

Directions: We recommend that students who need practice do so by reading one passage at least 3x daily (no more than 15–20 minutes at a time) for a week.

1. First give students the opportunity to listen to a reading by a fluent reader, while “following along in their heads.” It is essential that students hear the words pronounced accurately and the sentences read with proper punctuation!
2. Then have students read the passage aloud while monitored for accuracy in decoding words.
3. When reading aloud, students should focus on reading at an appropriate pace, reading words and punctuation accurately, and reading with appropriate expression.
4. Students need feedback and active monitoring on their fluency progress. One idea is to do a “performance” toward the end of the week where students are expected to read the selection accurately and expressively and be evaluated.
5. Students need to be encouraged. They know they do not read as well as they ought to and want to. It is very good to explain fluency and explain that it is fixable and has nothing at all to do with intelligence!
6. It is good for students to understand what they read. For this reason, comprehension questions and a list of high-value vocabulary words are also included with each passage.
7. Use Juicy Sentences (one juicy sentence will be identified for each passage) to help students dig into sentence structure, word choice, and meaning.

Students don’t need to finish an entire passage in one sitting. Variations in reading practice can include:

- Have students perform a choral read.
- Have students engage in a buddy/partner read.
- Recordings of the text can be used to provide additional opportunities to hear expert reading.
- Support students in chunking the text into smaller portions.

Support for English Language Learners

- Having a text read aloud by a fluent reader prior to the student engaging with the text.
- Giving students multiple opportunities to hear the text read aloud by a fluent reader so that they can mirror the pronunciation and prosody of well-spoken English.
- Providing repeated opportunities for students to practice decoding skills both on their own and with support via active monitoring.
- Providing opportunities for students to learn new vocabulary through the use of student-friendly definitions, and to reinforce newly learned vocabulary through repeated practice with the same text and opportunities to use that vocabulary to respond to comprehension questions.
- Calling out work with “juicy sentences,” a strategy developed by Dr. Lily Wong Fillmore, that allows students to look deeply at word choice, sentence structure, and other text features that build their understanding of how English is used to convey different meanings.
- Providing numbered lines that allow students to quickly focus-in on specific sections of the text.
- Providing space for students to annotate the text with their own notes.

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I Am Still The Greatest
By: Muhammad Ali

Vocabulary:

- conclusively – to come to a decision
- insidious – harmful
- diminished – lessened
- instilled – to be taught or cause to have
- compromised – weakened or given up
- triumphed – won
- increased – to make greater

Notes:

I Am Still The Greatest

1 I have always believed in myself, even as a young child
2 growing up in Louisville, Ky. My parents instilled a sense of
3 pride and confidence in me, and taught me and my brother
4 that we could be the best at anything. I must have believed
5 them, because I remember being the neighborhood marble
6 champion and challenging my neighborhood buddies to
7 see who could jump the tallest hedges or run a foot race
8 the length of the block. Of course I knew when I made the
9 challenge that I would win. I never even thought of losing.
10 In high school, I boasted weekly — if not daily — that
11 one day I was going to be the heavyweight champion of the

Notes:

12 world. As part of my boxing training, I would run down
13 Fourth Street in downtown Louisville, darting in and out of
14 local shops, taking just enough time to tell them I was
15 training for the Olympics and I was going to win a gold
16 medal. And when I came back home, I was going to turn
17 pro and become the world heavyweight champion in
18 boxing. I never thought of the possibility of failing — only
19 of the fame and glory I was going to get when I won. I
20 could see it. I could almost feel it. When I proclaimed that I
21 was the "Greatest of All Time," I believed in myself. And I
22 still do.

23 Throughout my entire boxing career, my belief in my
24 abilities triumphed over the skill of an opponent. My will
25 was stronger than their skills. What I didn't know was that
26 my will would be tested even more when I retired.

27 In 1984, I was conclusively diagnosed with Parkinson's
28 disease. Since that diagnosis, my symptoms have increased
29 and my ability to speak in audible tones has diminished. If
30 there was anything that would strike at the core of my
31 confidence in myself, it would be this insidious disease. But
32 my confidence and will to continue to live life as I choose
33 won't be compromised.

34 Early in 1996, I was asked to light the cauldron at the
35 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta. Of course my
36 immediate answer was yes. I never even thought of having

Notes:

37 Parkinson's or what physical challenges that would present
38 for me.

39 When the moment came for me to walk out on the
40 140-foot-high scaffolding and take the torch from Janet
41 Evans, I realized I had the eyes of the world on me. I also
42 realized that as I held the Olympic torch high above my
43 head, my tremors had taken over. Just at that moment, I
44 heard a rumble in the stadium that became a pounding
45 roar and then turned into a deafening applause. I was
46 reminded of my 1960 Olympic experience in Rome, when I
47 won the gold medal. Those 36 years between Rome and
Atlanta flashed before me, and I realized that I had come
full circle.¹

50 Nothing in life has defeated me. I am still the
51 "Greatest." This I believe.

I Am Still The Greatest
By: Muhammad Ali

Checking for Understanding

1. Give three examples from the text which support Muhammad Ali's statement that, "I have always believed in myself."
2. How was Muhammad Ali's will tested after he retired?

