



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 3: Module 1: Unit 1: Lesson 6**

## **Close Reading of *Nasreen's Secret School*: How Do People Access Books in Afghanistan?**



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**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can identify the main message or lesson of a story using key details from the text. (RL.3.2)  
I can describe the characters in a story (their traits, motivations, feelings). (RL.3.3)  
I can describe how a character's actions contribute to the events in the story. (RL.3.3)  
I can document what I learn about a topic by sorting evidence into categories. (W.3.8)  
I can follow our class norms when I participate in a conversation. (SL.3.1b)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can identify the main message of *Nasreen's Secret School* by reading the text closely.
- I can describe what Nasreen wanted and what she did.
- I can sort key details from *Nasreen's Secret School* into categories.
- I can discuss how the main message is conveyed through key details.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Close Read recording form (parts 1 and 2)
- Conversation Criteria checklist



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Engaging the Reader and Building Fluency. Read-aloud of <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> by Jeanette Winter (5 minutes)</li> <li>B. Unpacking the Learning Targets (5 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Work Time               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Rereading on Your Own: Capturing the Gist (20 minutes)</li> <li>B. Reading Again for Important Details: Somebody In Wanted But So (SIWBS) (20 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Closing and Assessment               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Debrief (10 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Homework               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Read some sections of <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> out loud to someone at home or in front of a mirror. Tell someone at home what you already have figured out about the story.</li> <li>B. Share the Letter to Families with an adult family member at home.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This lesson repeats the two-day close reading cycle from Lessons 2 and 3, with a new text.</li> <li>• Review: Helping Students Read Closely (Appendix 1).</li> <li>• This lesson includes the start of the Mid-Unit Assessment regarding students' discussion skills and how well they are collaborating with peers. Note that there is no formal "assessment" document to distribute to students. Rather, begin using the Conversation Criteria checklist (see supporting materials) to collect formal data for the Mid-Unit Assessment.</li> <li>• In advance: Review the Letter to Families about the topic of this book. Consider how you might adapt your presentation of this to the needs of your community and your classroom culture.</li> <li>• This text, <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i>, is one of two texts in this unit that are written by Jeannette Winter, who has written dozens of acclaimed children's books (ranging from adaptations of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" to fictional accounts of Emily Dickinson, Beatrix Potter and Jane Goodall). In these two texts, Winter addresses the importance of literacy and books even during times of war. Both texts include some reference to violence. The leading children publishing and teaching resource web sites unanimously agree that these texts are appropriate and effective for 3rd-grade children. Some of the books' themes challenge students to think through and learn to communicate new ideas, which is why these texts are so effective and widely used.</li> <li>• In Lessons 6 and 7 time is set aside to discuss with students that in some places in the world, there are wars that are scary. Use this discussion as an opportunity to build students' idealism, help them articulate it, describe what it means to act bravely, and notice how Nasreen pursues the power of reading.</li> </ul>



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
gist, message (in a story), lesson (in a story), detail, characters, setting, motivation, problem, solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> (book; one per student)</li><li>• Document camera and projector</li><li>• Sticky notes</li><li>• Anchor chart: Close Read recording form for <i>Rain School</i> (from Lessons 2 and 3)</li><li>• Close Read recording form (one per student)</li><li>• Conversation Criteria Checklist (from Lesson 4; included again here for teacher use to gather data as the Mid-Unit 1 Assessment)</li><li>• Close Read Recording Form for <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> anchor chart (new; teacher-created)</li><li>• Letter to Families (optional; adapt as suits your community)</li></ul>



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Engaging the Reader and Building Fluency: Read-aloud of <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gather students in a circle. Remind students of the important reading work they did with <i>Rain School</i>. Invite individual students to turn and talk about the steps they took to read that text closely. Re-orient them to the <b>Anchor Chart: Close Read recording form for <i>Rain School</i></b>.</li><li>• Tell them that today, you will be doing the same process, but with a new text, about a child going to school in a new place.</li><li>• Distribute <b><i>Nasreen's Secret School</i></b> to students. Project <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> and read aloud. Tell students that the text will be projected for them, and they should read along in their own text.</li><li>• Remind students that the purpose of this read-aloud is simply to acquaint them with the text. Students should listen, enjoy, and follow the flow of the story. Do NOT aid students in comprehension at this point through questioning or discussion.</li><li>• Read slowly, fluently, without interruption, as students follow along in their own text.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allowing students to see the text and illustrations will aid them in their comprehension.</li><li>• If a projector is not available, try providing multiple copies of the book, or positioning the book so it can best be seen by all students.</li></ul>
<p><b>B. Unpacking the Learning Targets (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct students to the learning target "I can discuss how the main message of <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> is conveyed through key details." Circle the word <i>discuss</i>. Invite students to share what this word means. Remind students that in reading closely the text <i>Rain School</i>, they talked about their ideas with one another, following class norms for conversation. Review the class norms for conversation with the class, emphasizing speaking in complete sentences, looking one another in the eye, and giving everyone a chance to speak.</li><li>• Remind students that today, as they work with their groups, you will be listening in to start to assess how well they are collaborating with their peers.</li></ul>	



