wanted to: Go play video games at his friend's house

But: his mom wants him to clean his room first

So: he went back upstairs and began cleaning

Then: when he finishes cleaning he will be able to go play video games

12. D

13. A

14. C

15. C

16. B

17.

Who: Lyndon B. Johnson

What: Gave a speech about the War in Vietnam

When: Sept. 29, 1967

Where: United States of America

Why: To persuade Americans to believe they are needed in Vietnam

18. D

19. B

20. A

21. A

22. C

23. D

24. B

25. C

26. A

27. A

28. B

29. D

30. C

31. C

32. A

33. B

34. D

35. B

36. C

37. A

38. B

39. D

40. C