Saying Thanks To My Ghosts
By: Amy Tan

Vocabulary:

- plentifully – a large amount
- opium – illegal drug
- stemmed – came from
- absolute– pure or perfect
- hologram – 3D image

Notes:

Saying Thanks To My Ghosts

1 I didn't used to believe in ghosts, but I was trained to
2 talk to them. My mother reminded me many times that I
3 had the gift. It all stemmed from a lie I told when I was 4.
4 The way my mother remembered it, I refused to get ready
5 for bed one night, claiming there was a ghost in the
6 bathroom. She delighted to learn I was a spirit medium.
7 Thereafter, she questioned anything unusual — a
8 sudden gust of wind, a vase that fell and shattered. She
9 would ask me, "She here?" She meant my grandmother.
10 When I was a child, my mother told me that my
11 grandmother died in great agony after she accidentally ate
12 too much opium. My mother was 9 years old when she
13 watched this happen.

Notes:

14 When I was 14, my older brother was stricken with a
15 brain tumor. My mother begged me to ask my grandmother
16 to save him. When he died, she asked me to talk to him as
17 well. "I don't know how," I protested. When my father died
18 of a brain tumor six months after my brother, she made me
19 use a Ouija board. She wanted to know if they still loved
20 her. I spelled out the answer I knew she wanted to hear:
21 Yes. Always.

22 When I became a fiction writer in my 30s, I wrote a story
23 about a woman who killed herself eating too much opium.
24 After my mother read a draft of that story, she had tears in
25 her eyes. Now she had proof: My grandmother had talked
26 to me and told me her true story. How else could I have
27 known my grandmother had not died by accident but with
28 the fury of suicide? She asked me, "She here now?" I
29 answered honestly, "I don't know."

30 Over the years, I have included other details in my
31 writing I could not possibly have known on my own: a
32 place, a character, a song. I have come to feel differently
33 about my ghostwriters. Sometimes their clues have come
so plentifully, they've made me laugh like a child who can't
open birthday presents fast enough.² I must say thanks, not
36 to blind luck but to my ghosts.

² Underlined text = juicy sentence

Notes:

37 Ten years ago, I clearly saw a ghost, and she talked to
38 me. It was my mother. She had died just 24 hours before.
39 Her face was 10 times larger than life, in the form of a
40 moving, pulsing hologram of sparkling lights. My mother
41 was laughing at my surprise. She drew closer, and when
42 she reached me, I felt as if I had been physically punched in
43 the chest. It took my breath away and filled me with
44 something absolute: love, but also joy and peace — and
45 with that, understanding that love and joy and peace are all
46 the same thing. Joy comes from love. Peace comes from
47 love. "Now you know," my mother said.

48 I believe in ghosts. Whenever I want, they will always
49 be there: my mother, my grandmother, my ghosts.

Saying Thanks To My Ghosts
By: Amy Tan

Checking for Understanding

1. How does Amy Tan's belief about ghosts change throughout this story?
2. Who does Amy Tan thank for her writing success?

The Learning Curve of Gratitude
By: Mary Chapin Carpenter

Vocabulary:

- breathlessness – not being able to catch your breath
- embolism – dangerous clot in an artery
- pulmonary – relating to the lungs
- litany – a long list

Notes:

The Learning Curve of Gratitude

1 I believe in what I learned at the grocery store
2 Eight weeks ago, I was released from the hospital after
3 suffering a pulmonary embolism. I had just finished a tour
4 and a week after returning home, severe chest pain and
5 terrible breathlessness landed me in the ER. A scan
6 revealed blood clots in my lungs.
7 Everyone told me how lucky I was. A pulmonary
8 embolism can take your life in an instant. I was familiar
9 enough with the medical term, but not familiar with the
10 pain, the fear and the depression that followed.
11 Everything I had been looking forward to came to a
12 screeching halt. I had to cancel my upcoming tour. I had to
13 let my musicians and crewmembers go. The record
14 company, the booking agency: I felt that I had let everyone
15 down.

Notes:

16 But there was nothing to do but get out of the hospital,
17 go home and get well.

18 I tried hard to see my unexpected time off as a gift, but
19 I would open a novel and couldn't concentrate. I would turn
20 on the radio, then shut it off. Familiar clouds gathered
21 above my head, and I couldn't make them go away with a
22 pill or a movie or a walk. This unexpected time was
23 becoming a curse, filling me with anxiety, fear and self-
24 loathing — all of the ingredients of the darkness that is
25 depression.

26 Sometimes, it's the smile of a stranger that helps.

27 Sometimes it's a phone call from a long absent friend,
28 checking on you. I found my lifeline at the grocery store.

29 One morning, the young man who rang up my groceries
30 and asked me if I wanted paper or plastic also told me to
31 enjoy the rest of my day. I looked at him and I knew he
32 meant it. It stopped me in my tracks. I went out and I sat in
33 my car and cried.

