

Read. Think. Explain.

In trying to understand a poem, it's important to read it carefully and thoughtfully by focusing on the words the poet chose *and* by thinking about what the images in the poem represent. In this activity, you'll answer a series of questions about J. Patrick Lewis's "A Tomcat Is" 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 does each line of this poem do? Why do you think the poet chose to do this?

2. The poet describes the cat's feet as "needle-point claws" and "marshmallow paws." What does this tell you about them?

3. What could you conclude about how the author feels about tomcats?

4. How does the illustration complement the poem? Do you like artist Chris Raschka's style?

A Rhyme Is

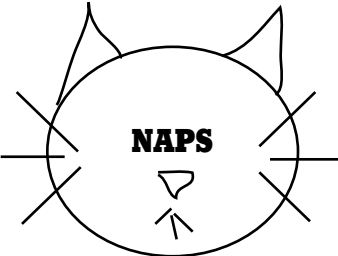
Many poems have rhyming words at the end of each line.

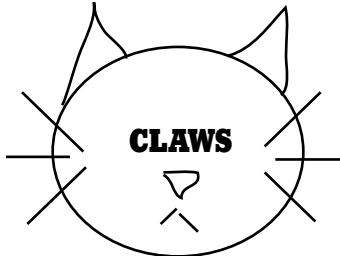
This is a technique some poets use to make their poems more catchy and fun.

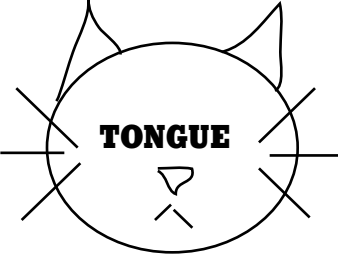
In "A Tomcat Is," what are some other words that rhyme with the ones J. Patrick Lewis chose?

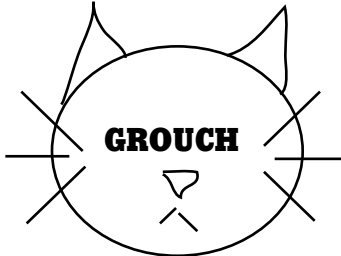
Directions: Write rhymes to the words below. Then, use them in your own poem about your favorite animal.

Section 1: Write as many rhyming words as you can for each word in the tomcat's head.

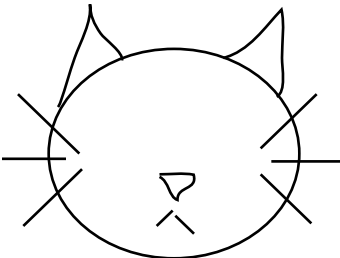


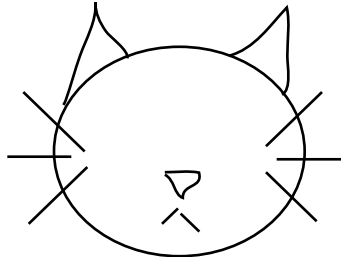






Section 2: On the tomcats below, choose your own catchy words and write rhymes for them.





On Your Own
On a separate sheet of paper, use some of the rhymes you chose above to write a fun, bouncy poem about a favorite animal or pet.

With a Partner
After each one of you fills in the blanks above, swap papers and write a poem using each other's words. Or combine the two and write a poem together.

A Poem Is a Faithful Companion.

In the poem "A Tomcat Is," J. Patrick Lewis paints a picture of a male cat, using lots of expressive language, including metaphors. Metaphors, such as the title of this activity, describes something by calling it something else. You're probably using metaphors without knowing it—like when your little brother steals your cookie, and you say "You're a pig!" You don't mean he has a snout and a curly tail. You're comparing him to an animal that eats a lot. In this activity, you will learn more about metaphors and how to use them to make your writing come alive.

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

I. Find three metaphors in "A Tomcat Is." Then explain what you think each metaphor means. We've done the first one for you.

1. needle-point claws

A cat's claws are small and sharp, like a needle.

2. _____

3. _____

II. Now write three of your own sentences using metaphors.

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 any subject you'd like—a pet, a sport, a book—as long as you include at least two metaphors..

