Junior Great Books

Series 2

Sample Unit

Common Core State Standards Edition

read.think.disscuss.grow.
Welcome! Junior Great Books Series 2 brings high-quality literature and student-centered discussion to your classroom while providing a superb framework for practicing reading comprehension, critical thinking, and writing. Teaching tips, sample student work, support for differentiating instruction, and tools for building language arts skills make Junior Great Books readings and discussions as engaging and rewarding for you as they are for your students.

The Great Books Shared Inquiry™ Method of Learning

The Junior Great Books program uses a method of reading and discussion known as Shared Inquiry. This distinctive approach to learning enables teachers, parent volunteers, and other adults who lead Junior Great Books programs to foster a vibrant environment in which children learn the habits and strategies used regularly and naturally by good readers, thinkers, and learners. Through your own curiosity and attentive questioning, you serve as a partner in inquiry with your students, helping the group work together to discover a story’s meaning. The process reaches its fullest expression in Shared Inquiry discussion, where you and your students think and talk about an interpretive question—a question about the story that has more than one good answer that can be supported with evidence from the story.
Junior Great Books Series 2 Features

High-Quality Literature

The Junior Great Books program includes outstanding works of literature by award-winning authors such as James Berry, Ann Cameron, and Cynthia Rylant. Stories are selected for their vivid writing and for their ability to support the multiple interpretations and thought-provoking discussions that are the hallmarks of the Junior Great Books program.

In-Depth Reading, Critical Thinking, Writing, and Creative Activities

The sequence of Shared Inquiry activities encourages students to develop the habits of effective readers and thinkers: to read closely, think deeply about what they have read, and listen and respond to their classmates.

Students follow along as a story is read aloud, ask questions about the story, and respond to the story in a second reading activity—all fundamental reading comprehension strategies. Then, in Shared Inquiry discussion, the heart of the program, students practice three basic elements of critical thinking:

- **Idea**—Students develop and clarify ideas about a story’s meaning.
- **Evidence**—Students support these ideas with evidence found in the story.
- **Response**—Students listen to and consider the ideas of others.

After the discussion, students continue their exploration of the story through written response, creative response, and projects linking the story to other subject areas.

Differentiated Instruction

Instructions for each activity are accompanied by a student learning spectrum, which presents the range of behaviors you might expect to see in your students during the activity. Linked to each student learning spectrum are modifications to aid you in tailoring the activity to suit the learning needs of all students—those who need support as well as those who are ready for a challenge. See pages 13, 15, and 19 for examples of differentiated instruction.

Research-Based Learning

Junior Great Books programs have been recognized as effective by the U.S. Department of Education, by Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council) in its study of professional development with student learning results, and by other studies of curriculum. Independent research has shown that regular, sustained use of Shared Inquiry and Great Books programs improves reading comprehension and critical thinking for students from a wide range of demographic backgrounds and achievement levels. Research supporting Shared Inquiry strategies and principles can be found online at www.greatbooks.org/research.
Accountability Measures

Junior Great Books Series 2 aligns with common district and state standards, as well as national standards, in reading, critical thinking, writing, and listening and speaking.

Student learning objectives appear alongside activity instructions, accompanied by student learning spectrums showing a range of common student behaviors related to that objective. These tools provide a simple framework for ongoing informal assessment. For more formal assessments, the CD-ROM contains story comprehension tests, a critical thinking rubric, and suggestions for scoring students’ participation.

The CD-ROM also includes reflection forms for the students and the teacher to make goal setting simple and benchmarks for improvement more concrete.

Reinforcement and Transferability of Learning

Junior Great Books Series 2 includes:

- Activities that build understanding and mastery of language arts skills and concepts
- Vocabulary and fluency activities, phonics and sight-word suggestions, and strategies to reinforce and supplement students’ reading comprehension
- Suggested cross-curricular activities to encourage transference of critical thinking skills

Assessment and Reflection

Assessment

The following assessment materials are located on the CD-ROM:

- Story comprehension tests, composed of seven multiple-choice questions and one short-answer question, measure students’ understanding of the reading selection they have completed. Skills tested include recognizing story facts, making inferences, understanding word meaning, sequencing, and summarizing. Tests are meant to be taken “open book” after the two readings and Shared Inquiry discussion.
- The critical thinking rubric helps you measure students’ progress in three strands of critical thinking: developing and articulating ideas, supporting ideas with evidence, and listening and responding to others. The critical thinking rubric may be used to grade Reader’s Journals or participation during the discussion or as a tool during parent-teacher conferences.
- The daily activity scores suggest a simple system for tracking students’ participation.

Reflection

Use the reflection forms to help your class, and yourself, evaluate your work together and set goals. These reflection forms are located on the CD-ROM:

- The How I Worked in Discussion handout asks students to think about their individual contributions to the discussion and consider how to improve in the future.
• The **How We Worked in Discussion** handout asks students to reflect on the behavior of the entire class during the discussion.
• The **Teacher Reflection** form guides you through aspects of your work as a teacher and links those aspects to your students’ behaviors.