34 What I want more than ever is to appreciate that I have
35 this day, and tomorrow and hopefully days beyond that. I
36 am experiencing the learning curve of gratitude.

37 I don't want to say "have a nice day" like a robot. I don't
38 want to get mad at the elderly driver in front of me.

39 I don't want to go crazy when my Internet access is
40 messed up. I don't want to be jealous of someone else's

Notes:

41 success. You could say that this litany of sins indicates that
42 I don't want to be human.³ The learning curve of gratitude,
43 however, is showing me exactly how human I am.

44 I don't know if my doctors will ever be able to give me
45 the precise reason why I had a life-threatening illness. I do
46 know that the young man in the grocery store reminded me
47 that every day is all there is, and that is my belief.

48 Tonight I will cook dinner, tell my husband how much I
49 love him, curl up with the dogs, watch the sun go down
50 over the mountains and climb into bed. I will think about
51 how uncomplicated it all is. I will wonder at how it took me
52 my entire life to appreciate just one day.

The Learning Curve of Gratitude
By: Mary Chapin Carpenter

Checking for Understanding

1. How did Mary Chapin Carpenter's life change after her pulmonary embolism?
2. What is the Author's Viewpoint? Please make sure to use 4-6 examples from the text to support your answer.
3. What did Mary Chapin Carpenter mean when she said, "I found my lifeline at the grocery store"? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

When Mom Is Right, And Tells Police They're Wrong
By: NPR Staff

Vocabulary:

Notes:

- animosity – a strong feeling of dislike or hatred
- barriers – something difficult to overcome
- distinctly – easily
- participated – be involved with others doing something

When Mom Is Right, And Tells Police They're Wrong

1 When Robert Holmes' parents moved to Edison, N.J., in
2 1956, they were one of the first African-American families
3 to integrate the neighborhood.
4 "After we'd moved to Edison, there was a resentment that
5 we had broken into the community," Holmes says.
6 Even at the age of 13, Holmes felt the animosity. The
7 neighborhood had a private swim club that opened up to
8 anyone who participated in the Memorial Day parade.
9 Holmes was in the band.
10 "I arrived at the pool on Memorial Day having marched
11 in the parade with my uniform still on, and they called the
12 police," he says.
13 The pool managers and the police department told
14 Holmes' mother that her son was not allowed in the pool.

Notes:

15 She started to ask why, but then she stopped herself.
16 Instead, she told Holmes to crawl under the turnstile and
17 go into the pool.
18 "I looked at my mother; I looked at the police," Holmes
19 says. "And I will tell you that as a 13-year-old, I was more
20 inclined to do what my mother said than to be afraid of the
21 police. So I did it."
22 A policeman told Holmes' mother to get him. Holmes
23 distinctly remembers her response: "If you want him out of
24 the pool, you go take him out of the pool. And by the way,
25 as you take him out, you tell him why he can't go in the
26 pool today."
27 "No one came. No one got me out, and I stayed in the
28 pool," Holmes says.
29 In standing up to the police, Holmes' mother wasn't
30 looking to break barriers for herself.⁵
31 "I think like a lot of African-American people at the time,
32 my parents were looking ahead of their own generation to
33 the next," Holmes says. "I think they were deciding, we're
34 gonna do something so that our children will have a better
35 life than we have for ourselves."

Holmes, now 67, is a professor at Rutgers School of Law.

⁵ Underlined text = juicy sentence

When Mom Is Right, And Tells Police They're Wrong
By: NPR Staff

Checking for Understanding

1. Describe Robert Holmes mom's personality using evidence from the text to support your answer.
2. What is the author's main purpose in the text? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Decades Later, Student Finds Teacher To Say 'Thank You'
By: NPR Staff

Vocabulary:

- sentiments – feelings of sympathy
- penmanship – quality of someone's handwriting

Notes:

Decades Later, Student Finds Teacher To Say 'Thank You'

1 John Cruitt, 62, spent decades tracking down his third-
2 grade teacher. He wanted to talk with Cecile Doyle about
3 1958 — the year his mother, who was seriously ill with
4 multiple sclerosis, passed away. Her death came just days
5 before Christmas. Cruitt had been expecting to go home
6 from school and decorate the Christmas tree.

7 "But I walked into the living room, and my aunt was
8 there, and she said, 'Well, honey, Mommy passed away this
9 morning.' "

10 Cruitt remembers seeing his teacher, Doyle, at his
11 mother's wake.

12 "When I found out she died, I could certainly relate to
13 that, because when I was 11, my own father died," Doyle
14 tells Cruitt at StoryCorps in Monroe, N.Y. "And you just
15 don't know how you're going to go on without that person."

16 When Cruitt returned to school, Doyle waited until all

Notes:

17 the other children left the room at the end of the day, and
18 told him that she was there if he needed her.

19 "Then you bent over and kissed me on the head. It was
20 really the only time someone said to me, 'I know what
21 you're feeling, and I know what you're missing,' " Cruitt
22 says. "And I felt, in a very real way, that things really would
23 be OK."