Read. Think. Explain.

In trying to understand a poem, it's important to read it carefully and thoughtfully by focusing on the words the poet chose *and* by thinking about what the images in the poem represent. In this activity, you'll answer a series of questions about Langston Hughes's "Harlem Night Song" 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. How would you describe the mood of this poem?

2. What metaphor does the poet use? What does it mean?

3. What lines are repeated? Why do you think the poet repeated them?

4. How does the illustration add to this poem?

In the Mood

Langston Hughes’s poem, “Harlem Night Song,” describes a couple walking the streets of Harlem, a part of New York City. But the poem tells you much more than that.

One of the most important parts of this poem is the *mood*—the way the words make the reader feel. A poem can feel angry, thrilling, sad, or any other emotion.

In this activity, you will consider what mood Hughes creates, and how, in “Harlem Night Song.”

Directions: Answer the questions below to explore the mood in “Harlem Night Song.”

1. What lines are repeated in the poem? _____

2. What mood do those lines create? How do they make you feel? (Hint: What do they tell us about the people in the poem? What does it mean that the lines are repeated?) _____

3. Look at the six lines in the middle of the poem. How do they contribute to the mood? What words in particular help create the relaxed and dreamy mood? _____

4. How do you feel after reading this poem? Would you want to be one of the people in the poem?

On Your Own
Draw a picture or describe an illustration to accompany this poem. The picture should capture the same mood as the poem does.

With a Partner
Choose a different mood setting for a poem (happy, angry, excited, etc.). Write a list of words or phrases that you could use in a poem to create your mood.

Read. Think. Explain.

In this activity, you'll answer a series of questions about "Deadly Bites," which will help you think more deeply about what causes food poisoning outbreaks and how they can be prevented. You'll also discuss how a team of scientists called "Team Diarrhea" figured out the source of the 2008 salmonella outbreak.

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 for your answers.

1. Why can it be difficult for scientists to figure out the source of a food poisoning outbreak?

2. Why is it important to identify where food poisoning originates?

3. What happened at a Jack-in-the-Box restaurant? What then happened as a result?

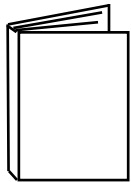
4. How did "Team Diarrhea" figure out where the salmonella outbreak was coming from?

5. What is the purpose of the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009? What specific actions would it require?

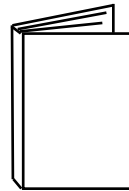
Thesaurus Rex

Great writers fill their stories with words that fit just right. But you won't want to use the same vocabulary every time. Sometimes, a flashier word works perfectly; other times, a common word does the trick. In this activity, you'll use a thesaurus or a dictionary to find synonyms for words from the article.

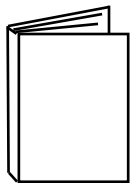
Directions: Using a thesaurus or a dictionary, find and write a simpler synonym above each word and a tougher one below it.



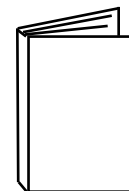
horrified



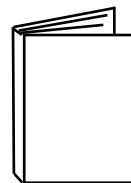
misery



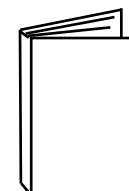
inspected



severe



lurking



toxic

Critical Thinking

On a separate piece of paper, write a paragraph about something you learned from the article "Deadly Bites." Use at least five of the synonyms you recorded above in your paragraph.

Write a Summary

A summary of an article or story shouldn't be funny or extremely detailed. It should be brief and include just the basic facts the reader needs to know. In this activity, we are going to help you write a summary of the article "Deadly Bites," about the 2008 salmonella outbreak. First, you will read 12 sentences about the salmonella outbreak. Then, you will decide which seven are the most important; these belong in your summary. Afterward, you will write a summary of the 2008 salmonella outbreak, based on the information you've chosen.

Directions: Read through the sentences below. Underline the sentences that are most important to the story. There are SEVEN important sentences.