**Professional Development**

The Great Books Foundation offers professional development courses, on-site consultation days, and planning sessions to introduce teachers to Shared Inquiry and to provide continuing assistance. Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council) has cited the Great Books Foundation’s professional development courses as effective in improving students’ learning results.

The Teacher Leaders Club (www.greatbooks.org/tlc) is open to anyone who has taken the Great Books core professional development courses. There you can find special offers from Great Books partners, a forum for sharing classroom experiences with your colleagues, and access to advice from Great Books instructors. You can find free downloadable materials, videos of real classroom discussions, research studies, and more at www.greatbooks.org/resources.

**Junior Great Books Series 2 Benefits**

**Teachers** will move from a factual approach to an interpretive approach. Series 2 makes it easy to:

• Engage all students in higher-level reading, thinking, and discussion
• Differentiate instruction to address students’ needs and learning styles
• Integrate critical thinking and social/emotional learning into their curriculum

**Students** will come to see themselves as successful learners and thinkers, as they learn to:

• Read for meaning
• Use reading comprehension strategies
• Go beyond snap responses to deeper thinking
• Support ideas with evidence from the story
• Develop appreciation for rich, rewarding literature

**Students** develop cognitive, social, and emotional intelligences by:

• Thoughtfully considering different points of view
• Listening to others and responding appropriately
• Contributing to a collaborative, respectful classroom environment
Junior Great Books Series 2 Program Materials

Student Books
Outstanding stories, grouped by theme and accompanied by original artwork, allow for interpretive reading and discussion.

Audio CDs
Professionally recorded versions of each story add flexibility to your reading routine and provide support for struggling readers.

Teacher’s Edition
Includes everything the leader needs to conduct each story unit—step-by-step instructions with helpful tips, differentiation options, and annotated student book pages. Also includes cross-curricular activities and a Teacher Resources section.

CD-ROM
Contains assessment and reflection tools, plus reproducible masters of all student handouts including the Reader’s Journal, where students write and draw in response to a story (see pages 34–38 to see sample Reader’s Journal pages).
Theme: Friendship
These stories encourage students to talk about and reflect on what friendship is, why people need friends, and how to resolve differences between friends.

The Happy Lion
Fantasy fiction by Louise Fatio

Miss Maggie
Realistic fiction by Cynthia Rylant

Anancy and Dog and Puss and Friendship
West Indian folktale as told by James Berry

Theme: Responsibility
These stories encourage students to explore what it means to be responsible (to oneself and to others) and the potential consequences of not living up to one’s responsibilities.

Catalog Cats/Our Garden
Realistic fiction by Ann Cameron

Carlos and the Cornfield
Realistic fiction by Jan Romero Stevens

The Wedding Basket
West Indian folktale as told by Donna L. Washington

Theme: Bravery
These stories encourage students to think about what bravery means and the consequences of acting bravely in challenging circumstances.

The Jade Stone
Chinese folktale as told by Caryn Yacowitz

The Girl and the Chenoo
Native American folktale as told by Joseph Bruchac and Gayle Ross

Jack and the Beanstalk
English folktale as told by Joseph Jacobs
Catalog Cats/Our Garden

Ann Cameron

LENGTH: 13 pages       READ-ALoud TIME: About 13 minutes
GENRE: Realistic fiction       SETTING: United States

About the Story

When Julian’s father orders a seed catalog for the garden, Julian tells his younger brother Huey an imaginative tale about the “catalog cats” that jump out of catalogs. When the catalog arrives and Huey gets upset, the boys’ father must decide how to react.

About the Author

Born in 1943 in rural Wisconsin, Ann Cameron spent her childhood reading, listening to stories on the radio, and exploring the wilderness around her house. Cameron, who has written many chapter books for children and young adults, is best known for the popular Julian series that began with The Stories Julian Tells (1981), from which “Catalog Cats/Our Garden” is excerpted. This series relates the exploits of Julian, a young African American boy, and his family. Her other books include The Most Beautiful Place in the World (1988), which was inspired by her years living in Guatemala supervising a library, and The Secret Life of Amanda K. Woods (1999), which was a finalist for the National Book Award.

The story starts on page 145 of the Teacher’s Edition and on page 13 of the student book.
SESSION 1  PAGES 133–135

Prereading  5 MINUTES
Students explore a concept relevant to the story they will be reading.

First Reading with Sharing Questions  25–30 MINUTES
Students listen as the story is read aloud and share their questions about the story.

SESSION 2  PAGES 136–137

Second Reading  25–30 MINUTES
Students listen to the story again, pausing to engage in brief activities that help them explore the story more deeply.

SESSION 3  PAGES 138–141

Shared Inquiry Discussion  20–25 MINUTES
Students explore the story’s meaning by discussing an interpretive question.

SESSION 4  PAGE 142

Written and Creative Response  TIMES VARY
Students write an expository paragraph or a piece of creative writing based on the story, or explore the story through another creative form.

ADDITIONAL SESSIONS  PAGE 143

Curriculum Connections  TIMES VARY
Students engage in suggested activities that connect “Catalog Cats/Our Garden” to the rest of your curriculum.

