

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Math (45 Minutes)	<p>Activity: Explore Nets and Surface Area (13.1 Reteach)</p>	<p>Khan Academy Videos: "Volume with fractional cubes" and "Volume of a rectangular prism: fractional dimensions"</p> <p>Activity: Find Volume of Rectangular Prisms (13.2 Reteach)</p>	<p>Khan Academy Videos: "How volume changes from changing dimensions" and "Volume of a rectangular prism: word problem"</p> <p>Activity: Solve Volume Problems (13.3 Reteach)</p>	<p>Activity: Solve Volume Problems (13.3 Additional Practice)</p>	<p>Have a great summer vacation!</p>
Physical Education (15 Minutes)	<p>Physical Activity –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go for walk/run YouTube – Kidz Bop Dance YouTube – Kids Workout 	<p>Physical Activity –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go for walk/run YouTube – Kidz Bop Dance YouTube – Kids Workout 	<p>Physical Activity –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go for walk/run YouTube – Kidz Bop Dance YouTube – Kids Workout 	<p>Physical Activity –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go for walk/run YouTube – Kidz Bop Dance YouTube – Kids Workout 	<p>Have a great summer vacation!</p>



Weekly Enrichment Plan: Week of May 18

Grade: 6

English Language Arts
(60 Minutes)

Reading Comprehension: During this week, you will focus on the essential question: How can challenges and failures lead to success? There is a graphic organizer with space for you to make notes each day during and after reading the day's assigned text. These notes should be how the text connects to the essential question and then evidence that you can site from the text. Today's is "Laura's Key" from Commonlit **(printed in packet)**

Grammar Practice: Spend 15 minutes working on grammar skills. [Khan Academy](#) – If you are new to Khan Academy Grammar, start with the Introduction; if you have been working on grammar already, move on to another part of the course. Follow it in order.

Independent Reading: Read for 20 minutes from your novel, then select activities from the Independent Novel Activity sheet in the printed packet to complete this week. **(Activity sheet is printed in last week's packet.)**

Optional Additional Resources for this week: [Wit and Wisdom video lessons for module 4](#), [Great Lakes Theater Virtual Learning Supports](#)

Reading Comprehension: Commonlit: "Sweet, Difficult Sounds" Text, comprehension questions, and graphic organizer from Monday. **(Printed in packet)**

Vocabulary Practice: Spend 15 minutes on [Membean](#): if you are a first time user, follow this link: [Click Here for Membean.com and enter code: CJNQBPN](#) Watch the video at this link to help you enroll <https://vimeo.com/405243332/66aca78165>

Independent Reading: Read for 20 minutes from your novel, then select activities from the Independent Novel Activity sheet in the printed packet to complete this week.

Reading Comprehension: Commonlit: "Michael Jordan: A Profile in Failure" Text, comprehension questions, and graphic organizer from Monday. **(Printed in packet)**

Vocabulary Practice: Spend 15 minutes on vocabulary skills on [Membean](#)

Independent Reading: Read for 20 minutes from your novel, then select activities from the Independent Novel Activity sheet in the printed packet to complete this week.

Reading Comprehension: Commonlit: "Mother to Son" Text, comprehension questions, and graphic organizer from Monday. **(Printed in packet)**

Written Expression: Use notes from graphic organizer to respond to writing prompt. **(Printed in packet)**

Vocabulary Practice: Spend 15 minutes on vocabulary skills on [Membean](#)

Independent Reading: Read for 20 minutes from your novel, then select two activities from the Independent Novel Activity sheet in the printed packet to complete this week.

Have a great summer vacation!

<p>Fine Arts (15 Minutes)</p>	<p>Art Read about History of Graffiti from Ancient to Modern times</p>	<p>Music Read about The Five Elements of Hip Hop & the biography of Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five & write a reflection</p>	<p>Art Create and design an original Graffiti work of art and write a reflection. Include in your reflection where you would put tis graffiti in the world</p>	<p>Music Listen to at least two selections of Hip Hop and write a reflection connecting it to other genres</p>	<p>Art Complete your Photo essay and have a great summer!</p>
<p>Science (30 Minutes)</p>	<p>Reviewing: Introduction to Plants Climb the Ladder: Plants, Plants, and More Plants! Complete the following to show what you have learned about plants. This week (Monday-Wednesday) you will choose one item from each rung of the ladder. (Choose one) — Make a Field Guide Make a field guide that identifies the major groups of plants. Draw a picture of each type of plant, and explain how you would identify this type of plant in the field. — Plant Reproduction Write and put on a play or skit that explains how seed plants and seedless plants reproduce. Assign roles to your family members, such as seedless plant, gymnosperm, and angiosperm. Perform your skit for your family group.</p>	<p>(Choose one) — Singing About Plants Write a song or poem that compares the features of vascular and nonvascular plants. — Making Models Make models of a vascular and a nonvascular plant. Label the features that make the plants vascular or nonvascular.</p>	<p>(Choose one) — Characteristics of Plants Make a poster or multimedia display that describes the characteristics of plants. — Plants Made Simple Write a science chapter for a third grader about the characteristics of plants. Make the chapter fun to read!</p>	<p>Today is a day to either finish any uncompleted work, or practice sharing one of your choices with your class when you return to school.</p>	<p>Have a great summer vacation!</p>

<p>Social Studies (30 Minutes)</p>	<p>The Electoral Process Read Pages 1 and 2. Predict: Look at the text features on pages 1 and 2. What five questions will the text answer? (Do not read the text. Use the text features to predict the questions that will be answered and write them below.)</p>	<p>The Electoral Process Reread Pages 1 and 2. 1. List six steps in the process to elect the president. 2. Is the caucus or the primary election the better way to select a candidate? Explain your answer. 3. What is the most effective way to inform voters about a candidate? 4. Would you change any part of the election process? If yes, which part? 5. How many electors does Ohio have?</p>	<p>The Electoral Process 1. Complete Calendar Project Activity. 2. Review - Write five facts about elections.</p>	<p>The Electoral Process Complete Activity Pages 1 - 3.</p>	<p>Have a great summer vacation!</p>
<p>Social Emotional Learning/ Reflection (15 Minutes)</p>	<p>Stress Journal Before you can deal with stress, you must learn to recognize what causes it. Think about last week and list as many events as you can remember that caused you stress. Complete the Stress Journal handout.</p>	<p>Empathy & Communication Leave a kind note somewhere from a family member to find.</p>	<p>My Village Choose up to five people you go to for positive advice and support to help you reach your goals. Complete the My Village activity.</p>	<p>Self-Awareness Make a list of things for which you are grateful.</p>	<p>Have a great summer vacation!</p>
<p>Student Daily Check-Off (check off each activity that you completed)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • English • Physical Ed. • Fine Arts • Science • Social Studies • SEL/Reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • English • Physical Ed. • Fine Arts • Science • Social Studies • SEL/Reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • English • Physical Ed. • Fine Arts • Science • Social Studies • SEL/Reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • English • Physical Ed. • Fine Arts • Science • Social Studies • SEL/Reflection 	<p>Have a great summer vacation!</p>



Weekly Enrichment Plan: Week of May 18

Grade: 6

Suggested Daily Schedule: Grades 6-8

Time	Activity
8:00 – 9:00 am	Wake up, make your bed, eat breakfast and get ready for an awesome day!
9:00 – 9:45 am	Mathematics
9:45- 10:00 am	Physical Activity
10:00– 10:45 am	English Language Arts – Reading Comprehension
10:45 – 11:00 am	15-Minute Break
11:00 – 11:15 am	Art
11:15 am – 12:00 pm	English Language Arts - Novel
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 – 1:30 pm	Science
1:30-1:45 pm	15-Minute Break
1:45-2:15 pm	Social Studies
2:15-2:30pm	Social-Emotional Learning/Reflection

Family Suggestions

<p>Parent Suggestions</p> <p>How can I support my student as a learner outside of school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarize yourself with your child's learning calendar. • Encourage your child to do their best when completing tasks and assignments. • Contact your child's teacher or the district's homework hotline when you or your child have questions or need feedback. • Support your child in starting the daily work early in the day. Waiting until the late afternoon or evening to start work adds unnecessary stress and creates missed opportunities for collaboration and feedback. • Remind your child to take frequent breaks to stay focused. • Consider designating a dedicated workspace to maximize time on task and facilitate learning. 	<p>Student Suggestions</p> <p>How can I continue learning outside of school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete work on your suggested learning calendar. • Put in your best effort when completing tasks and assignments. • Ask an adult to contact your teacher when you need help. Teachers are available via e-mail, your school's online learning program or on the district's homework hotline. • Let your teacher know if you have access to a phone or computer. <p>How can I stay organized?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start your work early. Waiting until the late afternoon or evening to start work adds unnecessary stress and creates missed opportunities for collaboration and feedback. • Take short breaks to increase focus and stay motivated to complete tasks on time. • Find a quiet place to complete your work.
<p>Individual Support</p>	<p>Individualizing Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See "Individualizing Supports for Students" for more information on how to support your child at home with these assignments. • Additional materials are available online and at school meal sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Specially Designed Instruction for Students with IEPs" packets with instructional routines that can be used at home to address students' IEP goal areas. • Materials and resources for students with life skills needs and significant disabilities will also be available.

English Language Learners

Enrichment Packet

- Daily language learning is important! The following links/resources are available for students to access daily.
- ¡El aprendizaje diario de idiomas es importante! Los siguientes enlaces/recursos están disponibles para que los estudiantes accedan al aprendizaje diario de idiomas.
- Kujifunza lugha ya kila siku ni muhimu! Viungo vifuatavyo/rasilimali vinapatikana kwa wanafunzi kupata mafunzo ya lugha ya kila siku.
- दैनिक भाषा सिक्न महत्त्वपूर्ण छ! तलका लिंकहरू / स्रोतहरू विद्यार्थीहरूको लागि दैनिक भाषा सिक्ने पहुँचको लागि उपलब्ध छ न।

مهم ! الروابط /
الموارد التالية متاحة للطلاب
للوصول إلى تعلم اللغة اليومي .

Individualizing Support for Students in Grades 6-12

For Students Who Struggle with Reading

Before Reading:

- For content area reading (nonfiction), provide some background information about the topic addressed in the text. The scholar can go online to look up information on the topic. Have scholar find resources in his/her preferred learning modality (videos, simplified text, activities) and summarize the new information learned.
- Look through the reading passage or book and look at pictures, graphics, and text features such as headings, captions, bolded words, etc. Discuss what you see and make a prediction about what you think will happen. During and after reading, adjust the prediction based on what you read.
- Look through the reading passage or book and identify difficult or unusual words. Have scholar practice decoding these words (reading them aloud). Provide meanings for these words. Create a vocabulary dictionary of these words to refer to later.

During Reading:

- **Accommodations:** Allow scholar to read aloud if they need to. Provide an audio recording of the text if available.
- **Chunking:** Read one paragraph or section at a time, and check for understanding by asking student to summarize or paraphrase what was read before moving to the next section.
- Make real-world connections (does the book remind you of something in your life? Another book, a movie, etc.)
- Stop and ask questions while reading. Ask questions with answers that can either be found in the reading or could be predictions about what might happen after the passage/story ends.

After Reading:

- For literature/fiction reading, have your scholar summarize what they read. Use the “5 W’s”
 - Who was the story/passage about?
 - What was the story/passage about? Make sure to include the main idea, some details, and how the story/passage ended
 - What did the character(s) learn?
 - What would be a good title for the story/passage? If one is provided already, what would be a different title you would give the story/passage?
 - When did the story/passage occur? This would be most important for informative and historical passages
 - Where did the story/passage occur?
 - Why? This can be many things, why did a specific character act in a certain manner? Why was a decision made? etc.
 - How? If there was a problem discussed ask how your scholar would have solved the problem differently, or how did that make you feel?
- For nonfiction reading/content area reading, have your scholar summarize what he/she has learned from the text and how he/she would apply the learning to real life.
- Allow an “open book” policy. Make sure that the scholar shows exactly where in the text he/she is getting the information to answer whatever question has been posed.

For Students Who Struggle with Written Assignments

- Have scholar dictate assignments into a phone's "notes" app or computer with speech-to-text technology. Most speech-to-text will also respond to commands to add punctuation (by saying "comma," "period," etc.). Student can then print out their writing, or copy it into their own handwriting.
- Write one sentence at a time, then have someone read it aloud to make sure it makes sense.
- Provide examples of quality writing that meets the task criteria.
- Accept a written assignment that is shorter than what is expected, as long as the task criteria are met.

