

Steck-Vaughn
School Supply

Grade 8

Reading Comprehension

Across the Genres

Going Beyond Literal Comprehension



SV 2363-2

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

Reading Comprehension Across the Genres

Grade 8

Contents

Features	3	Lesson 16	The Numbers Game	54
Correlation to Genres	7		Graph: "Campus Chat"	
Cross-Curriculum		17	A New Mammal	57
Literacy Links	8		Explanation: "Hello, My Possum"	
Lesson 1	We're Watching You	18	A Long Walk	60
	Narrative: From <i>1984</i>		Narrative: From <i>Life in the</i>	
2	Nuclear Fallout		<i>Iron Mills</i>	
	Diary: "A messij 2 the reeda"	19	Snack Time	63
3	Discoveries		Historical Advertisement	
	Account: "Looking Great After	20	Ring, Ring	66
	2,300 Years"		Argument: "Mobile Mania"	
4	Job Hunting	21	Fast Food	69
	Business Letters		Instructions: How to Use Your New	
5	"Metabolism" to "Metatarsus"	22	The Woes of Shopping	72
	Dictionary Excerpts		Discussion: "Plastic Bags"	
6	Star-Cross'd Lovers	23	Too Much TV?	75
	Script: Prologue from		Cartoon: Playground Tribes	
	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	24	Music for Everyone	78
7	Science Experiment		Newspaper Article: "Does	
	Procedure: "Chemical Activity in		Music Matter?"	
	Metals"	25	Clever Pets	81
8	All That Glitters		Magazine Article: "How Do	
	Explanation: "Metals"		Pets Know . . . ?"	
9	A Long Way from Home	26	At the Gym	84
	Narrative: From "The Meteor"		Timetable: Workout Schedule	
10	A Politician Speaks	27	Dr. Frankenstein Tells All	87
	Campaign Letter		Narrative: From <i>Frankenstein</i>	
11	A Modern Classic	28	On the Net	90
	Book Review:		Web Page: "Eat for Health"	
	<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>	29	Brought to You in 3-D	
12	Pioneer Days		Terror-Vision	93
	Description: From <i>Letters of a</i>		Film Festival Program	
	<i>Woman Homesteader</i>	30	A Hobbit's World	96
13	Stand Clear		Film Review: "Tolkien's	
	Poem: "Death of a Tree"		<i>Towers Tops</i> "	
14	The Middle Ages	31	Selling Your Skills	99
	Report: From <i>A Short History</i>		Interview: Job Hunting	
	<i>of the World</i>			
15	Another Continent			
	Map: "South America"			

LESSON

1

We're Watching You

Cross-Curriculum Literacy Link: History

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; descriptive passages to set the scene and create characters

From 1984

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him.

The hallway smelt of boiled cabbages and old rag mats. At one end of it a colored poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted a simply enormous face, more than a meter wide: the face of a man about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift. Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift-shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran.

Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig iron. The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely. He moved over to the window: a smallish, frail figure, the meagerness of his body merely emphasized by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the Party.

from 1984 by George Orwell. Middlesex: Penguin, 1954. P. 5.

NAME _____

DATE _____

On the Surface

1 What kind of weather is described in the passage?

2 What is the condition of the block of flats that Winston lives in?

3 Why does Winston take the stairs?

4 Why does Winston have to rest?

5 What time is it when Winston gets home, and why is this unusual?

Discoveries

1 These adjectives, and the nouns in parentheses, appear in the excerpt. Circle the ones which have negative connotations (associations).

enormous (face) vile (wind) glass (doors) gritty (dust) fruity (voice)

2 Circle the correct meanings of the following words, according to their use in the excerpt.

a contrived: accurate; controlled; managed cleverly

b meagreness: generosity; motionlessness; lack of substance

Delving More Deeply

1 What kind of lifestyle do you think Winston has? Give reasons for your answer.

2 Why do you think the telescreen is on continuously and cannot be shut off?

NAME _____

DATE _____

3 Why do you think the caption **BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU** is in capital letters?

4 Why do you think Winston turns down the volume of his telescreen?

Hidden Depths

1 List the clues which indicate that Winston is living in a restricted society.

2 How would you live your life if you believed you were being monitored? List five things you could not do, especially if the government controlled the monitors.

Extend Yourself

- Write the introduction to a novel about a future where everyone is happy and living conditions are ideal. Your introduction must describe the main character arriving home from work.
- Find a partner and prepare a debate: "Reality TV is a reflection of a sick society."
- What does the character Winston do next? Write half a page.



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