Head in the Clouds
This Reader's Journal activity can be done any time after the sharing questions activity and can take place in class or at home. Students draw in response to a suggested topic or a topic of your choosing (see the CD-ROM for the blackline master).

Interpretive Drawing Option
If your class is large, have half the class engage in interpretive drawing while the other half discusses the story with you; then have the groups switch places. Allow time for students to share and compare drawings. A suggested drawing prompt for this story appears on page 139.

Unit Wrap-Up
You may also want to plan additional sessions to do a theme connection activity (pp. 218–219), assessment (CD-ROM), or reflection on discussion (CD-ROM).
Use these activities and word lists at any time during the unit to customize the program to your classroom learning goals. (All page numbers below refer to this Teacher’s Edition.)

**Vocabulary in Context**
Use these suggested words (or your own words) to work with vocabulary in context. See page 327 for detailed vocabulary activity ideas.

**Suggested target words**
- ordinary (p. 146)
- invisible (p. 150)
- ignorant (p. 151)
- visible (p. 152)
- request (p. 153)

**Phonics Practice**
Choose some of these words to use with your usual phonics resources.

**Soft c and g**
- giant (p. 148)
- pages (p. 150)
- pencil (p. 154)

**Short oo**
- good (p. 145)
- book (p. 145)
- look (p. 152)

**Constructions**
- I’ll (p. 145)
- aren’t (p. 153)
- I’m (p. 154)

**Sight Words**
Use these suggested words on a word wall or with other sight word resources.
- don’t (p. 146)
- tell (p. 150)
- fast (p. 152)

**Fluency Practice**
Students practice making dialogue sound conversational (p. 146).
Activity Instructions

1. **Choose** a prereading option below.
2. **Ask** follow-up questions to help students further explain their ideas.
3. **Stop** after about five minutes to conserve class time for reading the story and sharing questions.

**ACTIVITY SUMMARY**
Students explore a concept relevant to the story they will be reading.

**STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE**
To activate and build background knowledge related to a story

**KEY SHARED INQUIRY CONCEPT**
Thinking about what we already know helps us get ready to read.

**Prereading Options**

**Text Preview**
Have students preview the story’s title and make predictions about what the story will be about. Make sure everyone knows what a catalog is, and ask the class: *What do you think a “catalog cat” might be?* After reading, you may want to ask students how their predictions matched up (or didn’t match up) with what happened in the story.

**Opening Question**
Ask students one or both of the following: *Have you ever told a made-up tale to a family member or friend? Did he or she believe you?*

www.greatbooks.org/series2
Activity Instructions

1. **Prepare** students to ask questions by telling them to listen for anything that is confusing or that they wonder about while you read.

2. **Read** the story aloud. Have students follow along in their books as you read.

3. **Ask** students to share their questions. Record them on chart paper.

4. **Answer** any questions that signal a serious comprehension problem. Leave the rest unanswered for now.

5. **Post** the list of questions in the classroom so that the questions can be revisited during the class’s work on the story.

6. **Reader’s Journal:** Ask students to draw or write about a part of the story that surprises or confuses them.

Recording Student Questions During Session 1

Questions that arise from your students’ (and your own) genuine curiosity about the story are the fuel for the Shared Inquiry process. During the sharing questions activity, record students’ questions on chart paper. Write students’ names next to their questions to give them ownership over the process and show them that their questions, which will remain posted throughout the unit, are valid and important.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY
Students listen as the story is read aloud and share their questions about the story.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE
To ask questions arising from a story

KEY SHARED INQUIRY CONCEPT
Reading a story once is just the first step in understanding it.

To watch a second-grade class sharing questions, go to www.greatbooks.org/cats.
SPOTLIGHT on Evaluative and Interpretive Questions

During the sharing questions activity, your students will likely ask different types of questions that are important to recognize.

“Catalog Cats/Our Garden” Questions
1. Why does the dad say that catalog cats are invisible? 
2. Is Julian’s mom mad at Julian for making up catalog cats?
3. Should Julian have been punished for lying?
4. What is “corn of the Ancients”?

For more information on question types, see pages 328–329.

Student Learning Spectrum

Look for students to:

| Have difficulty following or responding to the story | APPROPRIATING OBJECTIVES | See SUPPORT |
| Follow the story and ask a variety of questions, some of them relevant to the story’s meaning | MEETING OBJECTIVES |
| Follow the story and ask a variety of questions, most of them relevant to the story’s meaning | EXCEEDING OBJECTIVES | See CHALLENGE |

Differentiated Instruction

**SUPPORT** If students are struggling to follow or respond to the story, ask what part(s) of the story confused them or what they liked or did not like about the story. Help students shape their reactions into questions if necessary. If students are struggling with comprehension, consider having students listen to the story once more on the audio CD before Session 2.

**CHALLENGE** If students follow the story and readily ask questions about it, divide students into small groups after posting the class list of questions and have the groups identify vocabulary and background questions from the list. Each group can research some of the questions during the course of the unit and present the findings to the class.
Activity Instructions

1. **Prepare** students to reread with a purpose by telling them that this time they will be doing activities that help them think more deeply about the story.