24 "Well, John, I really loved you as a student, and I'm so
25 glad that I could be there with you for that time," says
26 Doyle, 82.

27 Decades after his mother's death, when Cruitt became a
28 teacher himself, he began to think more and more of
29 Doyle.

30 "And I started to think to myself, here I am, with a
31 memory of a teacher who changed my life, and I've never
32 told her that," he says.

33 So, that's when he finally wrote a letter:

34 Dear Mrs. Doyle,
35 If you are not the Cecile Doyle who taught English at
36 Emerson School in Kearny, N.J., then I'm embarrassed, and
37 you can disregard the sentiments that follow.

38 My name is John Cruitt, and I was in your third-grade class
39 during the 1958-1959 school year. Two days before
40 Christmas, my mother passed away, and you told me that
41 you were there if I needed you. I hope life has been as kind

Notes:

42 to you as you were to me.
43 God bless you, always. With great fondness,
44 John

45 Doyle says his letter, which arrived in February, could
46 have not come at a better time. Her husband, who passed
47 away this August, was struggling with Parkinson's disease.

48 "And I had just come home from the hospital, and I read
49 this beautiful letter, and I just was overwhelmed," she says.

50 "Well the funny thing is, when I finally wrote to you
51 again after 54 years, I typed the letter — I was afraid my
52 penmanship wasn't going to meet your standards," Cruitt
53 says as Doyle laughs.

54 "Well, after all this time, Mrs. Doyle, all I can say to you
55 is ... thank you."

56 "John, what can I say — I'm just glad that we made a
57 difference in each other's life."⁶

Decades Later, Student Finds Teacher To Say 'Thank You'
By: NPR Staff

Checking for Understanding

1. How are John Cruitt, and Cecile Doyle similar or different? Provide examples from the text to support your answer.

2. In the text, John Cruitt says, "I hope life has been as kind to you as you were to me." Provide evidence from the text that supports John's statement.

Print Your Own Medicine
By: Lee Cronin

Vocabulary:

Notes:

- universal – available for everyone
- deploy – open up and spread out the parts anywhere
- molecular – a small amount of something
- ultimately – in the end
- chemist – a person who studies chemistry
- fanciful – showing imagination
- network – group that is closely connected
- manufacture – process of making products
- biological – of or relating to biology or living things

Print Your Own Medicine

- 1 Organic chemists make molecules, very complicated
- 2 molecules, by chopping up a big molecule into small
- 3 molecules and reverse engineering. And as a chemist, one of
- 4 the things I wanted to ask my research group a couple of
- 5 years ago is, could we make a really cool universal
- 6 chemistry set? In essence, could we "app" chemistry?
- 7 Now what would this mean, and how would we do it?
- 8 Well to start to do this, we took a 3D printer and we
- 9 started to print our beakers and our test tubes on one side

Notes:

10 and then print the molecule at the same time on the other
11 side and combine them together in what we call
12 reactionware. And so by printing the vessel and doing the
13 chemistry at the same time, we may start to access this
14 universal toolkit of chemistry.

15 Now what could this mean? Well if we can embed
16 biological and chemical networks like a search engine, so if
17 you have a cell that's ill that you need to cure or bacteria
18 that you want to kill, if you have this embedded in your
19 device at the same time, and you do the chemistry, you
20 may be able to make drugs in a new way.

21 So how are we doing this in the lab? Well it requires
22 software, it requires hardware and it requires chemical
23 inks. And so the really cool bit is, the idea is that we want
24 to have a universal set of inks that we put out with the
25 printer, and you download the blueprint, the organic
26 chemistry for the molecule and you make it in the device.
27 And so you can make your molecule in the printer using
28 this software.

29 So what could this mean? Well, ultimately, it could mean
30 that you could print your own medicine. And this is what
31 we're doing in the lab at the moment.

32 But to take baby steps to get there, first of all we want to
33 look at drug design and production, or drug discovery and
34 manufacturing. Because if we can manufacture it after

Notes:

35

we've discovered it, we could deploy it anywhere. You don't
36 need to go to the chemist anymore. We can print drugs at
37 point of need. We can download new diagnostics. Say a new
38 super bug has emerged. You put it in your search engine,
39 and you create the drug to treat the threat. So this allows
40 you on-the-fly molecular assembly.

41 But perhaps for me the core bit going into this future is
42 this idea of taking your own stem cells, with your genes
43 and your environment, and you print your own personal
44 medicine.⁷

45 And if that doesn't seem fanciful enough, where do you
46 think we're going to go? Well, you're going to have your
47 own personal matter fabricator. Beam me up, Scotty.

Print Your Own Medicine
By: Lee Cronin

Checking for Understanding

1. Please summarize the key ideas of this piece.
2. What are some analogies or comparisons that Lee Cronin used to explain his “really cool universal chemistry set”?

