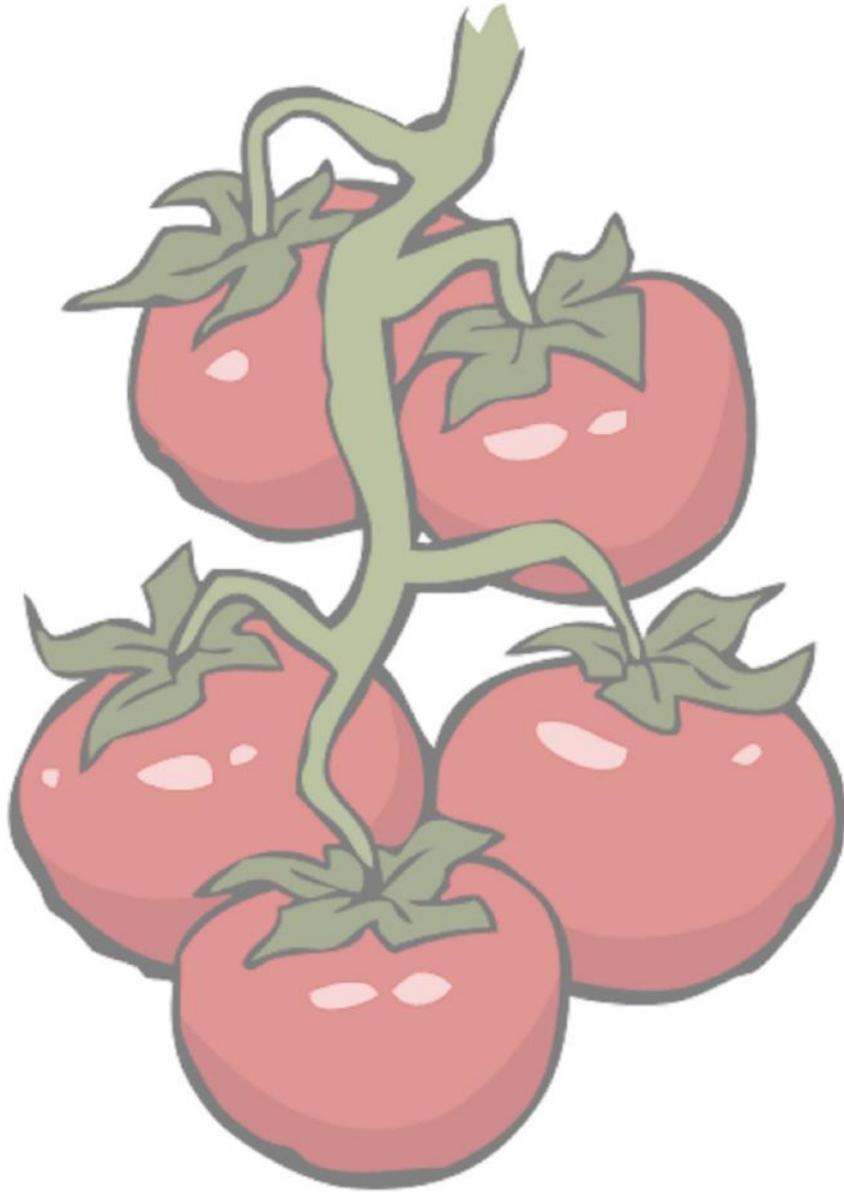




# Food For Thought

a book-based program for Grades PreK - 8





## Program Goals

- Gain an understanding of where food comes from
- Learn about sustainable agriculture practices
- Discover how to make healthy eating choices
- Visit local farms and meet farmers who produce the food we eat
- View food production as community building and citizen action

What can you do to grow students' understanding of the food they buy and eat?  
How can they research, write, and read about growing food?

All-around excellent resource: *Healthy Foods from Healthy Soils*, by Elizabeth Pattens and Kathy Lyons (both live in Maine). This guide for Grades K - 6 offers 45 experiential activities that help children understand more about food, gardening, agriculture, and recycling.

