

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 1 (after Lesson 10)

Dear Family,

We're off to another exciting school year! This year your child will be learning many new vocabulary words and important comprehension skills in *Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5*. Reading with fluency and accuracy will become increasingly important for your child as the reading materials become more complex.

Research tells us that when the family becomes involved in the child's learning, the child makes better progress. Your child is growing up and becoming more independent, but helping your child with schoolwork will make a real difference!

At the end of every tenth lesson, I will send you a *Reading Mastery Signature Edition* home letter to give helpful and timely information on topics you can help your child work on at home. They include:

- Information your child has been learning
- Important vocabulary words to review
- An activity to help your child learn at home.

Even though the school year is just beginning, here are some things you can do at home to help your child get started:

- Visit your local library to borrow books as often as possible.
- Make reading a family event. Silent read books as a family, read to your child, and/or ask your child to read to you as often as possible.
- Provide a quiet place at home for your child to read or study.
- Ask your child to show you their homework and set expectations for completion. Give as much help as needed.
- If homework involves studying for a test or quiz, ask your child a few questions to make sure the information has been learned.
- Praise your child for good reading and study habits.

If you have any questions or want more ideas about how to help your child with reading, please contact me at the school. I'd be happy to talk with you.

Sincerely,

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 2 (after Lesson 20)

Your child has completed the first 20 lessons of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here's an update on some things your child has learned.

What's New?		
<p>“Two Old Stories” <i>The Iliad</i> and <i>The Odyssey</i> were thought to have first been told by a blind poet named Homer. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which book tells about the Trojan War? (<i>The Iliad</i>) • Who won the war, Troy or Greece? (<i>Greece</i>) • Which book tells about the adventures after the war? (<i>The Odyssey</i>) • In what language were the stories first written? (<i>Greek</i>) 	<p><i>The Odyssey</i> <i>The Odyssey</i> was originally a Greek poem. Over time, many writers have translated it. Some writers have kept the poem form, while others have turned it into a novel. We've finished reading a novel version of <i>The Odyssey</i>. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the main character in <i>The Odyssey</i>? (<i>Odysseus</i>) • Describe your favorite part or character in the story. 	<p>“The Spider, the Cave, and the Pottery Bowl” Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is so special about the pottery bowl? (<i>It belonged to their ancestors.</i>) • How does Kate's grandmother get the bowl? (<i>From ancient ruins on the other side of the mesa</i>) • How do you think Grandmother feels when the bowl is broken? • What is Kate's dream about? (<i>Grandmother Spider and the pottery bowl</i>) • Johnny feels bad about the broken bowl and runs away to do what? (<i>Find another one in the ruins</i>)

Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
unearthly neglect courteous feeble uproar	bewildered nonetheless gourd mesa idle	ancestors ruins sympathize rot smudge

Activity Page

On the next page, you'll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 3 (after Lesson 30)

Your child has completed Lessons 21–30 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some things your child has learned.

What’s New?		
<p>Apprenticeships Seven hundred years ago, children in Western Europe were working ten hours a day by the age of twelve. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you name some countries in Western Europe? (<i>France, Portugal, Spain, and so on</i>) • Children who worked without pay in small shops were called what? (<i>Apprentices</i>) • How long was an average apprenticeship? (<i>Five to seven years</i>) • Would you want to be an apprentice? 	<p>A New Folktale We read a European folktale called “The Table, the Donkey, and the Stick.” The story tells about brothers who leave home, become apprentices, and return as journeymen. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first brother is a <u>joiner</u>. What is a joiner? (<i>Someone who creates items by joining pieces of wood</i>) • The second brother is a <u>mill</u>. What is a miller? (<i>A person who grinds grain into flour</i>) • The third brother is a <u>turner</u>. What is a turner? (<i>A person who uses a lathe</i>) 	<p>Ireland in the 1900s We also read a story titled “Mrs. Dunn’s Lovely, Lovely Farm.” It tells about a family that moves from Dublin, Ireland, to New York City around the year 1900. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do the Dunns move from Dublin? (<i>Because of the potato famine</i>) • Why were so many potatoes destroyed during the famine? (<i>They were affected by a disease called “potato blight.”</i>)

Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
devour wrath subside agreeable exchange	collapse abroad tenant mirage nourishment	dainty pneumonia gnarled contempt persistent

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 4 (after Lesson 40)

Your child has completed Lessons 31–40 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some things your child has learned.

What’s New?		
<p>“Demeter and Hades” Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are deities? (<i>Gods and goddesses</i>) • Demeter is the goddess of the _____. (<i>earth</i>) • Where does Demeter live? (<i>On the earth</i>) • Hades is the god of the _____. (<i>underworld</i>) • Where does Hades live? (<i>In the underworld</i>) 	<p>“Persephone” Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is Persephone? (<i>Demeter’s daughter</i>) • What happens when she picked the most magnificent flowers in the world? (<i>Hades appears</i>) • Why does Hades capture her? (<i>He wants her to be his queen.</i>) 	<p>Sara Crewe Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of school does Sara go to? (<i>A boarding school</i>) • How is it different from regular school? (<i>The students live there.</i>) • Does Sara like boarding school? (<i>No</i>) • Why does Miss Minchin change her opinion of Sara? (<i>Because her father died and she has no money</i>)

Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
wilt triumphant excessive illuminated threshold	melancholy frivolous detain emerge plumes	adorn inherit garret subscribe crimson

“Persephone” is a great story about Greek gods and goddesses. We are now reading *Sara Crewe*, a novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Ask to hear more!