2. **Read** the story aloud or play the audio CD. Have students follow along in their books.

3. **Pause** to engage students in one or more of the suggested Move! Say! Share! activities (see the box below and the annotated story starting on page 145).

4. **Ask** students the follow-up question corresponding to each activity they do. Keep the conversation brief to preserve the students’ enthusiasm for Shared Inquiry discussion.

5. **Review** with the class the list of questions you posted from the sharing questions activity. See if any have been answered while rereading and add any new questions.

6. **Reader’s Journal**: Ask students to record a question they would like to talk about more.

7. **Collect** the Reader’s Journals and note which questions students have recorded. This will help you choose a focus question for Shared Inquiry discussion.

### Second Reading Activity Options

**MOVE!** Students pretend to be the different-colored catalog cats helping out in the garden (p. 146).

**FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:** Why does Julian make up so many details about what the catalog cats can do?

**SAY!** Volunteers read aloud with expression the part where Julian and Huey’s father tells them that catalog cats are invisible (p. 150).

**FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:** Why does the father tell the boys that catalog cats are invisible?

**SHARE!** Pairs of students share their visualizations about what the garden looks like by the end of the summer (p. 157).

**FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:** Why does Julian think that Huey’s house of flowers is “the best thing of all” (p. 157)?
Student Learning Spectrum

Look for students to:

Misunderstand or have trouble answering second reading questions
Offer simple answers to second reading questions
Offer more detailed answers to second reading questions

Differentiated Instruction

**SUPPORT** If students struggle to respond to a second reading question, return to the passage that corresponds to the Move! Say! Share! activity you chose. Reread the passage aloud, pausing to model a reading strategy (for a list of potential strategies, see p. 326). Have students practice the strategy as you continue reading. Repeat the Move! Say! Share! activity and corresponding question once you think that the students understand the passage.

**CHALLENGE** If students readily respond to second reading questions, ask students to mark with an R any places where one of the characters says or does something responsible. After you finish reading, have volunteers share a part they marked, briefly explaining how the character shows responsibility at that point in the story.
Activity Instructions

NOTE: If you are dividing your class for discussion, have half the class do an interpretive drawing (see the facing page) while you conduct a discussion with the other half. Then have groups switch places. Allow time for groups to share and compare drawings.

1. Review students’ Reader’s Journals and posted questions to get a sense of the questions that most interest them. Compare them to the questions in the green box on the facing page.

2. Choose the focus question and cluster questions (interpretive questions about issues of meaning) that best align with your students’ areas of interest.

3. Seat everyone in a circle and review the five discussion guidelines on pages 8–9 of the student book.

4. Post the focus question and have students copy it on the Shared Inquiry discussion page of the Reader’s Journal. Give students several minutes to think, look back at the story, and write their answers.

5. Begin the discussion with the focus question. Remind students that this question has more than one good answer that can be supported with evidence from the story.

6. Ask follow-up questions such as those on the facing page. Aim for the discussion to last at least 20 minutes.

7. Reader’s Journal: As the discussion winds down, have students write an idea they heard in the discussion that they had not thought about earlier.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY
Students explore the story’s meaning by discussing an interpretive question.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE
To engage in a discussion by sharing ideas about a story, supporting those ideas with evidence, and listening to other students’ ideas

KEY SHARED INQUIRY CONCEPT
Discussing a story with others helps us understand it even better.

To watch a second-grade class participating in Shared Inquiry discussion, go to www.greatbooks.org/cats.

For more tips on conducting a successful Shared Inquiry discussion, see the Teacher Resources section on pages 330–335.
Suggested Focus and Cluster Questions

Choose one of the options below for your discussion. Start with the focus question. Ask the related cluster questions when they fit naturally into the conversation—they will help students develop their ideas while looking closely at specific parts of the story. (Page numbers refer to the student book.)

**OPTION 1**

**FOCUS QUESTION**
Why does Julian’s father tell Huey that catalog cats are real?

**CLUSTER QUESTIONS**
- Why does Julian’s father say that Julian’s story is “very ignorant”? (p. 19)
- Why does Julian’s father go into so much detail describing catalog cats?
- Why does Julian’s father have Huey, rather than Julian, write up the request for catalog cats?
- Why doesn’t Julian’s father scold Julian?

**OPTION 2**

**FOCUS QUESTION**
At the end of the story, does Julian believe catalog cats are real?

**CLUSTER QUESTIONS**
- Why does Julian tell Huey that cats come from catalogs?
- Why does Julian decide that catalog cats can do some things but can’t do others?
- Why does Julian want to write up the request for the catalog cats?
- Why does Julian go outside at night and lie in the garden?