For Students Who Struggle with Math Assignments

- Find a video of someone completing a similar task and have scholar watch it multiple times. Excellent resources for this are YouTube, Khan Academy, and LearnZillion.
- **Talk about math:** Have student explain a problem and its solution in mathematical terms. Have student teach a skill to another student. If they can teach it, they understand it.
- **Accommodations:** For tasks that require problem-solving, allow use of a calculator. Teach student how to use the calculator to accurately solve problems with multiple steps. Also provide access to anchor sheets for math procedures that may not be memorized, such as formulas.
- **Chunk assignments for easier completion/to ease frustration:** If there are 20 math problems to solve, complete 10 and take a break to move around. After the break go back and finish the other 10
- **Fractions:** use round food items to discuss fractions. Example: Cut a frozen pizza into 8 pieces and talk about pieces individually (1 piece is $\frac{1}{8}$) or in parts together (2 pieces is $\frac{2}{8}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$). Compare and contrast pieces of different sizes.
- **Graph paper:** use graph paper to organize work and problems, and to model mathematical situations visually.
- **Manipulatives:** any small item can be used as a manipulative to help with basic facts. Examples: coins, blocks, pieces of paper cut into smaller pieces. There are also virtual manipulatives online (Google "virtual math manipulatives").
- **Measurement, Money, and Time:**
 - Bake something and have your child measure out all of the ingredients for the recipe.
 - Have your child measure different items around the house and compare the sizes (What is bigger? What is smaller? How many ___ does it take to measure the couch?)
 - Take a walk outside for a movement break. While walking have them time how long it takes to go for the walk and get back home. Pick something outside like houses and have them count how many they pass while walking. You can also practice skip counting while you walk (example: for each step you take count by 2s, or 5s, or 10s).
 - Create a store using items around your house. Label each item with a dollar amount and have your child "shop" in your store or have them act as the cashier and make change.
 - Create a schedule for the day with times attached. Start with times on the hour and then get progressively more difficult with times on the half hour and quarter hour. Give a specific time they can play a game or use tech. This will help work on math skills and will also help keep your child focused on different tasks throughout the day!
- **Reference materials:** create a number line, hundreds chart, or anchor charts (worked examples) to help with math calculation, counting, and problem-solving.
- **Patterns:** use blocks or toys of similar colors to make a pattern. Example: 3 red Legos, 2 blue Legos, 3 yellow Legos, repeat.
- **Sorting:** Gather a group of toys and have your child sort them based on similar attributes (color, size, shape, etc.). Do the same with a set of books and have your child sort them based on fiction vs. nonfiction, type of book, etc.

- **Make it fun!** Practice math skills using games and things you might already have around the house and turn real-life activities into mathematical opportunities.
 - A deck of cards: each person draws 2 cards and then adds, subtracts, or multiply the numbers reflected on the cards.
 - Dice: can be used the same way as a deck of cards to work on basic facts or create multi-digit problems to solve.
 - Yahtzee: basic addition
 - Connect Four, Othello: problem solving, and strategic thinking
 - Puzzles: perfect for working on spatial awareness, which is key to geometry
 - Monopoly: have your child be the “banker” to work on money skills
 - Battleship: graphing coordinates
 - Uno: use numbers on cards to create calculation problems

For Students Who Struggle with Focus, Attention, and/or Study Skills

- Given scholar very clear written (or visual) directions of what to work on and what successful completion of the task looks like. Have scholar self-monitor whether or not he/she has completed all parts of the task.
- Use a timer, starting with a very brief amount of time (even 5-10 minutes is ok). After the timer “beeps,” provide student with a brief break (5 minutes) before continuing. Work to increase the amount of time for each work interval, up to 25 minutes.
- Provide a reward, such as a sticker or carrot, for every successful interval of on-task behavior.
- Only give one assignment or task at a time, but also provide scholar with a calendar or daily schedule to refer to so it is clear what to expect next.
- Have older students model study skills for younger children.

Grade 6 Set A: Failure and Success
FINAL ASSESSMENT: Cross-textual Thematic Essay

Essay Question: How can challenges and failures lead to success?

In this packet, you will find:

- a [graphic organizer](#) to help you prepare for your essay,
- a page of [helpful hints](#) to help you organize your essay, and
- the [essay prompt](#) with space to write.

Prewriting: Graphic Organizer

At the end of this distance learning text set, you will write a multi-paragraph essay answering the essential question: **How can challenges and failures lead to success?** After you have completed each reading assignment, use the chart below to help you remember how that text answered the essential question.

How can challenges and failures lead to success?		
<i>Text Title</i>	<i>How does this text answer the essential question?</i>	<i>Text Evidence (include paragraph number)</i>
"Laura's Key"		
"Sweet, Difficult Sounds"		
"Michael Jordan: A Profile in Failure"		
"Mother to Son"		

Name: _____ Class: _____

Laura's Key

By Anne-Marie Reidy
2019

*Anne-Marie Reidy is an educator and author based out of Washington, D.C. "Laura's Key" shares the story of a young girl who feels defeated after her experiences with her 6th grade soccer team. **Skill Focus:** In this lesson, you'll practice analyzing theme. Analyzing theme means paying attention to topics or big ideas that come up in a text. As you read, take notes on how Laura's attitude changes throughout the story and what message this reveals.*

- [1] At Piedmont Middle School, a kid could run track or play tennis, but everyone wanted to be on the soccer team. Piedmont and the surrounding towns were pretty small, so instead of having separate girls and boys teams, each school had one co-ed squad. Laura had dreamed of earning glory for the Falcons — or "*Los Halcones*," as most people called them — ever since the first grade, when her older brother Toni scored the winning goal in the county middle school championship. Now he was away at college on a soccer scholarship, and Laura wanted to be the next Martinez to dazzle the whole county with World Cup-level displays of soccer wizardry. The day she joined the team as a sixth-grader, she felt like she could fly.



"Untitled" by Tevarak Phanduang is licensed under CC0

But, unfortunately, her joy didn't last. She spent most of the season on the bench.

Walking to the car after the last game of the season, Laura tried to smile at her mother. Having spent yet another game sitting on the bench, Laura hadn't even broken a sweat. "Well, at least you don't have to wash my uniform," she joked, but she could feel tears in her eyes.

"Oh, *mija*,"¹ her mother sighed, "you'll have another chance. You'll see."

- [5] Laura could only shake her head as she climbed into the backseat.

Lying in bed that night, Laura thought back to her first game, the day of her huge mistake.

"Pass, pass, pass!"

"Clear that ball!"

1. term of love meaning "my daughter"

Voices yelled from every side. Laura hovered nervously in front of the goal as both teams charged down the field. A boy on the opposing team had the ball when a battle for possession broke out a few feet from her. Green and blue uniforms swirled around her, and Laura could barely keep track of the ball. Then, suddenly, it came her way!

- [10] *"Laura, I'm open!" one of her teammates called from near the sideline. A quick, easy pass and the ball would be away from their goal, the danger over. Laura drew back her foot and kicked.*

But the ball went in the completely wrong direction! Straight to an enemy in blue, who quickly shot it into the corner of the net, scoring. As the other team high-fived by the goal, Laura cringed from the laser beam stares of her own teammates.

The coach had benched Laura for the rest of the game. When *Los Halcones* lost 1-0, she was crushed.

If Laura hadn't been too ashamed to tell Toni that she was a failure, she would have quit the team that day. In practice, no one passed her the ball. The best players on the team would steal the ball from her and leave her in their dust. As she sat on the bench for game after game, Laura began to think only one Martinez was meant to be a soccer star.

Now that the season was over, she just wanted to forget about soccer. She clearly wasn't good enough to play with *Los Halcones*, and that was that.

- [15] A few days later, Laura's mother found her sprawled on the couch, watching music videos on her phone.

"You'd be better off watching soccer videos, *mija*," her mother said.

"What for?" Laura said, rolling her eyes. "Watching videos won't help me."

"Oh, really?" Her mother put her hands on her hips, which usually meant somebody better shape up. "I saw that boy take the ball from you in practice last week, Laura. No one ever takes the ball from Tobin Heath.² You could learn a lot from watching videos of her dribbling."

"That won't work," Laura whined. "I need someone to watch me and tell me how I can improve. I can't get better by myself."

- [20] Sighing, her mom sank down on the couch. "Laura, for every lock, there is a key. We just have to find it." After a moment, she added, "What if I film you during practice to help you find ways to improve?"

"But the season's over, Mom. No more practice, remember?"

"The best players keep practicing even when the season's over," her mother said. "You remember Toni spending all summer bouncing a ball off his head in the driveway. That boy used to run ten miles a day in the Arizona summer sun. You think he did that for fun?"

"But to practice plays I need at least one other person," Laura protested.

2. member of women's national soccer team and the Portland Thorns National Women's Soccer League team

Her mother patted her on the knee. “We’ll find that key, too,” she said. “Let’s just start with the dribbling.”

- [25] The next day was Saturday. Laura’s mother shook her awake early. “Come on, Laura, let’s go! Your breakfast is on the table, and then it’s soccer time.”

Rubbing sleep from her eyes, Laura stumbled out of bed. She pulled on shorts and a t-shirt, her pursed lips and flared nostrils broadcasting her mood. But once she’d finished a plate of her father’s famous scrambled eggs with jalapeños and warm tortillas, she rushed to the closet to dig out her cleats. Could I really become a better soccer player? she wondered.

Laura ran to get a soccer ball from the garage, but her mother said, “We won’t be needing that.”

“Why not?” Laura asked.

“You’ll see. Come on!” Her mother strode down the street with a tote bag over shoulder and a jumbo box of trash bags under her arm.

- [30] Frowning, Laura followed her mother to a vacant lot a few blocks from their house. Though the lot was certainly big enough to practice dribbling, it was also full of weeds, old tires, rusty beer cans, and take-out cartons. Laura raised her eyebrows. “You want me to practice here?”

Her mother handed her a big black trash bag and a pair of thick gardening gloves. “You do too much sitting around watching YouTube, *mija*,” she said, pulling on her own gloves. “If you squat down each time you grab something, your legs will get stronger and faster. Let them try to catch you then!”

It took all weekend to clear the lot. Late Sunday afternoon, Laura stood next to her mother, gazing out at the newly cleared ground. Her legs burned when she moved, so she supposed they must be getting stronger. She caught her mother’s eye, and they shared a big grin.

Laura built a rickety goal with scrap wood and duct tape. It looked like she could knock it over by sneezing, but it was good enough for her to practice shooting. She and her mother developed a routine: each weeknight before dinner, they headed to the lot for one hour. Laura practiced dribbling by dodging around a course of old tires, pretending she was protecting the ball from some of the best players in the world: Messi, Neymar, and Suarez.³ She practiced shooting, imagining that Tim Howard⁴ was staring her down from the goal. Her mother recorded everything, chuckling to herself. Between the uneven ground, bad lighting, and mosquitoes, Laura made more faces than a ventriloquist.⁵

At first, when they sat down to watch the videos, they doubled over in laughter. But Laura began to be able to see her mistakes, like the way she leaned back too far when she shot the ball. As spring blossomed into summer, she struggled to correct what she saw. Her mother told her she was improving, but when Laura watched the videos, all she saw was those same mistakes, over and over. Like a pot of water on the stovetop, Laura’s frustration bubbled hotter and hotter.

3. refers to Lionel Messi, Neymar da Silva Santos Junior, and Luis Suarez, three of the top professional soccer players in the national league

4. goalkeeper in the American professional soccer league

5. A person who can make sounds that seem to come from a puppet or a person or animal; they change their faces to react to what the puppet says.

[35] When summer vacation began, Laura was spending every day down at the sandlot soccer field, practicing her moves. Her mother would come to film her after work. They must have looked crazy: Laura running up and down the lot kicking a ball and her mom, still in her suit and heels from the office, jogging after her with a smartphone in her hand.

One evening, Laura was running down the sideline when she heard, “Uh, Laura? What are you doing?” She stopped, panting, and saw it was Dequan, a boy in her grade at school, and a couple of other kids from the neighborhood.

“I’m perfecting my dribble against imaginary defenders,” Laura said. She laughed when she saw the looks on their faces. Then she asked, “I don’t suppose any of you want to practice with me?”

“I would,” said Dequan, “but, uh, they wouldn’t take me on *Los Halcones* because I don’t run fast enough.”

“Oh, I have the key to open that door!” said Laura. “I used to be so slow, but my mom taught me how to get faster by strengthening my leg muscles.” She ducked her head and peered out at Dequan from behind her bangs. “I can show you how, if you want.”

[40] “Dope!” Dequan said. “I have a net we can set up at the other end of the field, too.”

Isabel, who lived a few blocks over from Laura, said, “I want to play! I can kick the ball anywhere I want to, but... I don’t really understand the rules.” Her cheeks reddened as she lowered her eyes, and Laura knew why. In their neighborhood, not understanding soccer was like not knowing two plus two!

“No worries, I can teach you,” Laura assured her. “I spent so much of last season on the bench that I basically have the rulebook memorized.” Laura rolled her eyes and let out a theatrical groan.⁶

Isabel smiled. “Cool! I bet I could get my little brother and his friends to play, if you want.”

Dequan said, “Yeah, my ten-year-old sister will want to play, too. And we could take turns recording video when your mom’s at work — then everyone would get a chance to play.”

[45] Laura spun around to where her mother was standing and was surprised to see she had put her phone away and picked up her purse. Time had flown by so quickly! “Okay, *mija*, it’s dinner time. We gotta go.” Smiling at Isabel and Dequan, she added, “You kids make sure you bring plenty of water with you tomorrow — maybe oranges, too. You know how hot it gets, running around in the sun!”

Laura waved goodbye to her new practice buddies and skipped after her mother. When she caught up, her mother winked at her. “See, Laura? A key for every lock.”

Laura met Dequan and Isabel the next morning, and they’d each brought siblings or friends along. Laura’s mom had packed her old red wagon full of water and oranges for snacks. They started their practice with the squats and sprints Laura’s mother had recommended for strong legs, and then practiced passing the ball to each other. They missed a lot of passes, but everyone encouraged each other and tried their best.

6. dramatic emotion

Laura never knew soccer practice could be so much fun. As she walked home for dinner, she thought, I really hope they all come back tomorrow!

They did come back, and, as the summer days passed, more friends from the neighborhood joined in. The kids took turns being the “official videographer” and, on rainy days when they couldn’t play, they gathered at Laura’s house to watch the videos.

- [50] That summer, Laura’s feelings about soccer were like a rollercoaster: one moment she would feel like Carli Lloyd⁷ smashing in a goal, but the next she would trip over her own feet and land in the dirt. Sometimes she didn’t even want to get up. It was like *Los Halcones* practice all over again.

