

Grade 4 Reading & Writing

Unit 1: Brown Girl Dreaming

16 lessons (the last is the Pausing Point review) and a words quiz. Use this pack with the unit's **Teacher Guide** and **Activity Book** (download them once from the course) to teach the whole unit without the internet.

For parents: This unit reads *Brown Girl Dreaming*. The book is not included here: borrow it from your library or buy a copy before you start (Core Knowledge lists it on the unit page).

What is in this pack

- A plan for each lesson: the Teacher Guide pages to follow, words to know, what to read, questions to talk over and the Activity Book pages to print.
- The words quiz, ready to print.
- Answers for the teacher at the back: every discussion question and the quiz key.

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Lesson schedule

One lesson a school day, about 60-90 minutes; split long lessons over two days. Tick each one off as you go.

	Lesson	Reader pages	Activity Book
☐	Lesson 1: Reading “Rosa Parks: The Mother of the Civil Rights Movement” and “february 12, 1963”	see lesson	AP 1.1, SR 1, SR 3
☐	Lesson 2: Reading “second daughter’s second day on earth” and “february 12, 1963”	see lesson	AP 2.1, AP 2.2
☐	Lesson 3: Reading “the ghosts of the nelsonville house”	see lesson	AP 3.2
☐	Lesson 4: Reading “it’ll be scary sometimes” and “no returns”	see lesson	AP 4.1, AP 4.2
☐	Lesson 5: Reading “greenville, south carolina, 1963”, “home” and “our names”	see lesson	AP 5.2, AP 5.3
☐	Lesson 6: Reading “greenville, south carolina, 1963”, “our names” and “home”	see lesson	—
☐	Lesson 7: Reading “the garden” and “at the end of the day”	see lesson	AP 7.1
☐	Lesson 8: Reading “the beginning” and “south carolina at war”	see lesson	AP 8.1
☐	Lesson 9: Reading “ribbons”, “sometimes, no words are needed” and “leaving greenville”	see lesson	AP 9.1, AP 9.2
☐	Lesson 10: Reading “new york city”, “brooklyn, new york” and “herzl street”	see lesson	AP 10.1, AP 10.2, AP 10.3
☐	Lesson 11: Reading “composition notebook” and “on paper”	see lesson	AP 11.2
☐	Lesson 12: Reading “composition notebook” and “on paper”	see lesson	AP 12.1
☐	Lesson 13: Reading “gifted”, “writing #1” and “reading”	see lesson	—
☐	Lesson 14: Reading “what everybody knows now”	see lesson	AP 14.1

	Lesson	Reader pages	Activity Book
☐	Lesson 15: Reading “the butterfly poems” and “every wish, one dream”	see lesson	AP 15.1
☐	Pausing Point: Review, extra practice and answer keys	—	A 1, A 2, A 3, A 4, A 5, A 6
☐	Words quiz	—	—

Page numbers are the PDF page numbers of the Student Reader file, so they match what your PDF reader shows.

Lesson 1: Reading “Rosa Parks: The Mother of the Civil Rights Movement” and “february 12, 1963”

Words to know

- **unfree** — not able to control one’s own life or choices
- **dawn** — the first daylight in a day when the sun is rising
- **dusk** — the last daylight in a day when the sun is setting
- **gourd** — a large fruit with a hard outer shell
- **constellation** — a group of stars in the sky that looks like an object, an animal, or a person; the group of stars is given a name
- **explode** — to burst open because of too much pressure inside
- **enslave** — to capture and put someone under the control of someone else
- **emancipate** — to set free from slavery or from being under the control of someone else (emancipated) (2) Begin by telling students the first vocabulary word they will encounter in this selection is unfree. Have them find the word on page 1 of the book. Explain that a glossary that contains definitions of all the vocabulary words in Brown Girl Dreaming

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 47–64: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “Rosa Parks: The Mother of the Civil Rights Movement” and “february 12, 1963” in Brown Girl Dreaming.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 1.1: Vocabulary for “february 12, 1963” by Jacqueline Woodson — Activity Book, PDF pages 5–6
- Student Resource 1: Memoir — Activity Book, PDF pages 51–52
- Student Resource 3: Glossary for Brown Girl Dreaming — Activity Book, PDF pages 53–60

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 2: Reading “second daughter’s second day on earth” and “february 12, 1963”

Words to know

- **allow** — to permit
- **automatically** — done without help, prompting, or encouragement
- **constellation** — a group of stars in the sky that looks like an item, an animal, or a person; the group is given a name
- **dawn** — the first daylight in a day when the sun is rising
- **dusk** — the last daylight in a day when the sun is setting
- **fiercely** — strongly or violently
- **fist** — a hand when the fingers are curled into the palm
- **gently** — softly
- **injustice** — something that is not fair
- **overcome** — to beat or defeat