Why is 'x' the unknown?
By: Terry Moore

Vocabulary:

Notes:

- disparate – different from each other
- reconciling – find a way of making two ideas true at the same time
- undefined – not described clearly
- rendered – translated
- supremely – highest rank in authority
- proofs – something which shows something else is true or correct
- derivation – act by which one thing is created
- texts – a book or piece of writing
- basis – something from which another thing develops

Why is 'x' the unknown?

1 I have the answer to a question that we've all asked. The
2 question is, Why is it that the letter X represents the
3 unknown? Now I know we learned that in math class, but now
4 it's everywhere in the culture -- The X prize, the X-Files,
5 Project X, TEDx. Where'd that come from?
6 About six years ago I decided that I would learn Arabic,
7 which turns out to be a supremely logical language. To
8 write a word or a phrase or a sentence in Arabic is like

Notes:

9 crafting an equation, because every part is extremely
10 precise and carries a lot of information. That's one of the
11 reasons so much of what we've come to think of as Western
12 science and mathematics and engineering was really
13 worked out in the first few centuries of the Common Era by
14 the Persians and the Arabs and the Turks.

15 This includes the little system in Arabic called al-jebra.
16 And al-jebr roughly translates to "the system for reconciling
17 disparate parts." Al-jebr finally came into English as
18 algebra. One example among many.

19 The Arabic texts containing this mathematical wisdom
20 finally made their way to Europe --which is to say Spain -- in
21 the 11th and 12th centuries. And when they arrived there
22 was tremendous interest in translating this wisdom into a
23 European language.

24 But there were problems. One problem is there are
25 some sounds in Arabic that just don't make it through a
26 European voice box without lots of practice. Trust me on
27 that one. Also, those very sounds tend not to be
28 represented by the characters that are available in
29 European languages.

30 Here's one of the culprits. This is the letter SHeen, and it
31 makes the sound we think of as SH -- "sh." It's also the very
32 first letter of the word shalan, which means "something"
33 just like the English word "something" -- some undefined,

Why is 'x' the unknown?
By: Terry Moore

Checking for Understanding

1. Briefly summarize why the letter X represents the unknown.
2. What is the author's viewpoint? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

A Life Defined Not By Disability, But Love
By: NPR Staff

Vocabulary:

Notes:

- recounts – telling someone about something that happened
- blatantly – very obvious
- intellectually – ability to think

A Life Defined Not By Disability, But Love

1 When Bonnie Brown was pregnant with her daughter,
2 Myra, she says she felt a mix of joy and anxiety.
3 "I hadn't ever been pregnant before," she says. "I never
4 had really an idea of how to take care of a baby."
5 Brown, who is intellectually disabled, works at Wendy's
6 while raising Myra as a single mom. Despite her disability,
7 she says she never felt like her daughter was too much to
8 handle.
9 "I think because I'm different it might seem hard for me,
10 but I was going to give it all I got no matter what," she tells
11 Myra, now 15, during a visit to StoryCorps.
12 Myra says she never realized her mom was "different,"
13 until she told her.¹¹

Notes:

¹¹ Underlined text = juicy sentence

14 "I said to you, 'Myra, I know I am not like your friends'
15 mothers, but I'm doing the best I can.' And you said, 'It's
16 OK, Mommy,' " Brown recounts. "And that made me feel so
17 good."

18 Myra remembers a time in third grade when her school
19 held a parent-teacher conference. Before the meeting, Myra
20 told her teacher in confidence that her mom's disabled.

21 "But the day after the interview, my teacher, she said
22 that you seemed really intelligent. And that made me feel
23 embarrassed," Myra says.

24 "Why?" her mom asks.

25 "Because I felt bad that I had said that, and then you had
26 gone and you'd been fine," Myra says. "No offense taken,"
27 she responds.

28 Today, Myra is enrolled in gifted and talented classes at
29 her high school in Lansdowne, Pa., and hopes to attend the
30 University of Cambridge when she graduates.

31 As a single mom raising Myra, Brown gets help from
32 Community Interactions in Philadelphia, an organization
33 that provides services for her, like cooking and running
34 errands.

35 Yet Brown says the hardest thing she's had to overcome
36 is emotional hurt. People often blatantly stare at Brown
37 when they're out in public, Myra explains.

38 "And I would say something [to them]. I guess I am kind

Notes:

39

40 of protective," Myra adds. Brown admits that she's also very
41 protective of her daughter, but only because she cares
42 about her so much. "I am really thankful because you
43 understand me, and you love me, and you accept me. And
44 ... thank you for that," Brown tells her daughter.

45 "I don't know, you kind of make it seem like I tolerate
46 you — I love you. You're a good parent, and just because
47 you're disabled doesn't mean that you do anything less for
48 me," Myra says.

49 Just like other parents, Brown says she wants to see
50 Myra succeed and go on to college. "I want you to make
51 something of yourself," she tells her.

52 "I want you to know that even though our situation is
53 unique, I'm happy that I am in it because I am happy that I
54 am with you," Myra says.

55 "Thank you, Myra, and I feel the same way. And I won't
56 never change it for anything in this world."

