

NOTE: PLEASE SEE NOTE ABOUT SECOND ROUND OF ASSESSMENTS BEFORE DECIDING ON WHETHER OR NOT THIS ASSESSMENT IS RIGHT FOR YOUR CLASS.

THIS ASSESSMENT ASSUMES YOU ARE ADAPTING A NONFICTION UNIT IN READING TO ALLOW FOR TEACHING STUDENTS TO ANALYZE THE REASONS AUTHOR'S GIVE TO SUPPORT POINTS IN A TEXT.

GRADE: First Grade

NAME OF ASSESSMENT:

Reading Informational Texts and Explanatory Writing Assessment

STANDARDS ASSESSED:

- Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text. (RI.1.4)
- Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text. (RI.1.8)
- With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1. (RI.1.10)
- Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure. (W.1.2)

Depth of Knowledge Level of task: Levels 2-3

Task Details:

- **Duration of administration:** Feedback needed from pilot schools.
- **Time of year when administered:** Spring (so that reading level is appropriate)
- **Materials needed:**
 - *Why Should I Protect Nature*, by Jen Green, Mike Gordan, illustrator. Hauppauge, New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 2002.
Excerpts for the assessment:
Pages 4-13 (for read aloud)
Pages 14-22 (copied for all students)

Explanation of Standards Alignment:

RI.1.4. Students will ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

- Students will ask and answer questions to help determine the meaning of the word “litter”.

RI.1.8: Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

- Students will identify the reasons that Jen Green and Mike Gordan give in the book *Why Should I Protect Nature?* to support the point that we should protect nature.

RI.1.10: With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1.

- With support through read aloud and prompts, student will analyze a grade-level complex text.

W.1.2: Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

- Students will write an explanatory text to name the point the author makes in *Why Should I Protect Nature*, supply some facts from the text that support that point, and provide some sense of closure.

Overview of Assessment

Note: Suggested teacher prompts follow – please alter and make note of alterations based on your own conversational style and the ways in which you’ve talked about reading and writing nonfiction in your own classroom. The tasks below could be administered in many different ways.

Suggested time frame: approximately 60 minutes total.

Introduction and Read Aloud of pages 4-22 (Note: this could be on a separate day before the writing portion of the assessment.)

Teacher gives a text introduction and reads aloud these pages as an introduction to the book and its topic. Teacher thinks aloud and prompts so that students are aware of the point the author makes by page 14: “We should protect nature.”

Task 1: Asking and answering questions to determine the meaning of the word “litter” (p. 19)

Students will be given copies of pages 14-22, and asked to turn to page 19. The teacher will prompt them to consider the question: “What does the word ‘litter’ mean here?” They will read on and draw and write to explain in their own words what they think the word means based on the text.

Task 2: Re-Reading Independently to Identify the Reasons the Author Gives for Why We Should Protect Nature

Students will re-read pages 14-22 to determine what reasons the author gives for why we should protect nature. They will write to share these reasons in an information book, supplying facts from the text to support the point and providing a sense of closure.

Suggested Teacher Prompts (tips in italics, possible language to kids in quotes):

Preparation for the Assessment:

- *Make copies from Why Should I Protect Nature? (one packet per student): pages 14-22*
- *Make copies of a one-page vocabulary explanation sheet with the word “litter” at the top of the page, a drawing box, and 3 lines for writing.*
- *Make copies from Why Should I Protect Nature? (one packet per student): Make copies of student answer booklets*
- *Make extra copies of blank pages for information writing in case students write more than the two provided pages*
- *Prepare chart with these questions:*
 - What big ideas does this book teach us about protecting nature?
 - What reasons does the author give to help us understand these ideas?
- *Chart expectations for information writing:*
 - Quickly plan how your writing will go
 - Name the topic – let your reader know what you’re writing about.
 - Use facts from the text.
 - Write a final sentence that reminds your reader of your topic.

Introduction and Read Aloud of Why Should I Protect Nature?

Task 1: Asking and Answering Questions About Unknown Words (CCSS RI K.4) (approximately 30 minutes)

“We are going to spend some time looking closely at an information book. Usually information books teach us important ideas about a topic. As readers, we can look for these ideas and also read closely to find out the reasons why these ideas are true.