But there was one big difference between those practices and these. When she landed on her face, Dequan pulled her back up, asking, “Okay, cap?”⁸ When one of her passes went awry, flying off toward who-knew-where, Isabel would joke, “Hey, I’m over here! It’s too hot to run after crazy balls!” They discussed plays and techniques with her, helped her identify her errors, and shared suggestions on how she could improve. Some evenings, wincing while her mother cleaned her latest scrapes with rubbing alcohol, Laura thought about quitting. But when she pictured her friends at the sandlot field, waiting for her to appear, she knew she couldn’t desert them.

One afternoon they were practicing passing — still Laura’s weakest skill — when Isabel called out, “Hey, Laura, I think you have a visitor!”

Looking to the side of the field, Laura thought she would see her mother, home early from work. But instead she saw a tall, lean young man with a huge smile. “TONI!”

Full of excitement, she dashed towards her big brother. Laughing, he scooped her up in his arms. “Hey, little Lulu, when’d you get so tall?” he laughed. “I gotta ask Dad what he’s been feeding you.”

- [55] Laura squeezed him hard. “I thought that college coach was going to keep you practicing soccer all summer and you’d never get to come home!”

Toni smiled and held her at arm’s length, admiring how fit and brown she was. “Believe me, I needed the practice, but I also needed some of Dad’s *huevos y jalapeños*.⁹ And when I heard my little sis was starting her own soccer empire, I decided to come check it out. Wait till *Los Halcones* see you in September!”

Laura’s heart fell. In her embarrassment, she had avoided telling Toni about how she blew it with *Los Halcones*. What would he think when he knew his little sister was a failure?

Seeing her facial expression, Toni frowned. “Lulu, what is it? Suddenly you look like your best friend just moved to Alaska.”

Laura knew she couldn’t put it off any longer; she had to tell him. Waving to Isabel, she pointed toward Toni and then toward her house. Isabel nodded and waved goodbye.

7. American women’s soccer player; two-time Olympic gold medalist; two-time FIFA Women’s World Cup champion

8. “Cap” refers to “captain,” as in the team captain.

9. eggs and jalapenos

[60] Grabbing her water bottle, Laura started walking toward the house and tried to figure out where to begin.

“Toni, I don’t know if they’re going to let me play on *Los Halcones* next year. I messed up so badly — everyone on the team hates me!” Toni snorted, but Laura plowed on with her story: the missed pass, the goal, and the loss in front of the whole school. By the end, she was barely whispering, tears running through the practice dust that coated her cheeks. “I’m so sorry, Toni. I didn’t mean to let you down.”

Toni stopped walking and crouched down, turning Laura by her shoulders so that they were face-to-face. He gently wiped the tears from her cheeks. “How could you ever say that? You could never let me down. I mean, I just saw you out there using all your free time to get better and help your friends get better. Don’t you know how proud that made me?”

Laura wailed, “But if I hadn’t blown it with *Los Halcones*, I never would’ve needed to spend all summer practicing! I only started to because I’m the worst one on the team!”

“Come here.” Toni led her over to the stone wall that bordered their parents’ property. Sighing, he sat down beside her and put his arm around her shoulders. “Lalu, I’m sorry. I see that I’m the one who let you down.”

[65] Laura gasped. “How? You’re the best player in the county!”

Toni chuckled. “Well, maybe I am. I think you might be a bit biased about that. But I’ll tell you what I’m not: the best player in my school.” He looked away for a moment, clearing his throat. Then he looked back at her with a little smile. “Did you ever hear the saying, ‘big fish in a little pond?’”

Laura shook her head.

“Well, if there’s one big fish in a pond full of little fish, he might think he’s pretty hot stuff. But then one day, he swims downstream to the ocean. And the first time he sees a shark, he realizes he’s not that big after all.”

Laura stared at him. “Toni, are you saying... you’re that not-so-big fish?”

[70] Toni grinned. “That’s exactly what I’m saying. See, when I rolled into college on a soccer scholarship, I definitely thought I was hot stuff. But my school recruits¹⁰ from all across the country, Lalu. There are guys on my team...” Shaking his head, he let out a low whistle. “This senior from Connecticut can sink goals that would blow your mind. And there’s a guy from Miami who dribbles like he has four feet!”

“Like Tobin Heath?” Laura asked.

Toni nodded. “Yeah, like Tobin Heath. In fact, the dude missed a couple weeks of school to try out for the men’s National Team.”

Laura bugged her eyes out to show how impressed she was.

10. **Recruit (verb):** to persuade people to join your team or organization

"Exactly," he said. "I saw real quick that the level on this team was high. And if I hadn't gotten it in practice, I sure got it at the first game, all of which I spent sitting on the bench." Toni was quiet for a moment, a dark look on his face. "That was rough for me, Lalu. I went back to my dorm that night thinking I was going to quit the team, quit college — all sorts of crazy stuff."

[75] "What stopped you?"

"Well, first I thought about what Mom would say." The siblings shared a look and burst out laughing. "Yeah, I did not want to live through that. But I also got an attitude adjustment.¹¹ Bryce, that guy from Connecticut who shoots like Cristiano Ronaldo,¹² came over to me at practice that week and gave me some pointers. Just a quick comment on how I could get my goal shots to curve more. And... I realized that instead of thinking about giving up, I should be thinking about rising up: rising to the level of my teammates. Those guys wanted me to be better, so I needed to get better."

Toni looked her right in the eyes. "If there's one thing we know how to do in this family, it's work hard. I decided that I might not be the best player on the team, but I was sure going to be a better player by the end of the year. I learned, Lalu; that's all I focused on all year. And I'm ten times the soccer player I was a year ago!

"That's why I'm so proud of you. You went through a tough time on *Los Halcones*, but instead of giving up, you found a solution. You found a way to learn."

Laura smiled. "There's a key for every lock, that's what Mom says. You just have to look until you find the right one!"

[80] Toni nodded. "Exactly. And I'll tell you what: your little team is doing pretty good, but I think you've hit a locked door. You've learned as much as you can from each other. You need some outside help to keep growing." He grinned at her. "How would you like me to be your coach for the next four weeks?"

"Oh, Toni, really?" Laura wrapped him in a huge hug. "That would be amazing! With your help, nothing can stop us!"

The rest of the summer sped by in a blur of soccer. Laura and Toni planned practices together over breakfast; ran drills and scrimmages in the hot sun at the sandlot all afternoon; and watched practice videos after dinner to analyze each player's performance. Some nights as Laura lay in bed, she thought her brain was as sore as her muscles!

It turned out Dequan's father had a friend who ran a summer soccer camp a few towns over. He and Toni arranged for their practice group to play a friendly game against the kids from the camp. Laura could hardly believe it. They were going to play a game like a real team!

"We need a team name," she said to the others. It was their last practice before the game.

[85] Toni smiled. "I've been thinking about that. What do you all think of *Los Alacránes*?"

Laura grimaced. "The scorpions? Ew."

11. **Adjustment** (*noun*): a small change

12. Portuguese professional soccer player; captain of the Portugal national team

"No, wait, I think that's perfect!" Isabel said. "Did you guys know that bark scorpions take five years to grow to full size?"

"So?" Dequan looked unimpressed.

"So," Isabel said, "in order to get bigger, they have to shed their hard exoskeleton.¹³ It literally cracks open and they crawl out, all soft and defenseless. And then their outer layer toughens up again to protect them."

[90] They all stared at her.

"Don't you see?" she said impatiently. "They're always growing. They have to take a risk, and — "

"I get it!" Laura exclaimed. "We're like *los alacránes*! We started the summer trapped in our little shells of 'I'm no good at this.' But we took a risk and shed those shells — and now we're bigger and tougher than ever!"

"Exactly." Toni looked around at them with pride. "And tomorrow those other kids are going to feel our sting." *Los Alacránes* high-fived all around, and Laura grinned with all her teeth.

The game was on a Thursday night at the permanent, well-lit field of the soccer camp. As Laura walked out onto their perfectly groomed grass, she was surprised to see there was quite a crowd in the stands! Her mom waved at her, and her dad winked, his hands full of snacks. Dequan's brothers were there, and even Isabel's grandma came along. Suddenly, Laura's pulse picked up, and her palms felt sweaty. This was nothing like their sandlot!

[95] "Hey," Dequan said beside her. "If they play on this fancy field all the time, I bet they ain't even ready for what these desert scorpions can do." They nodded at each other and ran to where Toni was leading the team through warm-ups.

The game was exciting, and much closer than Laura had expected. *Los Alacránes* were outmatched, but they put up a tough fight. Dequan made an amazing save in the first half, and Isabel scored a goal she never could have back in June. And as for Laura, she didn't miss a single pass.

In the end, *Los Alacránes* lost the game, 3-2. But as Laura hugged Toni on the sidelines, she had never felt so proud.

On the way home after the game, Laura sat in the backseat of her parents' car, squashed between Dequan and Isabel. Classes were starting up in a week, but soccer tryouts weren't until January.

"Dequan," Laura said, "are you still trying to get faster?"

[100] "Always," Dequan said cheerfully. "That red-headed kid smoked me today."

"What are you plotting now, Laura?" Isabel asked with a smile.

13. a hard covering on the outside of some invertebrate animals to provide support and protection; skeleton on the outside of an animal

"Well, I was thinking we might run cross country this fall. For every lock..."

"There is a key!" the three of them said together, bursting into laughter.

In the front seat, Laura's mother smiled silently.

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Which detail would be MOST important to include in a summary?
 - A. Laura continues to practice even when she wants to give up.
 - B. Laura and her mom spend a weekend cleaning up a vacant lot.
 - C. Laura's brother visits from college and helps coach Laura's soccer team.
 - D. The Piedmont Middle School soccer team lost their first game of the season.

2. Which piece of evidence BEST supports the idea that failure leads to growth and improvement?
 - A. "If Laura hadn't been too ashamed to tell Toni that she was a failure, she would have quit the team that day." (Paragraph 13)
 - B. "Some evenings, wincing while her mother cleaned her latest scrapes with rubbing alcohol, Laura thought about quitting." (Paragraph 51)
 - C. "Dequan made an amazing save in the first half, and Isobel scored a goal she never could have back in June. And as for Laura, she didn't miss a single pass." (Paragraph 96)
 - D. "Classes were starting up in a week, but soccer tryouts weren't until January." (Paragraph 98)

3. Which statement BEST conveys what the comparison to scorpions in lines 86-93 reveals about failure?
 - A. Failure cannot be overcome without taking a risk.
 - B. Failure allows people to learn from their mistakes.
 - C. Failure is not helpful if people are trying to succeed.
 - D. Failure should be avoided because it creates weakness.

4. What is the meaning of the phrase "For every lock, there is a key" in paragraphs 102-103?
 - A. Everyone needs to find their own answers to their frustrations.
 - B. Everyone shares the same problems and frustrations.
 - C. There will always be problems to solve.
 - D. There is a solution to every problem.

5. Write a paragraph showing how Laura's attitude toward failure changes over the course of the story and what events cause those changes. Refer to two pieces of evidence to support your response.

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. What personality traits can help a person overcome failure?

2. Do success and winning always look the same?

Name: _____ Class: _____

Sweet, Difficult Sounds

By I.M. Desta
2019

*I.M. Desta is a writer based in Washington, D.C. In this story, a young woman immigrates to the United States and struggles to fit in at school. **Skill Focus:** In this lesson, you'll practice analyzing theme. Analyzing theme means paying attention to topics or big ideas that come up in a text. As you read, take notes on Nothukula's fears and challenges and what she learns through her experience.*

- [1] It was the first day of school, and students swarmed the hallways like a roaming mass of bookbags. Nothukula wasn't sure what to do, so she watched her new schoolmates as they slammed lockers shut, hugged each other and handed out high fives.



"Untitled" by Suad Kamardeen is licensed under CC0

She turned and began to struggle with her locker combination. She didn't notice someone was beside her until she heard them speak. "Hey, I'm Ashley," said a dark-haired girl at the locker next to hers removing her backpack from her shoulders. "You new here?"

Yes, Nothukula wanted to say. But not just to Freedman High School, she was also new to the country. She had arrived in the summer from Zimbabwe.¹

"Can you speak English?" Ashley asked. Nothukula stared at her. It wasn't that she didn't understand English. They had spoken it at school back home, and then there were the American soap operas that she loved to watch. "Are you new?" Ashley spoke loudly and slowly, like Nothukula had trouble hearing. She was still standing there, staring at Nothukula, as if tapping the glass of a fish tank, waiting for any reaction. It made Nothukula nervous, stiffening her tongue. With each wordless second that passed, she felt more pressure to make up for the awkwardness, say the right thing to Ashley and ensure it came out perfectly. She opened her mouth, but not a single thing came out.

- [5] Rolling her eyes, Ashley looked away, checking her face in a compact mirror and calling after one of her friends. Nothukula just stood there, like a deer in headlights. She was still deciding what to say when the homeroom bell rang.

Lost in the school's big hallways, she made it to homeroom just in time. The teacher gestured for Nothukula to find a seat. She continued with roll call but paused at Nothukula's name. "What should we call you?" she asked.

Freshly intimidated² by her silent exchange with Ashley, Nothukula froze again. She didn't know what to say to forty students staring blankly at her from their seats, how best to introduce herself when she felt like an alien descending from a spaceship. "No-no-thu-ku-la," she stammered³ out.

