

# Grade 4: What a Character!

## Shared Text

### Week 1

#### Day 1 Focus: Read and Understand the Text (Shared Text)

- **Title:** “Swift Things are Beautiful” (Poem)
- **Main Idea Jot:**
  - Both swift and slow things in nature are beautiful.
- **Craft & Structure Focus:** Text Structure
  - Discuss the parallel relationship between the two stanzas and discuss how the author uses imagery to highlight the main idea of the poem.
  - “Rivers and meteors/Wind in the wheat” (lines 5-6)
  - “The opening flower” (line 14)

#### Day 2 Focus: Responding to Literature in Writing (Shared Text)

- **Title:** “Swift Things are Beautiful” (Poem)
- **Question 1:** What is the poet’s point of view on nature?
  - Sample answer: The author believes that nature is beautiful.
    - “And lightning that falls / Bright-veined and clear” (lines 3-4)
    - “The opening flower” (line 14)
- **Question 2:** How does the author’s use of repetition deepen the reader’s understanding of the main idea?
  - Sample answer: The author uses repetition of the first line in each stanza to show the reader that nature is beautiful—swift or slow.
    - “Swift things are beautiful” (line 1)
    - “And slow things are beautiful” (line 9)

### Week 2

#### Day 1 Focus: Read and Understand the Text (Shared Text)

- **Title:** “Whistle While You Learn” (Non-fiction)
- **Main Idea Jot:**
  - Unique languages such as Silbo Gomero are dying out.
  - Author is concerned that a valuable piece of culture is being lost.
- **Craft and Structure Focus:** Point of View
  - Highlight how the author conveys his/her point of view on a topic by including reasons and evidence such as quotes and opinion statements to support particular points in the text.
  - The author uses Silbo Gomero to highlight a more widespread problem.

### Day 2 Focus: Responding to Literature in Writing (Shared Text)

- **Title:** “Whistle While You Learn” (Non-fiction)
- **Question 1:** What is the author’s purpose for writing this article?
  - Sample answer: The author’s purpose is to bring awareness that humankind may lose unique languages around the world.
    - “But in the late 20th century, Silbo Gomero was in danger of dying out...A valuable piece of the island’s culture was in danger of being lost forever.” (paragraph 3)
    - “There are more than 7,100 languages in the world. About half of them are in danger of disappearing in the next century.” (paragraph 6)
- **Question 2:** How does the map help the reader understand the main idea of the text?
  - Sample answer: The map helps the reader to understand where La Gomera and all the other areas languages are at risk of disappearing are located.
    - “It’s used only on La Gomera, which is one of the Canary Islands.” (paragraph 1)
    - “Now nearly all of the 22,000 residents use Silbo Gomero as well as Spanish.” (paragraph 4)

### Day 3 Focus: Read and Understand the Text (Mastery Text)

- **Title:** “She’s Back” (Non-fiction)
- **Main Idea Jot:**
  - Reopening of Statue of Liberty after Superstorm Sandy.
  - Importance of historic structures like Ellis Island and how they were affected by the storm.
- **Craft and Structure Focus:** Text Structure
  - Highlight the author’s use of chronological order in section 1, paragraphs 1-4. ○ Analyze the author’s purpose for opening the article with the image of the Statue of Liberty during Hurricane Sandy. Discuss how this connects the author’s explanation of the cultural significance of the statue in the section “Her History.”

### Day 4 Focus: Responding to Literature in Writing (Mastery Text)

- **Title:** “She’s Back” (Non-fiction)
- **Question 1:** How does the author structure paragraphs 1-4?
  - Sample answer: Paragraphs are structured in chronological order.
    - “...Lady Liberty braved strong winds, crashing waves, and heavy rain from

- Superstorm Sandy last October.” (paragraph 1)
      - “But on July 4, the Statue of Liberty finally reopened to visitors.” (paragraph 1)
- **Question 2:** Why does the author include the section “Her History”?
  - Sample answer: The author includes the section “Her History” to show how the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island are important landmarks that were affected by the storm.
    - “The Statue of Liberty has inspired people all over the world because it stands for freedom.” (paragraph 6)
    - “From 1892 to 1954, more than 12 million immigrants entered the U.S. through nearby Ellis Island.” (paragraph 7)
    - “Ellis Island and the museum are not expected to reopen to the public this year.” (paragraph 7)

## Week 3

### Day 1 Focus: Read and Understand the Text (Shared Text)

- **Title:** “Is Anybody Out There?” (Non-fiction)
- **Main Idea Jot:**
  - NASA conducts research using the Kepler telescope for Earth-like planets (able to sustain life).
  - Have not found any yet, but are continuing to look.
- **Craft and Structure Focus:** Point of View
  - Identify how the author conveys his/her point of view on a topic by including reasons and evidence, such as quotes and opinion statements, to support particular points in a text.
  - “Still, scientists say the discovery is a big step toward finding an Earth twin.” (paragraph 4)
  - “Chances are, we’re not alone in the universe,” says Howell. “We just haven’t looked long enough yet.” (paragraph 7)

### Day 2 Focus: Responding to Literature in Writing (Shared Text)

- **Title:** “Is Anybody Out There?” (Non-fiction)
- **Question 1:** Explain what the author means by the phrase “Earth Twin.”
  - Sample answer: The phrase “Earth Twin” means a planet that supports life.
    - “To be habitable, a planet must have liquid water to support life. Liquid water can only exist on a planet where the temperature isn’t too hot or too cold” (paragraph 3)
    - “In December, NASA confirmed that Kepler had found its first planet in a habitable zone...” (paragraph 4)
- **Question 2:** What is the author’s point of view on scientific exploration?
  - Sample answer: The author believes scientific exploration should continue in order to find an Earth twin.
    - “Chances are, we’re not alone in the universe,” says Howell. “We just haven’t looked long enough yet.” (paragraph 7)
    - “Although Kepler hasn’t found any other Earths yet, it may be only a matter of

time.” (paragraph 6)