Today, we will read the book *Why Should I Protect Nature?* by Jen Green. We will read to find out all the reasons why the author thinks we should protect nature. In the next few days, I’ll meet with all of you in small groups to give you a chance to re-read the book, and to write and draw to share an idea you learned from this book, and the reasons the book gives us for why that idea is true.”

Let’s read together.

Read the title page and stop to think:

“So the title is *Why Should I Protect Nature?*. That’s already giving us an important idea about nature – that we should protect it! Let’s read to find out *why* we should protect nature – the reasons for believing this idea.”

After page 14:

“What does this book want us to think about Nature? Think about the title of the book... what have we read so far that goes along with that title?”

After page 16:

“Now we’ve read a little bit, and we’re starting to understand what the author wants us to know about nature. Let’s talk about what we’ve learned. What is this book teaching us about *why* we should protect nature? Turn and tell your partner one reason.”

Listen in to assess:

- *Are students naming specific reasons –things like “if we break off branches, we couldn’t climb trees” or “tree branches are important to birds”?*
- *Are students not naming specific reasons but instead repeating the main point “We need to protect nature.” Or using personal experience only as in “I like trees.”*

Share out one or two examples of reasons from the text and chart them under “Why should we protect nature?”

After page 22:

“Now we have learned some more reasons why we should protect nature. What else does this book say about this idea?”

Students talk to their partners to discuss this as rehearsal for their writing.

Listen in to assess:

Note which students...

- *Understand the relationship between the reasons and the points the author is making, “We need to protect nature so that we can climb trees/so that birds have homes/so that we don’t hurt animals.”*
- *List details without connecting them to the bigger point, i.e. “Birds need branches.” “Animals can die from litter.”*
- *Confuse reasons and points in their conversation, i.e. “We shouldn’t break off tree branches because litter hurts animals.”*

Note students who are not listing appropriate reasons – group these students together to provide extra support for the writing task.

Chart some model responses.

Possible wrap-up to this part:

“This book is helping us think about all the reasons why we should protect nature. Over the next couple of days, you will have a chance to read this book again with me and to write about what it teaches us about why we should protect nature.”

“Let’s take some time to look at a word that we read in this book.”

Enlarge page 19 on a document camera or scanned version on a SmartBoard.

The word “litter” is an important part of this page.

What questions do you have about this word? Turn to a partner and ask each other questions you have about this word and what it means in this book. Use what you know from the picture and from the rest of this page to help you ask and answer questions.

Teacher circulates to quickly transcribe questions or to record who is asking and answering questions about the word “litter.”

Now you have a chance to make a page that teaches what the word “litter” means. Draw and write to explain this word.

Give students clipboards and the one-page vocabulary sheet with “Litter” at the top. Make sure to circulate to support students in thinking through the word and its meaning and in capturing their thoughts on paper.

Note: the writing task could be given as a whole class task immediately following the read aloud and vocabulary task; or the task could be given in small groups across two or three days, giving a teacher more opportunity to interact during the assessment and capture dictated writing. The following outlines the small group option:

Set up small groups of 4-5 students, based on initial assessment during read aloud of which students need more support versus less support when listing reasons that correspond with the point “We should protect nature.”

Groups that need more support:

“Today, we are going to re-read Jen Green’s book *Why Should I Protect Nature*. We know that this book teaches us some reasons why it’s important to protect nature. For example, in the first section, we read that tree branches are homes for birds, and without those branches, birds couldn’t build nests. On this page, we find another reason why it’s so important for plants and animals. Let’s read it together and think about what this page is saying:”

Re-read pages 17-18.

“What is this page teaching us about why it’s important to protect nature?”

Facilitate a conversation – listen for: This page shows that if we don’t protect flowers and bees, we won’t have any honey.

“Now you’re going to have a chance to re-read this book on your own. When you’ve finished re-reading, I’m going to ask you to write and draw to tell the reasons the book gives for why we should protect nature.”

Groups that need less support:

“Today, we are going to re-read Jen Green’s book *Why Should I Protect Nature*. This book teaches us many reasons why we should protect nature. As you read, think about the reasons that the author gives. When you’ve finished re-reading, I’m going to ask you to write and draw to tell the reasons the book gives for why we should protect nature.”

“Begin reading. When you have finished reading, I will give you a booklet for your writing.”