1. Zimbabwe is a country in southern Africa known for its beautiful mountains and wildlife.

Her classmates exchanged confused glances. She realized how funny her name must sound to them. It was in her mother tongue, Ndebele, which they had probably never heard before. Or perhaps it was her accent?⁴ Nothukula knew she sounded nothing like the American actresses she loved to watch on TV. It felt like everyone in the room was laughing at her.

Then she saw a boy near the door with a wireless earbud tucked into one ear, nodding along to something only he could hear. When Nothukula locked eyes with him, he smiled at her for the longest moment. Too afraid to reciprocate,⁵ she looked away and shrank in her seat as her classmates began snickering. She didn't say another word all day; as teachers asked questions in class, Nothukula said nothing, even when she knew the answer.

- [10] That evening, Nothukula thought over the humiliating⁶ scene in homeroom. She told herself that the tears sliding down her cheeks were just from the onions she was dicing for that night's *dovi*, a chicken and peanut stew that her mother had taught her to make back home in Zimbabwe.

Nothukula lived with her Auntie Thandi, her mother's youngest sister. Auntie Thandi had been in the U.S. for two years and worked as a nurse in a nearby hospital. She got home late in the evenings, so Nothukula usually prepared dinner. While Auntie Thandi worked sixty hours a week in the emergency room, her niece was a quiet little mouse, helping out with the cooking and household chores.

Usually, making her mother's recipes soothed Nothukula, filling the kitchen and her heart with the smells of home. But that night she felt only misery.⁷

The door opened and Auntie Thandi came in, slipping off her shoes before kissing Nothukula's cheek. "How was your first day at school?"

Nothukula's eyes creased, listening to the way her auntie pronounced her words. It was like being back in Zimbabwe, listening to her teachers. Nothukula preferred it when they spoke in Ndebele. "It was fine," she replied.

- [15] "Did you make any friends?"

Nothukula shook her head. "They look at me as if I am funny."

"You are funny," Auntie Thandi replied grinning. "Our smart *inyoni*."⁸

Nothukula groaned. Her parents had nicknamed her that as a child because she talked so much. She would hear a word and instantly repeat it back to them, saying it over and over again, as if she were singing. By the time she was four, she was in love with American television and would consume common phrases as if they were pieces of fruit, eagerly repeating them back to her family: "Too cool." "Yeah, right!" "No way!"

-
2. **Intimidate (verb):** to frighten or threaten someone so that they do not do something
 3. **Stammer (verb):** to make accidental stops and repetitions while speaking
 4. **Accent (noun):** the way in which people in a particular area, country, or social group pronounce words
 5. **Reciprocate (verb):** to respond to an action by doing the action in return
 6. **Humiliate (verb):** to make someone feel ashamed or embarrassed, especially in front of others
 7. **Misery (noun):** great sadness
 8. Inyoni means "bird" in Ndebele.

Nothukula spooned the dovi into bowls. "I want to go back home," she said.

[20] "Ey!" Auntie Thandi looked at her sharply. "After just one day of school?"

"I don't like it there."

Auntie Thandi came closer. "You have to give it a try." She took the bowls from Nothukula and set them on the counter. "This is your home now. This is your chance to start anew. Besides, Zimbabwe will always be here," she said, pointing to Nothukula's chest. "You carry it with you."

But as the months passed, Zimbabwe began to feel like just a name on a map. It was February and she had barely spoken to anyone at school other than Ms. Johnson.

Ms. Johnson was her English teacher, a calm, soft-spoken woman with a youthful style, and the only person at Freedmen that Nothukula felt comfortable talking to. Because Nothukula had learned English in school in Zimbabwe, she tested out of the English classes for kids new to the language, but Ms. Johnson arranged for them to meet up after school each Tuesday and Thursday "just in case you have some questions about this crazy new place you're in." And, man, did she ever have questions! "How do I figure out which city bus goes where?" "Why do Americans play this strange game of running into each other and call it 'football'? That's not football!"⁹ "What on Earth is a 'chicken finger'?"

[25] But aside from her one-on-ones with Ms. Johnson, Nothukula went through her days at Freedmen silent as a ghost. The other kids assumed she didn't know English and Nothukula never corrected them. She felt invisible most of the time.

But then there was Cole, the boy who had smiled at her on her first day at the school. Cole was tall and lanky with deep dimples and kind eyes that reminded her of *ubude*¹⁰ Moffat. Even though they had never really spoken, Nothukula felt close to him for some reason. Like her, he didn't quite fit in. During lunchtime, she sometimes overheard Ashley and the other girls poking fun at him. They made jokes about his habit of stuttering.¹¹ He would try to speak to Nothukula during class, whenever they sat close together. Cole would speak slowly and enunciate his words, thinking she wouldn't understand him. Nothukula would cover her mouth to stop herself from giggling. Of course she understood him, but she never answered him, not even when he offered to help her with her English after school. She smiled awkwardly and shrugged her shoulders. *What if my English sounds stupid to him?* she thought. *What if my accent is so strange that he can't understand me?*

At lunchtime, she sat alone with her tray as other students clustered together, swapping expressions and talking over each other. "It'll be lit!" "Oh, she's got jokes." "Come through!" "Spill the tea, girl." Nothukula wished that her words sounded like theirs, flowing so freely, without even having to think about it. Ashley sat nearby, surrounded by friends. They complained about many things: boys, their teachers, parents, adding the word "like" to almost every statement. "He was like... she was like... I was like..." *Like what?* Nothukula wondered.

9. In most of the world, the game Americans call "soccer" is called "football." American football is not widely played outside the U.S.

10. *Ubude* means "brother" in Ndebele. It can also be used to refer to close family friends.

11. **Stutter (verb):** to speak with difficulty, often struggling to say or repeating the first sounds of words

One of the girls looked up and saw that Nothukula was watching them. Nothukula picked up her sandwich and returned to the book she was reading. She glanced up again to see the girl was gesturing¹² for her to join them. At that moment, Ashley looked over and shook her head. “She’s from Africa, Cynthia. She doesn’t understand you,” Ashley said.

Nothukula bristled and whispered under her breath, “I’m from Zimbabwe, and I understand you perfectly.”

- [30] That evening she went home and planned what she would say to Cole the next time she got a chance. She wrote it down in her notebook so that she could memorize it. Each version of what she thought she might say started with, “Hey Cole! You’re too cool!” Then she would ask him what kind of music he liked and tell him about how everyone in Zimbabwe learns English. She’d use the word “like” a lot, like Ashley did, and try her best to sound American.

The next morning, she waited and waited for the right moment to speak to Cole. There were too many people around during gym class, and Ms. LaVelle didn’t allow any English at all in her French class. By the time she stood in line in the cafeteria, waiting for chicken fingers, Nothukula was ready to give up.

Just then, a voice behind her asked, “So, what’s the special today?” Turning, Nothukula saw Cole smiling at her. As always, he had one earbud in, and his kind eyes looked directly into hers.

This was her chance! She flashed him a smile and thought about her reply. He’d asked a question, so replying to it with what she had rehearsed — “Hey Cole! You’re too cool!” — would just sound stupid. **Despite** all her preparation, the clever, American-sounding speeches she had written in her notebook flew right out of her brain. There she was again, her mouth open and her brain frozen.

Ashley was at the register and decided to chime in, answering for Nothukula before she had a chance to say something, “T-t-tater t-t-ots, f-f-freak.”

- [35] All the students within earshot started laughing and pointing in Cole’s direction. Dropping his eyes, Cole plugged his dangling earbud into his ear and turned up the volume on his phone. He slid out of line and disappeared into the crowd.

In that moment, Nothukula felt herself get scorching hot, as mad as Auntie Thandi got when patients asked for another nurse “who speaks English.” She had English class with Cole last period. Slitting her eyes at Ashley, she told herself she would speak to him then.

When Nothukula got to English class, Cole was already seated. There were no seats beside him, so she sat at the back of the room by the window and half-listened as students got up and rehearsed for the first round of the school-wide poetry recital.¹³ The winners of the school contest would get a chance to perform in the state-wide competition. Nothukula loved poetry, but her thoughts drifted off to her old life with her mother and father, *ubude* Moffat and all her friends back home, where she was a talkative, happy little bird who was always writing, speaking, and even teaching the other kids new words to say.

12. **Gesture (verb):** to express an idea by moving one’s hands

13. **Recite (verb):** to say something (usually a poem or part of a play) aloud from memory in front of an audience

"Nothukula? It's your turn," Ms. Johnson said, interrupting her thoughts. Nothukula had chosen one of her favorite poems, Paul Laurence Dunbar's "Sympathy," and she had it memorized. She replayed it in her mind:

*I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,¹⁴
And the faint perfume from its chalice¹⁵ steals —
I know what the caged bird feels!*

[40] Though she knew the lines, she had been praying that Ms. Johnson would never call on her. She didn't want her classmates to hear her say anything ever again. She never wanted to give them another opportunity to laugh at her accent. Sinking lower in her seat, she kept her mouth shut and shook her head.

"It's not optional, Nothukula," Ms. Johnson said, gesturing to the front of the room. Now everyone was looking at her, including Cole. Nothukula rose from her seat.

Clenching her hands so tightly that her nails dug into her palms, she began to recite the poem:

*"I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes — "*

"A little louder," Ms. Johnson said, smiling at her. "We want to hear you."

[45] Nothukula started over, but this time she tried to imitate the high-pitched, breathless pace of Ashley and her crew, saying the word "bird" in the same off-handed way they did with the word "like." She pretended she hadn't a care in the world, but, really, she was ready to hurl. Nothukula's stomach was doing backflips and cartwheels.

*"I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling
When he fain¹⁶ would be... would be..."*

And then, in the middle of the poem, her mind suddenly went blank. She'd forgotten the next line!

As she stood there fidgeting and fumbling, repeating the same lines over and over, the majority of the class stopped paying attention. They passed notes back and forth and watched the clock, waiting for Nothukula to shut up so class could be dismissed. When Nothukula confused the lines in the final verse, she decided to give up and spare herself any further embarrassment. Flopping down in her chair, she ducked her head, her cheeks burning.

14. a shortened version of "opens"

15. a large cup for drinking wine, or the cup-shaped inside of a flower

16. rather

Cole began to clap. One girl laughed, then clapped her hand over her mouth. “What was that?” someone said. The bell rang, and there was a rush as everyone headed for the door.

- [50] Nothukula was the last to pack her books into her backpack. Ms. Johnson stopped her on the way to the door. “Nothukula,” she said. “What happened? You’ve had weeks to memorize this poem. I thought for sure you’d know it by now.”

Nothukula’s heart sank. She wanted to tell Ms. Johnson that she had memorized the poem, that she didn’t know what had happened or why her mind suddenly went blank. But she could feel tears coming to her eyes, so she choked out, “I’m so sorry, Ms. Johnson,” and bolted out the door.

That evening, Nothukula was at the kitchen table, staring at a copy of the poem, when Auntie Thandi got home from another double shift at the hospital. Nothukula fixed her a plate while she changed from her scrubs to sweats.

“*Salibonani*,”¹⁷ her aunt said, stretching her back as she walked into the kitchen. “*Unjani?*”¹⁸

“Fine,” Nothukula answered, setting her aunt’s plate on the table and slumping down in her chair.

- [55] “What’s wrong with you?”

“Nothing.”

Auntie Thandi raised her eyebrows and tilted her head. “Nothukula?”

Nothukula told her about what had happened during English class and how she had to recite “Sympathy” again the next day.

Auntie Thandi cupped Nothukula’s chin, gently raising her face so she could see Nothukula’s eyes. “Just be yourself, *inyoni*. You can do this.”

- [60] “No, no, no, no, no,” Nothukula said. “You don’t understand. I can recite the poem in my head, but when I have to say it aloud, I forget the words.”

“You can practice in front of me then,” Auntie Thandi said, digging a spoon into the *sadza*¹⁹ and gravy Nothukula had prepared.

“You don’t understand,” Nothukula said again. “They all stare at me. They’re so cold, and unfeeling, as if I am invisible. As if...”

“Go on.”

“As if they can’t even see me.”

17. Salibonani means “hello” in Ndebele.

18. Unjani means “how are you” in Ndebele.

19. a Zimbabwean porridge made from white cornmeal, similar to grits or polenta

[65] Auntie Thandi set down her spoon and leaned back. But then her eyes lit up. She sprang out of her seat and dashed to a bookshelf in the corner. She started pulling out dozens of books, as many as she could find that had a picture of the author on the cover.

“Seems to me as if you need to practice fighting fire with fire.” She started standing the books up around the room, on the sofa, chairs, table — everywhere!

“What do you mean?”

“You said the other students act like you aren’t really there. Maybe you need to start pretending that they, as an audience, aren’t really there either. Maybe that’ll help.”

“I don’t get it.”

[70] “Look at all these faces,” Auntie Thandi said, gesturing to the book covers. “All these eyes staring at you. Except they’re not really there. They’re not really staring at you. Practice your poetry with this in mind. Keep reminding yourself as you speak and soon it won’t matter if they are really there or not.”

Auntie Thandi sat back down to her dinner and Nothukula stood up. She began to recite the poem in front of her “audience”: Auntie Thandi and the books. It felt silly at first, and she giggled her way through the poem. But soon she was looking into the eyes of these book authors and repeating her poem from start to finish, again and again, without any slip-ups.

“You already know what to say,” her aunt reminded her. “Just let yourself be heard. Do whatever works for you.” Nothukula ran through the poem several more times. By the time she finished, it didn’t matter to her whether her audience was real or not.

The next day in English class, Nothukula’s palms were sweaty. She wiped her hands on her jeans and slumped deeper into her chair. *Maybe Ms. Johnson will forget about me*, she thought. But sure enough, with fifteen minutes left on the clock, Ms. Johnson quieted the class and called her up to the front.

