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**The High Road**  

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**to Common Core  
Language Arts**

**Unit I**  
**Reading**



# About Unit I

## Reading

In Unit I of this book, you will be asked to read a group of interesting stories and then to answer **Objective** (multiple choice) **Questions** based on what you have read.

One or more skills will be introduced before each story. These **Keys to Comprehension** will give you the tools you need to better understand that story as well as others in the book.


It is necessary to read all selections carefully. The **Ask Yourself** and **Recite** boxes in the story help to guide your thinking as you read. You may need to reread some sentences or paragraphs in order to get a deeper understanding of the author's message.

Following each Reading selection, you will learn one **Test Taking Skill**. It provides helpful suggestions to answer the Objective Questions that follow. Read it carefully.

When answering Objective Questions, it is always wise to *return to the story* for the information you need. In this book, some Objective Questions will also *require* you to return to the text for **evidence** to support (or prove) the answer you have chosen. It is usually wise to also reread the sentences around the key sentence as they often provide additional information that is helpful.

The charts on pages 3 and 4 of this book are reviews of all the skills taught in Unit I of the book. You may wish to check to see how many you already know *before* you read. You may also use these charts as a review *during* reading, or *after* you have finished all of Unit I.





## Summary of TEST TAKING SKILLS (Objective Questions)

1. It is important to **look back at the story** for clues to the answers. It helps to underline the evidence for your answer. (see page 8)
2. Key words in the questions, such as BEST, MOST, and MAINLY, are often written in capitals or dark print. Pay special attention to these important words. (see page 14)
3. Use **P.O.E.** (Process of Elimination) to help find the answer. Cross off all answers you know are wrong. (You can usually do this with 2 of the 4 answers.) Then take a guess. You now have a 50-50 chance of getting it right! (see page 22)
4. Diagrams in the story are important clues to some answers. Be sure to study them carefully. (see page 28)
5. Some answer choices have **2** parts. Often **only one** is correct. Don't be fooled. BOTH parts of the answer must be correct! (see page 34)
6. If you are not sure of an answer, **circle** the question **and skip** it for now. When you come to the end, go back. Words or ideas in other questions may help you remember. (see page 39)
7. Questions sometimes use the words: *before, after, first, next, or last*. They warn us to pay attention to the *sequence or order of things* in a story. (see page 46)
8. The wrong answer choices often have words used in the story. Do not be fooled. Look for the **right idea**. (see page 51)
9. If there are pictures in the story, check them, too. They are sometimes clues to an answer. (see page 57)
10. Some kids erase and change a *right* answer to *wrong*! When you check your work, change your answer **ONLY** if you are *sure*. (see page 63)



# Keys to Comprehension

## THE SPEAKER OF A POEM

The poet is the person who writes the poem. The **Speaker** is the one who seems to be telling the poem. Poets sometimes create characters to be the speakers in their poems. In this way, a grown-up person can write a poem, and a child can seem to be telling it. Read the poem below:

### Going Out to Tea

Mommy's dressing me all up  
With flowers everywhere.  
She's washed my hands.  
She's washed my face.  
She's even curled my hair.

She's made me wear my daisy hat.  
She bought me lacy gloves.  
She's dabbed perfume  
Behind my ears  
- The kind she really loves.

And now we're getting  
in the car.  
She's taking me to tea.  
I'm bringing my doll, Missy.  
I guess her doll  
is ME!

by Jane Medina



**Who is the speaker in this poem?  
About how old is he or she?**

#### As You Read:

As you read the following poem, think about the speaker.

- Is the speaker the same person as the poet?
- If not, why do you think the poet chose this speaker?

### Ask Yourself:

**Title:** What does the title tell me?

**Picture:** What is happening?

**Stanza 1:** Who is speaking?

# The Keeper of Dreams

by John Micklos, Jr.



**1**

When I grow up, I want to be  
A sailor sailing on the sea—  
Or maybe a teacher,  
Or maybe a singer,  
Or maybe a preacher,  
Or a steeple bell ringer.

## Ask Yourself:

**Stanza 3:** With whom does he share his dreams?

**2**

You could be all those things,  
My mom says to me.  
You can be anything  
That you want to be.  
Just follow your dreams,  
Wherever they lead,  
For life is a tree and  
Your dreams are the seeds.

**3**

When you're young, you can dream  
Of being anything—  
An actor, a rock star,  
An athlete, a king.  
Whatever I wish for,  
No matter how hard it seems,  
I share with my mother,  
The keeper of dreams.

## Recite:

Tell what you think this poem is about.

## Tips for Answering the Objective Question

It is important to **look back at the story** for clues to the answers.  
It helps to **underline the evidence** for your answer.

### Circle the letter next to the correct answer.

1. Who is the speaker in this poem?

- a. someone who knows the boy
- b. a college student
- c. a boy
- d. a sailor at sea

2. What does he dream about?

- a. a movie
- b. his future
- c. the past
- d. far away places

I found this evidence (information) in stanza \_\_\_\_\_,  
line \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Reread the title of the poem.

What is a "Keeper of Dreams"?

- a. someone who tells you the truth
- b. someone who shares your home
- c. someone who listens and understands
- d. someone who keeps you safe

I found this evidence (information) in stanza \_\_\_\_\_,  
line \_\_\_\_\_.