Agricultural Literacy Matrix from Maine Agriculture in the Classroom: an online, searchable, and standards-based curriculum map for teachers  
<http://www.agclassroom.org/me/matrix/index.cfm>

**"Eating is an agricultural act." - Wendell Berry**

## The Author

Award-winning author Jacqueline Briggs Martin grew up on a dairy farm in Maine, and as a child she loved the sounds of words, even the sounds of the names of the cows on her farm!

She has authored over twenty children's books, including *Alice Waters and the Trip to Delicious*, *Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table*, *Creekfinding: A True Story*, *Chef Roy Choi and the Street Food Remix*, *Chicken Joy on Redbean Road: A Bayou Country Romp*, and many more.

Jacqueline now lives in Iowa, and is on the faculty of Hamline University's MFA in Writing for Children and Young Adults program.

## Design A Garden

If you had your own garden, what fruits and vegetables would you plant in it? Draw your perfect garden, and list what you planted.

## Read More

- *What Will Grow?* by Jennifer Ward and illustrated by Susie Ghahremani.
- *Before We Eat: From Farm to Table*, by Pat Brisson.
- *The Tiny Seed*, by Eric Carle.
- *Yummy! Good Food Makes Me Strong*, by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly.
- *How to Grow A School Garden*, by Arden Bucklin.
- *The Garden Classroom*, by Cathy James.
- *Growing Vegetable Soup/A sembrar sopa de verduras* (English and Spanish editions), by Lois Ehlert.



## Discussion Questions

- Alice was a "friend of food." What does that mean?
- Why did Alice want to feed people fresh food instead of frozen food?
- Which of your favorite foods come from a farm or garden, and which of your favorite foods come from a factory?
- Discuss the journey from farm to table. How does a vegetable's life start? What is required to raise a healthy plant from seed to harvest? How does it end up in a grocery store?
- Alice worked hard to find fresh ingredients close by. Are there farmlands in your area? Large farms? Small farms? What do they grow? What would Alice do with those fresh ingredients, were she to get her hands on them?

For other questions and book-based activities, visit Readers to Eaters Curriculum Guide [here](#).

## What's in this Lunch?

As a class, try to identify the ingredients of the following lunch items, and also their origins:

- Pretzels
- Apple juice
- Slice of American cheese
- Chocolate chip cookie
- Turkey meat roll-ups
- Fruit salad

After this activity, ask students to break down the ingredients and origins of the last meal they ate.

## The Author

Jacqueline Briggs Martin wrote this book, too! Her bio is on the previous page.

## Discussion Questions

- What steps did Farmer Will Allen take once he decided he wanted to farm?
- What plants, animals, and people help Will Allen's farm to thrive?
- Why are fruits and vegetables compostable, but plastics aren't?
- Russell Libby, a Maine farmer, said, "Food should have a place, a face, and a taste." What do you think that means?

For more discussion questions and book-related activities, visit the Readers to Eaters curriculum guide [here](#).