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Rereading on Your Own: Capturing the Gist (20 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distribute the <b>Close Read recording form for <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i></b> to each student. Remind students of the close reading work they did the first time they read <i>Rain School</i> independently.</li><li>• Ask them: “What did we do as readers?” Elicit student responses.</li><li>• Point students to the Close Read recording form for of <i>Rain School</i> that they created in Lessons 2 and 3.</li><li>• They will do several important things:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Read and think on their own to find the gist of each section by writing their ideas on the text or <b>sticky notes</b>, and underlining unfamiliar words or putting them on sticky notes</li><li>* Talk with their group about the text</li><li>* Write notes or answer questions about the text</li><li>* Review the words <i>gist</i> and <i>unfamiliar</i>.</li></ul></li><li>• Once all students are clear on the task, distribute sticky notes, and give them 10 to 15 minutes to work with <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> on their own.</li><li>• If necessary, chunk the text for students (see Meeting Students' Needs). Circulate to support students as needed.</li><li>• After 15 minutes, ask students to fill in the top box, which asks for their ideas about the lesson of the story, on their Close Read recording form.</li><li>• Once they have done this, tell students they will now have 10 minutes to discuss, in small groups or partnerships, the reading work they have done so far. “What is this story mostly about?” Remind students of the class norms for conversation.</li><li>• As students discuss their work, circulate with the <b>Conversation Criteria checklist</b>. Use this time to assess one or two small groups for the mid-unit assessment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To make it more accessible to students, consider breaking the text into the following sections:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. pp 1–9 (ending with: “I knew I had to do something.”)</li><li>2. pp 10–21 (ending with: “Would we ever know what had happened?”)</li><li>3. pp 22–33 (end of story)</li></ol></li></ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. Reading Again for Important Details: Somebody In Wanted But So (SIWBS) (20 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gather students back in a circle. Direct their attention to the anchor chart: Close Read recording form for <i>Rain School</i>.</li><li>• Use this to review the categories students used to collect important details. Remind students that they were looking for character, setting, motivation, problem, and solution. Review this vocabulary to clarify and activate students' knowledge from Lessons 2 and 3.</li><li>• Ask students to return to their seats to read independently, using the SIWBS graphic organizer to help them focus.</li><li>• Remind them that it is very important to read the entire text again, not just “hunt and peck” for important details. Details are more or less important based on a reader's understanding of the main message of a text. And when a reader starts to identify a pattern in the details, then the reader's understanding of the main message may grow or change.</li><li>• As students read and collect important details, circulate and support them as needed.</li><li>• After 10 minutes of independent close reading time, invite students to once again discuss their reading with their groups. Ask students to go through each category of note-taking, giving every student in their group a chance to share their ideas. Tell them that when there is a difference between two students' ideas, it is important to notice that and discuss why each made the decision he or she made.</li><li>• As students discuss their work, circulate with the Conversation Criteria checklist. Use this time to assess one or two small groups for the mid-unit assessment.</li><li>• Before students return to a circle, ask them to return to the idea of the story's <i>message</i> or <i>lesson</i>. Review what these terms mean in this context.</li><li>• Remind them to think about the details they just wrote and discussed, and decide if their ideas about the story's lesson changed at all.</li><li>• Gather students back in a circle. Invite students to assist in completing the anchor chart: Close Read recording form for <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i>. Consider keeping this chart posted next to the anchor chart: Close Read recording form for <i>Rain School</i>. It is very helpful for students to have a sense of routine as they begin to build their stamina for reading closely.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider allowing ELL students to pair up with students who speak their native language for the partner/small group discussion portion.</li></ul>