1. Choose the SEVEN statements below that are most important to the story.

After realizing a salmonella outbreak was occurring, scientists in Minnesota interviewed victims to learn more.

Scientists discovered salmonella in a jar of peanut butter at a nursing home where people had been affected.

If passed, a new bill in Congress called the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009 will overhaul the system that protects us from dangerous food.

Christopher Meunier's temperature reached 103 degrees.

The scientists in Minnesota call themselves "Team Diarrhea."

Hamburgers must be cooked to 150 degrees to kill E. coli.

Nearly 19,000 Americans got sick during the outbreak and eight people died from salmonella.

The contaminated peanut butter was traced to a Peanut Corporation of America plant in Blakely, Georgia.

Pet treats and Keebler crackers were among the recalled foods.

Food poisoning outbreaks can be hard to trace because modern foods contain ingredients from many places.

King Nut peanut butter is sold in seven states.

Over several months, more than 4,000 foods were removed from store shelves.

2. Using the seven important events you've underlined, write a short summary of the 2008 salmonella outbreak.

Science Detective's Notebook

Imagine that you are a detective-in-training, learning from the expert Team Diarrhea scientists. One thing you'll find out from reading the article "Deadly Bites" is that they are masters of observation. They keep their eyes and ears open because anything could be a clue that might crack their next food-poisoning case. Like most detectives, they probably record their observations in a notebook. This helps get them in the habit of paying attention to detail. It also helps them keep track of little things that might turn out to be important later. To help you see how they solved the mystery of the 2008 salmonella outbreak, the Team D scientists have provided the prompts below for your own "detective's notebook." *Try this with a partner!*

Directions: As you and your partner read the article "Deadly Bites," fill in as much information as you can. Incomplete sentences are fine! Then, review your notes. Can you work together to crack the case of the 2008 salmonella outbreak?

1. THE PROBLEM

What happened to Christopher Meunier just before Thanksgiving in 2008? What were his symptoms?

2. THE DIAGNOSIS

What did doctors say was wrong with Christopher?

3. THE QUESTION

What main question did this bring up? (Hint: What are the Team D scientists trying to figure out?)

4. THE FACTS

What is salmonella? How can it be spread? What are some other facts about it? (Remember to use information found in the article.)

Continued ►►

Science Detective's Notebook page 2

5. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

What happened in 1993 that could be compared to the case Team D is working on?

What are some of the facts of the 1993 case?

What are some similarities between the 1993 case and the Team D case?

6. IMPORTANT CLUES

In the case of the 2008 salmonella outbreak, where did many of the victims spend their time?

What object was found at one of the nursing homes? Why is this detail important?

What are some questions scientists had regarding this find?

7. YOUR THOUGHTS & CONCLUSIONS

Before you and your partner read the section "Thousands of Foods" on page 11, write down any suspicions or deductions you have. Then, draw your best conclusion about what happened in the case.

DETECTIVE'S GLOSSARY

deduction [di-DUHK-shuhn]: something that is figured out from clues

suspicions [suh-SPISH-uhns]: thoughts that something is wrong or bad

Read. Think. Explain.

An active reader is always looking for deeper meaning in a story.

In this activity, you'll answer questions about Zaritza, the main character in Patrick Jennings's funny and touching story "My Homework Ate My Homework." You'll also write about how she evolves during the story, and what might have prompted these changes in her character.

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. What do you learn about Zaritza from the opening of the story, when she is talking in the mirror?

2. What lesson does Zaritza's mom want her to learn?

3. What details show that Zaritza needs to become more responsible?

4. What happens to Zaritza when Abalina looks at her in the mirror and says, "Homework"?

5. Near the end of the story, Zaritza says to Bandito, "I know you didn't eat my cookies." What does this show about how she has changed?

My Words Ate My Words

In Patrick Jennings's story "My Homework Ate My Homework," Zaritza learns a thing or two about ferrets—and responsibility. You can learn the great words in the story! In this activity, you will use a dictionary and your very own brain to match the words below to their definitions.

