

Just for Girls!

Reading Comprehension

Grades 6-8

Written by Eleanor M. Summers
Illustrated by S&S Learning Materials

About the author:

Eleanor Summers is a retired elementary teacher who continues to be involved at various levels of education

ISBN: 978-1-55495-005-8

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Published in the U.S.A by:
On The Mark Press
3909 Witmer Road PMB 175
Niagara Falls, New York
14305
www.onthemarkpress.com

Published in Canada by:
S&S Learning Materials
15 Dairy Avenue
Napanee, Ontario
K7R 1M4
www.sslearning.com

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At A Glance

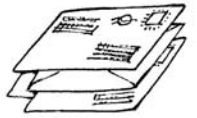
Learning Expectations	Grade 6 Fiction						Grade 6 Nonfiction						Grade 7 Fiction						Grade 7 Nonfiction						Grade 8 Fiction						Grade 8 Nonfiction					
Vocabulary, Word Usage & Grammar																																				
• Identify word meanings	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Antonyms/synonyms/idioms																																				
• Dictionary and thesaurus skills																																				
• Write complete sentences	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Reading Comprehension																																				
• Identify and describe main text elements	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Understand words in context	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Summarize main events and provide supporting details	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Identify and describe character traits and relationships between characters	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Reasoning and Critical Thinking																																				
• Analyze and evaluate text elements	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Point of view of a character/person	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Compare and contrast setting or characters/persons	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Analyze character/people traits and behaviors	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Identify and describe cause and effect	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Express opinions/provide evidence from text	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Evaluate evidence	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Creative writing	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Relate text to personal experiences	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Extend text message to personal actions and behaviors	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Creativity and Design																																				
• Create a visual product from ideas gained from text	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Express feelings and emotions in a visual form	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Demonstrate an understanding of the story through artistic interpretations	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

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Grandma's Secret



1. As people age, there may come a time when they cannot live in their own home. What are some reasons that elderly people could no longer live alone?

2. Where would elderly people live if not in their own home? Try to think of at least three places.

3. Jen describes her Grandpa and Grandma as "old school." Write the meaning of this expression in your own words.

4. In this poem, Jen and her mother have to pack up Grandma's belongings. Why would that be a hard task? _____

5. Describe a time in your life when an elderly person had to move out of their home or tell about someone else you know. _____

6. Write a short meaning or synonym for each of these words:

- a) forlorn: _____
- b) invasion: _____
- c) beau: _____
- d) lifeline : _____



"Come, Jen," my mother called me. "I need your help today.
We need to clean through Grandma's house and pack some things away."
I thought of Grandma Ella, no longer living on her own
Her mind and body weary, she's in a nursing home.

We drive up to the old house, weathered and so worn
Reminds me of Grandma Ella, a thought I find forlorn.
I look out in the backyard where all we kids would play
The sand pile and the swing set, it seems like yesterday.

I loved those summer visits. Oh, the stories Gram would share.
She cooked and cared for all of us, it seemed, without a care.
She'd say "It makes me happy to share all of your love."
"I know that Grandpa's watching us high up from above."

My Grandpa, just like Grandma, was what they call "old school"
Always helping others and living the Golden Rule.
Suddenly Grandpa left us, without a real goodbye
But Grandma, in her wisdom, encouraged us to cry.

7. Explain in your own words: "living the Golden Rule."

8. Why do you think Grandma encouraged the children to cry?

I help Mom in the kitchen. We sort through things and pack
Neither of us saying we know Gram won't be back.
"I'm going to the attic," I call out as I leave
But what I'm really looking for is a quiet place to grieve.

I climb the stairs while thinking "I wonder what I'll find"
Some treasure or a memory that time has left behind.
Over in the corner, half hidden from my view
A battered looking hat box my attention drew.



It was scratched and it was dusty, but still I want to look
I tugged the lid so gently, like opening a book.
Piles and piles of letters, tied up with ribbon blue,
Old names, old stamps, old writing, were the only clue.



Some letters were for Grandma, from places long ago.
Some letters, in her writing, were for a name I did not know.
It seemed like an invasion just to start to read
But somehow deep inside me, it was an aching need.

8. Why do you think Jen had "an aching need" to read some of the letters she found?



The letters told a story of a young love, oh, so strong
In spite of all life's troubles, nothing could go wrong.
But then, the Great War started, and Grandma's beau was far away
For he would serve his country and he'd return someday.

Those letters were Gram's lifeline to a world so far away,
Where young men fought so fiercely and with their lives did pay.
Each day, Gram had no real choice except to wait and wait
And hope that death would not become her soldier's final fate.

But there, a government letter, at the bottom of the pile
I waited to unfold it, knowing the contents all the while.
It began, "We regret to inform you ' I felt a sudden tear
For it held news for Grandma, oh so hard to hear.

I sat there just reflecting on all that I had read.
At once, a hundred questions were whirling in my head.
I tried to make some sense of this and then it was so clear.
My Grandma's love, her soldier boy, was such a memory dear.

9. Why do you think that Grandma had kept all of these old letters for so many years?



Gram loved my Grandpa dearly, she was proud to be his wife,
Looking after him and family was the focus of her life.
No one had ever mentioned this soldier from the past,
A secret that was hidden but now was told at last.



I heard my mother calling as she looked for me.
I gathered up the letters, afraid that she would see.
Soon she walked toward me and then I saw her smile.
"I see you found Gram's letters. They've been there a while."

She must have seen my shocked look and surprise upon my face
And then she helped me to restore Gram's letters to their place.
"Some day when you are older, I'm sure you'll understand
That past events and present, sometimes go hand in hand."

10. Why would Jen be shocked and surprised that her mother knew about the letters? _____

"That soldier boy that Gram once loved more than any other
Was like another kind, good man... for he was Grandpa's brother.
Gramps made a vow that he would care for Grandma from the start
And soon his love and all that care, won your Grandma's heart."

"I think she kept the letters, though many years have past,
As some kind of reminder that her new love would last.
One day when you are older, and your true love you find,
I'm sure that Grandma's story will come into your mind."

11. Why does Jen's mother think that Gram's love story will make more sense when she is older? _____

I thought of Grandma's secret, one that my mother knew
And wondered if my mother had her past secrets, too. ♦



Grandma's Secret

12. Jen has many great memories of spending time at her grandparents. Find and record at least three examples from the story that proves this statement.

13. Retell this story in ten sentences or less. Include all important facts.

14. What is Jen left wondering at the end of the poem?

15. Reread the last two lines. What do you think the writer is trying to say about people in our lives?