Interpretive Drawing Suggestion

Draw Julian and Huey’s father telling the boys about catalog cats. (p. 20)

Asking Follow-Up Questions During the Discussion

The follow-up questions you ask during the discussion will help advance students’ critical thinking skills. Try using these questions when you want students to:

**CLARIFY IDEAS**
- What do you mean when you say that?
- Can you say a little more about that?

**FIND EVIDENCE**
- Where does that happen in the story?
- What part of the story makes you think that?

**RESPOND TO OTHERS**
- Have you heard an answer you agree with?
- Do you agree or disagree with Jason?
Asking Follow-Up Questions

During this discussion, the teacher asks follow-up questions to help students hone their critical thinking skills (see p. 139 for more suggested follow-up questions).

**TEACHER:** Why does Julian’s father tell Huey that catalog cats are real?

**JASON:** Because he wants Huey to feel good.

**TEACHER:** Can you explain what you mean by “feel good,” Jason?

**JASON:** Well, he wants Huey to feel better about the trick that Julian played on him.

**TEACHER:** Lindsay, is your answer different or the same as Jason’s answer?

**LINDSAY:** It’s the same. I think the dad wants Huey to feel better.

**TEACHER:** What does the father say that makes you think he wants Huey to feel better?

**LINDSAY:** He says Huey can write the letter asking for cats. That would make Huey feel better.

**TEACHER:** Let’s all turn to that part of the story on pages 21 and 22. (The teacher reads from “I can write up a request,” to “And Huey wrote it all down” on page 22.) Does anyone have a different idea about why the father has Huey write the request?

**MARISOL:** I do. I think the father is trying to make Julian feel bad about what he did.
Student Learning Spectrum

This student learning spectrum reflects student behavior in three key areas of critical thinking: **idea**, **evidence**, and **response**.

Look for students to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEA</th>
<th>EVIDENCE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offer no answers or repeat others’ answers to the focus question</td>
<td>Have difficulty supporting ideas with evidence from the story</td>
<td>Have difficulty listening to other students’ ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer simple answers to the focus question</td>
<td>Refer to the story in general to support ideas</td>
<td>Agree or disagree simply with other students’ ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer more detailed answers to the focus question</td>
<td>Recall or locate relevant parts of the story to support ideas</td>
<td>Explain agreement or disagreement with other students’ ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differentiated Instruction

**SUPPORT** If the class as a whole is struggling, use the student and teacher reflection forms on the CD-ROM to determine which area of critical thinking students need the most practice with (idea, evidence, or response). Then concentrate your follow-up questions in that area.

If some students are struggling, use the student and teacher reflection forms to determine which area of critical thinking they need to practice. Jot students’ names next to the corresponding follow-up questions on page 139 as a reminder to ask them those questions during the discussion.

**CHALLENGE** If your students show proficiency in one or more of the key critical thinking areas, try asking advanced follow-up questions that help them:

**Explain ideas in more detail**
- Can you explain what you mean by [word or phrase]?  
- How does that idea help answer our focus question?

**Explain how evidence supports an idea**
- How does this part of the story support your answer?  
- What does the character do or say in this part of the story to make you think that?

**Consider other responses**
- Why do you agree with Jasmine’s answer?  
- How is your idea different from Salvador’s idea?
Choose from among the following suggested activities to help students deepen their understanding of the story while honing other language arts skills and concepts.

**Written Response**

**Paragraph Practice**
Use your students’ questions and areas of interest as topics for persuasive or informational paragraphs. Alternatively, choose from among the suggested questions below. Students can use the graphic organizer in the Reader’s Journal on the CD-ROM to plan the structure of the paragraph.

**Interpretive question:** Have students turn their answer to the focus question into an expository paragraph.

**Background question:** How do you plant a garden?

**Evaluative question:** Should Julian’s father have punished Julian for telling Huey the made-up tale about catalog cats?

**Creative Writing**
Use your students’ speculative questions as topics for creative writing. Alternatively, try the activity below.

**Cataloging the Cats** Review with students Julian’s description of the different-colored catalog cats. Help the class turn this description into a numbered list, including each cat’s color and its job in the garden (Example: 1. White cats dig up the ground). Have students come up with two or three of their own catalog cats and write their own lists, including a title and numbered items.

**Creative Response**

**Tableau Time** With the class, reread the scene when the catalog first arrives (pp. 149–150 in the Teacher’s Edition). Assign three volunteers to be Julian, Huey, and the father. Begin to read the scene aloud and pause at a chosen point while the volunteers create a tableau (frozen picture) of the action. While volunteers are frozen, solicit ideas from the class as to what each character is thinking and feeling at that point in the story. Repeat the exercise with new volunteers at a different point in the scene (or with a different scene in the story).
Choose from among the following suggested activities to connect “Catalog Cats/Our Garden” to the rest of your curriculum.

**Revisiting the Theme**

Have the class revisit their responses to the theme question on page 11 of the student book (p. 129 of the Teacher’s Edition). Ask students how their answers have changed as a result of reading the story, and then record their new ideas.

**Related Projects**

**How It All Adds Up**  Provide groups of students with age-appropriate catalogs and order forms. Give each group an imaginary budget and ask them to agree on ten items to “purchase” from the catalog. Have them fill out and total up the order forms, making sure they do not go over their budget.