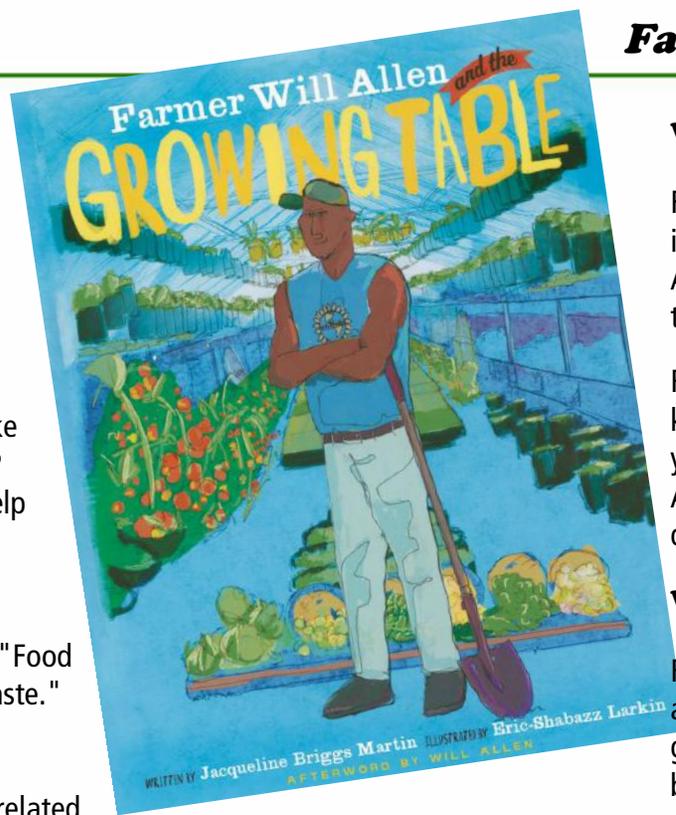
## Growing Power

Research Farmer Will Allen's farm, named Growing Power, then draw his innovative greenhouse growing system, which uses vertical space (space going up) in addition to floor space. Make sure you include all levels and label what lives or grows there; they all serve their own purpose!

Video tour: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vs7BG4IH3m4>

## Vermicomposting

Start a bin in your classroom! Video: Vermicomposting - how do worms make soil?: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8miLevRI\\_o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8miLevRI_o)



## Whole v. Processed

Farmer Will specializes in growing whole foods. Much of the food items in a grocery store, however, are considered 'processed foods.' As a class, discuss the difference, and brainstorm numerous items that fall within each category.

Read the ingredient labels on common household food items, like ketchup, breakfast cereal, or sliced bread. Are there any ingredients you don't recognize? Research what they are if you don't know. Also, discuss how a whole food can become a processed food. How do apples become "processed?"

## Where Can Food Grow?

Farmer Will believes that growing your own food is a form of power and taking care of yourself. Some people might think they can't grow their own food because they don't have the space. As a class, brainstorm all the places at home and in the community where people could grow food.

## Food Issues

Does everyone in the US have access to fresh, healthy food? Find out more about US food issues here, including hunger, food insecurity, and food deserts: [http://www.generationon.org/files/project/child\\_hunger\\_fact\\_sheet\\_quiz\\_0.pdf](http://www.generationon.org/files/project/child_hunger_fact_sheet_quiz_0.pdf)

## Read More

- Author Jacqueline Briggs Martin recommends: *City Green*, by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan.
- *Our Farm: Four Seasons with Five Kids on One Family's Farm*, by Michael J. Rosen.
- *The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat*, by Michael Pollan.

The Author

Julia Alvarez was born in New York City, but moved to the Dominican Republic when she was three months old. Her father became involved in an underground political rebellion, and Julia and her family had to hurriedly leave in 1960 to return to the US.

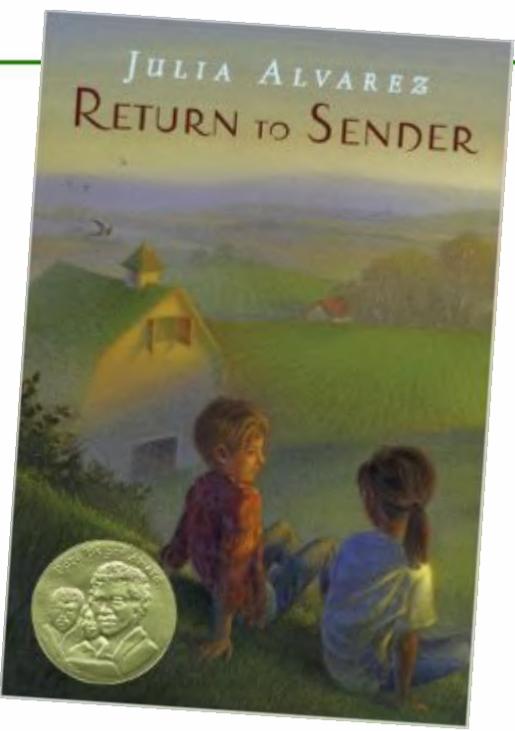
They moved back to New York City and, though Julia knew some English, it was quite an endeavor to enter a classroom and learn how to speak the language exclusively.

"When I'm asked what made me into a writer, I point to the watershed experience of coming to this country. Not understanding the language, I had to pay close attention to each word -- great training for a writer," said Julia. "I also discovered the welcoming world of the imagination and books. There, I sunk my new roots."