The whole room fell silent as Nothukula got up and shuffled slowly up to the chalkboard. She felt her heart thumping out of her chest, and did her best to ignore it. She just had to get this dreadful assignment over with.

[75] She stared out at her classmates and scanned their bored and amused expressions, searching in vain²⁰ for a friendly face. *They are not real*, she told herself as she began reciting the poem. The lines sounded painful and strained, so Nothukula started to speed up. She could see smirks on her classmate’s faces and knew they were remembering her terrible performance the day before. Sweat sprang out along her hairline, but she fought the sinking feeling and continued:

“I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
When his wing is bruised and his bosom²¹ sore, —
When he beats his bars and he would be free —”

20. without success

21. chest

She paused. She couldn't recall the following line, and each second she remained silent felt like an hour. She was ready to hide under a rock. Her tongue was a block of stone. *Why did I trust Auntie's ridiculous idea?* Nothukula asked herself. *Book covers don't whisper and laugh at you.* The sound of the students giggling grew louder and louder, and Nothukula became more flustered. The only one showing any interest was Cole.

Then she remembered something else that Auntie Thandi had said: "*Do whatever works for you.*" She continued to recite, becoming more and more composed the more she focused on Cole. She never missed another beat, and her classmates stopped laughing as her voice rose, coming to an end with the booming lines:

"It is not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,
But a plea,²² that upward to Heaven he flings —
I know why the caged bird sings!"

[80] For a moment the whole room was silent. Then Nothukula's mouth dropped open as Ashley began to clap. The other students joined her, and Cole called out, "Bravo!" Then the final bell rang and the entire class gathered their things and rushed out of the room. Still buzzing with pride, Nothukula went to collect her things. When she was the only person left in the classroom, Ms. Johnson said, "Good job, Nothukula! You have a good chance of making it to the regional competition."

Nothukula was stunned. "Really?" she said. "You think so?" Blushing, Nothukula made a note to give Auntie Thandi a big hug when she got home that night. "Thank you, Ms. Johnson."

As she wandered out the classroom door, Nothukula saw that Cole was waiting for her. For a while, they wandered down the empty hallway together, neither saying a word. Then, finally, Cole said, "You were gr-gr-great."

"No way." Nothukula blushed again, turning to face him. "I can't stand the way I sound."

Cole shook his head. "You have a pretty voice." He looked down at his shoes, then slowly met Nothukula's eyes. "*Kuhle ukukubona.*"²³ Cole pronounced the words delicately, unsure if he said them right.

[85] Nothukula's heart warmed. His accent was horrible, but the effort was all she needed. "Pleased to meet you, too."

That night, Nothukula told Auntie Thandi all about how she had **conquered** the poem.

"I knew it!" her aunt crowed. "I demand my own performance, *inyoni!*"

Standing tall in her kitchen, Nothukula proceeded to recite the poem, proudly and imperfectly, entirely in her own voice.

22. **Plea (noun):** an emotional way of asking for something very important

23. *Kuhle ukukubona* means "pleased to meet you" in Ndebele.

After she was done, Auntie Thandi was quiet for a long time. “You see,” she said, wiping tears from her eyes, “*indlovu ibulawa yibunyonyo*.”²⁴

[90] Nothukula grinned. “Yes, Auntie. A lot of small steps can overcome even the biggest problem.”

“Sweet, Difficult Sounds” by I.M. Desta. Copyright © 2019 by CommonLit, Inc. This text is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

24. *Indlovu ibulawa yibunyonyo* means “the large elephant is killed by small ants” in Ndebele. It is an old saying in Zimbabwe.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What does the bird in the poem represent in the story? (Paragraph 38)
 - A. The bird represents Nothukula's confidence in being away from Zimbabwe for the first time.
 - B. The bird represents the cruel way other students have trapped Nothukula in a lonely situation.
 - C. The bird represents the happiness Nothukula feels living with her loving Auntie Thandi.
 - D. The bird represents Nothukula's wish to communicate with the world outside herself.

2. How do paragraphs 73-75 develop the theme of the story?
 - A. They demonstrate how wanting revenge on one's haters can lead to success.
 - B. They demonstrate the way that a past failure can stop a person from succeeding.
 - C. They demonstrate how support from friends and family can help a person succeed.
 - D. They demonstrate the way that a person can let fear hold them back from their goals.

3. Which piece of evidence best reveals why Nothukula wanted to speak Ndebele with her aunt?
 - A. "It was in her mother tongue, Ndebele, which they had probably never heard before." (Paragraph 8)
 - B. "That evening, Nothukula thought over the humiliating scene in homeroom." (Paragraph 10)
 - C. "Nothukula's eyes creased, listening to the way her auntie pronounced her words." (Paragraph 14)
 - D. "Nothukula shook her head. 'They look at me as if I am funny.'" (Paragraph 16)

4. What is the best meaning of the word "enunciate" as it is used in paragraph 26?
 - A. pronounce
 - B. mumble
 - C. whisper
 - D. shout

5. What message about challenges does the author express through "Sweet, Difficult Sounds"?

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. How can language be both a help and a barrier to helping us connect with others?
2. How can feeling alone impact how we feel about ourselves?
3. Do we feel better when we are connected to people? Why?
4. How can connection and a sense of belonging impact a person's view of themselves and the world?

Name: _____ Class: _____

Michael Jordan: A Profile in Failure

By Jeff Stibel
2017

*Jeff Stibel is a brain scientist, author, and businessman. With his partner Kobe Bryant, he founded Bryant Stibel to support others starting new businesses. In this text, Stibel discusses Michael Jordan's failures. **Skill Focus:** In this lesson, you'll practice identifying an author's central idea and how they support it. This means paying attention to the evidence and reasons they give for their idea. As you read, make note of the details that support the author's central idea about failure and success.*

- [1] Michael Jordan needs no introduction. Something of a legend for turning failure into success, he is the author of the longest quote on my company's failure wall — which was tricky to paint but worth the extra effort:

I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.



"JORDAN 23" by Marco Varisco is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

Most of us don't fail or succeed in the glare of a national spotlight, much less do it thousands of times, with analysts endlessly critiquing¹ every move. Perhaps that's why people love sports: they provide a black and white analogy² for the gray backdrop of life. The ball is in or it's out, the basket is made or missed, the game is won or lost. Watching our favorite stars pull through when the chips are down³ **inspires** us to do the same in our own lives. And no one has **inspired** more sports fans, young and old alike, than Michael Jordan.

The story of Michael Jordan not making his high school team has been told and retold, but continues to **inspire** with each retelling. In 1978, sophomore Michael Jordan tried out for the varsity⁴ basketball team at Laney High School. When the list was posted, Jordan's name wasn't on it. Instead, he was asked to play on the junior varsity team.

1. **Critique (verb):** to examine carefully or call out mistakes and errors
2. **Analogy (noun):** a comparison between two things
3. when in a difficult or dangerous situation
4. the first-string team in a sport at a school

- [5] The reasoning behind the choice wasn't that Jordan didn't have enough talent or hadn't already **distinguished** himself as an outstanding basketball player. Rather, it came down to seniority, size, and a strategic decision: The varsity team already had eleven seniors and three juniors. That left space for only one more player, and the coaches chose another sophomore, Jordan's friend Leroy Smith. Smith was not as good as Jordan but he added size to the team, as he was 6'6" compared to Jordan's diminutive 5'10". What's more, the coaches knew that if Jordan had been chosen for the varsity team, he would play only when needed as a substitute for the more senior varsity players. On the junior varsity team he would get more playing time and a chance to truly develop.

It was a perfectly logical choice for the coaches to assign Jordan to the junior varsity team for his sophomore year. But 15-year-old Jordan was devastated⁵ when the list was posted without his name. In his mind, it was the ultimate defeat, the ultimate failure. "I went to my room and I closed the door and I cried. For a while I couldn't stop. Even though there was no one else home at the time, I kept the door shut. It was important to me that no one hear me or see me." Jordan was heartbroken and ready to give up the sport altogether until his mother convinced him otherwise.

After picking himself up off the floor, Jordan did what champions do. He let his failure and disappointment drive him to be better. He played on the junior varsity team, and he worked himself to the limit. "Whenever I was working out and got tired and figured I ought to stop, I'd close my eyes and see that list in the locker room without my name on it, and that usually got me going again."

It became a pattern throughout Jordan's life that a disappointment or setback resulted in a redoubling of effort.⁶ High school rival player Kenny Gattison, who led his team to beat Jordan's team for the high school state championship, put it this way: "You got to understand what fuels that guy, what makes him great. For most people the pain of loss is temporary. [Jordan] took that loss and held on to it. It's a part of what made him."

For most people, public failure becomes public humiliation,⁷ and that leads to retreat. Fear of public speaking is a good example. Few people are psychologically afraid of speaking their mind and even fewer have physical speech impediments⁸ preventing them from doing so. Yet glossophobia, the technical term for speech anxiety, is consistently ranked among the most prevalent⁹ mental disorders, with a reputed 75% of the world's population experiencing some degree of anxiety around public speaking. Our fears have little to do with speaking, of course, and far more to do with the perceived impact and reaction that our audience may have. But for Jordan and elite¹⁰ performers like him, the fear of failure and public ridicule is transformed into a drive for success.

- [10] The pattern of defeat followed by success would follow Jordan to the University of North Carolina and later to the NBA. His **relentless** drive would lead him to break numerous records and become the most decorated player¹¹ in the history of the NBA. What's more, he's credited with dramatically increasing the popularity of basketball both in the United States and internationally, and **inspiring** the next generation of basketball players including LeBron James, Dwyane Wade, and Kobe Bryant. You can't think of the word "champion" without thinking of Michael Jordan, and there's no better proof that failure is simply a stepping stone to success.

5. **Devastate (verb):** to cause someone to feel great emotional pain

6. trying harder; increasing effort

7. **Humiliation (noun):** a feeling of great embarrassment when one looks weak or silly

8. a physical condition that makes speaking difficult

9. **Prevalent (adjective):** widespread or common

10. **Elite (adjective):** belonging to a group with power due to money, knowledge, or special skills

11. the one who has received the most honors and awards

Michael Jordan faced another formidable¹² challenge decades later, when he became the owner of the NBA basketball franchise, the Charlotte Bobcats. Jordan had been a minority owner since 2006 but bought the majority stake from Bob Johnson in 2010. At the time, the business was hemorrhaging,¹³ so Jordan used his own money to cover the significant operating losses¹⁴ the team was experiencing.

The first season was lackluster¹⁵ but things got worse. In the 2011-2012 season, the team earned a mere 7 wins alongside 59 losses — the worst record of any team ever in the history of the NBA.

In addition to — or maybe because of — their disastrous record, the Bobcats had poor community support. The Bobcats brand was synonymous¹⁶ with disappointment, **despite** having one of the best basketball brands of all time at the helm — Michael Jordan himself.

But after the 2012-2013 season came to a close, Jordan started to turn things around. First, he brought in former Lakers assistant coach Steve Clifford to replace Mike Dunlap. In a change every bit as important as the new coach, Jordan agreed to remove himself from the process of managing the team's operations.

[15] Instead, Jordan focused on what Jordan can do better than anyone else: revitalizing¹⁷ the brand. He **applied** for and received permission to change the team name to the Charlotte Hornets. Jordan himself became more involved in community events and forged a connection between the team and the city.

The changes paid off. The team finished the 2013-2014 season with a winning record of 43-39, the second best year in the history of the franchise. They even made it to the playoffs. At the same time, ticket and merchandise sales skyrocketed¹⁸ and public opinion improved dramatically. The team was well on its way to making both a comeback and a profit.

Most of us look to successful people and assume they can do anything because of their past successes. The old joke about asking your doctor for stock tips comes to mind, as if just because you can cure an illness, you have wisdom about everything. Doctors don't make great stockbrokers,¹⁹ brain surgeons are horrible rocket scientists, CEOs aren't usually exceptional cooks, and basketball stars are rarely great baseball players (you can ask Jordan about that last one as well).²⁰ Experience and knowledge are only valuable where **applicable**.

This mindset doesn't just fog our external lenses,²¹ it also blurs how we see ourselves. It is often hard for successful people to admit that they won't be good at something new. In Jordan's case, his basketball skills didn't translate into basketball management. It took some time, but Jordan certainly deserves credit for acknowledging²² what wasn't working and trying new things until he hit on a winning combination. He gave up managing and focused on marketing, a skill he was uniquely qualified for. For Jordan, that became the recipe for success:

-
12. **Formidable (adjective):** very powerful or intimidating
 13. losing a large amount of money
 14. when a company is spending more money than it earns
 15. **Lackluster (adjective):** lacking greatness; unimpressive
 16. **Synonymous (adjective):** having the same or nearly the same meaning as another word
 17. **Revitalize (verb):** to put new energy or strength into something
 18. **Skyrocket (verb):** to increase very quickly; to take off
 19. Stockbrokers advise other people on how to earn more money.
 20. In 1994, Jordan retired from the Chicago Bulls to play minor league baseball. He quit after only one year to return to basketball.

It's harder than most people think. Some people have been in this business a lot longer and still haven't put together a sustainable, successful scenario. When you make bad decisions, you learn from that and move forward. I think I'm better in that sense. I've experienced all of the different valleys and lows about ownership and the success of businesses. Does that constitute me being a better owner? Then I guess I am.

[20] Hard, yes, but flexing a new muscle²³ is also exhilarating,²⁴ especially when you eventually succeed. As Jordan puts it, "...it's been fun. It's been hard, but I've had fun doing it."

