

NJSLA Literary Analysis Task Grade 3 Writing

Lesson 2: Modeling the Prose Constructed Response

Rationale

- Given the extreme difference in the testing layout and interface between NJ ASK and NJSLA, students should be guided through NJSLA's sample items on their website. This will also give the teacher an opportunity to model the approach and thought processes students should replicate to complete the Literary Analysis Task.

Goal

- In modeling the process for completing the NJSLA Literary Analysis Task prose constructed response, students will have a clear picture of what to expect on the assessment.

Task Foci

- CCSS RL.3.1:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

Objectives

- Students will be familiar with the format of the NJSLA Literary Analysis Task prose constructed response.
- Students will observe the process for completing the prompt through teacher modeling.

Materials

- Computer and Projector (for instructor to model activities)
- NJSLA's online test environment: <https://nj.mypearsonsupport.com/practice-tests/>
 - Note: NJSLA updates their sample item sets occasionally. References to the site in this lesson are based upon the March 2014 version.
- Computers (optional) (one per student or student pairs)
- Sample Markup (for instructor)
- Note-Taking Chart handout (per student)

Preparation

- ✚ Take some time to navigate through NJSLA's test environment on your own to get comfortable with it before you show your students.
- ✚ Before class begins, navigate to the LAT PCR prompt in NJSLA's online test environment.

Procedures

- ✚ To begin the lesson, explain to students that today they will view the PCR prompt in its intended environment. If students have access to computers, guide them to the prompt on NJSLA's website.
- ✚ Show students the features of the test interface.
 - A purpose-setting statement and the texts are on the left side of the page.
 - You can flip through the three texts. Tabs near the top of the left side of the page are used to select which text to view.
 - The prompt and writing space are on the right.
 - There is a tool bar at the top of the writing space with basic word processing functions (bold, underline, copy, paste, undo, etc.)
- ✚ Ask students for their opinions, observations, and questions about the interface.
- ✚ Read the prompt to the class.
- ✚ Ask students: **"How do we begin answering this prompt?"**
- ✚ Hand out the Note-Taking Chart to each student. The handout highlights relevant details and gives explanations. This is just a sample. Feel free to address any other details that stick out to you.
- ✚ Guide students through the markup.
- ✚ Address any questions students have.
- ✚ In closing, tell students that we will cover writing for a NJSLA prompt in thorough detail in upcoming lessons.

My Notes

You have read two stories where one family member saves another. Write an essay describing the mosquito from “Cricket and Cougar” and one of the main characters from “Kira-Kira.” For each character described,

- Explain how the thoughts, words, and/or actions of the character help you understand what the character is like.
- Explain why the character chooses to save his or her family member.
- Be sure to include specific details from each story to support your ideas.

| | Text 1 | Text 2 |
|--|--------|--------|
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My Notes (Sample Mark-up)

You have read two stories where one family member saves another. Write an essay describing the mosquito from “Cricket and Cougar” and one of the main characters from “Kira-Kira.” For each character described:

- Explain how the thoughts, words, and/or actions of the character help you understand what the character is like.
- Explain why the character chooses to save his or her family member.
- Be sure to include specific details from each story to support your ideas.

| | Kira-Kira (Katie) | Cricket and Cougar (Mosquito) |
|---|--|---|
| Words and thoughts that help me understand what the character is like BLUE | She loves her sister: “I didn’t care where she sent me, so long as Lynn came along.”; “I liked it when she said that, so I stopped crying.” She didn’t care as much about the dog as Lynn did, but was glad her sister was safe: “Who cares?” | Mosquito doesn’t say anything. |
| Actions that help me understand what the character is like PURPLE | She was only thinking of saving her sister. She was planning to hit the dog. “I ran inside and looked for a weapon.” I got a milk bottle out of the fridge and ran toward Lynn and threw the bottle at the dog.” | The mosquito is vicious. The mosquito began to bite the soft inner ear of the cougar, and drank from his blood. ; The mosquito bit him again and again. |
| Why the character chooses to save the family member GRAY | She was scared her sister would be hurt. “...saw the dog tearing at Lynn’s pants as she huddled over into a ball.” | The cougar threatens the cricket. “If your cousin does not prove himself to me, I will crush you and your entire lodge with my paw!” |

- Point out that some information must be inferred from what is in the story (it never explicitly says why Katie saves Lynn, but you can infer that from the way Katie describes Lynn and her panicked statement “I couldn’t think straight.”)
- Also point out that some information is not there (Mosquito never says anything), but you can get the rest of the answer from other parts of the text. Sometimes what is not said is as important as what is said.
- Have students highlight the passage to find information to place in the chart. Note that they should only transfer the **MOST RELEVANT** highlighted info to the chart.

Passage #1 Read the stories “Kira-Kira” and “Cougar and Cricket” and answer the question that follows.