She studied writing at Syracuse University, and has taught at the university level around the US. She received the National Medal of Arts in 2014. Julia currently lives in Vermont, and is the writer-in-residence at Middlebury College.

Julia's website is an incredible resource for links, articles, further research suggestions, and other information related to Return to Sender. Check it out: http://return-to-sender.juliaalvarez.com

For discussion questions, visit this guide to the book: https://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/teachers\_guides/9780375858383.pdf



Literary 3x3

After reading the book, create a Literary 3x3:

https://www.haikudeck.com/literary-3x3-education-presentation-fyHsn6sa6t#slide0

Migrant Workers

A lesson plan covering how migrant worker issues have changed throughout the past century: https://www.commonlit.org/texts/mexican-migrant-workers-in-the-20th-century

Happening Now

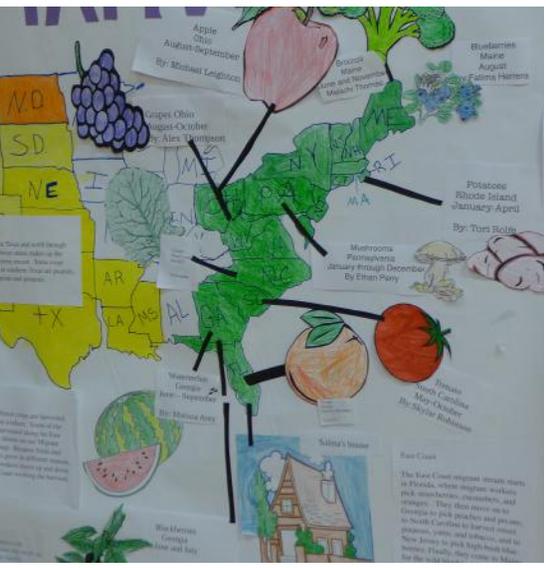
Scour respected, verified news sites for articles related to soil loss, areas of famine or drought, farm labor, or other agriculture and farm-related news.

Harvest Map

Create a map that details the various crops that seasonal migrant workers harvest across the US (photo at left from Milbridge Elementary School, 2015).

Read More

- A Handful of Stars, by Cynthia Lord.
Esperanza Rising, by Pam Munoz Ryan.
Voices from the Fields: Children of Migrant Farmworkers Tell Their Stories, by S. Beth Atkin.



**The Market Garden: Incredible Edible Milbridge**  
Milbridge Rd., Cherryfield, ME - (207) 546-0085  
<http://www.whrl.org/iem/about-iem/>

**Folklore Farm at Fortenberry Farm:** Michael Hayden, MOFGA Journey Person  
folklore.farm@gmail.com - <https://fortenberryfarm.wordpress.com>.  
Outreach education, native bee pollination, organic market gardens, wild blueberries and Jams. They offer workshops for schools on pollinators.

**Salty Dog Farm:** Sasha Alsop and Sam Cheeney  
269 Back Bay Rd., Milbridge, ME - (207) 546-2676 - Primarily organic seed garlic but also diversified vegetables. <https://www.facebook.com/SaltyDogFarm>.

**Tide Mill Farm:** Aaron Bell and Carly DeSignore  
91 Tide Mill Rd., Edmunds, ME - (207) 733-2551 - Organic fruits and vegetables, meat and dairy, balsam wreaths, educational tours.  
<http://www.tidemillorganicfarm.com>

**Rock Hill Farm: Thomas Cooke**  
307 S. Lubec Rd., Lubec, ME - (207) 733-4247  
Certified Naturally Grown Vegetables, Flowers, Fruits.

**Smith Ridge Farm:** Darrel Bostow and June Gregory  
387 Smith Ridge Rd., Dennysville, ME - (813) 503-4734 - Vegetables, Flowers, Compost, Firewood. They hope to instruct local school children about local food production and sustainable forest management. They produce garden vegetables, mushrooms, and eggs.