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Debrief (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Debrief with three questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “What do you think the lesson of this story is?”</li><li>* “What details in the story helped you decide the lesson?”</li><li>* How might you have felt if you were Nasreen?</li></ul></li><li>• After students have had the opportunity to discuss these questions about the book, follow-up with a conversation that might sound like: “In some places in the world, there are people who are fighting in a war. This may feel scary and sad to people and that is ok. As a reader, you may sometimes encounter ideas that make you feel different emotions—sometimes you might feel happy and other times, sad or angry. I encourage you to find an adult to talk to when you read a book that makes you feel sad or angry.</li></ul>	
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read some sections of <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i> out loud to someone at home or in front of a mirror. Tell someone at home what you already have figured out about the story. What is the story mostly about? What details are important, and why? How are the students in that school like you? How are they different?</li><li>• Share the <b>Letter to Families</b> with an adult family member at home. After your family member has had a chance to read the letter, have a conversation about any feelings you may have had while reading the text <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i>.</li></ul> <p><i>Note: For the next lesson, students will continue to work with their Close Read recording forms and their copy of <i>Nasreen's Secret School</i>. Consider collecting students' work from today, so nothing gets lost, or direct students to save them in a reading folder.</i></p>	<p>For ELLs or struggling readers, consider highlighting their text to help them find some important details that will help them answer the questions.</p>





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## Supporting Materials



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Close Read Recording Form

Name:

Date:

Close Read Recording Form for book:

**Capturing the Gist of a Story**

After reading this for the first time on your own, what do you think the lesson of this story is?



Close Read Recording Form

**Gathering Important Details in a Story**

Somebody ... ( <i>character</i> )	
in ... ( <i>setting</i> )	
wanted ... ( <i>motivation</i> )	
but ... ( <i>problem</i> )	
so ... ( <i>resolution</i> )	
<p>After thinking more closely about the characters and their motivations, <i>now</i> what do you think the lesson of this story is? Why do you think this?</p>	

<sup>1</sup>Kylene Beers, *When Kids Can't Read: What Teachers Can Do* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003), 144–49.



For example: P= Partner, G= Small Group, C= Whole Class)

[illegible]



Dear Families,

At school, students are learning about the power of literacy and about the effort people go to in order to access books around the world. As a part of this, they will read two books that describe the importance of literacy and books, even during times of war. They learn about heroic people who go to great lengths to get the “power of reading” in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both countries have experienced war in recent years.

In class today, students began to read *Nasreen’s Secret School* and to discuss these issues. We discussed how violence does happen around the world, and how heroic the characters are in this book. We also discussed that readers might have different feelings (like sadness or anger) when reading about difficult issues. We discussed that it is normal to have these kinds of feelings, and it is important to find an adult that you trust that you can talk to about what you are thinking and feeling. Please ask your child about the book they read today and offer your support should your child ask for it.

We welcome your feedback and questions about the important work that we are doing to support your child’s growth as a reader, writer, and citizen.

Please print and sign your name on this letter and return it with your child to school tomorrow so that we know that you received this communication.

Sincerely,

---

Parent/guardian name & signature



Estimadas familias,

En la escuela, los estudiantes están aprendiendo sobre el poder de la literatura y el esfuerzo de la gente al rededor del mundo para tener acceso a los libros. Como parte de esto, leerán dos libros que describen la importancia de la literatura y de los libros, incluso durante tiempos de guerra. Ellos aprenden acerca de las personas heroicas que hacen todo lo posible para obtener “el poder de la lectura” en Irak y Afganistán. Ambos países tuvieron experiencia de guerra en los últimos años.

En la clase de hoy, los estudiantes empezaron a leer *Nasreen's Secret School* y hablar de estos temas. Hablamos sobre como la violencia ocurre alrededor del mundo, y como son heroicos los personajes en los libros. También hablamos sobre los lectores que podrían tener diferentes emociones (como la tristeza o amargura) cuando leen sobre temas difíciles. Hablamos sobre que es normal tener emociones como estas, y es importante encontrar un adulto en quien confías y con quien puedes hablar sobre lo que estas pensando y sintiendo. Por favor pregúntele a su hijo acerca del libro que leímos hoy y ofrezca su apoyo en caso de que su hijo lo pida.

Agradecemos sus comentarios y preguntas acerca de la importante obra que estamos haciendo para apoyar el crecimiento de su niño como lector, escritor y ciudadano.

Por favor imprima esta carta y firme su nombre y devuélvala a la escuela con su hijo mañana para que sepamos que ha recibido esta comunicación.

Atentamente,

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Nombre y firma del padre / tutor