

## English Language Arts/Literacy: Spring of 1st Grade

### Overview

In the spring assessment, students are asked to use what they learn from an informational song to better understand what happened to Toad’s seeds in the chapter “In the Garden” from *Frog and Toad Together*. After learning what real seeds need to grow, students write a letter to Toad explaining why his seeds finally came up at the end of the chapter. This task is designed to take place in whole-group settings at the end of the 1st grade. The specific passages and informational text used are designed to model how to conduct this task over four days. **Teachers can substitute another high-quality piece of literature and/or informational text and develop a response sheet specific to that text if this book or video is not available.**

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## TASK: Informational Read-Aloud

### Standards Assessed

#### Reading Informational Text

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.1** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.2** Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

#### Writing

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.8** With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

### Teacher Preparation

#### Materials Needed

- Frog and Toad Together* by Arnold Lobel\*
- Pencils
- Student Response Sheet
- “Dear Toad” Letter Template
- Individual Score Sheet
- Group Score Sheet

**\*The task can be completed using a single copy of the book. However, if possible, it is helpful to provide additional copies for student use.**

#### Preparation

- Review the task sequence.
- Make one copy of the “Dear Toad” Letter Template, Student Response Sheet and lyrics page per student.
- Make as many copies of the Group Score Sheet as necessary to include all students in your class.
- Mark the starting pages from *Frog and Toad Together* before your session.
- Read the excerpt in advance and ensure that you can show video or transfer the lyrics on page 5 to a piece of chart paper.
- Bring your copies of “Dear Toad” Letter Template, score sheet(s), lyrics page and the text to the session.
- Use a clock or timer to maintain the appropriate pace for the assessment administration.

### Scoring

Use the Group Score Sheet during and after the session to develop an initial impression of student performance. This sheet can be supplemented with personal notes. After the tasks are complete, copy one Individual Score Sheet per student. Attach this as a cover sheet to the letter each student writes. This sheet will provide a final score for each student in your class.

## Task Assessment Activities

### Day One (Allow 35 minutes)

#### 1. Introduce the Assessment

- a. This assessment is designed to help you get to know more about your students as learners and readers. During the next two days, they will be listening to stories and an informational video and then answering questions — doing some things by themselves and some things together as a group.

#### 2. First Reading

- a. Introduce the book by pointing out the title and the author, as well as the specific chapter (“In the Garden”) that will be read. You may point out to students that they have heard this story earlier in the year and may remember it. Set the purpose for reading by explaining that Toad faced a major problem in the story because he planted a garden and his seeds did not grow at first. On this day, students will be thinking about why Toad’s seeds finally grew at the end of the chapter. Read the chapter out loud with appropriate pacing and expression.
- b. After you read “In the Garden,” tell students that next they will listen to a song to learn more about how real seeds grow. They should think about Toad’s garden while they watch. Show “The Needs of a Plant” video on YouTube (the full text appears on the screen in each frame) or read the text aloud to the students.

“The Needs of a Plant” (song for kids): Harry Kindergarten Music

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQT6piZOX7c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQT6piZOX7c)

#### 3. Second Reading

- a. As a second reading, students choral read the text from “The Needs of a Plant,” either from handouts (see page 5) or from chart paper.

#### 4. Graphic Organizer

- a. On their own, students fill out the sheet on page 6, providing the main idea and supporting details for “The Needs of a Plant.” Be sure each student has a paper copy of the song lyrics to refer to and encourage them to reread on their own. Collect their completed graphic organizers; you will return them to students to use as notes when they write on Day Three.

NOTE: This is an individual student activity. Make sure that students complete this work on their own to understand their development in regard to the standards.

### Day Two (Allow 20 minutes)

#### 1. Third Reading

- a.** Tell students that today the class is going to do some more thinking about Toad, the fictional character who had trouble getting his garden to grow. Explain that, as you reread the chapter, you want students to look and listen carefully so they can tell you what things Toad did to try to get his garden to grow. Reread, stopping frequently and calling attention to the illustrations, as students point out Toad’s efforts to get his seeds to grow by lighting a candle, reading them stories, singing to them, etc. Then discuss as a class:
  - Did the things Toad did really help his seeds to grow? Why do you think so?
  - What did we learn from “The Needs of a Plant” that could give us a better explanation of why Toad’s plants finally grew? Be sure students draw the conclusion that the seeds must have had water, soil, air, light and water to have grown. Sing the song or review the video if needed.
- b.** Tell students to imagine that they are going to write a letter to Toad and explain to him why his plants were really able to grow. Have students turn and talk to a partner, pretending that their partner is Toad and practicing verbally what they are going to write. This will serve as oral rehearsal for tomorrow’s writing. Share ideas briefly as a class and explain that tomorrow students will write a letter to Toad.