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

concocting	being very angry or excited
drowsy	failure to take care of something
neglect	made weak crying noises
outraged	inventing
seethed	shrinking back from pain or embarrassment
sneering	sleepy
whimpered	smiling in a mean or hateful way
wincing	extremely angry

Sentence 1: _____

Sentence 2: _____

Sentence 3: _____

Sentence 4: _____

What Did You Think of "My Homework Ate My Homework"?

Directions: Read the fiction story "My Homework Ate My Homework" in the November/December 2009 issue of *Storyworks*. Then, on a separate piece of paper, copy these paragraphs over, filling in the blanks with details from the story and with your own ideas. When you are finished, you will have a well-crafted review of Patrick Jennings's story.

I just read "My Homework Ate My Homework" by Patrick Jennings. The _____
Choose an adjective to describe the story.

story is about a girl named _____ who has a problem: _____. This happened
Name the main character. Describe her problem.

because she _____. But rather than tell the truth about her situation and try to find a
Explain the cause of her problem.

solution to her problem, she _____. She does this by _____.
Explain what she does instead. Give an example of her behavior.

Unfortunately for Zaritza, her mom catches her in the act. Instead of fessing up to the deed, Zaritza
 tries to blame the whole thing on _____. But Mom is smarter than Zaritza thinks she is.
Name who she tries to blame.

She tells Zaritza that _____ and that it's important for Zaritza to _____.
Describe one thing she says. Provide another detail from their talk.

Then, during their conversation, something extraordinary happens: _____, and Zaritza's
Describe what happens.

problem is solved. But, even though she doesn't want to, she still has to _____. In the
Describe what she has to do.

end, Zaritza learns an important lesson: _____.
Explain the lesson she learns.

Overall, I thought this story was _____ because _____. The situation
Give your opinion. Back up your opinion.

reminded me of something that happened to me: _____. If I had to choose whether
Connect Zaritza's situation to something in your life.

to recommend this story to my friends, I _____ because _____.
would/would not Back up your opinion.

How Do You Solve a Problem Like Zaritza Does?

In "My Homework Ate My Homework," Zaritza learns that even a very creative lie can't solve her problems. In this activity, you will compare Zaritza at the start of the story and at the end.

Directions: Read "My Homework Ate My Homework" and fill in the chart.

	Zaritza at the Start	Zaritza at the End
<p>I. How does Zaritza feel about doing her homework?</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>II. How does Zaritza feel about her little sister?</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>III. Compare one other thing about Zaritza's behavior from the beginning to the end of the story.</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

On Your Own

How did Zaritza change from the start of the play to the end? Write a well-organized paragraph, using the examples from the story you wrote down above.

With a Partner

Make a list of responsibilities you have at school or at home. Then discuss ways you could be a role model and teach a younger brother or sister.

Read. Think. Explain.

In trying to understand an article, it's important to read 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 Krakatoa and Mount St. Helens, and discuss how the two volcanic eruptions 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. What were different reactions villagers had after Krakatoa's first blast? What do you think you would have done?

2. On Krakatoa, one disaster caused another one to happen. What were the two disasters?

3. Why did scientists suspect that something was going to occur at Mount St. Helens?

4. What details show how powerful the blast at Mount St. Helens was?

5. Why were so many more people killed by Krakatoa's explosion than by Mount St. Helens's?

Five & Five

In this activity, you will compare and contrast the volcanic eruptions of Krakatoa and Mount St. Helens, using this month's "Yesterday & Today" feature.

Directions: In the left box, write five facts about Krakatoa's eruption from the "Yesterday & Today" article. In the box on the right, write five facts about Mount St. Helens's explosion.

Facts	
Krakatoa	Mount St. Helens
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____
5. _____ _____	5. _____ _____

Critical Thinking

Use your list to write a well-organized paragraph that explains how the eruptions of the two volcanoes are alike and how they are different. (Use a separate piece of paper.)

Read. Think. Explain.

An active reader is always looking for big ideas and deeper meaning in a play by paying attention to things like details, characters, and setting. In this activity, you'll answer questions about these elements in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. You'll also think a lot about Ichabod's feelings, what motivates him, and how he relates to his environment.