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 65–74: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “second daughter’s second day on earth” and “february 12, 1963” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. What does the title tell you about the author’s identity?
2. How did the author describe herself as a newborn baby?
3. What do you think the protest songs, and the author, meant by saying “we shall overcome someday”?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 2.1: Vocabulary for “second daughter’s second day on earth” — Activity Book, PDF pages 7–8
- Activity Page 2.2: What did the author say about James Baldwin in this selection? — Activity Book, PDF pages 9–10

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 3: Reading “the ghosts of the nelsonville house”

Words to know

- **bouquet** — a bunch of flowers
- **furrow** — a line or crease
- **icebox cake** — a cake that does not need to be baked
- **parlor** — a room in a house that is often used for conversation or socializing
- **slyness** — the quality of being sneaky or smart
- **spiral** — to form a curve around a certain point
- **trunk** — a large box or compartment used to store or carry items
- **university** — a large school that one attends after finishing high school, or the twelfth grade
- **write** — to create marks on a paper with a tool such as a pen, pencil, or other instrument

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 75–82: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “the ghosts of the nelsonville house” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. What image comes into your mind when the author describes the sun as “a watery Nelsonville sun”?
2. What kinds of food did the Woodson children have in their house, according to this section of the text?
3. What connections does the author make between herself and her ancestors?
4. Why do you think the author titled this selection “the ghosts of the nelsonville house”?
5. What connection does the author seem to have to the ancestors she describes?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 3.2: “the ghosts of the nelsonville house” — Activity Book, PDF pages 11–14

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 4: Reading “it’ll be scary sometimes” and “no returns”

Words to know

- **coal** — a hard, black substance, found in the earth, that is dug up and burned as fuel
- **face** — to stand before, or deal with, something in a way that shows you are brave
- **generation** — a group of people who were all born around the same time period; the time period between parents and their children
- **icebox cake** — a cake that does not need to be baked
- **imagine** — to form an idea or picture in one’s mind
- **memorial** — a building or statue that honors a person who is dead, or an important event that happened in the past
- **monument** — something built or created to honor a special person or event
- **return** — something that is sent back or taken back
- **still** — not moving; quiet; calm
- **whine** — a long, high-pitched sound that expresses fear, pain, or complaint

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 83–92: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “it’ll be scary sometimes” and “no returns” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. What event was taking place during the time the author’s great-great grandfather was alive?
2. What does the author mean when she says her great-great grandfather was “a long time dead but living still among the other soldiers on that monument in Washington, D.C.”?
3. How was the author related to William Woodson? How do you know?
4. Have you ever experienced something like the author’s mother did here? How did you handle the situation?
5. How does the author’s brother respond to her when her mother brings her home from the hospital as a baby?
6. The author says in these lines that her brother is “already three years old and still doesn’t understand how something so tiny and new can’t be returned.” Would you expect a three-year-old to really understand that?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 4.1: Vocabulary for “it’ll be scary sometimes” and “no returns” — Activity Book, PDF pages 15–16
- Activity Page 4.2: Elements of a Memoir — Activity Book, PDF pages 17–18

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 5: Reading “greenville, south carolina, 1963”, “home” and “our names”

Words to know

- **apology** — a statement in which someone says he or she is sorry for something
- **azalea** — a shrub that has dark green leaves and colorful flowers
- **curb** — the edge of the sidewalk where it curves down to meet the street
- **dare** — to challenge someone to do something that takes courage
- **dash** — a punctuation mark that is a short, horizontal line
- **embroidered** — cloth that is decorated with stitches in a decorative pattern
- **face** — to stand before, or deal with, something in a way that shows you are brave
- **fist** — a hand when the fingers are curled into the palm
- **furrow** — a line or crease
- **gently** — softly

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 93–102: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “greenville, south carolina, 1963”, “home” and “our names” in Brown Girl Dreaming.

Talk it over

1. Why did the author’s mother move her children to the back of the bus?
2. What line(s) of the text suggest that perhaps at another point in time her mother may have chosen a seat closer to the front of the bus?
3. Who is another person you learned about who was treated unfairly on a bus because she was African American?
4. Why do you think the author’s mother gave her children strict directions about how to behave, i.e., “Sit up straight. ...Take your fingers out of your mouth?”
5. What does the author’s mother mean by the phrase This isn’t Ohio?
6. Why did the author’s mother say to “step off the curb if a white person comes toward you, and not to look them in the eye”?
7. Why do you think this selection is called “home”?
8. Why might the author’s grandparents say “Welcome home,” and why might her mother be crying?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 5.2: “greenville, south carolina, 1963,” “home,” and “our names” — Activity Book, PDF pages 19–24
- Activity Page 5.3: Showing Versus Telling — Activity Book, PDF pages 25–26

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 6: Reading “greenville, south carolina, 1963”, “our names” and “home”

Words to know

- **allow** — to permit
- **dare** — to challenge someone to do something that takes courage
- **dash** — a punctuation mark that is a short, horizontal line
- **gently** — softly
- **imagine** — to form an idea or picture in one’s mind
- **immense** — very large
- **right** — something that a person is entitled to have
- **still** — not moving; quiet; calm
- **write** — to create marks on a paper with a tool such as a pen, pencil, or other instrument

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 103–112: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “greenville, south carolina, 1963”, “our names” and “home” in Brown Girl Dreaming.