A Life Defined Not By Disability, But Love
By: NPR Staff

Checking for Understanding

1. What is the author's main purpose of this text? Give evidence from the text to support your answer.

2. How have Myra's feelings about her mom changed over time? Give evidence from the text to support your answer.

After 30 Years Of Surgeries, Doctor And Patient Dance
By: NPR Staff

Vocabulary:

Notes:

- sarcoma – a type of childhood bone cancer
- squandered – used in a wasteful way

After 30 Years Of Surgeries, Doctor And Patient Dance

1 When Marcela Gaviria was 7 years old, she was diagnosed
2 with Ewing's sarcoma, a type of childhood bone cancer. She
3 survived, and the cancer was cured — but it nearly took her
4 leg.

5 When Gaviria was 12, she needed a bone transplant and
6 met surgeon Dempsey Springfield, who performed the
7 operation.

8 "I was pretty scared, I remember, and I think I survived a
9 very sort of traumatic moment 'cause you were so kind,"
10 Gaviria, now 43, told Springfield at StoryCorps in Boston.

11 "What I remember about you were your bow ties. You
12 just looked like such a Southern gentleman, and you'd
13 show up every morning with such a big smile. And you
14 were so warm and gentle, and I wanted to get better for
15 you. I wanted your surgery to work on me."

16 Gaviria has spent the past 30 years dealing with damage

Notes:

17 that the cancer did to the bones in her leg and hip, and in
18 all that time she's stuck with Springfield. Even when he has
19 moved, she's traveled so he could keep treating her.

20 "I just don't trust other doctors as much," she tells him.

21 Neither Gaviria nor Springfield can remember how many
22 surgeries they've been through together, but it's a lot.

23 Gaviria says she has "shark-attack body" from all the
24 scarring.⁹

25 When she was a child, Gaviria complained to Springfield
26 that she would never get married.

27 "I always wondered how difficult it would be for
28 someone to sign up to my life," Gaviria says.

29 But this year, she did get married. At her wedding, her
30 first dance was with Springfield.

31 "I wanted you to have the first dance," she told him.

32 "That was just a way of celebrating the fact that a lot of
33 what I'm able to do nowadays is because of your care."

34 "Your wedding is the first wedding of a patient that I
35 have ever gone to," Springfield said. "It's so rewarding to
36 see that all of that, you know, getting up before the sun
37 comes up to get to the hospital pays off. It wasn't
38 squandered."

39 "Well, I have a great surgeon that really cared to get it
40 right," Gaviria says. "It's a beautiful thing."

⁹ Underlined text = juicy sentence

Notes:

41 Today, Gaviria walks with a cane. Despite all of the
42 surgeries, there is still a very real possibility that Gaviria
43 will lose her leg, so there are more surgeries in her future.
44 But at least she knows a good surgeon.

After 30 Years Of Surgeries, Doctor And Patient Dance
By: NPR Staff

Checking for Understanding

1. Why does Marcela Gavira feel so connected to Dr. Dempsey Springfield? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

2. Describe Marcela Gavira's personality using evidence from the text to support your answer.

For A Boy With Little, Learning To Love A Castoff Trombone
By: NPR Staff

Vocabulary:

- annihilated – completely destroyed
- initially – occurring at the beginning
- undeterred – not stopped by problems

Notes:

For A Boy With Little, Learning To Love A Castoff Trombone

1 Gilbert Zermenio came from a big family who didn't have
2 much. They lived on the plains of West Texas and got by on
3 the \$100 a week that Gilbert's father made working the
4 cotton fields. So when Gilbert wanted to join the school band
5 in sixth grade, his parents had to get creative, as he
6 explained to his wife, Pat Powers-Zermenio, during a recent
7 visit to StoryCorps in Phoenix.

8 "I was imagining myself playing the saxophone," he says.
9 One day, he brought home a note from school to show his
10 mom. "The school is bringing in an instrument salesman,
11 and all the kids are going to be there that want to be in
12 band," he told her.

13 There was a huge dust storm that day, Gilbert recalls, so
14 his mother replied, "There's no way that we can drive in this
15 dust storm, mi hijo [my son]. It's just too dangerous."

Notes:

16 Undeterred, Gilbert made a plan. "I took this little statue
17 of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and I put her on the window.
18 And I said, 'I really want to be in the band. Please make this
19 storm go away.' "

20 Ten minutes later, Gilbert says, the storm "just stopped.
21 And I went over to Mom. I went, 'No wind.'

22 "So now, she's in a really tough spot," he laughs.

23 So they got in the car and drove to school, Gilbert
24 explains. "And there's all these new, shiny instruments.
25 And the parents are just writing checks out. And my mom
26 looks at one of the checks — it's like, 650 bucks. That's six
27 weeks' worth of work for my dad.