Task 2: Written Response to *Why Should I Protect Nature* (approximately 20 minutes)

“In the book *Why Should I Protect Nature*, the author teaches us many reasons why we should protect nature instead of hurting it. Write an information book that teaches the reasons that the author gives. You may look back at the book to help you with this.

Remember that you are only writing down reasons that the book gives, not your own reasons.

There are 5 pages in the books I've given you, but if you need more pages, there are some extras at your tables to add. You will have _____ minutes to write your books. Remember to name what you're writing about on each page, and to use what you know about organizing information across pages, making labels for drawings, writing to teach and explain information, and spelling words the best you can to write this book. I will come around to talk to you about your book as you're working."

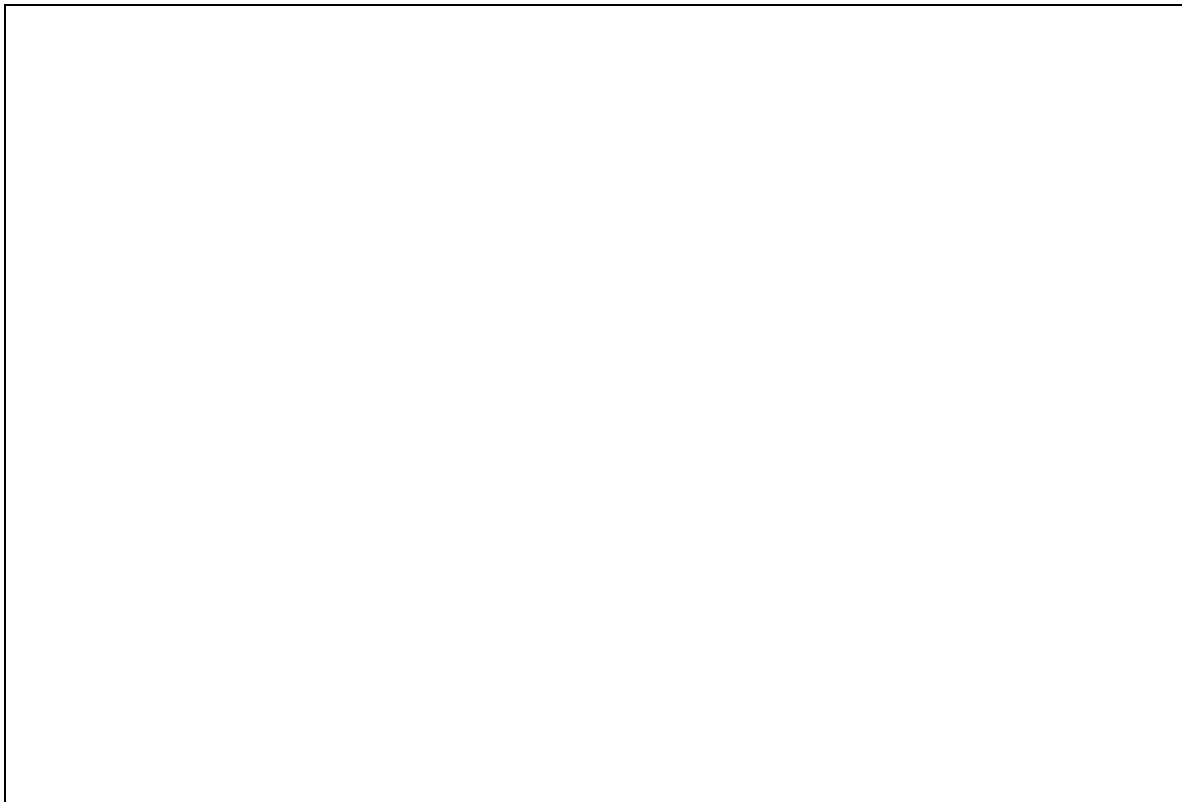
Note: teachers may decide to chart these tips along with picture support (for example, a picture of the pages in a book, etc.) so students can view them while writing.

Remember, when writing an information book...

- *Name what you're writing about on each page (use a heading)*
- *Organize information across pages.*
- *Include pictures and labels.*
- *Write to teach and explain information.*
- *Spell words the best you can.*

Circulate and take dictation where appropriate to add students' thinking to books.

Title:



Written by:

Litter



Title:

Written by:

