

K–8 Literature Reading Continuum

| | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 |
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| <p>A Progression to Support CCL2-3</p> | | | | |
| <p>Talking/ Inferring About Characters</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked to talk about the characters, the reader can generate single-word adjectives as an idea about the character’s dominant trait or feeling, which are <i>not</i> directly named in the text. A reader may continue to confuse a trait for an emotion and vice versa. The reader may now talk about how a character’s feelings or circumstances change across the text, perhaps noting degree of feeling (very happy, not so happy, etc.). • The reader can identify the main character’s problem or trouble, and will tend to focus on concrete, external factors (“Andrew is upset because he doesn’t have freckles”). • The reader may compare characters, especially the same character in different books in a series. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked to talk about the characters, the reader will tend to talk about ideas about the character’s feelings. With prompting, the reader may provide a descriptor or two of the character’s personality (traits). These descriptors may not be distinct from each other, but instead synonyms or shades of a feeling or trait (mean/nasty). If asked, the reader can trace a character’s feelings or traits in more than one place in the story. • The reader can readily identify concrete, external factors when talking about the main character’s problems and troubles. • The reader often compares characters, especially ones who face clearly similar troubles or display similar traits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked to discuss the characters, the reader is apt to generate ideas mostly about the main character’s traits, in some depth, using more than a single word to do this. The reader may acknowledge that the character is „more than one way“ by pointing out different traits that make the character complex. The reader may struggle to get the precise, literary language to describe nuances. The reader often speaks about characters by comparing them to other characters. • The reader may discuss secondary characters’ traits. In doing this, the reader seems to be trying to sum up each characters’ personality. • When considering a character’s problems and troubles, the reader may reflect on <i>why</i> a character acts/feels as he or she does, thus reaching to understand the relationship between the character’s motivations and his or her actions and feelings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked to talk about the characters, the reader is apt to generate ideas about multiple characters’ traits and/or motivations. The reader will address many sides of a character, perhaps seeing how these sides create tensions or contradictions within the character. Through this work, the reader is apt to address the reasons for characters’ traits and motivations. • The reader describes characters in terms of both their internal and external motivations, especially when nudged, noticing the ways in which outside influences change and affect a character. Often, the reader notices similarities between character’s troubles across stories. • The reader often analyzes what changes for the character, and attempts to describe what creates that change. |

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| A Progression to Support CCL2-3 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 |
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| <p>Developing Interpretations: Morals, Lessons and Themes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When reading a text that explicitly shows the character learning a lesson and when asked to discuss this, the reader can talk about the central lesson the character learned and, with nudging, may name an explicit, obvious change the character experiences. • If asked what the book is <i>really</i> about, the reader is apt to retell the whole story. Alternatively, the reader may name a big topic or feeling (friendship, getting a dog) in lieu of naming a theme or specific lesson. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When reading a text in which the character learns some implicit lessons as well as explicit, the reader begins to name those lessons (e.g. “Amber Brown learns not to fight with her friend”) • With nudging, and usually after the story is completed, the reader can talk about the life lessons the character learns. These life lessons will often be worded as clichés (“Never give up”), or as very specific lessons (“Opal’s dog helped her make friends.”). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader develops ideas about life lessons learned by the character, this time putting more words around these lessons and moving away from the cliché. Often, the reader realizes these lessons after the story is completed (e.g. “Annemarie learns to be brave.”). • The reader begins to ask, “What is this story beginning to be about?” along the way, and may begin to trace ideas, or themes, across the story (e.g. “This story shows that kids sometimes have to grow up fast during war.”). • The reader begins to see patterns of lessons, or themes, across texts. That is, they recognize that some books show similar themes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader may continue to discuss ideas about life lessons learned by the character, and will often see that these lessons are valuable for the reader as well. • Before the end of the book, the reader can recognize larger themes, and collect evidence for those themes across the story. The reader may begin to realize that stories are about more than one idea. • The reader sees lessons and themes that are connected, or similar, across texts. He or she will mostly focus on their similarities. |