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 7: Reading “the garden” and “at the end of the day”

Words to know

- **collard** — a type of green vegetable, similar to cabbage
- **face** — to stand before, or deal with, something in a way that shows you are brave
- **foreman** — the leader of a group of workers
- **generation** — a group of people who were all born around the same time period; the time period between parents and their children
- **gently** — softly
- **imagine** — to form an idea or picture in one’s mind
- **miss** — fail to experience
- **printing press** — a machine used to print words or images on paper or material
- **promise** — statement (spoken or unspoken) that something will happen
- **right** — something that a person is entitled to have

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 113–120: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “the garden” and “at the end of the day” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. In what way were the author’s grandmother and her grandfather different from one another?
2. The author said the men who worked at the printing press called her grandfather Gunnar, but they should have called him Mr. Irby. Why should they have called him Mr. Irby, and why did they not call him that?
3. How would you feel if you were the author’s grandfather and was treated this way?
4. Why was it difficult to tell who was white and who was black at the printing press?
5. What do the italicized lines mean, Colored folks used to stay where they were told they belonged. But times are changing And people are itching to go where they want?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 7.1: Vocabulary for “the garden” and “at the end of the day” — Activity Book, PDF pages 27–28

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 8: Reading “the beginning” and “south carolina at war”

Words to know

- **allow** — to permit
- **calm** — not upset or excited
- **face** — to stand before, or deal with, something in a way that shows you are brave
- **fist** — a hand when the fingers are curled into the palm
- **gently** — softly
- **imagine** — to form an idea or picture in one’s mind
- **infinity** — something that never ends or cannot be measured
- **insist** — refuse to give up or change one’s mind about something
- **preach** — to give advice to a group in public, often connected to religion
- **right** — something that a person is entitled to have

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 121–128: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “the beginning” and “south carolina at war” in Brown Girl Dreaming.

Talk it over

1. At what age was the author able to write her initials, with her sister’s help?
2. What is the author looking forward to and why?
3. Why do you think the author wrote an entire selection about learning to write?
4. What does the word right mean in line 1?
5. Why does the author use the word dream here?
6. What is the author referring to here?
7. How did African Americans in Greenville fight for their rights without violence?
8. Why do you think the author’s mother used to try to sneak out to join the fight without the author’s grandmother seeing her?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 8.1: Vocabulary for “the beginning,” and “south carolina at war” — Activity Book, PDF pages 29–30

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 9: Reading “ribbons”, “sometimes, no words are needed” and “leaving greenville”

Words to know

- **anchor** — to hold something in place
- **calm** — not upset or excited
- **ceiling** — the top surface in a room
- **iron** — to press wrinkles out of a piece of material or paper
- **miss** — fail to experience
- **pale** — light or lacking color
- **promise** — statement (spoken or unspoken) that something will happen
- **slightly** — by a small amount or degree
- **still** — not moving; quiet; calm
- **whine** — a long, high-pitched sound that expresses fear, pain, or complaint

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 129–136: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “ribbons”, “sometimes, no words are needed” and “leaving greenville” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. How does the author feel about her mother?
2. Based on the title of this selection and line 18, how do you think the author’s life is going to change based on what her mother said to her?
3. How do you think the author will feel about leaving her grandparents’ home in South Carolina and moving to a new home north of there?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 9.1: Vocabulary for “ribbons,” “sometimes, no words are needed,” and — Activity Book, PDF pages 31–32
- Activity Page 9.2: Paragraph B — Activity Book, PDF pages 33–34

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 10: Reading “new york city”, “brooklyn, new york” and “herzl street”

Words to know

- **allow** — to permit
- **bundle** — to gather things and tie or put them into a single package
- **cast** — to give off or project across a distance
- **ceiling** — the top surface in a room
- **dim** — not well-lit; dark
- **firefly** — an insect whose lower body flashes a light at night
- **gather** — to slowly collect or build up
- **miss** — fail to experience
- **neatly** — cleanly, or done in an organized way
- **sizzle** — to make a hissing or crackling sound