**The Truth About Cats**  Have students brainstorm questions they have about cats. Arrange for a class trip to a veterinarian’s office or pet shelter where students can ask an employee their questions. Afterward, have students write thank-you notes that include one new thing they learned from the experience.

**Related Readings**

When Pete feels miserable because rain makes it impossible to play ball outdoors, his father finds a fun indoor game to play with his son.

A young boy and his father go on a fishing trip and discover the power of imagination.

These episodes in seven-year-old Julian’s life include getting into trouble with his younger brother Huey, planting a garden, losing a tooth, and finding a new friend.

**Related Readings Key**
- **S** Appropriate for struggling readers who need support
- **O** Appropriate for on-level readers
- **C** Appropriate for readers who are ready for a challenge or for classroom read-alouds

**THEME CONNECTIONS**
See the Theme Connections section (pp. 218–219) for a theme wrap-up activity, a story-to-story connection activity, and at-home projects.

**ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION**
See the Assessment and Reflection sections of the CD-ROM for resources to track student learning and reflection forms for teachers and students.
I spoke to the seeds very softly.
CATALOG CATS/
OUR GARDEN

Ann Cameron

CATALOG CATS

Would you boys like to plant gardens?” my father said. “Yes,” we said. “Good!” said my father. “I’ll order a catalog.”

So it was settled. But afterward, Huey said to me, “What’s a catalog?”

“A catalog,” I said, “is where cats come from. It’s a big book full of pictures of hundreds and hundreds of cats. And
when you open it up, all the cats jump out and start running around.”

“I don’t believe you,” Huey said.

“It’s true,” I said.

“But why would Dad be sending for that catalog cat book?”

“The cats help with the garden,” I said.

“I don’t believe you,” Huey said.

“It’s true,” I said. “You open the catalog, and the cats jump out. Then they run outside and work in the garden. White cats dig up the ground with their claws. Black cats brush the ground smooth with their tails. Yellow and brown cats roll on the seeds to push them underground so they can grow.”

“I don’t believe you,” Huey said. “Cats don’t act like that.”

“Of course,” I said, “ordinary cats don’t act like that. That’s why you have to get them specially—catalog cats.”

“Really?” Huey said.

“Really,” I said.

“I’m going to ask Dad about it,” Huey said.

ordinary: not special
“You ask Dad about everything,” I said. “Don’t you think it’s time you learned something on your own for a change?”

Huey looked hurt. “I do learn things by myself,” he said. “I wonder when the catalog will come.”

“Soon,” I said.

The next morning Huey woke me up. “I dreamed about the catalog cats!” he said. “Only in my dream the yellow and brown ones were washing the windows and painting the house! You don’t suppose they could do that, do you?”

“No, they can’t do that, Huey,” I said. “They don’t have a way to hold rags and paintbrushes.”

“I suppose not,” Huey said.

Every day Huey asked my father if the catalog had come.
“Not yet,” my father kept saying. He was very pleased that Huey was so interested in the garden.

Huey dreamed about the catalog cats again. A whole team of them was carrying a giant squash to the house. One had his teeth around the stem. The others were pushing it with their shoulders and their heads.
“Do you think that’s what they really do, Julian?” Huey said.
“Yes, they do that,” I said.
Two weeks went by.
“Well, Huey and Julian,” my father said, “today is the big day. The catalog is here.”
“The catalog is here! The catalog is here! The catalog is here!” Huey said.
He was dancing and twirling around.
I was thinking about going someplace else.
“What’s the matter, Julian?” my father said. “Don’t you want to see the catalog?”
“Oh, yes, I—want to see it,” I said.
My father had the catalog under his arm. The three of us sat down on the couch.
“Open it!” Huey said.
My father opened the catalog.
Inside were bright pictures of flowers and vegetables. The catalog company would send you the seeds, and you could grow the flowers and vegetables.
Huey started turning the pages faster and faster. “Where are the cats? Where are the cats?” he kept saying.

“What cats?” my father said.

Huey started to cry.

My father looked at me. “Julian,” he said, “please tell me what is going on.”

“Huey thought catalogs were books with cats in them. Catalog cats,” I said.

Huey sobbed. “Julian told me! Special cats—cats that work in gardens! White ones—they dig up the dirt. Black ones—they brush the ground with their tails. Yellow and brown ones—they roll on the seeds.” Huey was crying harder than ever.

“Julian!” said my father.

“Yes,” I said. When my father’s voice gets loud, mine gets so small I can only whisper.

“Julian,” my father said, “didn’t you tell Huey that catalog cats are invisible?”

“No,” I said.

“Julian told me they jumped out of catalogs! He said they jump out and

invisible: not able to be seen
work in gardens. As soon as you get the catalog, they go to work.”

“Well,” said my father, “that’s very ignorant. Julian has never had a garden before in his life. I wouldn’t trust a person who has never had a garden in his life to tell me about catalog cats. Would you?”

“No,” Huey said slowly. He was still crying a little.

My father pulled out his handkerchief and gave it to Huey. “Now, blow your nose and listen to me,” my father said.