28 "So she says, 'Where's the band director? Donde esta el
29 director?' So we went in, and the man said, 'Well, a senior
30 left behind this trombone.' "

31 It wasn't a saxophone. It wasn't shiny. And it had "a bit
32 of green rust around it," Gilbert says. "And he opens [the
33 case], and the crushed velvet is no longer crushed — it's
34 like, annihilated inside. And I'm just looking at it going,
35 'That is so pathetic.' "

36 The director wanted \$50 for the old trombone, so
37 Gilbert's mother worked out a payment plan, sending \$20
38 initially, then \$5 each week.

39 "But I was horrible," Gilbert says. "I sat on the toilet in
40 the bathroom, because it was the only room that had a

Notes:

41 door. And my poor mother had to listen to me play the
42 same thing, over and over again. And she would be turning
43 up the radio as loud as she could," he laughs. "But I also
44 noticed that, the more I practiced and the better I got, the
45 radio was turned down a little further. And I still have that
46 trombone to this day." And that's why the couple's
47 daughter plays the trombone today, says Pat, laughing.

48 "She could have played any instrument she wanted, and
49 I encouraged that," Gilbert insists. "I said, 'No, mi hija [my
50 daughter]. Really, you can play any instrument you want. I
51 could be one of those parents who could write a check out
52 for a saxophone — anything you want.' "

53 But Gilbert's daughter knew her mind. ¹²As Gilbert
54 describes it, she just said, "No, I want to play the
55 trombone."

For A Boy With Little, Learning To Love A Castoff Trombone
By: NPR Staff

Checking for Understanding

1. What character trait(s) does Gilbert Zermeno possess? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

2. Why does Gilbert Zermeno's daughter play the trombone? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

The Farmer and the Stork
By: Aesop

Vocabulary:

- excite – cause to be felt
- beseeching – begging
- slave – work very hard

Notes:

The Farmer and the Stork

1 A farmer placed nets on his newly sown plow lands and
2 caught a number of Cranes, which came to pick up his
3 seed. With them he trapped a Stork that had fractured his
4 leg in the net and was earnestly beseeching the Farmer to
5 spare his life. "Pray save me, Master," he said, "and let me
6 go free this once. My broken limb should excite your
7 pity.¹³ Besides, I am no Crane, I am a Stork, a bird of
8 excellent character; and see how I love and slave for my
9 father and mother. Look too, at my feathers-- they are not
10 the least like those of a Crane." The Farmer laughed aloud
11 and said, "It may be all as you say, I only know this: I have
12 taken you with these robbers, the Cranes, and you must die
13 in their company."

14 Birds of a feather flock together.

¹³ Underlined text = juicy sentence

The Farmer and the Stork
By: Aesop

Checking for Understanding

1. What does "earnestly beseeching" mean as it is used in the following sentence: "With them he trapped a Stork that had fractured his leg in the net and was earnestly beseeching the Farmer to spare his life."
2. Please explain what the moral of the story means.

The Kid and the Wolf
By: Aesop

Vocabulary:

- pursued – to follow and try to catch
- outwit – trick by being more intelligent

Notes:

The Kid and the Wolf

1 A kid, returning without protection from the pasture,
2 was pursued by a Wolf. Seeing he could not escape, he
3 turned round, and said: "I know, friend Wolf, that I must be
4 your prey, but before I die I would ask of you one favor you
5 will play me a tune to which I may dance." The Wolf
6 complied, and while he was piping and the Kid was
7 dancing, some hounds hearing the sound ran up and
8 began chasing the Wolf. Turning to the Kid, he said, "It is
9 just what I deserve; for I, who am only a butcher, should
10 not have turned piper to please you."

11 In time of dire need, clever thinking is key
12 or Outwit your enemy to save your skin.¹⁴

¹⁴ Underlined text = juicy sentence

The Kid and the Wolf
By: Aesop

Checking for Understanding

1. How would you describe the kid in this fable? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
2. Please explain the meaning of the moral of the story.

The Fox and the Stork
By: Aesop

Vocabulary:

- shallow – not deep
- appointed – decided beforehand

Notes:

The Fox and the Stork

1 At one time the Fox and the Stork were on visiting terms
2 and seemed very good friends. So the Fox invited the Stork
3 to dinner, and for a joke put nothing before her but some
4 soup in a very shallow dish. This the Fox could easily lap
5 up, but the Stork could only wet the end of her long bill in
6 it, and left the meal as hungry as when she began. "I am
7 sorry," said the Fox, "the soup is not to your liking."
8 "Pray do not apologize," said the Stork. "I hope you will
9 return this visit, and come and dine with me soon." So a
10 day was appointed when the Fox should visit the Stork; but
11 when they were seated at table all that was for their dinner
12 was contained in a very long-necked jar with a narrow
13 mouth, in which the Fox could not insert his snout, so all
14 he could manage to do was to lick the
15 outside of the jar.
16 "I will not apologize for the dinner," said the
17 Stork: "One bad turn deserves another."¹⁵

¹⁵ Underlined text = juicy sentence

The Fox and the Stork
By: Aesop

Checking for Understanding

1. How did the Fox and the Stork's relationship change from the beginning of the fable to the end?
2. What does the Stork mean when he says, "One bad turn deserves another"?

