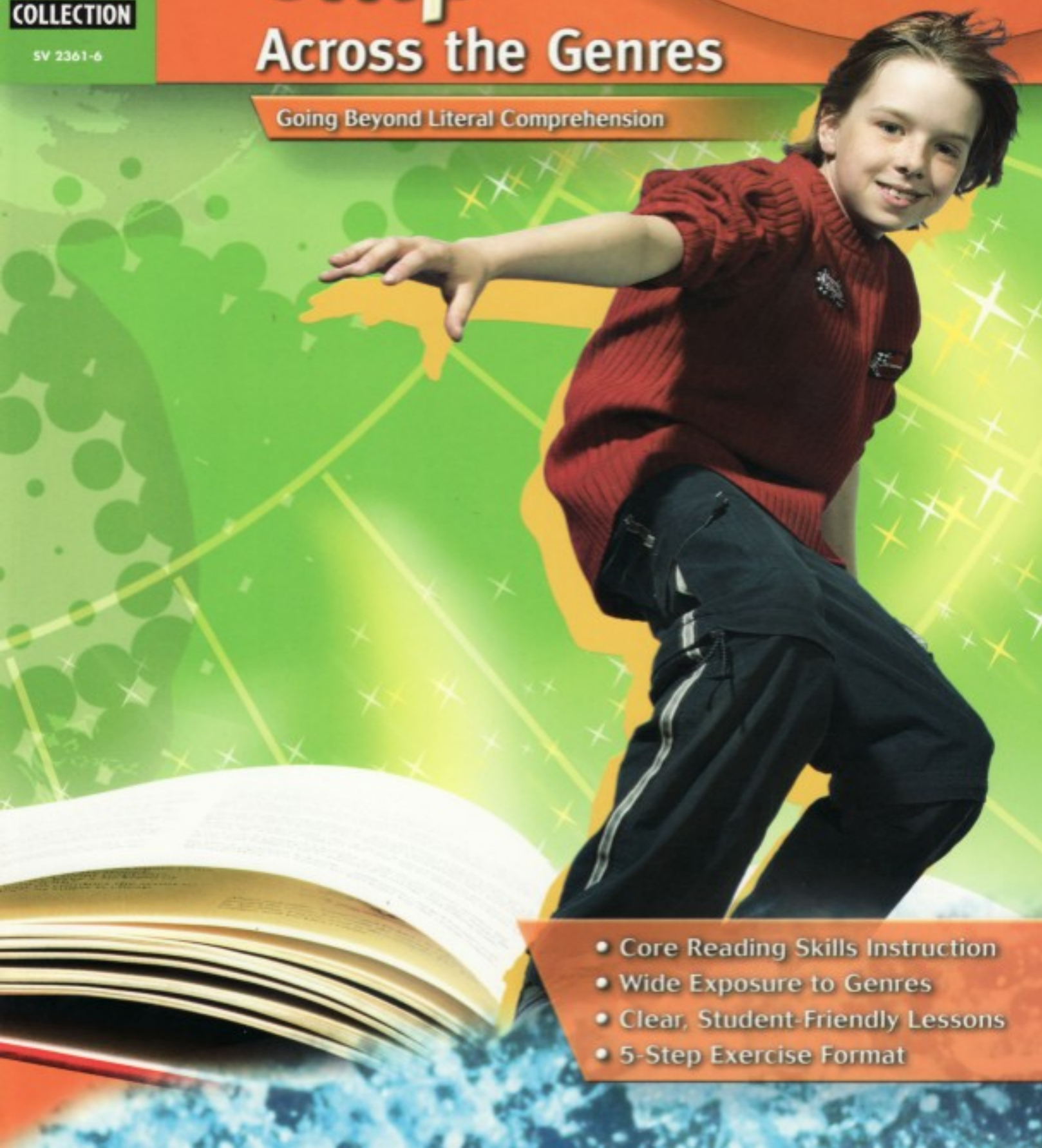


Reading Comprehension

Across the Genres

Going Beyond Literal Comprehension



- Core Reading Skills Instruction
- Wide Exposure to Genres
- Clear, Student-Friendly Lessons
- 5-Step Exercise Format

Reading Comprehension Across the Genres

Grade 6

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LESSON 1**A Fateful Meeting****Cross-Curriculum Literacy Links: Science; History; Geography; Health; Difference and Diversity****Text Type** Narrative**Purpose** To tell a story**Structure**
1 Introduction — who or what, where and when
2 Complication
3 Series of events
4 Resolution**Features** Use of past tense, pronouns (words taking the place of nouns, e.g., *he, she, him, her*)**From “After Twenty Years” by O. Henry**

The policeman on the beat moved up the avenue impressively. The impressiveness was habitual and not for show, for spectators were few. The time was barely ten o'clock at night, but chilly gusts of wind with a taste of rain in them had well nigh depeopled the streets.