**The Women's Health Resource Library and Incredible Edible Milbridge:** (207) 546-7677  
Contact: Pam Dyer Stewart  
<https://www.facebook.com/incredibleediblemilbridge/>  
<http://www.whrl.org/iem/about-iem/>

**Regina Grabrovac:** Washington County Food Programs Manager  
<https://healthyacadia.org>

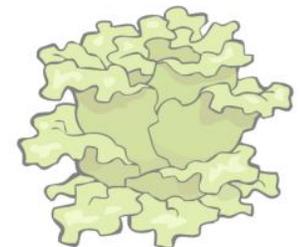
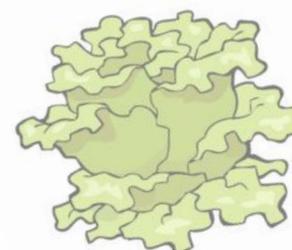
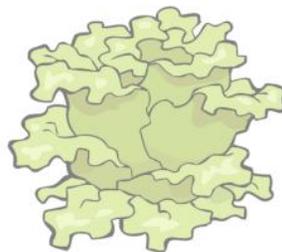
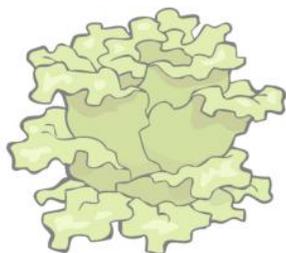
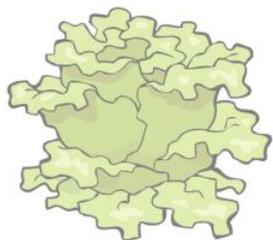
**UMaine Cooperative Extension** educational programs in Washington County: <https://extension.umaine.edu/washington/programs/>

**Lubec Community Outreach Center:** Cathy Arrington  
(207) 733-6113 or [cathy@lubecoutreach.org](mailto:cathy@lubecoutreach.org)  
<https://www.lubecoutreach.org/community-food/>

## To find books related to food and food issues:

Milbridge Public Library: Director Amanda Fickett  
22 School St., Milbridge, ME - (207) 546-3066  
[www.milbridgelibrary.org](http://www.milbridgelibrary.org)

Lubec Memorial Library: Director Suzanne Plaut  
55 Water St., Lubec, ME - (207) 733-2491  
<http://www.lubec.lib.me.us>





Inspired by *Kids Make It Better*, a write-in, draw-in journal by Massachusetts writer Suzy Becker

- Pesticides pollute land, air, water, and living creatures, including people. What would you do to keep pests off plants without using pesticides?
- Transporting vegetables across the world is bad for the environment. What would you do to solve this problem?
- There are people starving all around the world, and yet tons of food is thrown away every day. What would you do to eliminate hunger and food waste?
- Sometimes unnatural ingredients are added to processed foods so they last longer on the shelf. How would you stock a grocery store full of fresh foods without any of them going bad?
- Sometimes it's hard to initiate positive changes because everyone is very busy. What would you do to overcome this hurdle?

Kindergarten

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.7

With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g. what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).

Grade 1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.7

Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.