Kira-Kira
by Cynthia Kadohata

1. My sister, Lynn, taught me my first word: *kira-kira*. I pronounced it *ka-a-ahhh*, but she knew what I meant. *Kira-Kira* means “glittering” in Japanese. Lynn told me that when I was a baby, she used to take me onto our empty road at night, where we would lie on our backs and look at the stars while she said over and over, “Katie, say, ‘*kira-kira, kira-kira*.’” I loved that word! When I grew older, I used *kira-kira* to describe everything I liked: the beautiful blue sky, puppies, kittens, butterflies, colored Kleenex.
2. My mother said we were misusing the word; you could not call a Kleenex *kira-kira*. She was dismayed over how un-Japanese we were and vowed to send us to Japan one day. I didn’t care where she sent me, so long as Lynn came along.
3. I was born in Iowa in 1951. I know a lot about when I was a little girl, because my sister used to keep a diary. Today I keep her diary in a drawer next to my bed.
4. I like to see how her memories were the same as mine, but also different. For instance, one of my earliest memories is of the day Lynn saved my life. I was almost five, and she was almost nine. We were playing on the empty road near our house. Fields of tall corn stretched into the distance wherever you looked. A dirty gray dog ran out of the field near us, and then he ran back in. Lynn loved animals. Her long black hair disappeared into the corn as she chased the dog. The summer sky was clear and blue. I felt a brief fear as Lynn disappeared into the cornstalks. When she wasn’t in school, she stayed with me constantly. Both our parents worked. Officially, I stayed all day with a lady from down the road, but unofficially, Lynn was the one who took care of me.
5. After Lynn ran into the field, I couldn’t see anything but corn.
6. “Lynnie!” I shouted. We weren’t that far from our house, but I felt scared. I burst into tears.
7. Somehow or other, Lynn got behind me and said, “Boo!” and I cried some more. She just laughed and hugged me and said, “You’re the best little sister in the world!” I liked it when she said that, so I stopped crying.
8. The dog ran off. We lay on our backs in the middle of the road and stared at the blue sky. Some days nobody at all drove down our little road. We could have lain on our backs all day and never got hit.
9. Lynn said, “The blue of the sky is one of the most special colors in the world, because the color is deep but see-through both at the same time. What did I just say?”
10. “The sky is special.”
11. “The ocean is like that too, and people’s eyes.”
12. She turned her head toward me and waited. I said, “The ocean and people’s eyes are special too.”
13. That’s how I learned about eyes, sky, and ocean: the three special, deep, colored, see-through things. I turned to Lynnie. Her eyes were deep and black, like mine.
14. The dog burst from the field suddenly, growling and snarling. Its teeth were long and yellow. We screamed and jumped up. The dog grabbed at my pants. As I pulled away, the dog ripped my pants and his cold teeth touched my skin. “Aaahhhhh!” I screamed.
15. Lynn pulled at the dog’s tail and shouted at me, “Run, Katie, run!” I ran, hearing the dog growling and Lynnie grunting. When I got to the house, I turned around and saw the dog tearing at Lynn’s pants as she huddled over into a ball. I ran inside and looked for a weapon. I couldn’t think straight. I got a milk bottle out of the fridge and ran toward Lynn and threw the bottle at the dog. The bottle missed the dog and broke on the street. The dog rushed to lap up the milk.
16. Lynn and I ran toward the house, but she stopped on the porch. I pulled at her. “Come on!”

17. She looked worried. "He's going to cut his tongue on the glass."
18. "Who cares?"
19. But she got the water hose and chased the dog away with the water, so it wouldn't hurt its tongue. That's the way Lynn was. Even if you tried to kill her and bite off her leg, she still forgave you.
20. This is what Lynn said in her diary from that day:
21. *The corn was so pretty. When it was all around me, I felt like I wanted to stay there forever. Then I heard Katie crying, and I ran out as fast as I could. I was so scared. I thought something had happened to her!*
22. *Later, when the dog attacked me, Katie saved my life.*
23. I didn't really see things that way. If she hadn't saved my life first, I wouldn't have been able to save her life. So, really, she's the one who saved a life.

Passage #2 Cougar and Cricket

From www.boyscouttrail.com/content/story/cricket_and_cougar-881.asp

- 1 Cougar is the mightiest of the animals in the forest.
- 2 Cougar was walking in the forest, and he jumped onto a fallen log to look around. From inside the log came a tiny voice.
- 3 "Get off the roof of my lodge!" Out from the rotten end of the log came a tiny Cricket. "You are standing on the roof of my lodge, Cougar," said the little insect. "You must step off now, or the roof-pole will break and my lodge will fall in."
- 4 "Who are you to tell me what to do?" asked Cougar sternly, although he did step off the log. He lowered his head until his nose was very close to Cricket. "In this forest, I am the chief of the animals!"
- 5 "Chief or no Chief," said Cricket bravely, "I have a cousin who is mightier than you, and he would avenge me."
- 6 "I don't believe you, little insect," snarled Cougar.
- 7 "Believe me or believe me not," said Cricket. "It is so."
- 8 "Let your cousin come to this place tomorrow, when the sun is high, and we will see who is the mightier," said Cougar. "If your cousin does not prove himself to me, I will crush you and your entire lodge with my paw!" Cougar turned and bounded off through the forest.
- 9 The next day, when the sun was high, Cougar came back along the same trail. He stopped over the log and called to cricket. "Cricket, come out! Let me meet your mighty cousin!"
- 10 Just then, a tiny mosquito flew up from the log and buzzed into the big cat's ear.
- 11 "What is this?" cried the cougar, who had never seen or heard a mosquito before. The mosquito began to bite the soft inner ear of the cougar, and drank from his blood. "Ahrr! Ahrr!" cried the cougar in pain. "Get out of my ear!" The cougar pawed at his ear, and ran around in a circle shaking his head. The mosquito bit him again and again.
- 12 Cricket came out of the log and called up to the cougar. "Are you ready to leave my lodge alone?"
- 13 Cougar said that he would so Mosquito came out of Cougar's ear and went into the log lodge with Cricket. Cougar ran off down the trail, and never went that way again.