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

1. In the first scene, what details tell you what Ichabod Crane looks like? What about what he does? What image does this create of Ichabod?

2. In what ways are Ichabod Crane and Brom Bones different? What do they have in common?

3. How does Brom feel at the party? Why do you think he tells his story of the Horseman?

4. Why did Ichabod leave the party so late? Do you think this was a good idea? Why or why not?

5. How do Ichabod's superstitions affect him?

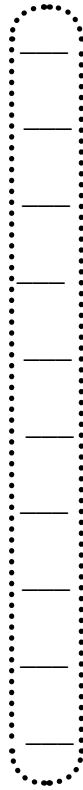
The Language of Sleepy Hollow

Larry found lots of great vocabulary words in the November/December issue of *Storyworks*. Use the words listed below to solve his puzzle.

Directions: Choosing from the words in the bank below, find the synonym of each numbered word or phrase, and write it in the blanks next to it. One letter from each word will fall into the dotted oval. Use those letters to complete the sentence at the bottom of the page.

brooding burly glen lank musket
omen patrolling spurring tethered wary

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. jabbinb a horse to make it move faster | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 2. worrying or thinking about something a lot | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 3. cautious or careful | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 4. a narrow valley | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 5. moving around an area to keep watch over it | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 6. an old-fashioned gun with a long barrel | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 7. strong and broad with large muscles | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 8. a warning about something in the future | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 9. tied up, as an animal | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |
| 10. thin and limp | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ |



In Washington Irving's story, Brom Bones scares Ichabod Crane with tales of the ghostly

ANSWER: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

9. 4. 3. 2. 7. 4. 6. 6. 9. 5. 1. 6. 4. 8. 3. 10.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Guided Reading & Thinking

Writing down notes about the basic elements of a story can help you remember and understand it.
Use this organizer with the spooky play *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* to help you achieve a better understanding of it.

TITLE

AUTHOR

CHARACTERS

The main character's name is _____.

Some words to describe the main character are (provide at least three) _____

Some examples that show what the main character is like are _____

Another character's name is _____.

His/her relationship to the main character is _____.

Some words to describe this character are _____

Some examples that show what this character is like are _____

Another character's name is _____.

His/her relationship to the main character is _____.

Some words to describe this character are _____

Some examples that show what this character is like are _____

Guided Reading & Thinking page 2

SETTING

The location of this play is _____.

The time period of this play is _____.

The atmosphere, or feeling that the setting creates, is (e.g., rich, poor, strange, comfortable, scary, friendly, etc.) _____.

PLOT

These are the main events that happen in the play at the

Beginning: _____

Middle: _____

End: _____

The main conflict of the play is _____.

The climax, or point at which the conflict reaches its peak, is _____.

The conflict is resolved when _____.

Guided Reading & Thinking page 3

LANGUAGE

The story is told by (a narrator, the main character, someone else) _____.

The action is narrated by (a narrator, the main character, someone else) _____.

Why do you think the author chose to write the play this way? _____

_____.

The language in the play is (i.e., humorous, serious, simple, complicated)_____.

What differences are there between the way the characters in this play speak and the way people speak today? _____.

LITERARY DEVICES (OPTIONAL)

Give examples below of some literary devices from the story:

Metaphors _____

Similes _____

THEME

What are one or two big ideas you think the author wanted you to get from the play?

RESPONDING TO LITERATURE

Would you recommend this play to a friend? Why or why not?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Spooky Stories

“The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” written by Washington Irving, and retold in *Storyworks* by Mack Lewis is a classic ghost story. Why do we call it that? Ghost stories are a genre, the word for a type of story with similar features. While ghost stories includes many different plotlines, some elements reappear and help us identify the type of story we’re reading. In this activity, you will find examples of four elements of a ghost story from “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.”

Directions: Read *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and fill in each box with examples from the play of each element of the ghost story genre listed below.

<p>1. The story is meant to be scary.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>3. Suspense builds throughout the story, giving the story a creepy, unsettling tone.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>2. The story includes a supernatural figure, like a ghost.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>4. There’s an event in which a human character encounters a supernatural one.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>