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 137–146: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “new york city”, “brooklyn, new york” and “herzl street” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. Based on this title, where do you think the author and her family are moving when they leave South Carolina?
2. How do “the southerners” describe New York City, according to the author?
3. What does this description of New York City suggest that “the southerners” think about New York City?
4. Why does the author say “Maybe it’s another New York City?”
5. How does the author describe the New York City she sees?
6. Why does the author describe New York as a place that does not have pine trees, or a porch swing that moves with the weight of your grandmother?
7. How does the author feel about moving to New York City?
8. What sensory language does the author use to describe the apartment where they lived in Brooklyn?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 10.1: Vocabulary for “new york city,” “brooklyn, new york,” and “herzl street” — Activity Book, PDF pages 35–36

- Activity Page 10.2: 5. What does the author mean by “sitting and running their mouths” in line 6 on page 145? — Activity Book, PDF pages 37–38
- Activity Page 10.3: 4. What kinds of things did you say when the event happened? — Activity Book, PDF pages 39–40

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 11: Reading “composition notebook” and “on paper”

Words to know

- **allow** — to permit
- **calm** — not upset or excited
- **composition** — a piece of writing, such as a story or an essay
- **fan** — a piece of writing, such as a story or an essay
- **gather** — to slowly collect or build up
- **hush** — the calm or silence that takes place after noise
- **pale** — light or lacking color
- **right** — something that a person is entitled to have
- **write** — to create marks on a paper with a tool such as a pen, pencil, or other instrument

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 147–154: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “composition notebook” and “on paper” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. What sensory language does the author use to describe how she feels about the composition notebook?
2. Whose thoughts are captured in this line?
3. Based on her description of the composition notebook, how do you think the author feels about it?
4. Why do you think the author is so excited about the composition notebook? Why is the notebook so important to her?
5. How does the author describe the process of writing in these lines?
6. Reread lines 12 and 13 on page 156. Based on the way the author wrote those lines, how do you think she feels about the sentences she is able to write?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 11.2: Memoir Organizer — Activity Book, PDF pages 41–44

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 12: Reading “composition notebook” and “on paper”

Words to know

- **allow** — to permit
- **composition** — a piece of writing, such as a story or an essay
- **gather** — to slowly collect or build up
- **gently** — softly
- **honeysuckle** — a vine with sweet-smelling flowers
- **jut** — to stick out
- **marble** — a very hard stone that comes from the earth and is often used to build things such as buildings, stairs, monuments, etc.
- **squish** — to make a soft sound, like quiet splashing, when pushed together or walked on
- **sway** — to swing back and forth, from side to side
- **write** — to create marks on a paper with a tool such as a pen, pencil, or other instrument

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 155–160: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “composition notebook” and “on paper” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 12.1: Vocabulary for “first grade,” and “brooklyn rain” — Activity Book, PDF pages 45–46

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 13: Reading “gifted”, “writing #1” and “reading”

Words to know

- **achieve** — to do something successfully, or to reach a goal
- **allow** — to permit
- **brilliant** — very smart
- **composition** — a piece of writing, such as a story or an essay
- **disappear** — to go away from view
- **excel** — to do better than others or better than expected
- **still** — not moving; quiet; calm
- **twirl** — to spin around
- **write** — to create marks on a paper with a tool such as a pen, pencil, or other instrument

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 161–168: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “gifted”, “writing #1” and “reading” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. How does the author describe her sister in these lines?
2. Why do you think the author does not finish the sentences at the ends of lines 5 through 8?
3. How do you think the author felt when her older sister excelled at many things in school?
4. What does the author think the word gifted means?
5. How do you think the author feels in school when she is reading?
6. Do these lines indicate the author has any goals while she’s in school?
7. What does the author say in these lines about writing stories?
8. In these lines, what is it that walks all over the room; sits in a chair; crosses a leg, and talks to her?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 14: Reading “what everybody knows now”

Words to know

- **clasp** — to connect with a device that holds things together
- **fare** — the price that must be paid to ride a bus, subway, plane, or other public transportation
- **imagine** — to form an idea or picture in one’s mind
- **neatly** — cleanly, or done in an organized way
- **still** — not moving; quiet; calm
- **write** — to create marks on a paper with a tool such as a pen, pencil, or other instrument

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 169–176: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “what everybody knows now” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 14.1: Vocabulary for “what everybody knows now” — Activity Book, PDF pages 47–48

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 15: Reading “the butterfly poems” and “every wish, one dream”

Words to know

- **allow** — to permit
- **dandelion** — a common plant with bright yellow flowers. After a few days, the dandelion plant’s flowers dry out and turn to seed. These seeds are then spread by the wind
- **encyclopedia** — a book, arranged alphabetically, that has information on a wide range of topics
- **firefly** — an insect whose lower body flashes a light at night
- **infinity** — something that never ends or cannot be measured
- **windowpane** — the sheet of glass that fills a window frame
- **write** — to create marks on a paper with a tool such as a pen, pencil, or other instrument