**Aligned CCLS: (1) RL.3.6; (2) RL.3.1; RL.3.1; (3) RL.3.4; RL.3.1**



4. Why does Mother mention things like rock star, athlete, or king?
- a. to show very different kinds of things
  - b. to show that these are her favorites
  - c. to say that some things are impossible
  - d. to tell her child to do one of them

5. The last two lines of stanza 2 state:

**For life is a tree and  
Your dreams are the seeds.**

To what does the poet compare a tree?

- a. dreams
  - b. life
  - c. strength
  - d. choices
6. Which word below BEST describes Mother?
- a. funny
  - b. worried
  - c. bossy
  - d. caring
7. Underline lines 2 and 4 of stanza 3. What do you notice about the end words?
- a. They have the same number of letters.
  - b. They rhyme.
  - c. They end in a period.
  - d. They tell what the speaker says.

8. By the end of the poem, what does the dreamer decide?
- a. to become a king
  - b. some things are too hard to do
  - c. to plant seeds
  - d. to keep dreaming

**Aligned CCLS: (8) RL.3.3**



**Check:**

Did you answer ALL questions? (Remember, do not leave a blank!)



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**to Common Core  
Language Arts**

**Unit II**  
**Writing**

# About Unit II: Writing

In Unit II of this book, you will need to write answers to questions about the articles and stories you read. All questions are based on the material in the selection. You will need to **read carefully**.

All questions *require* you to return to the text for “**evidence to support your answer**”. This tells you to find **information** in the story to **prove** your answer is correct. Use the information in the story – but say it in your own words.

Some questions have more than one part. **Be sure to answer all parts of the question**. There are two kinds of questions in Unit II.

## The Short Constructed-Response Question (Short C-R)

The **Short C-R Question** can be answered in one well-written paragraph. It requires you to show evidence (two details) from the passage to support your answer.

These guides **help you answer the Short C-R Question**:

*How to Answer the Short C-R Question* (page 69)– gives you a step-by-step way to answer this kind of question.

*Tips for the Short C-R* (page 70)– teaches you how to avoid the mistakes that many students make.

## The Extended Constructed-Response Question (Extended C-R)

The **Extended C-R Question** asks you to write a longer answer. It also requires you to show evidence from the article (or story) to support your answer.

These guides **help you answer the Extended C-R Question**:

*How to Answer the Extended C-R Question* (page 79) – teaches you how to write a good response.

*Tips for the Extended C-R* (page 80) – teaches you how to avoid the mistakes that many students make.

*Each Prewriting Graphic Organizer* (ie: see page 85)– guides you in taking notes and organizing your writing.

*Each Sharpen your Writing Skills* page (ie: see page 88)– gives you skills to improve your first draft.

*Each Revise and Edit* chart (ie: see page 89)– helps you check the completed response.

Use these helpers to build and polish your writing skills!









# The Lazy Gardener

## A Folktale

**1** Once there was a man who had a large estate with a huge garden. His gardener was a very lazy man. As soon as the master was out of sight, the gardener would take a snooze under a tree. He always dreamt that if he were a rich man, he would never have to work at all.



Meanwhile, the flowers died from lack of water and the bushes grew wild. In short, the garden was a mess.

**2** One day, a very wise old lady asked the lazy gardener, "Would you like to be a rich man?"

**3** "I dream of it every day," said the lazy gardener.

**4** "Plant this little black seed," she said. "It will make you very rich."

**5** Sure enough, the next day the seed had grown into a huge, beautiful flower. Just as the gardener was about to pick the flower, a little man popped out and jumped up onto his finger.

**6** "Hurry, hurry, we have work to do!" said the little man.

**7** The gardener was so surprised, he obeyed. He watered the flowers and pruned the bushes. Time went so quickly that he was surprised when the little man said, "Time for lunch!"

**8** The gardener always took a nice long nap after lunch. In fact, he usually napped until it was almost time to quit for the day. This day, as soon as he had taken the last bite of his sandwich, the little man gave him the tools. It was back to work again.

**9** By the end of the day the gardener was so tired, he whined and complained. "I will not live to be a rich man. I will get worn out and die."

**10** But the next day, the gardener found the work to be easier. The little man disappeared and was never seen again. The

garden began to look beautiful, and the gardener was proud when people stopped to admire his flowers.

**11** Soon the garden became quite famous! An Indian prince hired him to oversee all his gardens. The gardener was paid lots of money and soon was very rich. He still went to work in the garden every day because he took pleasure in all the beauty he created.



## Short Constructed-Response Questions

1. The gardener thinks his problem is that he does not have enough money. Do you agree? Explain your answer.  
*Use evidence (two details) from the story to support your answer.*

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2. Read the following sentence from paragraph 10.

**But the next day, the gardener found the work to be easier.**

Why was this so?

*Use evidence (two details) from the story to support your answer.*

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## Short Constructed-Response Questions

3. What did the wise old lady promise? Did this come true? Explain your answer.

*Use evidence (two details) from the story to support your answer.*

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4. A folktale like *The Lazy Gardener* is meant to teach a lesson. What is the lesson of this folktale?

*Use evidence (two details) from the story to support your answer.*

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