



Textual Evidence and Inference

FREE SAMPLE

A complete reading selection, one focused task, and matching teacher guidance.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Complete source reading selection
- Focused task with response space
- Teacher guidance and source notes
- Published Saint Pierre license

2017 NC ELA SCOS | In use for 2026-27

Supplemental practice for the named skill. Print-ready PDF.

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GRADE 7 ELA | READING PRACTICE

Standard: RL.7.1 — Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Learning target (I can): I can cite several relevant pieces of evidence to explain what a literary text states directly and to support my inferences.

Essential question: How can multiple details from a story support a thoughtful interpretation?

Name: _____ **Class:** _____ **Date:** _____

Sample directions: Read and annotate the complete selection. Then complete the included focused task.

Reading Selection: The Key Behind the Frame

On the morning the town council planned to vote on the old railway station, Mira found a brass key beneath her grandfather's workbench. A paper tag attached to it read NORTH WALL, although the station had been locked for years. Her grandfather, who had repaired clocks there when trains still stopped in Bellweather, had died the previous winter. Mira turned the key over in her palm. She was supposed to be rehearsing the speech she would give at that evening's hearing, but the small object felt more urgent than the note cards spread across her kitchen table.

The council wanted to sell the station to a developer who planned to replace it with a parking garage. Several business owners argued that more parking would bring customers downtown. Mira did not dismiss their concerns. Her mother's bakery struggled when delivery trucks blocked its entrance, and Mira knew an empty building could not remain empty forever. Yet her grandfather had described the station as the place where neighbors once exchanged news, helped newcomers find work, and waited together during winter storms. Mira hoped the town might find a purpose for the building that did not require tearing it down.

She called her friend Theo, who volunteered with the local historical society. 'We should tell someone before going inside,' he said when she described the key. Mira agreed. They asked the town clerk for permission to examine the station; after checking with the property manager, the clerk arranged for a custodian to meet them that afternoon. Mira was disappointed by the delay, but Theo reminded her that a building abandoned for decades could have weak floors or exposed wiring. Waiting, he said, was different from giving up.

Inside, the station smelled of rain-soaked wood and dust. Afternoon light passed through high windows and settled in pale rectangles on the floor. The custodian kept them in the old ticket hall, the only room cleared for visitors. At first, the key seemed useless. There were no doors on the north wall, only a row of empty display frames. Then Theo noticed that one frame hung slightly crooked. Behind it, set into the plaster, was a narrow metal compartment. The key turned with a reluctant click.

The compartment held a cloth-covered ledger, a bundle of letters, and a photograph of dozens of people standing shoulder to shoulder on the station steps. The ledger listed donations of blankets, bread, firewood, and train fares. Most entries were dated during the flood of 1968, when the river had risen over its banks and forced families from their homes. Between the pages lay a short note in her grandfather's handwriting: 'A station is more than a place to leave. Sometimes it is where a town learns to stay together.' Mira read the sentence twice before closing the book.

Theo wanted to photograph every page immediately. Mira suggested that they first ask the historical society how to handle the documents so the fragile paper would not tear. The custodian helped them place the materials in a clean archival box, and the clerk arranged for a volunteer archivist to inspect them. When the archivist arrived, she confirmed that the ledger appeared to document a community relief effort not described in the town's published history. She warned, however, that the discovery alone could not determine the council's decision. The station still needed a practical future and a way to pay for repairs.

Back at the bakery, Mira watched her mother carry two heavy flour sacks from a truck parked half a block away. She recognized the problem the proposed garage was meant to solve. During dinner, she told her mother about the ledger and admitted that her speech sounded like a demand to save the station at any cost. Her mother replied, 'If you want people to listen, show them you've listened first.' Mira crossed out the opening line of her speech. Instead of accusing the council of forgetting the past, she began with the needs of the businesses and families who used downtown now.

At the hearing, the developer displayed a diagram of the proposed garage and explained that its construction could create jobs. Mira waited through his presentation without interrupting. When it was her turn, she held up a copy of the flood photograph. She described the ledger and her grandfather's note, but she also spoke about trucks, crowded streets, and the station's damaged roof. She proposed a six-month study of whether the building could become a shared market and community shelter, with designated loading spaces nearby. She did not claim to know what repairs would cost; instead, she asked the council to commission an estimate.

A council member asked whether a market would attract enough visitors to survive. Mira had no figures to prove it would. 'Not yet,' she answered. 'That is why I'm asking for a study rather than a promise.' Another member questioned whether delaying the sale would cause the town to lose the developer's offer. Mira admitted that this was a risk. From the back row, her mother raised a hand and said several shop owners might be willing to help evaluate the loading-space problem. The developer, after a pause, offered to share his traffic survey with the committee if the town formed one.

The council voted to delay the sale for six months and request a repair estimate and feasibility study. The vote did not save the station permanently. Outside, Theo congratulated Mira, but she shook her head. 'We got time to find out what's possible,' she said. Later that evening, she returned the brass key to the archivist, who planned to catalog it with the ledger. As Mira walked home, she passed the bakery, where the delivery entrance was still blocked by a truck. Tomorrow's problems remained. For the first time, though, she believed the town might solve two of them together.

RL.7.1 | Focused lesson

Support one interpretation with several relevant story details.

Completed model

An inference is a conclusion, not a copied event. Mira acts responsibly: she gets permission before entering, protects fragile papers, and requests a repair estimate. Each action supports care rather than haste.

Name: _____ Date: _____

[illegible]

RL.7.1 | Sample teacher guidance

Task 1

Her early speech demands preservation at any cost; she revises after recognizing delivery difficulties; she proposes a study and loading spaces while admitting uncertainty. Together these show listening and evidence replacing a single fixed demand.

The full packet includes retained comprehension questions and keys, all three focused tasks, and further teacher guidance.

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