Grade 2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.1

Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

Grade 3

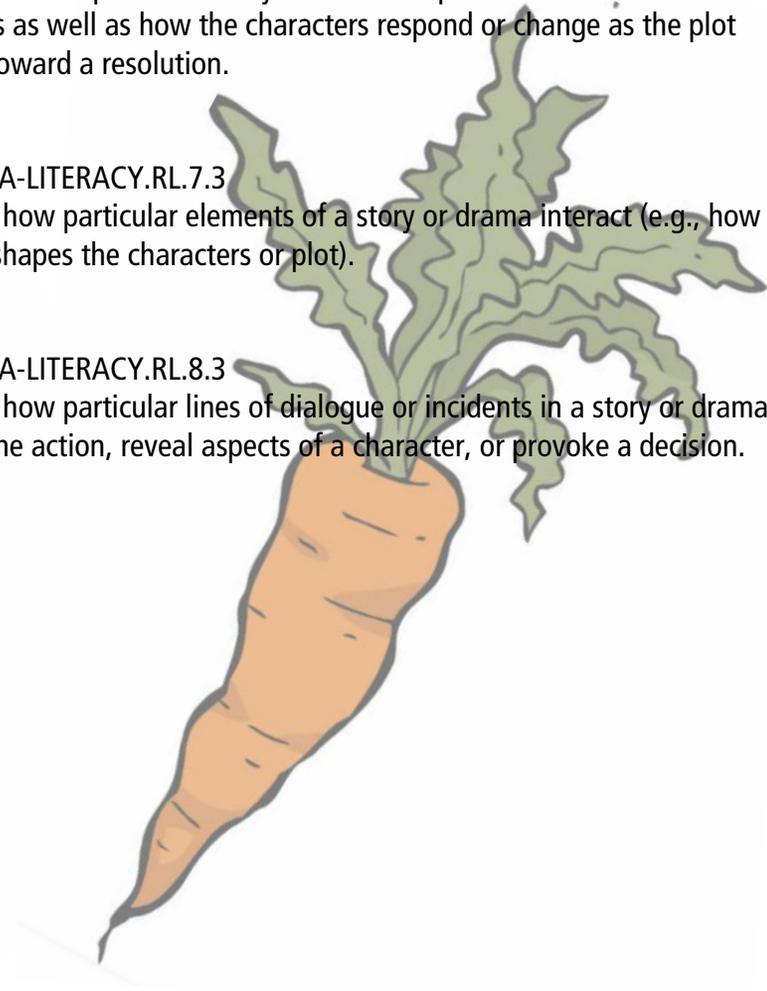
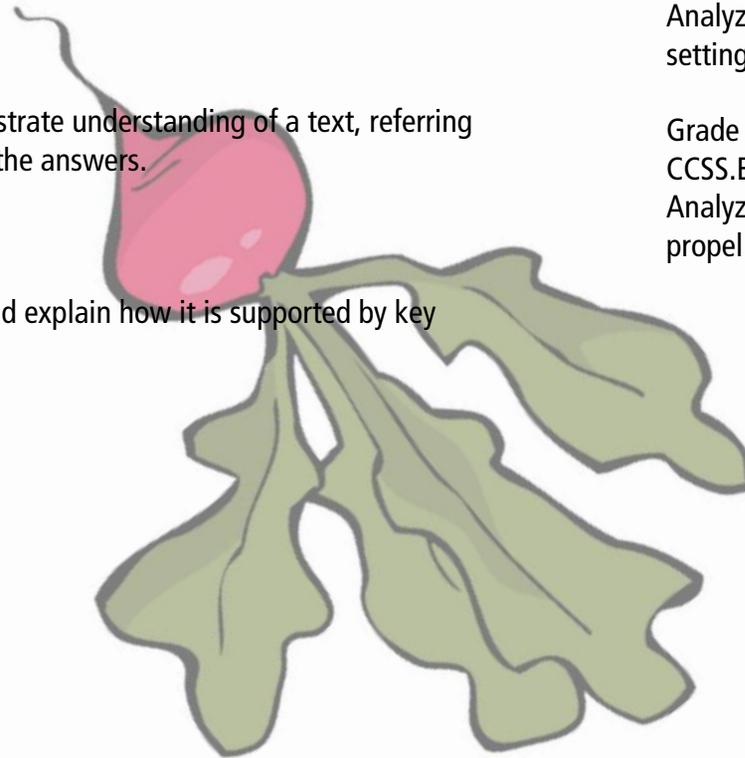
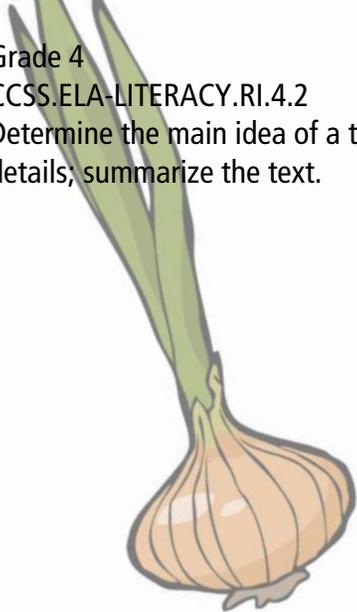
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

Grade 4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.



Grade 5

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2

Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

Grade 6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.3

Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

Grade 7

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3

Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Grade 8

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.