### Day 3 Focus: Read and Understand the Text (Mastery Text)

- **Title:** “Journey’s End” (Non-fiction)
- **Main Idea Jot:**
  - Solar powered plane completed a cross-country flight despite challenges.
  - Major accomplishment for renewable energy and aviation.
- **Craft and Structure Focus:** Author’s Purpose
  - Identify how the author wanted to demonstrate that this journey was a major accomplishment for aviation and renewable energy.
  - “In doing so, we also pushed the boundaries of clean technologies and renewable energies.” (paragraph 5)
  - Consider the author’s purpose for including paragraph 4, and explain how it relates to the section “Sky-High Success” as a whole.

### Day 4 Focus: Responding to Literature in Writing (Mastery Text)

- **Title:** “Journey’s End” (Non-fiction)
  - **Question 1:** What is the author’s point of view on Solar Impulse’s journey?
    - Sample answer: The author believes Solar Impulse’s journey is a historic accomplishment for solar powered aviation and renewable energy.
      - “During this journey, we had to find solutions for a lot of unforeseen situations, which obliged us to develop new skills and strategies... In doing so, we also pushed the boundaries of clean technologies and renewable energies” (paragraph 5)
      - “What was a year ago an idea became in the last eight weeks a reality... Now it’s already history.” (paragraph 2).
  - **Question 2:** How does paragraph 4 contribute to the reader’s understanding of the main idea?
    - Sample answer: Paragraph 4 shows that despite challenges, Piccard and Borschberg were able to successfully fly across the country in a solar powered plane.
      - “Solar Impulse encountered tornadoes while flying...” (paragraph 4)
      - “During this journey, we had to find solutions for a lot of unforeseen situations...” (paragraph 5)

## Week 4

### Day 1 Focus: Read and Understand the Text (Shared Text)

- **Title:** “Meeting the Real Wizard of Oz” (Non-fiction)
- **Main Idea Jot:**
  - Despite many failures, L. Frank Baum found success in his childhood passion of storytelling; wrote the famous novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.
- **Craft and Structure Focus:** Text Structure
  - Describe how the author used a chronological text structure to organize the text. ○ The author chronicled Baum’s imagination and ambition, as well as his failures and setbacks to convey the main idea.

### Day 2 Focus: Responding to Literature in Writing (Shared Text)

- **Title:** “Meeting the Real Wizard of Oz” (Non-fiction)
- **Question 1:** How does the author structure the text?
  - Sample answer: The author structures the text in chronological order to show how Baum’s failures paved the way for his ultimate success.
    - Baum had many failures and setbacks such as a burned down theater, a bankrupt general store, and a newspaper no one read.
    - He ultimately created a career out of his passion for storytelling by writing The Wonderful Wizard of Oz.
- **Question 2:** What is the author’s point of view on L. Frank Baum?
  - Sample answer: The author believes that L. Frank Baum is resilient.
    - Despite L. Frank Baum’s many failed careers, he continued to try to find success.
    - “What he knew for sure though, was that he still loved making up stories to entertain his own kids.” (paragraph 5)
    - “After decades of failure Baum had finally achieved greatness.” (paragraph 9)

### Day 3 Focus: Read and Understand the Text (Mastery Text)

- **Title:** “Maria Tallchief” (Non-fiction)
- **Main Idea Jot:**
  - MT was a famous and driven ballerina who embraced her Native American heritage.
- **Craft and Structure Focus:** Text Structure
  - Discuss the descriptive text structure and the fact that the author does not lead with the fact that Maria is a famous dancer. Instead, the author starts by telling us “Maria Tallchief decided that she would grow up to be a ballerina.”
  - Discuss how the paragraphs connect to each other to show Maria’s desire to become great, combined with her pride in her heritage led her to becoming truly remarkable.

### Day 4 Focus: Responding to Literature in Writing (Mastery Text)

- **Title:** “Maria Tallchief” (Non-fiction)
- **Question 1:** What is the purpose of paragraph three?
  - Sample answer: The purpose of paragraph three is to show that Maria was a talented and accomplished Native American ballerina.
    - In 1953, the state of Oklahoma honored Maria with a special award in honor of her accomplishments as a dancer and as a Native American.” (paragraph 3)
    - “Audiences and critics alike referred to her as the greatest American ballerina in the history of ballet.” (paragraph 3)
- **Question 2:** How does the author prove that Maria Tallchief was talented?
  - Sample answer: The author proves that Maria Tallchief was talented by giving examples of how she achieved success.
    - “She was so talented that she soon became the first American in over 100 years to dance with the Paris Opera Ballet” (paragraph 2)
    - “Audiences and critics alike referred to her as the greatest American ballerina in the history of ballet.” (paragraph 3)

# What Else Do I Need?

- **Shared Text Selections:**

- Poem: "Swift Things are Beautiful" by Elizabeth Coatsworth from *The Bill Martin Jr. Big Book of Poetry*
- Non-fiction: "Whistle While You Learn" by Laura Modigliani from *Scholastic News*
- Nonfiction: "She's Back" by Stephanie Kraus from *Time for Kids*
- Non-fiction: "Is Anybody Out There?" by Natalie Smith from *Scholastic News*
- Non-fiction: "Journey's End" by Cameron Keady from *Time for Kids*
- Non-fiction: "Meeting the Real Wizard of Oz" from *Scholastic News*
- Non-fiction: "Maria Tallchief" from *Hopscotch Magazine*