### Day Three (Allow 40 minutes)

#### 1. Creating an Explanation

- a.** Sing or reread the text of “The Needs of a Plant.” Be sure that student have a paper copy of “The Needs of a Plant” and their graphic organizer from Day One as they respond to the following writing prompt:

Toad thought his plants grew because he sang to them and read them stories. Now that you have read about the things real plants need, why do you think Toad’s plants finally grew? Use details from “The Needs of a Plant” to explain your thinking in a letter to Toad.
- b.** Provide students with the letter sheet and a variety of writing utensils. Provide oral directions to explain to students how they can complete the activity. Remind them to write in complete sentences. Circulate while students are writing, both to monitor their work and to provide assistance as needed in explaining the directions. The format of the writing will be scaffolded by the template, but the content/writing should be done independently.
- c.** Students who struggle with writing may be directed to draw instead, or you may take dictation. This support will be noted in the score the student receives.

NOTE: This is an individual student activity. Make sure that students complete this work on their own to understand their development in regard to the standards.

## THE NEEDS OF A PLANT

For a plant to stay alive  
It needs 5 things, I would not lie

It needs water so it can grow  
And it needs soil, just like so

Plants need space, they can't be tight  
The sun helps plants by giving light

Don't forget to give plants air  
Repeat the needs if you dare:

NEED 1 — Water!

NEED 2 — Soil!

NEED 3 — Space!

NEED 4 — Light!

NEED 5 — Air!

A PLANT!!!!!!

“The Needs of a Plant” (song for kids): Harry Kindergarten Music  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQT6piZOX7c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQT6piZOX7c)

**STUDENT RESPONSE SHEET: Main Idea and Supporting Details: “The Needs of a Plant”**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

What is this song about?



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In the boxes below, draw and write about three things a plant needs to grow.