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 177–184: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read “the butterfly poems” and “every wish, one dream” in *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Talk it over

1. Why might someone be surprised to hear the author is writing an entire book about butterflies?
2. What are the following items: monarch, painted lady, giant swallowtail, queen butterfly, and buckeye?
3. What images, adjectives or adverbs does this short phrase bring to mind?
4. What is the author’s brother’s reason for thinking there should not be a book about butterflies?
5. Why does the author include these last three lines in this verse?
6. Why does the author talk about dandelions and stars in these verses?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 15.1: Vocabulary for “the butterfly poems” and “every wish, one dream” — Activity Book, PDF pages 49–50

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Pausing Point: Review, extra practice and answer keys

Teacher's lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 185–255: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Activity Book pages

- Assessment page 1: ASSESSMENT — Activity Book, PDF pages 61–72
- Assessment page 2: Grade 4 Beginning-of-Year Assessment Summary — Activity Book, PDF pages 73–74
- Assessment page 3: Word Reading in Isolation Assessment Scoring Sheet — Activity Book, PDF pages 75–76
- Assessment page 4: Beginning-of-Year Fluency Assessment Recording Copy — Activity Book, PDF pages 77–78
- Assessment page 5: Beginning-of-Year Grammar Assessment — Activity Book, PDF pages 79–86
- Assessment page 6: ASSESSMENT — Activity Book, PDF pages 87–95

Check for understanding

WORDS QUIZ

Brown Girl Dreaming

Name: _____ Date: _____

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. Which word means “cloth that is decorated with stitches in a decorative pattern”?
 - a) embroidered
 - b) spiral
 - c) parlor
 - d) immense
2. Which word means “a punctuation mark that is a short, horizontal line”?
 - a) dusk
 - b) dash
 - c) pale
 - d) clasp
3. Which word means “to press wrinkles out of a piece of material or paper”?
 - a) generation
 - b) azalea
 - c) iron
 - d) miss
4. Which word means “to carry or cause to move gently on water or in the air”?
 - a) waft
 - b) hush
 - c) achieve
 - d) fan
5. Which word means “to create marks on a paper with a tool such as a pen, pencil, or other instrument”?
 - a) allow
 - b) write
 - c) injustice
 - d) achieve
6. Which word means “the top surface in a room”?
 - a) dash
 - b) ceiling
 - c) calm
 - d) insist
7. Which word means “to make a hissing or crackling sound”?
 - a) sizzle
 - b) foreman
 - c) composition
 - d) fare

8. Which word means “a building or statue that honors a person who is dead, or an important event that happened in the past”?

- a) still
- b) memorial
- c) parlor
- d) spiral

9. Which word means “to form an idea or picture in one’s mind”?

- a) imagine
- b) sway
- c) dawn
- d) university

10. Which word means “softly”?

- a) insist
- b) gently
- c) coal
- d) whine

11. Which word means “a large box or compartment used to store or carry items”?

- a) icebox cake
- b) firefly
- c) trunk
- d) iron

12. Which word means “to mark with dots of color or light”?

- a) encyclopedia
- b) sizzle
- c) speckle
- d) anchor

Answers

Lesson 2: Reading “second daughter’s second day on earth” and “february 12, 1963”

1. **What does the title tell you about the author’s identity?**

The title refers to the author’s relationship to her family. She is the second daughter in the family, so she must have an older sibling.

2. **How did the author describe herself as a newborn baby?**

She had brown skin and black hair, and she was “wide-eyed,” or innocent.

3. **What do you think the protest songs, and the author, meant by saying “we shall overcome someday”?**

Answers may vary, but could include that the Civil Rights Movement might make it possible for African Americans to overcome the discrimination and unfair treatment to which they were being subjected.

Lesson 3: Reading “the ghosts of the nelsonville house”

1. **What image comes into your mind when the author describes the sun as “a watery Nelsonville sun”?**

Answers may vary, but may include that the sun is not direct – it is soft and flowing into the room like water.

2. **What kinds of food did the Woodson children have in their house, according to this section of the text?**

icebox cake (or a cake that didn’t need to be baked); cold fried chicken; honey ham

3. **What connections does the author make between herself and her ancestors?**

She sees herself in the way her father furrows his brow; the way her aunt Alicia smiles; and the way her grandmother, Grace, bends her hand.

4. **Why do you think the author titled this selection “the ghosts of the nelsonville house”?**

Answers may vary, but may include that the “ghosts” are her ancestors – her aunts, uncle, and her father – when they were children, growing up in the house in Nelsonville. She described what each of these ancestors was like and when they lived in that home.

5. **What connection does the author seem to have to the ancestors she describes?**

Answers may vary, but may include that she sees part of herself and her personality in the images she has of her father, her Aunt Alicia, and her grandmother, Grace. She sees her identity as linked to that of her ancestors.