Trying doors as he went, twirling his club with many intricate and artful movements, turning now and then to cast his watchful eye down the pacific thoroughfare, the officer, with his stalwart form and slight swagger, made a fine picture of a guardian of the peace. The vicinity was one that kept early hours. Now and then you might see the lights of a cigar store or an all-night lunch counter, but the majority of the doors belonged to business places that had long since been closed.

When about midway of a certain block, the policeman suddenly slowed his walk. In the doorway of a darkened hardware store a man leaned with an unlighted cigar in his mouth. As the policeman walked up to him, the man spoke quickly.

“It’s all right, officer,” he said reassuringly. “I’m just waiting for a friend. It’s an appointment I made twenty years ago. Sounds a little funny to you, doesn’t it? Well, I’ll explain if you’d like to make certain it’s all straight. About that long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands — ‘Big Joe’ Brady’s restaurant.”

“Until five years ago,” said the policeman. “It was torn down then.”

The man in the doorway struck a match and lit his cigar. The light showed a pale, square-jawed face with keen eyes and a little white scar near his right eyebrow. His scarf pin was a large diamond, oddly set.

“Twenty years ago tonight,” said the man, “I dined here at ‘Big Joe’ Brady’s with Jimmy Wells, my best chum and the finest chap in the world. He and I were raised here in New York, just like two brothers, together. I was eighteen and Jimmy was twenty. The next morning I was to start for the West to make my fortune. You couldn’t have dragged Jimmy out of New York; he thought it was the only place on earth. Well, we agreed that night that we would meet here again exactly twenty years from that date and time, no matter what our conditions might be or from what distance we might have to come . . .”

On the Surface

- 1 Name the two main characters in the passage from "After Twenty Years."

- 2 What is noteworthy about the waiting man's appearance?

- 3 How long has it been since the waiting man was in New York? _____

- 4 Describe the setting where the man waits.

- 5 What is the man waiting for? _____

Discoveries

- 1 Refer to a dictionary; then write definitions for the following words as they are used in this text.

a intricate _____ c stalwart _____

b pacific _____ d swagger _____

- 2 Write synonyms (words with the same or similar meanings) for these words as they are used in this text.

a depeopled _____ c vicinity _____

b thoroughfare _____

- 3 List five examples, from this text, of verbs that describe actions that occurred in the past.

Delving More Deeply

- 1 This text is part of the introductory section of a narrative or story. What information does it provide about the two characters?

- 2 Why does the man quickly tell the officer the reason he is waiting in the doorway?

NAME _____

DATE _____

- 3 Why didn't Jimmy Wells go West to make his fortune, too?

- 4 What do the scar and the large diamond suggest about the man's past?

- 5 What actions does the police officer take that show his ability to do his job?

Hidden Depths

- 1 "After Twenty Years" is set early in the twentieth century. What does this tell you about the trip from the West back to New York and the man who made it?

- 2 What do you predict will happen as the man waits — will Jimmy show?

Extend Yourself

- Write the rest of the short story, based on what you have read and what you predict will happen. Share your story with your classmates.
- Find a copy of "After Twenty Years" and finish the story. Compare your ending to O. Henry's.
- New York City has inspired a lot of art. Find paintings or photographs of New York from around 1900, and discuss how they illustrate the story's setting.
- What are the rules for keeping appointments in our culture? Must one be on time? Can one be "fashionably late"? Check the rules in several etiquette books and report your findings to the class.



Reading Comprehension

Across the Genres

A Simple, Flexible Solution for Reading Skills Support

Reading Comprehension Across the Genres can be used in a variety of ways:

- **Practice:** Assign independent practice for core reading skills.
- **Remediation:** Target certain text types or skills that need further attention.
- **Reinforcement/Review:** Support and review key topics from your curriculum.
- **Enrichment:** Provide students with opportunities for deeper study.
- **Homework:** Assign meaningful, student-centered homework that can be completed in a single sitting.

Reading Comprehension Across the Genres

includes 35 lessons covering various genres:

Essays	Cartoons	Short stories
Novels	Poems	Advertisements
Letters	Scripts	Functional documents
Reviews	Journals	Tables and charts

Reading Comprehension Across the Genres features a 5-step exercise format:

- Basic, literal understanding questions
- Author's purpose, text structure, and language features questions
- Interpretive questions
- Higher-order interpretive and critical thinking questions
- Activities to extend the text through writing, listening, speaking, and viewing

Reading Comprehension Across the Genres also includes

Cross-Curriculum Links
Graphic Organizers
Bound-in Answer Key

Available for Grades 6, 7, and 8