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| A Progression to Support CCL2-3 Supporting Thinking with Evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader is apt to expect that evidence for his or her ideas will be lodged in the words more than the pictures, though he or she may use pictures, in books that include them, to help locate the parts of the written text that is relevant. The reader may include evidence from his or her own life that is related, though not necessarily relevant. • When giving evidence from the text, and when prompted to say more, the reader tends to use simple linking/ transition words such as “because,” “so,” “but,” that generally supports the relationship between ideas and evidence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader will sometimes point to more than one place in the text to support an idea. With prompting, the reader can say something about how the passage supports the idea, although this will tend to involve citing the actions the character has made, or citing the literal description included in the text rather than analyzing the significance of that passage. • The reader continues to use linking/transition words when citing evidence from the text, showing a sense of logic in supporting an idea with examples. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader expects to cite more than one part of the text when supporting an idea, and to collect evidence across the text. The links between the evidence and the reader’s claims may or may not be well developed, though the reader does expect to explain why parts of the text are important (e.g. by saying, “This is important because...”) • In an attempt to elaborate about how several pieces of evidence support his or her claim, the reader may use linking words that facilitate this work (“Just like when... here...,” “at first, but then...”). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evidence the reader uses may vary slightly, and the reader attempts to describe how some of this evidence supports the idea in different ways or with different strength. That is, the reader begins to weigh evidence. • The reader tends to draw on transition words in order to link multiple pieces of evidence. The reader does this sequentially by finding evidence that occurs chronologically, using words that reflect the passage of time (“next,” “later”), as well as ones that create an essay-like structure of the reader’s thinking (“Another example,” “You see this again when...”). |

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| A Progression to Support CCL2-3 | Level 6 | Level 7 | Level 8 | Level 9/10 |
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| <p>Talking/ Inferring About Characters</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked to discuss the characters, the reader is able to generate ideas about more than one character’s traits and/or motivations. The reader will attempt to address many sides of a character, seeing and trying to analyze how characters are complicated. Through this work, the reader is apt to address the reasons for characters’ traits and motivations, and how those change from the beginning to the end of the story. • The reader describes characters in terms of both their internal and external motivations, especially when nudged, noticing the ways in which outside influences change and affect a character internally. • The reader looks beyond the central, obvious external trouble (or what the character thinks/says he or she wants) to understand parts of this trouble, and other troubles the character faces. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked to analyze the characters, the reader can describe characters in ways that suggest an understanding that they are complicated and nuanced, even at times contradictory. The reader understands the value of revising claims and theories in order to allow greater complexity. • The reader increasingly pays attention to both internal and external influences on the character, noticing the interplay between the two, and incorporates these observations in his or her theories about characters. The reader also analyzes the different parts of problems, and which parts get solved. • The reader is alert to how characters change across the narrative, and begins to analyze the various motivations and causes for these changes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked to analyze the characters, the reader carries multiple theories while reading, and investigates these theories across the novel. The reader understands that there is often a relationship between external and internal influences, including social issues and character flaws, and now regularly relies on these to grow and explain theories. • The reader is increasingly observant of how secondary characters reflect on, interact with, or change the main character, and includes these in his or her theories. • When nudged, the reader asks about the role that characters play, and notices that characters play particular roles in books or represent archetypes that are worth investigating. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked to analyze the characters, the reader expects to weave his or her analysis of individual characters with how those characters relate to or convey deeper meanings and themes (e.g. “Frodo’s role as an unlikely hero demonstrates how people from ordinary backgrounds can make a tremendous difference.”). The reader often analyzes how characters play particular roles in books, and describes characters by comparing them to archetypes or literary figures. • The reader notices the interaction of characters with oppressive social issues, noticing outside world pressures and how characters respond or change as a result. • The reader considers multiple perspectives, expecting characters to shift and their understanding to shift. The reader’s theories are more sophisticated because they draw on and synthesize multiple perspectives. |