Lesson 4: Reading “it’ll be scary sometimes” and “no returns”

1. **What event was taking place during the time the author’s great-great grandfather was alive?**

the Civil War

2. **What does the author mean when she says her great-great grandfather was “a long time dead but living still among the other soldiers on that monument in Washington, D.C.”?**

Although he is actually dead, he is “living” in the sense that he and his contributions in the Civil War can never be forgotten, because his name and his accomplishments are permanently displayed on the monument.

3. **How was the author related to William Woodson? How do you know?**

He was her great grandfather. The text says he was the son of her great-great grandfather, who fought in the Civil War.

4. **Have you ever experienced something like the author’s mother did here? How did you handle the situation?**

Answers will vary.

5. **How does the author’s brother respond to her when her mother brings her home from the hospital as a baby?**

He wants his parents to take her back.

6. **The author says in these lines that her brother is “already three years old and still doesn’t understand how something so tiny and new can’t be returned.” Would you expect a three-year-old to really understand that?**

Answers may vary, but may include that her parents may expect her brother, despite his young age, to understand that the new baby is his sister, especially since he already has another sister.

Lesson 5: Reading “greenville, south carolina, 1963”, “home” and “our names”

1. **Why did the author’s mother move her children to the back of the bus?**

The family was African American, and in South Carolina in 1963 there was still often discrimination against people because of the color of their skin. The author’s mother did not want to risk having the bus driver ask them to move.

2. **What line(s) of the text suggest that perhaps at another point in time her mother may have chosen a seat closer to the front of the bus?**

Line 6 says, “Not with us. Not now,” which suggests that perhaps if she had not been accompanied by her children, her mother would have sat closer to the front of the bus, perhaps as a sign of protest.

3. **Who is another person you learned about who was treated unfairly on a bus because she was African American?**

In 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man in Alabama when she was told to do so simply because she was African American. This was the start of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

4. **Why do you think the author’s mother gave her children strict directions about how to behave, i.e., “Sit up straight. ...Take your fingers out of your**

mouth?

The author's mother was aware of the stereotypes held by many people in the South about African Americans at this time in history. Many White Southerners believed that African Americans were not as capable or as smart as they were. The author's mother wanted her children to be especially well behaved to "disprove" these commonly held stereotypes.

5. **What does the author's mother mean by the phrase *This isn't Ohio*?**

In Ohio, African Americans generally did not face the same type of discrimination that they faced in the South, in places like South Carolina, so they had to be more careful in South Carolina not to call attention to themselves.

6. **Why did the author's mother say to "*step off the curb if a white person comes toward you, and not to look them in the eye*"?**

She was trying to avoid a confrontation, or unpleasant interaction, with a white person who might not treat them kindly.

7. **Why do you think this selection is called "*home*"?**

Answers may vary, but may include that perhaps the author and her family are moving to her grandparents' home in South Carolina. SUPPORT: Be sure students understand that the author and her family are moving to South Carolina to live with her grandparents (following her parents' divorce, which is addressed in another selection of the book that students will not read).

8. **Why might the author's grandparents say "*Welcome home,*" and why might her mother be crying?**

Answers may vary, but may include that the grandparents are happy the author and her family are moving into their home. Her mother may be crying out of sadness, relief, or happiness.

Lesson 7: Reading "*the garden*" and "*at the end of the day*"

1. **In what way were the author's grandmother and her grandfather different from one another?**

Her grandmother thought that God provided everything they would need to live, and they shouldn't ask for more than that. Her grandfather, however, wanted more from the land than just what they needed. Preview the core vocabulary words from the second selection. Have students refer to Activity Page 7.1 as you read the following words and definitions:

2. **The author said the men who worked at the printing press called her grandfather Gunnar, but they should have called him Mr. Irby. Why should they have called him Mr. Irby, and why did they not call him that?**

Her grandfather was the foreman, or the man in charge, so the men who worked there should have shown him respect and called him Mr. Irby rather than his first name. They did not show him the respect he deserved because of the color of his skin. The workers think the South is changing too fast and an African American man should not be their boss.

3. **How would you feel if you were the author's grandfather and was treated this way?**

Answers will vary.

4. **Why was it difficult to tell who was white and who was black at the printing press?**

The ink from the printing press made everyone's hands black, so it was difficult to tell from their hands who was black and who was white.

5. **What do the italicized lines mean, *Colored folks used to stay where they were told they belonged. But times are changing And people are itching to go where they want?***

These lines signal that, in spite of how life is in the South (i.e., segregation as to where white people and African American people lived) things are starting to change and African Americans were looking forward to (itching to) going where they wanted and not where they were told to stay.