"Michael Jordan: A Profile in Failure" by Jeff Stibel. Copyright © 2017 by Jeff Stibel. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

-
21. make it difficult to see other people clearly
 22. **Acknowledge (verb):** to accept or admit something is true
 23. trying out a new skill
 24. **Exhilarating (adjective):** exciting and energizing

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What is the central idea of the article?
 - A. Michael Jordan inspired many through his skills and talents on the basketball court.
 - B. Michael Jordan inspired many through his message that failure is not necessary for success.
 - C. Michael Jordan succeeded through failure after adopting the attitude that failure can lead to success.
 - D. Michael Jordan succeeded through failure after adopting the attitude that avoiding risks can lead to success.

2. Which detail from the article best demonstrates the connection between success and failure?
 - A. "Twenty-six times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed." (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "The story of Michael Jordan not making his high school team has been told and retold, but continues to inspire with each retelling." (Paragraph 4)
 - C. "The pattern of defeat followed by success would follow Jordan to the University of North Carolina and later to the NBA." (Paragraph 10)
 - D. "It is often hard for people to admit that they won't be good at something new." (Paragraph 18)

3. Which detail would be most important to include in a summary of this text?
 - A. "The ball is in or it's out, the basket is made or missed, the game is won or lost." (Paragraph 3)
 - B. "The reasoning behind the choice wasn't that Jordan didn't have enough talent or hadn't already distinguished himself as an outstanding player." (Paragraph 5)
 - C. "After picking himself up off the floor, Jordan did what champions do. He let his failure and disappointment drive him to be better." (Paragraph 7)
 - D. "Fear of public speaking is a good example. Yet glossophobia, the technical term for speech anxiety, is consistently ranked among the most prevalent disorders." (Paragraph 9)

4. Which of the following best describes how the author develops the connection between success and failure in the article?
 - A. The author establishes Michael Jordan as a successful player due to long hours of practices and pure talent and skill.
 - B. The author reports statistics from Michael Jordan's basketball record to prove he was both a success and a failure at the sport.
 - C. The author highlights key events in Michael Jordan's basketball career to show how moments of failure or rejection pushed him harder.
 - D. The author describes what happened at Michael Jordan's junior varsity games to show how he used missed opportunities to push him harder.

5. Write a summary of the article in 4-5 sentences.

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. Michael Jordan is very open about his failures. Why do you think it is important for successful people to share their failures?
2. Describe a time when you failed at something, but later succeeded after trying again. What contributed to your later success?
3. Why is it not fair to assume that, just because a person is good at one thing, they are good at everything?
4. Would you rather be the best in one area of achievement or average in a few different areas?

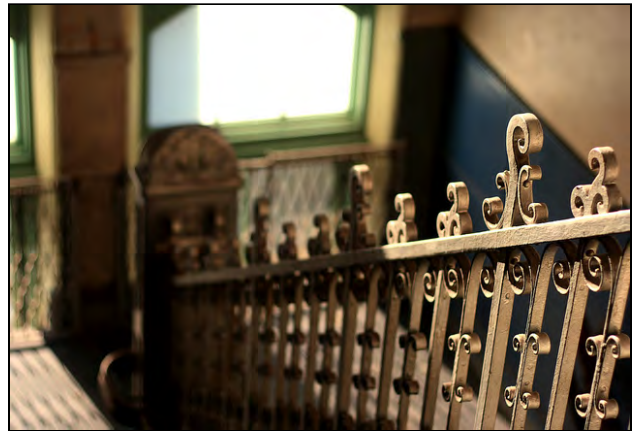
Name: _____ Class: _____

Mother to Son

By Langston Hughes
1922

Langston Hughes (1902-1967) was an American poet, activist, novelist, and playwright. He is also considered one of the leaders of the Harlem Renaissance, which was the cultural, social, and artistic movement of black artists that took place in Harlem between the end of World War I and the mid-1930s. As you read, take notes on the metaphor and larger message presented in the text.

- [1] Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
[5] And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor —
Bare.
But all the time
I've been a-climbin' on,
[10] And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So boy, don't you turn back.
[15] Don't you set down on the steps
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
Don't you fall now —
For I've still goin', honey,
I've still climbin',
[20] And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.



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"Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes (1922) is in the public domain.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. In the poem, whom is the speaker addressing and about what?
 - A. A mother is telling a story to her child about her own childhood.
 - B. A mother is describing for her son the climb up a crystal staircase.
 - C. A son is recounting a conversation with his mother about his struggle to earn a comfortable living.
 - D. A mother is warning her son about the difficulties of life and the struggle to persevere.

2. Which of the following best explains the significance of the staircase in the poem?
 - A. The narrator describes a tiring climb up a beat-up staircase, which represents her persistence through difficulties and challenges in life.
 - B. The narrator describes a crystal staircase, which symbolizes her goals and the hard work she has done to accomplish her dreams.
 - C. The narrator describes her climb up a dirty staircase that transforms into a crystal stair, which represents her ability to rise above difficulties.
 - D. The narrator describes herself going down a staircase that is falling apart, which represents her fleeing a difficult life.

3. PART A: Which of the following statements best describes a major theme of the poem?
 - A. Never forget your family.
 - B. Persevere when life isn't easy.
 - C. Hope is the answer to all challenges.
 - D. Respect your elders.

4. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "Well, son, I'll tell you: / Life for me ain't been no crystal stair." (Lines 1-2)
 - B. "It's had tacks in it, / And splinters, / And boards torn up, / And places with no carpet on the floor — / Bare." (Lines 3-7)
 - C. "I'se been a-climbin' on, / And reachin' landin's, / And turnin' corners" (Lines 9-11)
 - D. "So boy, don't you turn back. / Don't you set down on the steps / 'Cause you finds it's kinder hard. / Don't you fall now — / For I'se still goin', honey" (Lines 14-18)

5. How does the poem's use of language and free verse contribute to the author's purpose?

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. In your opinion, do all Americans have equal access to the American Dream? What are some of the factors that could make it easier or harder to achieve happiness in America? Why do you think Harlem Renaissance writers focused on the American Dream?
2. How do we achieve our goals or dreams? How does circumstance, status, and identity factor into this? In the context of this poem, how do people overcome adversity? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
3. In the context of this poem, what is the meaning of family? What do you think it means to be a parent, especially a mother? How do you relate to your parents or guardians when they are trying to give you advice? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

Grade 6: Failure and Success

Directions: You have read four texts this week: “Laura’s Key,” “Sweet, Difficult Sounds,” “Michael Jordan: A Profile in Failure,” and “Mother to Son.” Write a multi-paragraph response answering the essential question: **How can challenges and failures lead to success?** Be sure to include details from more than one text in your response.

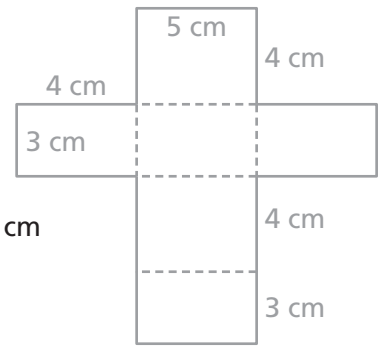
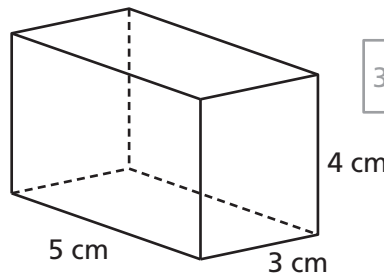
Explore Nets and Surface Area

You can find the **surface area** of a three-dimensional figure by finding the area of each of the figure's faces.

A **net** is a two-dimensional pattern of a three-dimensional figure. When finding the surface area of a three-dimensional figure, a net can help ensure you find the area of all of the faces of the figure.

Find the surface area of the rectangular prism.

- Sketch a net of the rectangular prism.
- Use the given measures of the rectangular prism to determine the measures of the net.
- Determine the area of each section of the net. For sections that are congruent, you can find the area of one section and multiply by the number of congruent sections.
- Sum the area of the sections to find the surface area of the rectangular prism.



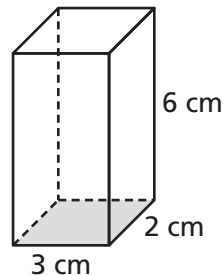
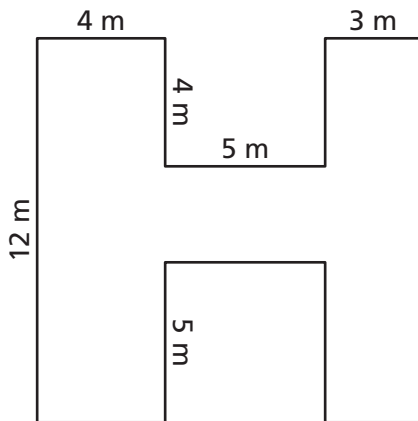
$$2 \text{ sections} \times 4 \text{ cm} \times 5 \text{ cm} = 40 \text{ cm}^2$$

$$2 \text{ sections} \times 3 \text{ cm} \times 4 \text{ cm} = 24 \text{ cm}^2$$

$$2 \text{ section} \times 3 \text{ cm} \times 5 \text{ cm} = 30 \text{ cm}^2$$

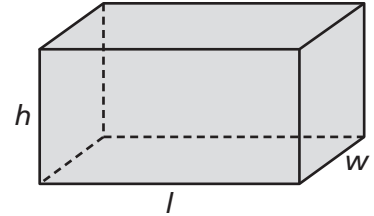
$$40 + 24 + 30 = 94 \text{ cm}^2$$

- What is the area of the figure?
- Sketch a net of the figure. Determine the surface area.



Find Volume of Rectangular Prisms

The **volume** of a solid is the amount of space it occupies. You can find the volume of a rectangular prism by multiplying its length by its width by its height.



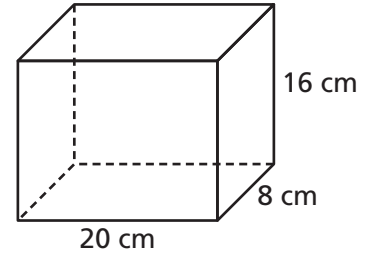
Volume of a rectangular prism
= lwh

Find the volume of the rectangular prism.

- A.** Use the given dimensions and the volume formula to calculate the volume of the rectangular prism.

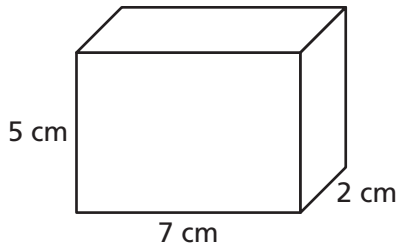
$$V = lwh = 20 \cdot 8 \cdot 16 = 2,560 \text{ cm}^3$$

The volume of the rectangular prism is $2,560 \text{ cm}^3$.

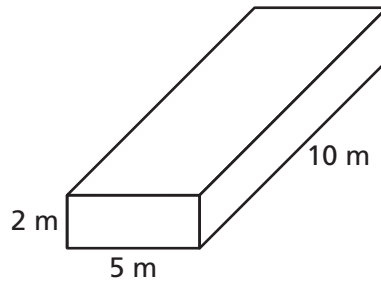


Find the volume of each figure.

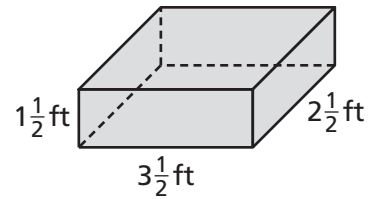
1.



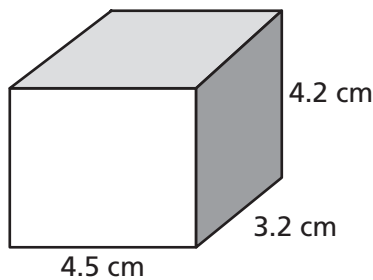
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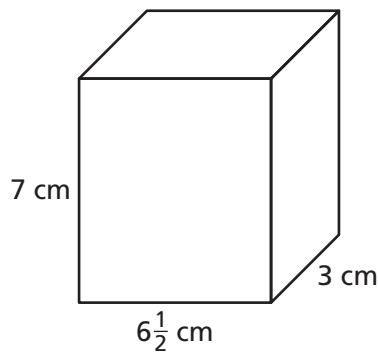
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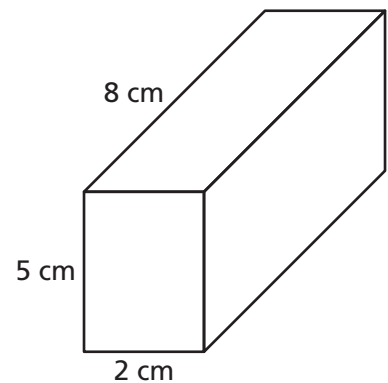
4.



5.



6.



Solve Volume Problems

You can use the volume of a rectangular prism to solve problems.

A manufacturing company ships small boxes of tools in large cases. How many boxes of tools will fit in each case?

- A.** Determine the volume of the large case.

