

Read. Think. Explain.

In trying to understand a poem, it's important to read through it carefully and thoughtfully by focusing on the words the author chose *and* by thinking about what the images in the poem represent. In this activity, you'll answer a series of questions about Tony Mitton's "Instructions for Growing Poetry" in order to grasp the poem's full meaning.

Directions: Answer the questions below, using information and details from the poem to back up your ideas.

1. What is the main thing this poem asks readers to do? What are some of its specific instructions?

2. In what ways does this poem suggest that poetry comes from both inside and outside of us?

3. How does the illustration on the page fit with the poem? What might the child in the picture write about in a poem?

4. What would your instructions be for growing poetry?

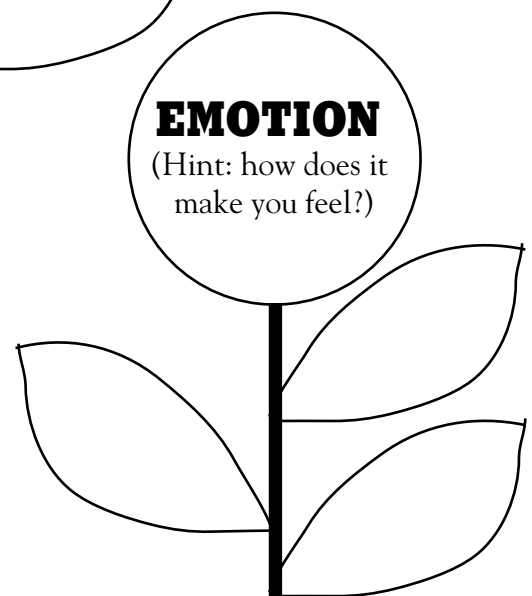
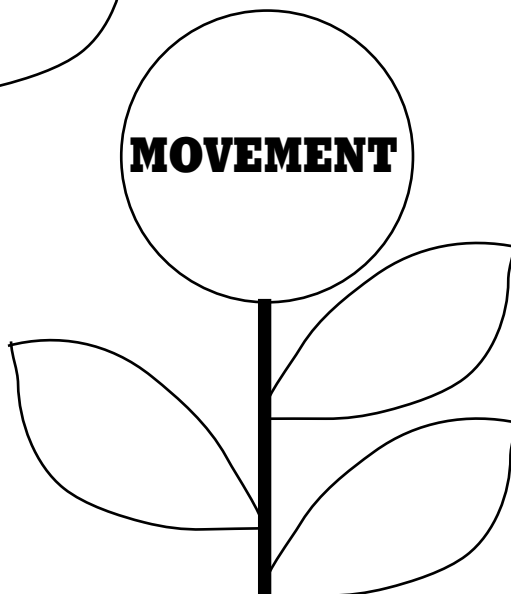
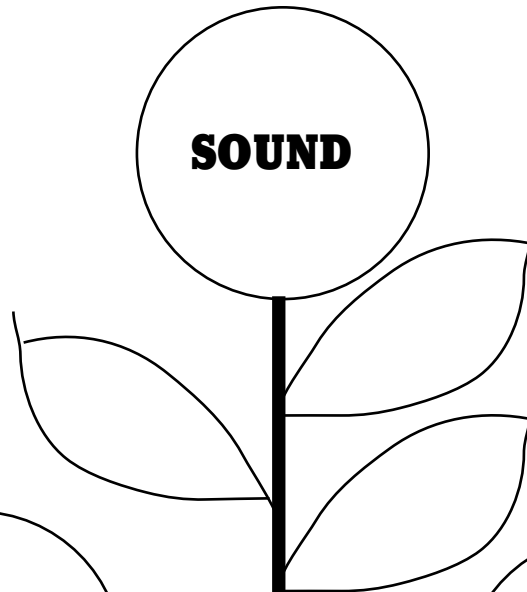
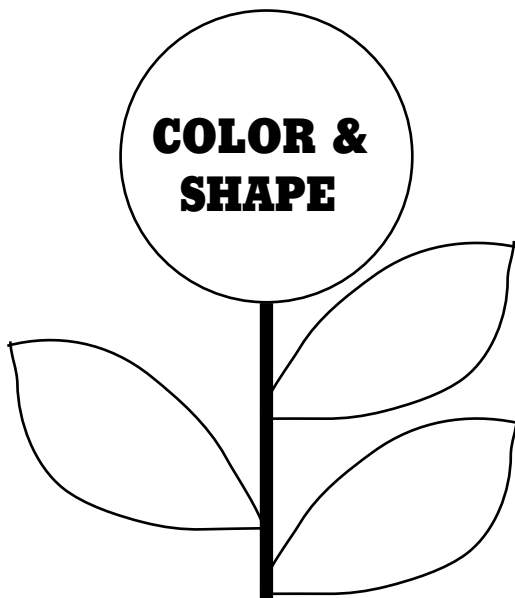
A Poetry Garden