Lesson 8: Reading "the beginning" and "south carolina at war"

1. **At what age was the author able to write her initials, with her sister's help?**
age three

2. **What is the author looking forward to and why?**

She is looking forward to being able to write her entire name by herself without her older sister's help. Perhaps she feels that she will be "grown up" when she is able to write without any help; perhaps she feels that being able to write her name independently will further clarify her identity and who she is. SUPPORT: If you created a "Factors that Influence Identity Chart" in Lesson 5, add writing her name on her own to the chart.

3. **Why do you think the author wrote an entire selection about learning to write?**

Answers may vary, but should include that it demonstrates the importance of writing in the author's life. SUPPORT—Explain that during the time of slavery, it was often illegal for enslaved people to read and write. People who taught an enslaved person to read or write were also punished. In the time after the end of slavery, and still today, the ability to learn to read, and to write was an important part of being free. Receiving an education was and still is a way for someone to live a better life (e.g., have a job where they can earn enough money to survive).

4. **What does the word *right* mean in line 1?**

something that a person is entitled to have

5. **Why does the author use the word *dream* here?**

It refers to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech in which he said, "I have a dream."

SUPPORT: Refer to the timeline to remind students of some of the events taking place as part of the Civil Rights Movement, including peaceful protests such as King's march on Washington.

6. **What is the author referring to here?**

She is referring to slavery when people from Africa were brought to America against their will and forced to work without being paid for their work. SUPPORT: Refer to the timeline and draw students' attention to the Abraham Lincoln reference on the far left side of the line. Note that the date listed there is 1865, or the year in which the Civil War ended. Explain that during the Civil War, in 1863, President Lincoln announced the Emancipation Proclamation, which said that people in the United States were no longer supposed to be held in slavery.

7. **How did African Americans in Greenville fight for their rights without violence?**

They fought for their rights by protesting the unjust treatment of African Americans by "sitting in places they aren't allowed to sit," such as Rosa Parks did during the bus boycott.

8. **Why do you think the author's mother used to try to sneak out to join the fight without the author's grandmother seeing her?**

Answers may vary, but may include that the author's mother thought she would not be permitted to go out, even though she was adult.

Lesson 9: Reading "ribbons", "sometimes, no words are needed" and "leaving greenville"

1. **How does the author feel about her mother?**

She says in these lines that she loves her.

2. **Based on the title of this selection and line 18, how do you think the author's life is going to change based on what her mother said to her?**

Answers may vary, but may include that she will be leaving her grandparents' home and move somewhere north of South Carolina.

3. **How do you think the author will feel about leaving her grandparents' home in South Carolina and moving to a new home north of there?**

Answers may vary, but should include that she will probably miss her grandparents and the home she seems to love – the place she has called home since she was a baby. Others may speculate that the author may be relieved to leave South Carolina since she has witnessed such unfair treatment of African Americans in the form of discrimination and segregation. Have students work with their partner to complete the information in Activity Page 4.2 referencing these selections.

Lesson 10: Reading "new york city", "brooklyn, new york" and "herzl street"

1. **Based on this title, where do you think the author and her family are moving when they leave South Carolina?**

New York City SUPPORT—Point to New York City on a map of the United States (or have a student point to the location). Then point to South Carolina (or have a student do so). Explicitly point out to students that New York City is located in the state of New York, a northern state, while South Carolina is a southern state.

2. **How do “the southerners” describe New York City, according to the author?**
They describe it as a place where money is falling from the sky and diamonds speckle the sidewalks.
3. **What does this description of New York City suggest that “the southerners” think about New York City?**
It sounds as if the author has heard “the southerners” talking about New York City in a way that suggests it would be a wonderful place to live, a place where everyone has the possibility of getting rich.
4. **Why does the author say “Maybe it’s another New York City?”**
She is not seeing the same things “the southerners” described when they said it was a place where money falls from the sky and diamonds speckle the sidewalks.
5. **How does the author describe the New York City she sees?**
It has gray rock and is as cold and treeless as a bad dream. CHALLENGE—Ask students to identify the type of figurative language expressed in the phrase “cold and treeless as a bad dream.” (a simile) If students are not familiar with similes, explain that they will be learning about this type of figurative language later in the school year.
6. **Why does the author describe New York as a place that does not have pine trees, or a porch swing that moves with the weight of your grandmother?**
Those are the things she loved and misses about South Carolina, and she is comparing New York City with the home she just left.
7. **How does the author feel about moving to New York City?**
She thinks it will never feel like home. She seems very sad and seems to miss her life in South Carolina. SUPPORT—Have students discuss a time they had a big change in their life and how it made them feel. Small Group: “brooklyn, new york” and “herzl street” in *Brown Girl Dreaming* [pages 144, 145–146]
8. **What sensory language does the author use to describe the apartment where they lived in Brooklyn?**
dim bulb; swung back and forth; walked across their floor; casting shadows; brother cry

Lesson 11: Reading “composition notebook” and “on paper”

1. **What sensory language does the author use to describe how she feels about the composition notebook?**
Answers may vary, but should include some of the following: smelling like something I could fall right into; clean white pages; breeze; fanned the pages; smell and feel and sight of bright white paper; sniff the pages; listen to the sounds the paper made; bright white page with pale blue lines; smell of a newly sharpened pencil; soft hush.
2. **Whose thoughts are captured in this line?**
The author’s older sister thinks that it’s silly that someone has given the author a notebook since she can’t write yet.