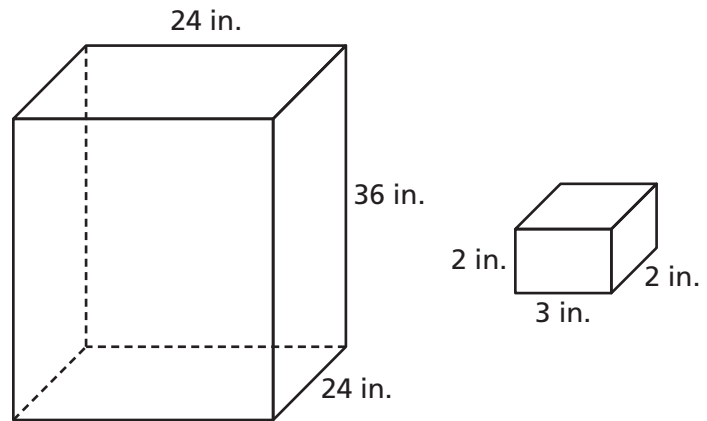
$$V = lwh = 24 \cdot 36 \cdot 24 = 20,736 \text{ in}^3$$

- B.** Determine the volume of the small box.

$$V = lwh = 2 \cdot 3 \cdot 2 = 12 \text{ in}^3$$

- C.** Divide the volume of the large case by the volume of the small box.

$$20,736 \div 12 = 1,728; 1,728 \text{ boxes of tools will fit in each case.}$$



- A cube-shaped box can be made from 486 square inches of cardboard. What is the volume of the box?

- Logan's cooler holds $7,200 \text{ in}^3$ of ice. If the cooler has a length of 32 inches and a height of $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches, what is the width of the cooler?

- An Olympic swimming pool measures 50 meters long, 25 meters wide, and 2 meters deep. If 1 m^3 holds 1,000 liters of water, how many liters of water are in an Olympic swimming pool? Explain.

- A dresser has a width of 6 feet, a height of 3 feet, and a depth of 2 feet. If the dresser has 6 drawers of the same size, what is the volume of the space for each drawer?

Solve Volume Problems

1. A fruit basket is shipped in a cube-shaped cooler that has a surface area of 1,176 square inches.

A. What is the area of each face of the cube?

B. What are the dimensions of the cube?

C. What is the volume of the cube?

2. A shoe box is $14\frac{3}{8}$ inches long, $7\frac{1}{2}$ wide, and 5 inches tall.

A. What is the volume of the shoe box?

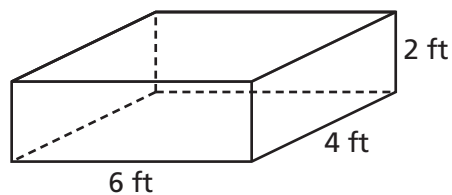
B. Explain how you found the answer.

3. A watch company ships watch boxes in large boxes. The watch box and the shipping box are shown.

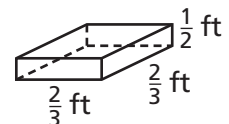
A. What is the volume of the shipping box?

B. What is the volume of the watch box?

C. How many watch boxes could fit in the shipping box?



Shipping box



Watch box

Reviewing: Introduction to Plants

Climb the Ladder: *Plants, Plants, and More Plants!*

Complete the following to show what you have learned about plants.

1. This week (Monday-Wednesday) you will choose one item from each rung of the ladder. Use Thursday as a day to either finish any uncompleted work, or practice sharing one of your choices with your class when you return to school.

2. Have a great summer vacation!

<p>Monday (Choose only one)</p>	<p>___ Make a Field Guide Make a field guide that identifies the major groups of plants. Draw a picture of each type of plant, and explain how you would identify this type of plant in the field.</p>	<p>___ Plant Reproduction Write and put on a play or skit that explains how seed plants and seedless plants reproduce. Assign roles to your family members, such as seedless plant, gymnosperm, and angiosperm. Perform your skit for your family group.</p>	
<p>Tuesday (Choose only one)</p>	<p>___ Singing About Plants Write a song or poem that compares the features of vascular and nonvascular plants.</p>	<p>___ Making Models Make models of a vascular and a nonvascular plant. Label the features that make the plants vascular or nonvascular.</p>	
<p>Wednesday (Choose only one)</p>	<p>___ Characteristics of Plants Make a poster or multimedia display that describes the characteristics of plants.</p>	<p>___ Plants Made Simple Write a science chapter for a third grader about the characteristics of plants. Make the chapter fun to read!</p>	

The Electoral Process

Name: _____



Barack Obama speaks at the Democratic National Convention in 2012.

It's Election Time!

Every four years, our country holds a presidential election. The candidates debate, hit the road talking to voters, and put advertisements on television, radio, and the internet. All this hard work actually starts months or even years before Election Day in November. So what does it take to go from a hopeful candidate to a victorious president?

The first public step a candidate has to take is to **declare** to the nation that he or she wants to be the president. Then candidates must get support for their campaign, raise money, and get the attention of the leaders of his or her political party.

Narrowing the Field

Candidates for the larger political parties are chosen at party meetings called **conventions**. The parties hold conventions at the local, state and national levels. There are two main ways the states send people to the national convention: the caucus and the primary. Both methods result in a set of **delegates** who will attend the national conventions. The delegates pledge that when they attend the convention, they will vote for the candidate the state political party supports.

Q: What if the president runs for re-election?

A: The nomination process still happens, but it is shorter because the incumbent rarely has anyone to run against!

Iowa hosts the first caucus

of the season

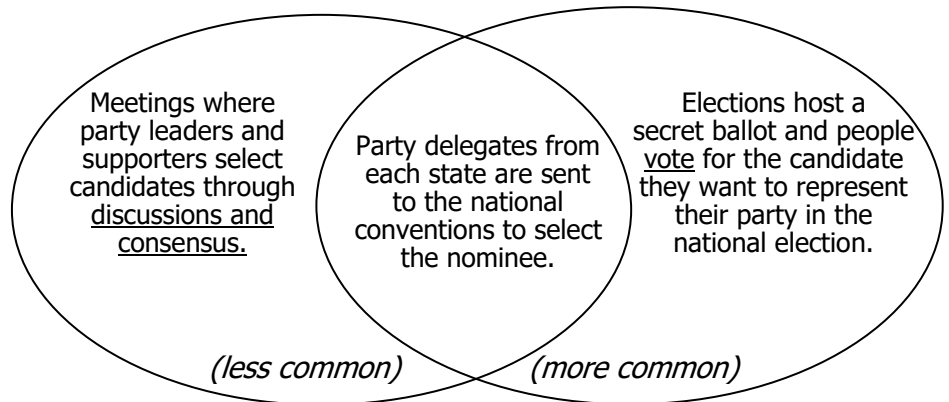
and

New Hampshire holds the

first primary election,

both in early February!

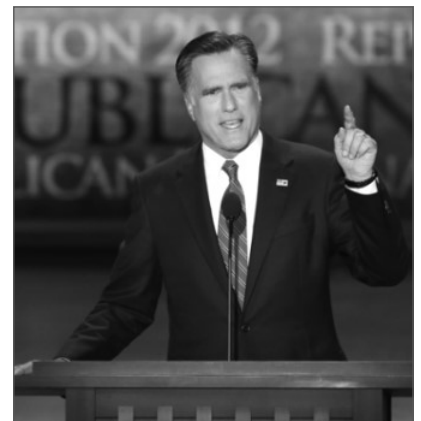
Caucus System



And the Nominee is...

Each party holds its national conventions in huge arenas with balloons, confetti, funny looking hats, and lots of media coverage. Delegates chosen from each state discuss and debate the candidates, listen to speeches, and help create the party platform. Near the end of the multi-day convention, the delegates cast their votes for the party's **nominee** who will run in the national election.

The presidential and vice presidential nominees each make an **acceptance speech** that is meant to bring the party together to support the nominees and forget about the months of debate and arguments that led up to their nomination. This is the first major step in getting the national campaign for president up and running.

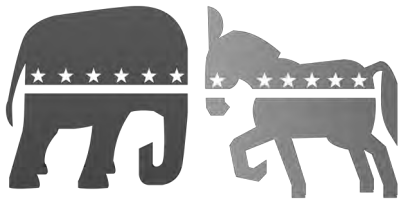


Mitt Romney at the 2012 Republican National Convention

The Electoral Process

Name: _____

On the Campaign Trail



Millions of dollars are spent in the months leading up to the national conventions, but that is just the beginning! Once the field is narrowed to the two main party candidates, fundraising becomes even more important. There are only a few months before the general election, and each candidate needs to get his or her message out to the American public. The parties in each state help the candidates with paying the bills and organizing support.

Get the Word Out!

A political **campaign** is the process of gathering public support for a candidate. The goal of a campaign is to deliver as much information about the candidate and the party's platform to as many people as possible. Candidates campaign in a variety of ways.

Direct Mail : Send information packets directly to voters	Personal Appearances: Radio & TV interviews, debates and speeches
Printed Material: Posters, bumper stickers, leaflets, buttons, t-shirts	The Internet: Emails, websites, videos, blogs, social networking

Election Day!



All of these efforts lead up to Election Day in November. People across the nation go to the polls and select which candidate they want for the next president. As polls close from state to state, the news media reports who is getting the most votes. The next morning, the media announces a winner of the **popular vote**, which is a tally of all the votes cast. But that is just one step in the process of electing the president...

The Electoral College

The U.S. Constitution requires an extra step in the process of electing the president. This step is called the **Electoral College**. Each state has a group of people called **electors** who cast the actual votes for president. When

you vote for a presidential candidate, you're really voting to decide which candidate the electors in your state will vote for.

In December after the election, the electors meet in their state capitols and cast their ballots. Even though you cast one vote for a president/vice-president team, electors cast two votes—one for each office. After the electors vote, president of the Senate collects the votes and counts them. There are 538 electors, and in order to win, the presidential and vice-presidential candidates must have an **absolute majority** of votes. That means more than half the votes—at least 270. Then, on January 20, the President-elect and Vice President-elect take the oath of office and are inaugurated.

But what if there's a tie? Or what if no candidate gets 270 votes? In that case, the House of Representatives votes to decide which candidate will become president. If they haven't done that by the time Inauguration Day rolls around, then the vice president-elect acts as president. The Senate decides who that will be by voting to choose one of the vice-presidential candidates. And if that's a tie, too? Then the current Speaker of the House becomes president. That's never happened, but the elections of 1800 and 1824 both had to be resolved by Congress.

You can find out how many electors your state has if you know how many representatives you have in Congress.

EXAMPLE: Illinois has two senators (like all states) and 18 members of the House of Representatives.

2 Senators
+ 18 Representatives
20 Electors

The Electoral Process

When is Election Day?

November 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

An act of Congress sets the day for presidential and congressional elections as the Tuesday after the first Monday in November.



When is Election Day, 2020?

Electors meet at their state capitols to cast their ballots on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December.

Circle the date!

When do the electors meet in 2020?

December 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2021						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	23	24	15	16
17	18	19	20	21		
24/31	25	26	27	28		

The new president and vice president are sworn into office on January 20th.

The President of the Senate (current Vice President) counts the electoral votes on January 6, unless it falls on a Sunday.

Circle the date!

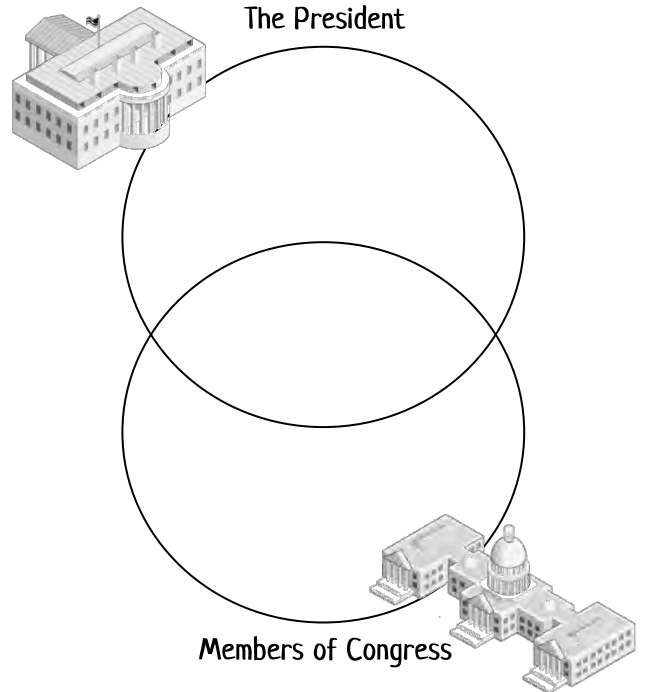
When are the electoral votes counted in 2021?

The Electoral Process

Name: _____

A. What's different when there are elections for U.S. Congress? Candidates for the Senate and House of Representatives have a smaller audience for the campaigns, since they are elected by districts within a specific state. Congress also goes back to work earlier than the President. How do the processes compare? Using this information and what you learned in the lesson, complete the Venn diagram with the letters from the list.

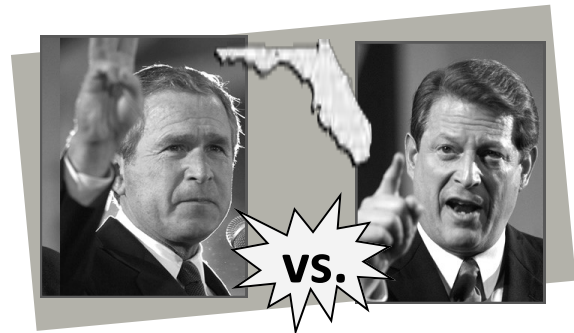
- A. Candidates declare that they want to run for office
- B. Political parties select their nominee for the national election in primaries and caucuses
- C. Candidates run campaigns to inform the public about their agendas and positions on the issues
- D. The winner is directly elected through popular vote.
- E. Officially selected through the Electoral College
- F. Takes office on January 3.