Tony Mitton's poem, "Instructions for Growing Poetry," is about opening your mind and finding the elements of a poem. You can grow a poem yourself using the same ideas. The key to this kind of poem is observation, looking very closely at your subject: its colors, its shape, its smells, its motions, and finding wonderful words and phrases to describe each part.

Directions: Find an interesting subject that you can observe closely or imagine one.

On each of the leaves below, write down words or phrases for each kind of observation.

Use these words and phrases to grow your own observation poem. You might want to have a thesaurus handy.



Critical Thinking

On a separate sheet of paper, use your notes above and your observation skills to write a poem.

Read. Think. Explain.

In trying to understand a poem, it's important to read through it carefully and thoughtfully by focusing on the words the author chose *and* by thinking about what the images in the poem represent. In this activity, you'll answer a series of questions about Karla Kuskin's "To You" in order to grasp the poem's full meaning.

Directions: Answer the questions below, using information and details from the poem to back up your ideas.

1. This poem is written from a first-person point of view. Who do you think is speaking? Who might "I" and "you" be?

2. What can you conclude about how the speaker in the poem feels about the person he or she is addressing?

3. This poem is included in the collection *America at War*, poems selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins. How do you think this poem might relate to war?

4. Look at the illustration accompanying the poem? What do you see in it?

Awesome Alliteration!

In the poem "To You," Karla Kuskin describes the love one person feels for another using phrases full of expressive adjectives and nouns. She also uses **alliteration**—a repeated sound at the beginning of two consecutive words—to make the poem come alive. In this activity, you will learn more about alliteration and how to use it in your own writing.

Directions: Fill in the blanks below and then write your own poem.

I. Find three examples of alliteration in "To You." Then jot down how you think the repeated sound at the beginning of each adjective-and-noun pair make the phrase come alive. We've done the first one for you.

1. simmering sand

Simmering sand sounds like it would be too hot (sizzling!) to touch. The double "s" sound slides off your tongue when you say it out loud.

2. _____

3. _____

II. Now write three original sentences using alliteration.

Critical Thinking

Choose one of your original sentences and expand upon it to write your own poem on a separate sheet of paper. You can write about a person or object you love, using Karla Kuskin's "To You" as a guide.

Read. Think. Explain.

In this activity, you'll answer a series of questions about "The School at the Edge of the Earth" that will help you think more deeply about the devastating effects of American boarding schools like Carlisle that stripped Native American children of their traditions and ways of life.

Directions: Answer the questions below, using information and details from the article to back up your ideas. Use a separate piece of paper if you need more room.

1. Why didn't Ota Kte trust the white man on the train? How do you think you would feel if you were Ota Kte?

2. What was Captain Pratt's motivation for opening Carlisle? Do you think his intention was good or bad? Why?

3. Why did the school officials change the Native Americans' names? In what way does your name show who you are? How would it affect you if you had to change it?

4. What elements of Native American culture did school officials take away from students?

5. What do you think the author means by the last sentence in the article? In what ways did the Indian within Luther Standing Bear become stronger?

A New World of Words

The article on the Indian boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, told a story that may have been new to many readers. Some of the vocabulary was probably new too. In this activity, you will use the dictionary and your very own brain to match the words below to their definitions.

Directions: Match the words on the left to the definitions on the right. Then choose four of the words and write a sentence using each.

barracks	care for something in a loving way
bustling	deeply or seriously
cherish	traditions passed down through generations
devastated	buildings where soldiers live
flourished	difficult
heritage	destroyed
plight	busy
profoundly	situation of great hardship
rigorous	grew and succeeded
wary	suspicious

Sentence 1: _____

Sentence 2: _____

Sentence 3: _____

Sentence 4: _____

Back in Order

Reading "The School at the Edge of the Earth" is fascinating and can help you learn about an important time in history. But it can be confusing unless you pay attention to how events unfold. In this activity, you will practice "sequencing," putting events from the article in the proper order.