3. **Based on her description of the composition notebook, how do you think the author feels about it?**

Answers may vary, but should include that she loved the composition book, or was excited to use it for her writing, which she hoped to do one day; or that it was a valued possession.

4. **Why do you think the author is so excited about the composition notebook? Why is the notebook so important to her?**

Answers may vary, but may include that she is excited about the possibility of writing down her ideas, things she only thinks about “in her head” right now. Discuss with students whether they feel the same way as the author about writing. Why or why not?

5. **How does the author describe the process of writing in these lines?**

Answers may vary, but may include a process that began with letters, which formed words, and then those words began to have meaning. The author said that writing was a way to express the thoughts that formed in her head.

6. **Reread lines 12 and 13 on page 156. Based on the way the author wrote those lines, how do you think she feels about the sentences she is able to write?**

Answers may vary, but may include that she feels proud. If you have continued to use the “Factors that Influence Identity Chart” from Lesson 5, add the phrase expressing her thoughts in writing to the chart. Remind students of the importance of writing, reading, and education to everyone, but especially to African Americans after the end of slavery. Word Work: Gather

Lesson 13: Reading “gifted”, “writing #1” and “reading”

1. **How does the author describe her sister in these lines?**

She describes her as brilliant, or very smart.

2. **Why do you think the author does not finish the sentences at the ends of lines 5 through 8?**

Answers may vary, but should include the fact that Odella received so many honors and awards and recognitions in school, that either the author does not remember all the details, or that it didn’t matter what the subject or event was – Odella often excelled at it.

3. **How do you think the author felt when her older sister excelled at many things in school?**

Answers may vary, and may include that she felt proud of her sister, sad or upset that she did not receive as many recognitions, or some combination of feelings.

4. **What does the author think the word gifted means?**

She thinks it means that her sister has presents or gifts all around her.

5. **How do you think the author feels in school when she is reading?**

Answers may vary, and may include that she may feel frustrated or upset, because these lines indicate that she had trouble reading. It took her longer to make sense of

what she read than it did most of her classmates. SUPPORT – You may want to explain that some students who have reading difficulties, such as confusing the letters “b” and “d” or “m” and “w,” sometimes report that, when they look at writing on a page, it seems as if the words and/or letters “are moving around on the page.”

6. **Do these lines indicate the author has any goals while she’s in school?**

Answers may vary, but may include that she seems to want to become a better reader and understand words better.

7. **What does the author say in these lines about writing stories?**

She says she is able to think of and talk about the stories, but she has trouble writing them down.

8. **In these lines, what is it that walks all over the room; sits in a chair; crosses a leg, and talks to her?**

The stories that are in her mind. SUPPORT—Explain that this is a literary technique called personification. With personification, the author gives human traits, or characteristics, to things that are not human.

Lesson 15: Reading “the butterfly poems” and “every wish, one dream”

1. **Why might someone be surprised to hear the author is writing an entire book about butterflies?**

Answers may vary, but may include that it might seem that there would not be enough interesting information about butterflies to fill an entire book.

2. **What are the following items: monarch, painted lady, giant swallowtail, queen butterfly, and buckeye?**

They are types of butterflies.

3. **What images, adjectives or adverbs does this short phrase bring to mind?**

Answers may vary, but students may mention words such as quietly, gracefully or phrases such as, early morning before people or other animals are out and about, etc. SUPPORT—You may want to point out the use of alliteration, i.e., the repetition of the /w/ sound heard at the beginning of wings and whisper.

4. **What is the author’s brother’s reason for thinking there should not be a book about butterflies?**

Butterflies don’t live very long.

5. **Why does the author include these last three lines in this verse?**

She said it is because butterflies do not live long in nature that she wants to write about them. On paper, they will live forever. SUPPORT—Remind students of the author’s early descriptions about writing and her use of the word infinity to describe written words. Ask students to turn back to “the beginning” on pages 62–63 and have one student read lines 13–19 aloud. Discuss the manner in which writing down one’s thoughts and ideas makes them last.

6. **Why does the author talk about dandelions and stars in these verses?**

Those are things people use to make a wish. Lines 8–9: LITERAL—What does the author say she always wishes for?

Unit quiz key

1. a 2. b 3. c 4. a 5. b 6. b 7. a 8. b 9. a 10. b 11. c 12. c