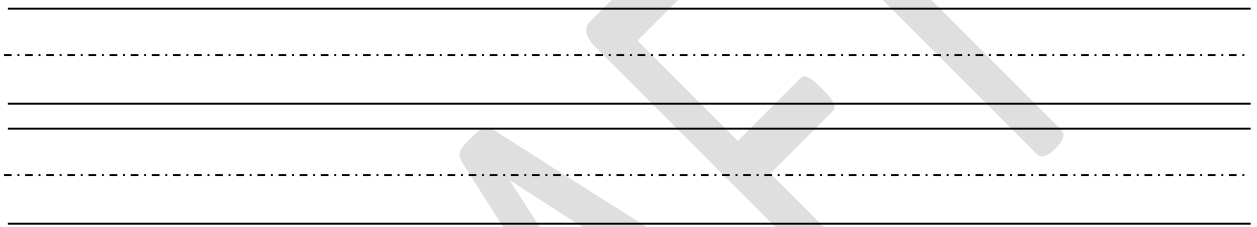
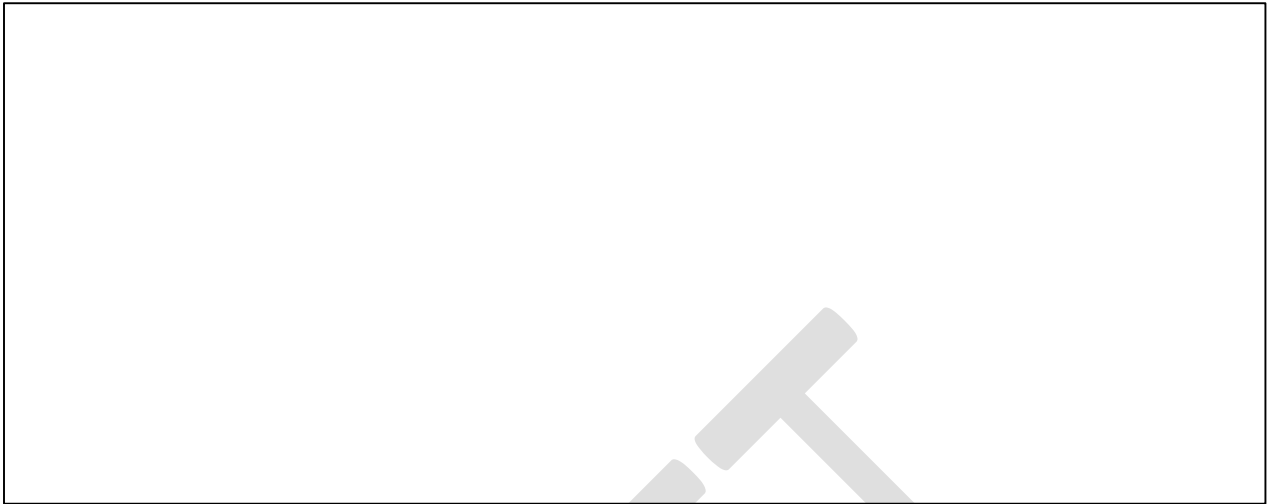
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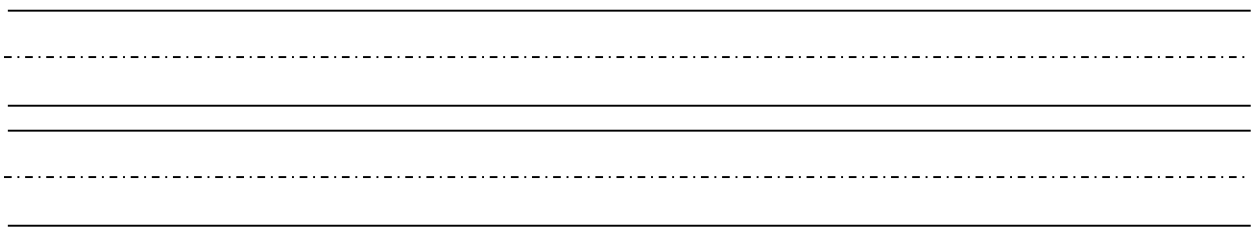
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Dear Toad,

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Handwriting practice area consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid) for writing practice.

Sincerely,

### INDIVIDUAL SCORE SHEET: Informational Text

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the chart below to indicate where the student resides in the trajectory of reaching grade-level proficiency for specific standards. Use the Notes section to record specific observations of performance, such as oral responses to prompts.

**Key**

**Beginning:** The student demonstrates the skill(s) required by the standards intermittently and inconsistently or requires significant scaffolding (e.g., dictation for a written task).

**Developing:** The skill(s) represented by the standards are present but not reliably employed.

**Secure:** The skill(s) represented by the standards are established and consistently employed.

**Extending:** The skill(s) represented by the standards are firmly established, consistently employed, and often displayed with precision and detail.

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beginning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Developing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Extending	Notes:
<b>Story Comprehension</b>					
<b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.1</b> Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.					
<b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.2</b> Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.					
<b>Writing</b>					
<b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.2</b> Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.					
<b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.8</b> With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.					

**GROUP SCORE SHEET: Informational Text**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**B = Beginning D = Developing S = Secure E = Extending**

<b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.1</b> Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. <b>Sources of evidence:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in group discussion</li> <li>• Main idea graphic organizer</li> </ul>				<b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.2</b> Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. <b>Source of evidence:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main idea graphic organizer</li> </ul>				<b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.2</b> Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure. <b>Source of evidence:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter to Toad</li> </ul>				<b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.8</b> With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. <b>Source of evidence:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter to Toad</li> </ul>			
B	D	S	E	B	D	S	E	B	D	S	E	B	D	S	E

**STUDENT NAME**

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**Beginning:** The student demonstrates the skill(s) required by the standards intermittently and inconsistently or requires significant scaffolding (e.g., dictation for a written task). **Developing:** The skill(s) represented by the standards are present but not reliably employed. **Secure:** The skill(s) represented by the standards are established and consistently employed. **Extending:** The skill(s) represented by the standards are firmly established, consistently employed, and often displayed with precision and detail.

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