Directions: In this activity, you'll retell "The School at the Edge of the Earth" by numbering the events below in the order they happened.

Carlisle shuts down for good.

Captain Henry Pratt convinces Sioux chiefs to send their children to Carlisle.

Captain Pratt convinces the U.S. government to turn an abandoned Pennsylvania Army barracks into a boarding school.

Ota Kte rides on a train with 83 other Sioux children.

The U.S. Army forces Native Americans off their lands and onto reservations.

Ota Kte's hair is cut and his name is changed to Luther Standing Bear.

Critical Thinking

What do you think might have happened if Ota Kte had not gone to Carlisle? Do you think he would have been able to accomplish what he did? On a separate piece of paper, write a well-organized paragraph explaining your opinion. Remember to back up your thoughts using details from the article.

Ask What, Ask Why

You eat five double-fudge brownies. What happens? You get a stomachache. You ace your cello recital. Why? You practiced every day. It's easy to figure out cause-and-effect relationships by asking two simple questions: "What happened?" (to find an effect) and "Why did this happen?" (to find a cause). Find the cause-and-effect relationships in "The School at the Edge of the Earth."

Directions: Fill in what's missing from each cause-and-effect pair. Use the hints to help you.

1. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: The Sioux chiefs let Captain Pratt take 84 children to Carlisle.

HINT: *Why did the Sioux chiefs allow Captain Pratt to take their children?*

2. CAUSE: Chief Spotted Tail was furious to see his children dressed like American soldiers.

EFFECT: _____

HINT: *What did Chief Spotted Tail do?*

3. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: The American government opened more boarding schools around the country.

4. CAUSE: White settlers wanted more land.

EFFECT: _____

5. CAUSE: Captain Pratt believed "Kill the Indian, save the man."

EFFECT: _____

6. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: Most Indian boarding schools were shut down.

Now, on your own, find two cause-and-effect relationships from the article.

7. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: _____

8. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: _____

Read. Think. Explain.

An active reader is always looking for deeper meaning in a story. In this activity, you'll answer questions about the characters, their motivations, and how they work together to find solutions to their problems in "Maxwell's Fabulous Tee Shirts."

Directions: Answer the questions below, using information and details from the story to back up your ideas. Use a separate piece of paper if you need more room.

1. In the beginning of the story, how does Maxwell feel about taking summer art classes? How does it present a conflict for him? What does this tell you about Maxwell?

2. Why do you think Mr. Kimberly didn't want to sell Maxwell's tee shirts?

3. How does Maxwell react to Mr. Kimberly's rejection? How does his dream help him?

4. It took a lot of courage for Maxwell to ask Melodie to sell his tee shirts. What shows you this in the story?

5. How have Maxwell's feelings about Old Turtle changed by the end of the story? What does this tell you about how he has changed? What did he learn from the summer's experiences?

Maxwell's Fabulous Vocab

In Bil Wright's short story, Maxwell puts his mind and creativity to work using his art to help his family. You can put your mind to work too, learning some great new words! In this activity, you will use the dictionary and your very own brain to match the words below to their definitions.

Directions: Match the words on the left to the definitions on the right.
Then choose five of the words and write a sentence using each.

admiring	making a low, bubbling sound
antique	really beautiful
fabulous	very old
gorgeous	something shaped out of wood, clay, etc.
gurgling	respecting or enjoying
haul	making spitting or coughing noises
sculpture	carry something with difficulty
sputtering	wonderful or marvelous

Sentence 1: _____

Sentence 2: _____

Sentence 3: _____

Sentence 4: _____

Sentence 5: _____

Maxwell's Fabulous Changes

In this activity, you will consider how Maxwell's character changes from the beginning to the end of the story, "Maxwell's Fabulous Tee Shirts."

Directions: Fill in the chart below as you think about how Maxwell's ideas and attitudes change throughout the story. Then take note of how your attitude about Valentine's Day changes as well.