The Fox and the Mask
By: Aesop

Vocabulary:

- theatre – a building where plays are performed
- observed – watched and listened to carefully

Notes:

The Fox and the Mask

1 A Fox had by some means got into the storeroom of a
2 theatre. Suddenly he observed a face glaring down on him
3 and began to be very frightened; but looking more closely
4 he found it was only a Mask such as actors use to put over
5 their face. "Ah," said the Fox, "you look very fine; it is a
6 pity you have not got any brains."

7 Outside show is a poor substitute for inner
8 worth.¹⁶

The Fox and the Mask
By: Aesop

Checking for Understanding

1. What does the Fox mean when he said, "you look very fine; it is a pity you have not got any brains"?
2. What does the moral of the story mean?

The Farmer and the Snake
By: Aesop

Vocabulary:

- inflicting – to cause someone to be affected by
- bosom – a person's chest
- benefactor – someone who helps another person
- revived – made strong and healthy again
- resuming – to begin again after stopping

Notes:

The Farmer and the Snake

- 1 One winter a Farmer found a Snake stiff and frozen with
2 cold. He had compassion on it, and taking it up, placed it
3 in his bosom. The Snake was quickly revived by the
4 warmth, and resuming its natural instincts, bit its
5 benefactor, inflicting on him a mortal wound. "Oh," cried
6 the Farmer with his last breath, "I am rightly served for
7 pitying a scoundrel."
- 8 The greatest kindness will not bind the
9 ungrateful.¹⁷

¹⁷ Underlined text = juicy sentence

The Farmer and the Snake
By: Aesop

Checking for Understanding

1. What does the following sentence tell you about the Farmer: "He had compassion on it, and taking it up, placed it in his bosom."
2. What does the moral of the story mean?

The Crow and the Pitcher
By: Aesop

Vocabulary:

- necessity – something you must have
- perishing – dying or being killed
- vain – having no success

Notes:

The Crow and the Pitcher

1 A crow perishing with thirst saw a pitcher, and hoping
2 to find water, flew to it with delight. When he reached it,
3 he discovered to his grief that it contained so little water that
4 he could not possibly get at it. He tried everything he
5 could think of to reach the water, but all his efforts were in
6 vain. At last he collected as many stones as he could carry
7 and dropped them one by one with his beak into the
8 pitcher, until he brought the water within his reach and
9 thus saved his life.

10 Necessity is the mother of invention.¹⁸

¹⁸ Underlined text = juicy sentence

The Crow and the Pitcher
By: Aesop

Checking for Understanding

1. What does “perishing” mean as it is used in the following sentence: “A crow perishing with thirst saw a pitcher, and hoping to find water, flew to it with delight.”
2. How did the crow’s mood change throughout this fable?
3. What does the moral of the story mean?

The Bear and the Two Travelers

By: Aesop

Vocabulary:

- misfortune –being unlucky
- concealed – to hide something from site

Notes:

The Bear and the Two Travelers

1 Two men were traveling together, when a Bear suddenly
2 met them on their path. One of them climbed up quickly
3 into a tree and concealed himself in the branches. The other,
4 seeing that he must be attacked, fell flat on the ground, and
5 when the Bear came up and felt him with his snout, and
6 smelt him all over, he held his breath, and feigned the
7 appearance of death as much as he could. The Bear soon
8 left him, for it is said he will not touch a dead body. When
9 he was quite gone, the other Traveler descended from the
10 tree, and jocularly inquired of his friend what it was the
11 Bear had whispered in his ear. "He gave me this advice,"
12 his companion replied. "Never travel with a friend who
13 deserts you at the approach of danger."

14 Misfortune tests the sincerity of
15 friends.¹⁹

¹⁹ Underlined text = juicy sentence

The Bear and the Two Travelers
By: Aesop

Checking for Understanding

1. What does the word “feigned” mean in the following sentence:
“The other, seeing that he must be attacked, fell flat on the ground, and when the Bear came up and felt him with his snout, and smelt him all over, he held his breath, and feigned the appearance of death as much as he could”?
2. What advice did the bear give one of the men? What does it mean?

The Ant and the Dove
By: Aesop

Vocabulary:

- perceiving – noticing

Notes:

The Ant and the Dove

1 An Ant went to the bank of a river to quench its thirst,
2 and being carried away by the rush of the stream, was on
3 the point of drowning. A Dove sitting on a tree
4 overhanging the water plucked a leaf and let it fall into the
5 stream close to her. The Ant climbed onto it and floated in
6 safety to the bank. Shortly afterwards a bird catcher came
7 and stood under the tree, and laid his lime-twigs for the
8 Dove, which sat in the branches. The Ant, perceiving his
9 design, stung him in the foot. In pain the bird catcher
10 threw down the twigs, and the noise made the Dove
11 take wing.

12 One good turn deserves another.²⁰

²⁰ One good turn deserves another.

The Ant and the Dove
By: Aesop

Checking for Understanding

1. How did the Dove help the ant?
2. What does the moral of the story mean?