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| <p>Developing Interpretations: Morals, Lessons, and Themes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader recognizes life lessons the characters learn, and begins to articulate those as ideas about lessons the narrative suggests. The reader may generalize those lessons into larger themes. • The reader begins to investigate ideas about themes before the end of the story, adjusting his or her ideas in collecting evidence. The reader begins to describe why evidence is important to showing a theme. • The reader often recognizes and articulates themes that they see in more than one text, usually by comparing what is similar across these texts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader often generalizes life lessons from the story to ideas about life lessons for the reader (and he or she may slip into cliché with these generalizations), however, the themes do have a social relevance that is clear and significant. • The reader expects stories to convey ideas, and expects that stories are often about more than one idea. The reader, therefore, begins to track ideas about lessons and themes early in the text, and notices by the end of his or her reading which themes seem particularly significant. • The reader begins to analyze how stories develop themes distinctly, noticing not only what the same is across texts, but what is different. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader may come to texts already interested in certain themes or critical lenses. These lenses and inquiries may shape the reader's response, so that he or she begins investigating, for instance, what a text suggests about gender roles, or a social issue that is of concern for the reader. • Even when the reader comes to the text with ideas and lenses, he or she is open to how the text conveys more than one idea, and tries to notice what the story suggests about more hidden themes underneath the more explicit ones. • The reader looks closely at how themes develop and are conveyed, comparing passages within and across texts, and perhaps analyzing the author's craft and structure as well as the characters and plot. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader often brings critical lenses to bear on the text, alert to how a text suggests certain ideas, lessons, and themes – and yet the reader also remains open to what the text suggests that is unexpected, new, or unusual. • The reader expects texts to convey complex ideas as well as more than one idea. When the reader talks about themes that the narrative illustrates, these themes are complex and the reader has to look closely at different parts of the text to articulate how these themes are developed. The reader often relates this thinking to his or her life, to other texts, and to the world at large. • The reader often incorporates some analysis of the author's craft, noticing particularly effective language, indelible images, unforgettable characters, deft plot twists and relating those to meaning. |

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| A Progression to Support CCL2-3 | Level 6 | Level 7 | Level 8 | Level 9/10 |
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| Supporting Claims with Reasons and Evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader gathers evidence to support claims while reading, often attempts to support more than one idea with evidence, and gathers evidence from across the text. • The reader begins to weigh the evidence and articulate which evidence is most significant. Most of the evidence is clearly relevant to the idea and some of it is implicit in the text. • The reader tends to draw on transition words in order to link multiple pieces of evidence. The reader tends to draw on transition words in order to link multiple pieces of evidence. The reader does this sequentially, that is, by finding evidence that occurs chronologically, using words that reflect the passage of time (“next,” “later”) as well as ones that create an essay-like structure of the reader’s thinking (“Another example,” “In addition,” “You see this again when...”). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader gathers evidence from across the text to support the claim while reading, and that evidence is related and relevant. Some of the evidence the reader gathers is implicit in the text and the reader tries to describe and analyze its significance. • The reader begins to weigh evidence and sort it into categories, or supports for reasons. That is, the claim may have subordinate parts, that the reader substantiates (e.g. “Kati is mistrustful. She mistrusts herself, she mistrusts her closest friends, and she mistrusts her leaders.”) • The reader presents claims, reasons, and evidence in a logical manner, using transition words such as, “because...for instance... also.” The reader, when nudged, acknowledges a counter claim, often by using language such as “Even though...in spite of.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader continues to use a combination of explicit evidence and implicit evidence to back up his or her claims. • The reader attempts to analyze his or her evidence, looking closely at how the evidence supports his or her claim, how parts of the text compare, what’s the same and different in terms of the significance of evidence. The reader often uses explanatory and analytical language, such as “this is important because...the author reveals/suggests/ demonstrates.” • The reader acknowledges and begins to refute the counter claim when supporting the claim, which means the reader uses language that acknowledges more than one position, such as “I used to think...but now I realize,” “Some may think, but it’s clear that...” “Despite early evidence suggesting...nevertheless...” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader notices, collects, and sorts out evidence that explicitly and implicitly supports a claim and counter-claims, expecting texts to be complex, nuanced, and even at times contradictory. • The reader not only analyzes implicit and explicit evidence, he or she attempts to analyze some of the author’s word choice, craft, and structure when supporting a claim with textual evidence. • The reader shows control of logic and sequence in conveying an argument, so that there is forethought in articulating a claim clearly, supporting the claim, and giving appropriate acknowledgement to distinguishing other points of view. |