	Beginning	End
<p>What Maxwell Thinks About Himself</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>What Maxwell Thinks About His Artistic Talent</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

Continued ►►

Maxwell's Fabulous Changes page 2

	Beginning	End
What Maxwell Thinks About Other People	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
What Maxwell Thinks About His Problem	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Critical Thinking

In "Maxwell's Fabulous Tee Shirts," Maxwell overcomes his fears and comes up with a unique solution to a problem he is facing—and his actions show great courage! Has there ever been a time in your life when you've acted like Maxwell? On a separate piece of paper, write a well-organized paragraph explaining the situation. Make sure to back up your thoughts, using information and details from your life and from the story.

What's the Big Idea?

When you read a story, part of the reason why it means something to you is because of its theme—the big idea or overall message you take away from it. In this activity, you will choose a theme from "Maxwell's Fabulous Tee Shirts" and explain why it's meaningful to you.

Directions: Follow the directions in the boxes below.

Step 1: What are some of the big ideas in the story?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step 2: Pick one of the big ideas from your list above and write it below.

The most important theme, or big idea, of "Maxwell's Fabulous Tee Shirts" is _____
_____.

Step 3: Describe some parts in the story that illustrate this big idea.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Critical Thinking

On a separate piece of paper, write a well-organized paragraph explaining how the main theme you picked above relates to your own life. Remember to use supporting details to back up your statements.

Read. Think. Explain.

In trying to understand an article, it's important to read through it carefully and thoughtfully, focusing on the words the author chose *and* thinking about the article's big ideas. In this activity, you'll answer a series of questions about Queen Elizabeth I and Prince William to understand how members of English royalty are alike and how they are different.

Directions: Answer the questions below, using information and details from the article to back up your ideas.

1. Why did King Henry VIII believe it was so important to have a male heir? How did Elizabeth prove him wrong?

2. What details in the article show that Elizabeth was an exceptional child?

3. Do you think you would like having reporters and photographers capture everything you did, like Prince William? Why or why not?

4. In what ways is Prince William just like everyone else? In what ways does he have the life of a Prince?

5. Prince William and Queen Elizabeth both had life-changing events when they were young. What were they, and how do you think each was affected by them?

Five & Five

In this activity, you will compare and contrast two members of English royalty—Queen Elizabeth I and Prince William—using this month's "Yesterday & Today" feature.

Directions: In the box on the left, write five facts about Queen Elizabeth I that you learned from the "Yesterday & Today" article. In the box on the right, write five facts about Prince William.

Facts	
Queen Elizabeth I	Prince William
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____
5. _____ _____	5. _____ _____

Critical Thinking

Use your list to write a well-organized paragraph in which you compare and contrast England's first female monarch with the young royal trying to make his way in today's society. (Use a separate piece of paper.)

Read. Think. Explain.

Cidro-Ella is a modern version of the classic fairy tale Cinderella. Part of the reason why this version is so funny is because the author did an excellent job paying attention to things like dialogue, character development, and setting in order to make the play relevant for a contemporary audience. In this activity, you'll compare and contrast these elements in *Cidro-Ella* with those in the classic tale.

Directions: Answer the questions below, using information and details from the play to back up your ideas.

1. In what ways is this play similar to the original Cinderella story? In what ways is it different?

2. What do you like or prefer about this version? What do you like or prefer about the original? Why?

3. Why do you think this version has an *American Icon* competition instead of a ball?

4. Why do you think the author rewrote this fairy tale in the present?

5. Over time, this story has been retold in many ways. What does that tell you about it?

A Vocabu-ella Story

You don't need a fairy godmother to improve your vocabulary. All you need are the great new words you can find in this month's play! In this activity, you will use the dictionary and your very own brain to match the words below to their definitions.

Directions: Match the words on the left to the definitions on the right. Then choose four of the words and write a sentence using each.

astonished	women who sew for a living
choreographer	moved or worked quickly
forfeited	someone who arranges dance steps
hustled	unhappy or unfortunate
obliviously	having had a great victory or success
plucked	without noticing
seamstresses	very surprised
triumphant	situation of great hardship
urchin	a poor and badly clothed young person
wretched	gave up the right to do something

Sentence 1: _____

Sentence 2: _____

Sentence 3: _____

Sentence 4: _____

Secrets From Great Writers!

THIS MONTH'S SECRET: WRITING GREAT DIALOGUE

One way writers bring characters to life is through dialogue: what they say and how they say it. Are they generous? Selfish? Happy? Sad? How do they feel about the other characters in the story?