Huey blew his nose and sat up straight on the couch. I sat back and tried to be as small as I could.

**ignorant**: not knowing much
“First of all,” said my father, “a lot of people have wasted a lot of time trying to see catalog cats. It’s a waste of time because catalog cats are the fastest animals alive. No one is as quick as a catalog cat. It may be that they really **are visible** and that they just move so quickly you can’t see them. But you can feel them. When you look for a catalog cat over your right shoulder, you can feel that he is climbing the tree above your left ear. When you turn fast and look at the tree, you can feel that he has jumped out and landed behind your back. And then sometimes you feel all the little hairs on your backbone quiver—that’s when you know a catalog cat is laughing at you and telling you that you are wasting your time.

**Visible:** able to be seen
“Catalog cats love gardens, and they love to work in gardens. However, they will only do half the work. If they are in a garden where people don't do any work, the catalog cats will not do any work either. But if they are in a garden where people work hard, all the work will go twice as fast because of the catalog cats.”

“When you were a boy and had a garden,” Huey said, “did your garden have catalog cats?”

“Yes,” my father said, “my garden had catalog cats.”

“And were they your friends?” Huey said.

“Well,” my father said, “they like people, but they move too fast to make friends.

“There’s one more thing,” my father said. “Catalog cats aren’t in garden catalogs, and no one can order catalog cats. Catalog cats are only around the companies the catalogs come from. You don’t order them, you request them.”

“I can write up a request,” I said.

request: ask for
“Huey can do that very well, I'm sure,” my father said, “if he would like to. Would you like to, Huey?”

Huey said he would.

My father got a piece of paper and pencil.

And Huey wrote it all down:

REQUESTED:

1 dozen catalog cats
all varieties
WHOEVER
wants to come
is welcome

OUR GARDEN

We planted tomatoes, squash, onions, garlic, peas, pumpkins, and potatoes. Besides that we planted two special things we saw in the catalog, which were—
Genuine corn of the Ancients! It grows 20 feet high. Harvest your corn with a ladder. Surprise your friends and neighbors.

and

Make a house of flowers. Our beans grow ten feet tall. Grow them around string! Make a beautiful roof and walls out of their scarlet blossoms.

Huey was the one who wanted the house of flowers the most. I wanted the giant corn. My father said he wasn’t sure he wanted either giant corn or a flower house, and if we wanted them, we would have to take care of them all summer by pulling weeds. We said we would.

We planted everything one Saturday. We worked all day long, getting the ground smooth and even, and laying the little seeds down in rows. The whole time I felt the catalog cats were there, swirling their tails in the air.

23
We finished just before the sun went down.

My mother gave Huey and me baths. She said we were darker than the garden. She said we were dirty enough that she could grow plants on our hands and knees.

When we were clean, we had supper, with chocolate pie for dessert, and went to bed.

Huey went to sleep right away. But I didn’t.

I put my jacket on over my pajamas and went out the back door to the garden. In the dark it looked as if the garden was sleeping. I lay down on the grass. It was cold and a little wet.

I looked up. I thought all the catalog cats were sitting on the roof of the garage, staring at me. Over the top of the garage
was the moon, a little moon with sharp horns. There were birds rustling in the dark branches of the trees.

The seeds were dreaming, I thought. I put my mouth next to the ground, and I spoke to the seeds very softly: “Grow! And you corn seeds, grow high as the house!”

In just one week the seeds did start to grow, and we watered them and weeded them. By the end of the summer we had vegetables from the garden every night. And the corn did grow as high as the house, although there wasn’t very much of it, and it was almost too tough to eat. The best thing of all was Huey’s house made of flowers. After a while the flowers dropped their petals and turned into beans, and we ate the beans for supper.

So what Huey made was probably the first house anyone ever played in and then ate. Catalog cats are strange—but a house you eat for dinner is stranger yet.
Draw or write about a part of the story that surprises or confuses you.
Write a question you’d like to talk about more. It can be a question you thought of already or a new question. You can write more than one question if you wish.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Head in the Clouds

Choose one of the topics in the clouds and draw a picture about it.

- My favorite part of the story
- Something the story makes me think of
- What might happen if I were in the story
The focus question: ________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Your answer to the focus question: ________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

An idea you heard in the discussion that you had not thought about before:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
Use this page to help you write a paragraph.