B. Recount! Occasionally, election results end up very close and a candidate may call for a recount of all the votes to make sure the winner is the winner. This happened in 2000 when Al Gore and George W. Bush ran for the presidency. The election came down to one state — Florida — where the votes were too close to call.

Bush was declared the winner in Florida, but there were lots of problems with the ballots. Gore pushed the courts to allow a recount in Florida. Bush tried to prevent it. The Florida Supreme Court ruled there should be a recount in the districts where the ballots were in question. Bush appealed that ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Which controversial 5 - 4 decision did the U.S. Supreme Court make?



- Decision A:** Get those ballots out and count again! Bush ends up behind in the recount of ballots. Gore wins!
- Decision B:** No recounts! The Florida Supreme Court can't order a recount in some districts of the state but not others. There isn't enough time anyway! Bush wins!
- Decision C:** Recount ALL the votes in Florida, not just in the messed up districts, fast! Bush takes more of a lead in the recount and Gore concedes (gives up). Bush wins!

The Electoral Process

Name: _____

C. In the Funny Pages The battle over the results of the 2000 Presidential election between Al Gore (D) and George W. Bush (R) lasted well over a month after Election Day. The confusion over the ballots, recounts, and election rules gave cartoonists a lot of material! Look closely at the cartoon below and answer the questions that follow.



(Remember, the donkey is the symbol for the Democratic Party and the elephant represents the Republican Party.)

1. What is the Democratic message?
(Look at the sign and t-shirt.)

2. What is the Republican message?
(Look at the sign and t-shirt.)



Cartoon by Steve Sack, The Minneapolis Star-Tribune

3. What is the purpose of this cartoon?

- Support the Republican Party's call to end the recount.
- Support the Democratic Party's call for a recount.
- Point out that there is a problem with how both parties are dealing with the election.

4. What makes you think that's the purpose?

5. Political cartoons often have captions at the bottom that title, summarize, or explain the cartoon. Create *two* different captions for this cartoon, using what you know about the 2000 election.

Caption 1

Caption 2

The Electoral Process

Name: _____

D. Vocabulary.

Match the definitions to the words they describe.

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| __1. When a candidate states that he or she is planning to run for office | A) delegate |
| __2. Party meetings where candidates are selected and the platform is created | B) nominee |
| __3. Someone who represents the party views of a state at a national convention | C) campaign |
| __4. The person who is chosen to run as a party's candidate in the national election | D) declare |
| __5. Given by the people selected to run for President and Vice President at the end of a national convention | E) convention |
| __6. A collection of all the efforts a candidate makes to win an election | F) acceptance speech |

E. Something's Missing!

Fill in the paragraph with the correct terms in the

Electoral College popular vote absolute majority electors



Every four years on Election Day, the American public elects the president of the United States. The first set of election results tallies the _____, a count of every vote cast. These results determine whom each state's _____ will support when they meet and participate in the _____. In order to win, a candidate must have 270 out of a total of 538 electoral votes. This number is half of 538 (269) plus one, which is considered a(n) _____.

F. Oops!

A candidate made a to-do list for his run for the presidency, but he dropped it and everything got mixed up. Help him out by numbering the items so the list can be put in the right order.

- ___ Attend the national convention for my party! Hopefully, I will be nominated.
- ___ Yay! I'm the nominee! As part of my national campaign, I'll make speeches, show up on tv, send out mailings, and attend rallies.
- ___ Wait for the results of the Electoral College and prepare my acceptance speech for inauguration!
- ___ Declare my candidacy! I want to be the President, and I hope my party will support me!
- ___ Hang out with family and friends to await the results of the popular vote on Election Day.
- ___ Campaign for the primary and caucus season by making speeches and talking to voters.

The Electoral Process

Day 1—Reading—pages 1 & 2

Predict: Look at the text features on pages 1 and 2. What five questions will the text answer? **(Do not read the text. Use the text features to predict the questions that will be answered and write them below.)**

Your questions

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----
5. -----

The Electoral Process

Day 2—Reread, **Reading pages 1 & 2**

1. List six steps in the process to elect the president.
2. Is the caucus or the primary election the better way to select a candidate?
Explain your answer.
3. What is the most effective way to inform voters about a candidate?
4. Would you change any part of the election process? If yes, which part?
5. How many electors does Ohio have?

The Electoral Process

Day 3—Calendar Activity Project Master

1. Complete Calendar Project Activity
2. Review—Write five facts about elections.

The Electoral Process

Day 4—Complete **Activity Pages 1 & 2**

The Electoral Process

Day 5—Complete **Activity Page 3**

Grade 6-8 Art & Music Week 7 D 1-4

Art M-W

Artist of the week: Graffiti artists

Mon: Read about the history of Graffiti from Ancient times to today.

<http://www.graffitiheart.org/walls/> to learn about local graffiti artists working in Cleveland

Write a reflection on Graffiti art. How does her work make you feel? What did you notice about it?

Wed: Using materials available to you, design a mural, tag, or other graffiti art on paper. If you could, where would you want this graffiti to appear and who do you want to see it? Why? What inspired your work? Why did you select the colors you used? What do you hope people will feel when they look at your work?

Music T-Th

Listen suggested music style for week 7: Hip Hop--and take time to reflect on how this music makes you feel. Do you like it? Why or why not? Do you hear a connection in Jazz, Blues, Ragtime, Soul, and Funk?

Tue: Read about the Five Elements of Hip Hop, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious 5

Thu: Listen to one or more Hip Hop greats and research the artists. **MAY CONTAIN EXPLICIT LYRICS**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PobrSpMwKk4> *The Message* Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UAnW-c57gM> *Fight the Power* Public Enemy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OGMXKhJrPo> *Fly Girl* Queen Latifah

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBiA_po8TYM *It's Tricky* Run DMC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCou76T5Y9Q> *Old Town Road* Lil Nas (w/Billy Ray Cyrus)

Practice good audience behavior. Make a written reflection on your experience and the music. Critique the form using music language. Include in your reflection where you hear connections to other music genres.

Art: Photo Journal

Materials: any camera (phone, tablet, regular camera, etc.)

Using a camera that you already have, take a daily image or set of images based on a theme, and use words to reflect on what the image means to you. Save all images and thoughts for a future share/presentation of your reflections of this time.

Week 7 theme: The Future

Certainly no one knows what the future holds. Student scholars everywhere prepare for their futures, by working hard, staying true to their dreams, and above all, being open to change and new circumstances. What does the future mean to you? What do you see as the best case and worst case for the future? What steps are you taking to make your future a reality? Use images and words to express your vision and thoughts. Be sure to save all your work—hopefully we can collect it and share!

History of Graffiti—Ancient Times to Today

The word graffiti comes from the Italian language and it is the plural of the word “graffito.” They are both derived from the word *graffio*, which means “a scratch.” The earliest graffiti was created prior to written language and the first drawings on walls appeared in caves thousands of years ago. “*Cueva de las Manos*” (The Cave of Hands), located in Santa Cruz, Argentina, offers one of the first fascinating ancient graffiti. The painting dates from 13,000 to 9,000 BCE.

In the ancient Greek city of Ephesus (located in modern day Turkey) the first known example of “modern style” graffiti can be found. It includes the drawing of a foot, a hand, a heart, and a number and local guides say it is an advertisement for prostitution.

The ancient Romans also carved graffiti on walls and monuments. The Alexamenos graffito on the wall of a room located near Rome, Italy, was created around 200 AD and is the earliest known image of Jesus Christ. Another early form of graffiti was found in the Hagia Sophia. A Viking mercenary is the author of the graffiti and it contains a sentence meaning “Halvdan was here”.

However, the style of urban graffiti that most people have seen and know about, the kind that uses spray cans it seems to have appeared in Philadelphia in the early 1960s, and by the late 1960s it had reached New York and was born on the subway trains. During the early 70s the writer TAKI 183 (“Taki” was short for his Greek name, Demetraki, and 183 was the street he lived on) took it to another level by covering much of New York City with his tag. He lived on the 183rd street in Washington Heights and he worked as a messenger who traveled all throughout the city. Wherever he went he would write his name at subway stations using a marker and eventually he became known all throughout the city. *The New York Times* even published an article in 1971 about TAKI 183. Soon after this the amount of graffiti on trains exploded.

Later, using spray cans of paint quickly became popular mostly used for tagging on the outside of trains. But it wasn’t just tagging and writers would try to make their tags more stylish than anyone else’s by adding more colors and creating unique tags. This is how the art and science of graffiti began. In the mid-1970s, the trains were completely covered in spray paintings known as “masterpieces.” Soon art galleries in New York began buying graffiti but it was around that time when John Lindsey, the mayor of New York at that time, declared the first war on graffiti in 1972. A few die-hard artists refused to be beaten and kept the art form alive during this period. By the 1980s it became much harder to write on subway trains without being caught and more graffiti artists went into the streets and used roofs of buildings or canvases.

Graffiti style is constantly evolving and street artists like Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring transformed their work into mainstream art gallery fare. Basquiat began spraying on the street in the 1970s and he became a respected artist in the 1980’s. In the early 1980s, a new stencil graffiti genre emerged. Blek le Rat created some of the first examples in 1981 in Paris. A few years later stencils had appeared in other cities including New York City, Sydney, and Melbourne.

Graffiti is considered one of the four elements of hip-hop (along with emceeing, DJing, and B-Boying). Graffiti is a central part of this subculture. The origins of all of these can be traced to the Bronx, in New York City. The emergence of hip-hop in mainstream culture during the 80s exposed graffiti to the world and it began showing up everywhere.

The 5 Elements of Hip Hop & Background of Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five

Hip hop is a type of culture/art style that started in the 1970s. It began in Jamaican-American, African-American, and Latino-American urban areas in some of the larger cities of the United States. Hip hop uses a style of singing called rapping. The singer or group chants or says words with a rhythm that rhymes. The lyrics of hip hop songs are often about the life of urban people in the big cities. Hip hop music also uses musical styles from pop music such as disco and reggae. Rap and hip hop music have become successful music genres.

Hip hop as a culture involves the music as well as a style of dressing called "urban" clothes (baggy pants, Timberland leather work boots, and oversize shirts); a dancing style called breakdancing or "B-Boying"; and graffiti, a street art in which people paint pictures or words on walls. In the 2000s, hip hop music and hip hop culture are very popular in the United States and Canada. Hip hop musicians usually use nicknames. Many of the popular hip hop musicians from the 2000s use nicknames, such as Snoop Dogg, Jay-Z, Eminem, Lil' Wayne, and 50-Cent.

The Five Elements of Hip-Hop:

Emcee: an acronym for the Master of Ceremonies. Emcees began as hosts at hip-hop parties who would prompt the breakers to dance. Influenced by original spoken-word artists, emcees began to do rhythmic call-and-response with the audience, a technique that eventually morphed into the poetic form of rapping that we know now. .

DJ: The DJ existed before hip-hop. It's an acronym for the word disc jockey. Originally, the DJ's job was to play recorded music for an audience either on radio or live for an audience. But the hip-hop DJ took it to the next level by making record spinning into an art form called turntablism.

Breaking: The dance element of hip-hop, performed by dancers called B-Girls or B-Boys. Birthed in the late 1970s in New York, breaking blended movement styles such as jazz and martial arts with dance styles from the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa. B-Girls and BBoys got their name because they danced over the DJ's "breaks" at hip-hop parties in the Bronx.

Graffiti: hip-hop's visual element. The modern form of graffiti or "graff" actually began before hip-hop music and dance, but it quickly became a part of the culture as many graffiti artists grew up in the same area as other hip-hop artists. Many graffiti artists are emcees, deejays, and/or breakers.

Beatboxing: also known as the "Fifth Element,;" the ability to make a beat with one's mouth instead of drums or drum machines. Beatboxing became a staple sound of hip-hop and modern dance music.

Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, American group that was instrumental in the development of [hip-hop music](#). The members were [Grandmaster Flash](#) (original name Joseph Saddler; b. January 1, 1958), Cowboy (original name Keith Wiggins; b. September 20, 1960—d. September 8, 1989), Melle Mel (original name Melvin Glover), Kid Creole (original name Nathaniel Glover), Mr. Ness (also called Scorpio; original name Eddie Morris), and Raheim (original name Guy Williams).

Formed in the Bronx, [New York City](#), in 1976, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five were one of the first multimember rapping crews. They were a staple of the earliest hip-hop shows in the Bronx and Harlem, and nonrapping member Grandmaster Flash was credited with being an inventor and innovator of many of the techniques and performing gimmicks associated with hip-hop deejaying. He also jury-

The 5 Elements of Hip Hop & Background of Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five

rigged a drum machine into his turntable and created miniature audio dramas on his legendary 12-inch single "The Adventures of Grandmaster Flash on the Wheels of Steel" (1981) that presaged digital sampling. As recording artists on hip-hop's flagship label, [Sugar Hill](#), the group was originally known for high-energy singles such as "Freedom" (1980) and "Birthday Party" (1981), which combined their rhyme skills with slick production. With their depiction of the harsh realities of ghetto life in "The Message" (1982), they became the pioneers of socially conscious protest [rap](#), inspiring the likes of [Public Enemy](#)'s Chuck D and Boogie Down Production's KRS-One to create provocative social commentary in the manner of [Bob Dylan](#) and [Bob Marley](#). The group also tackled [drug abuse](#) in "White Lines" (1983). By the mid-1980s the group had disbanded, and later reunions were short-lived. In 2007 Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five became the first hip-hop act inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

[Greg Tate](#)

My Village:

Students can choose up to five people they can go to for positive advice and support to help reach their goals.

Name	Role in your life
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____

How does your village help you to attain your goals?

Who do you support and give advice to? How do you help others attain their goals?