The words and tone they use help readers understand what each character is like.

In this activity, you will study lines from the play *Cidro-ella* and think about what the line tells you about the character. Then, in part 2, you will try to you write your own dialogue for each character in the play.

Directions: Read the passage below, from "Cidro-ella. Then fill in the blanks below:

What They Say

- 1. Cidro's father:** I'll be back in a few days.
What presents should I bring you?
- 2. Cidro's stepmother:** Nothing special for me, dear. Just some jewelry or furs.
- 3. What does this tell you about the stepmother?**
- 4. Cidro's stepsister:** I need about a million pairs of shoes.
- 5. Cidro's stepbrother:** I want a solid-gold belt buckle.
- 6. Cidro's father:** And how about you, Cidro?
- 7. Cidro's stepmother (disapprovingly):** You really spoil that child.
- 8. Cidro:** If you don't mind, Father, just bring me some seeds from the tree that shades my mother's grave.
- 9. Cidro's stepbrother and stepsister (in unison):**
Weird!

What Can You Tell?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

Continued

Secrets From Great Writers! Part 2

NOW YOU TRY!

Think about Cidro and his stepbrother and stepsister. You know that Cidro is polite and generous, while his stepbrother and stepsister are selfish and unkind. Think about each character's personality as you write dialogue for them in the spaces below.

1. How would Cidro ask his father for a new pair of shoes?

2. How would Cidro's stepbrother ask Cidro for help with his homework?

3. What would Cidro's stepbrother say if you asked him to take out the garbage?

4. What would Cidro's stepsister say if you accidentally stepped on her foot?

5. What would Cidro say if someone asked him to share his sandwich?

6. What would Cidro's stepsister say if someone asked her to share her cupcakes?

Critical Thinking

Choose one character in the play and tell what kind of person he or she is. As supporting evidence, choose at least three lines in the play that showed you what kind of person this character is.

Seeking Cinderella

Arthur Goldwag's "Cidro-ella" is a modern version of a classic fairy tale. In this activity, you will read a short version of the Cinderella story that many of us know. Then you will answer questions to help you understand the updated play, and the way we think about "a Cinderella story."

Directions: Read the story of Cinderella below. Then use the information to answer the questions.

Once upon a time, a man had a single daughter with his good and beautiful wife, who died when the girl was still young. He remarried a cruel and proud woman with two equally haughty daughters. The girl's stepmother and stepsisters treated her badly and forced her to work, while her father offered no help. Because the girl slept by the hearth, she was called Cinderella.

One day, the King announced a ball for his son, the Prince. Cinderella wanted to go, but her stepmother refused and took only her own daughters. In some stories, a fairy godmother appears to help Cinderella; in others, birds from the tree above her mother's grave come to her aid. She magically receives a coach, a gown, and pair of special slippers.

When Cinderella arrived at the ball, everyone stared at the beautiful woman. She danced with the Prince all night, but left before midnight, when all her magical decorations—her gown, the carriage and coachmen, but not her shoes—would disappear. She attended another ball, but fled when the clock struck midnight. In her haste, she lost one of her slippers.

The Prince, in love with the mysterious beauty, searched the entire kingdom for the woman who fit the slipper. The stepsisters tried to force their own feet into the slipper, and attempted to keep Cinderella away. In some stories, they even cut off their own toes or heels to fit the slipper. Eventually, Cinderella tried on the shoe, which fit her perfectly. The Prince recognized her as the lady from the ball. They married and lived happily ever after. In some versions, Cinderella's stepmother and stepsisters are punished for their terrible behavior.

1. Find the main events in the story. Write a one-sentence summary of each paragraph above.

Continued ➤

Seeking Cinderella page 2

2. "Cidro-ella" is a modern version of this story. Does the updated version have all the same main events? How are the stories different?

3. What are Cinderella's and Cidro's lives like at the beginning of the story? What are they like at the end?

4. The term "Cinderella story" gets used in everyday life, too, not just in fairy tales. Have you ever watched a sports game or race where one team or person is expected to win? Sometimes, someone new or unexpected wins instead, and the announcers shout in their surprise, "What a Cinderella story!" What does that phrase mean?

5. Why is an unexpected winner in sports like Cinderella and Cidro?

6. Give an example of another time you might use the phrase "Cinderella story." Explain why it would be appropriate.