Main Idea

Supporting Detail

Supporting Detail

Supporting Detail
Critical Thinking Rubric

This rubric shows three major critical thinking areas—idea, evidence, and response—at four performance levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERFORMANCE LEVEL</th>
<th>IDEA</th>
<th>EVIDENCE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
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</table>
| 4                 | OFFERS A DEVELOPED ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION  
& Makes inferences about motives and causes  
& To clarify, specifies meaning of words or phrases  | EXPLAINS HOW EVIDENCE SUPPORTS IDEAS  
& Habitually looks back at the story for evidence  
& Explains how specific parts of the story support an idea  | DEVELOPS OWN ANSWER IN RESPONSE TO OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS  
& Understands that classmates’ ideas are valuable to the conversation  
& May be convinced by other students  
& Responds directly to other students without prompting  |
| 3                 | OFFERS A MORE DETAILED ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION  
& Thinks carefully before answering  
& To clarify, says more or rephrases answer  | RECALLS OR LOCATES EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY TO SUPPORT IDEAS  
& Often looks back at the story without prompting  
& Recalls or locates relevant parts of the story  | EXPLAINS AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS  
& Acknowledges differing ideas  
& Builds on or offers counterarguments to other students’ ideas  
& Responds directly to classmates with prompting  |
| 2                 | OFFERS A SIMPLE ANSWER TO THE FOCUS QUESTION  
& Does not elaborate on answer, or offers a snap judgment  
& To clarify, repeats answer  | REFERS TO THE STORY IN GENERAL TO SUPPORT IDEAS  
& Looks back at the story when asked to do so  
& Recalls major story facts  | AGREES OR DISAGREES SIMPLY WITH OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS  
& Allows classmates to speak  
& Reacts to other students’ ideas but does not give reasons for reactions  
& Speaks only to teacher and not directly to classmates  |
| 1                 | STRUGGLES TO ANSWER THE FOCUS QUESTION  
& Does not answer when called on  
& Repeats other students’ answers  | HAS DIFFICULTY SUPPORTING ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY  
& Talks about things other than the story  
& Struggles to recall key story facts  
& Considers answer self-explanatory  | HAS DIFFICULTY LISTENING TO OTHER STUDENTS’ IDEAS  
& Ignores or interrupts other students  
& Struggles to understand that classmates have differing ideas  
& Distracts other students or does not follow the discussion  |
### Reading

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

6. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

7. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

### Speaking and Listening

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

### Writing

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

6. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td><strong>Page 10: Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RL 2.4 Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Page 11: Prereading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Speaking and Listening</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SL 2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.</td>
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<td>SL 2.4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Page 12: First Reading with Sharing Questions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
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<td>RL 2.1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.</td>
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<td>RL 2.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
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<td>SL 2.6 Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.</td>
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<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
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<td>W 2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.</td>
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<td><strong>Page 13: Spotlight on Evaluative and Interpretive Questions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Page 14: Second Reading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
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| **Page 15: Sharing Visualizations** | **Reading** |
| RL 2.1 | Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. |
| RL 2.3 | Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges. |
| RL 2.7 | Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. |

| **Speaking and Listening** |
| SL 2.1 | Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. |
| SL 2.3 | Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue. |
| SL 2.6 | Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification. |

| **Pages 16, 39: Shared Inquiry Discussion** | **Reading** |
| RL 2.1 | Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. |
| RL 2.3 | Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges. |
| RL 2.7 | Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. |

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| **Writing** |
| W 2.2 | Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section. |

<p>| <strong>Page 20: Written and Creative Response</strong> | <strong>Writing</strong> |
| W 2.2 | Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section. |</p>
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<tr>
<td>Page 20: Written and Creative Response, continued</td>
<td><strong>Writing</strong>&lt;br&gt;W 2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.</td>
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<td>Page 21: Curriculum Connections</td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong>&lt;br&gt;RL 2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.&lt;br&gt;RL 2.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
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<td>Page 23: The Story: “Catalog Cats”</td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong>&lt;br&gt;RL 2.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
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<td>Page 28: Second Reading: Say!</td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong>&lt;br&gt;RL 2.1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.&lt;br&gt;RL 2.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Speaking and Listening</strong>&lt;br&gt;SL 2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.&lt;br&gt;SL 2.6 Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.</td>
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<td>Page 35: Second Reading: Share!</td>
<td><strong>Speaking and Listening</strong>&lt;br&gt;SL 2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.&lt;br&gt;SL 2.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.</td>
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<td>Page 36: Reader’s Journal: Sharing Questions</td>
<td><strong>Writing</strong>&lt;br&gt;W 2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.</td>
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<td>Page 40: Reader’s Journal: Written Response</td>
<td><strong>Writing</strong>&lt;br&gt;W 2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.</td>
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The Great Books Foundation’s mission is to empower readers of all ages to become more reflective and responsible thinkers. To accomplish this, we teach the art of civil discourse through the Shared Inquiry method and publish enduring works across the disciplines.

The Great Books Foundation was established in 1947 to promote the reading and discussion of great literature by the general public. In 1962, the Foundation extended its mission to children with the introduction of Junior Great Books. Since its inception the Foundation has helped hundreds of thousands of people throughout the United States and in other countries begin their own discussion groups in schools, libraries, and community centers. Today, Foundation instructors teach hundreds of courses each year, in which educators and parents learn to lead Shared Inquiry discussion as well as a variety of classroom activities that improve students’ critical thinking, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills.

The Great Books Foundation’s courses in Shared Inquiry help people get the most from discussion. Participants learn how to read actively, pose fruitful questions, and listen and respond to others effectively in discussion. All participants also practice leading a discussion and have an opportunity to reflect on the process with others. For more information about Great Books materials or courses, call the Great Books Foundation at 800-222-5870 or visit our website at www.greatbooks.org.