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 5 (after Lesson 50)

Your child has completed Lessons 41–50 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some things your child has learned.

What’s New?		
<p>Sara Crewe Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does Sara like the attic? (<i>She can see the sunsets. She imagines it’s a really nice place.</i>) • How does Sara make friends with Melvin? (<i>By being calm and quiet, by feeding him crumbs</i>) • Why does Sara pretend to be a princess? (<i>To lift her spirits when Erma leaves</i>) • Who do you think Sara’s friend is? 	<p>More About Sara Crewe Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is Miss Minchin afraid of the parcels? (<i>They might be from a rich friend.</i>) • How does the monkey get into Sara’s room? (<i>Through the skylight</i>) • How does Sara’s life change after she meets Mr. Carrisford? (<i>She discovers the details of her father’s death and inherits a fortune.</i>) 	<p>Review Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who won the Trojan war, Troy or Greece? (<i>Greece</i>) • Can you name some countries in Western Europe? (<i>France, Germany, Italy, Holland, and so on</i>) • Demeter is the goddess of _____. (<i>the earth</i>)

Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence. Make it even more challenging; use more than one of these words in the same sentence!

Vocabulary		
inclined shuffle impudent absurd jostled	ponder luxurious grate vague parcel	scant agitated miscalculation drab suitable

We have finished reading *Sara Crewe* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Ask your child about their favorite part of the story!

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 6 (after Lesson 60)

Your child has completed Lessons 51–60 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some of the things your child has learned.

What’s New?		
<p>Guy de Maupassant Guy de Maupassant was a French writer who lived from 1850 to 1893. He wrote short stories about life in Paris. Maupassant wrote “The Necklace” as well as “Ball of Fat,” his most famous story. Find out more about Guy de Maupassant with your child!</p>	<p>“The Necklace” Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does Matilda want the necklace? (<i>So she won’t look poor at the governor’s ball</i>) • What does Matilda learn about the necklace? (<i>It was fake.</i>) 	<p>“The White Heron” Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does Sylvia feel about living on her foster mom’s farm? (<i>She loves it and feels alive.</i>) • Why is the young man looking for the white heron? (<i>He collects birds.</i>) • What does Sylvia learn about the white heron? (<i>Where it lives</i>)

Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
efface pertain humiliating clasp anguish	diversion maneuver unprecedented parasol undisputed	gallant trio landmark crest reveal

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 7 (after Lesson 70)

Your child has completed Lessons 61–70 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some things your child has learned.

What’s New?		
<p>Jack London Jack London (1876–1916) was one of America’s most famous and popular writers. His best known novel is <i>The Call of the Wild</i>. We are reading one of London’s first novels, <i>The Cruise of the Dazzler</i>. Many of the events in the novel are based on his experiences as an oyster pirate in the San Francisco Bay. Borrow one of Jack London’s novels at the library and read it with your child!</p>	<p>Sloops on the Bay A sloop is a fast sailboat. Pirates could outrace many of the police ships and other patrol boats on the bay in a sloop. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the <i>Dazzler</i> a sloop? (Yes) • What did oyster pirates do? Why did they do it? (<i>Steal oysters from farm beds and sell them, because it was good money</i>) • Name 2 of the 3 large cities that surround most of the San Francisco Bay? (<i>San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose</i>) 	<p><i>The Cruise of the Dazzler</i> Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways is <i>The Cruise of the Dazzler</i> a true story? (<i>London was a pirate. It takes place in a real location.</i>) • Why does Joe Díaz decide to start a new life? (<i>To prove he can live on his own</i>) • What does Joe discover about his companions? (<i>They’re bay pirates.</i>) • How is Frisco Kid’s life story different from Joe’s? (<i>He has no home or family.</i>) • How does Frisco Kid feel about life on land? (<i>He doesn’t think there’s a place for him there.</i>)

Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
rebel smirk suppress loot collide	outwit surge mar wince spunk	untidy survey muffled loom gale

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 8 (after Lesson 80)

Your child has completed Lessons 71–80 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some of the things your child has learned.

What’s New?

<p>Casey at the Bat <i>Casey at the Bat</i> by Ernest Lawrence Thayer is a long poem about a baseball game. The last batter, Casey, has a chance to win the game if he can hit a home run. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning of the poem, is the outlook good for the “Mudville nine”? (<i>No</i>) • Does Casey hit a home run and win the game? (<i>No</i>) 	<p>About the Civil War Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was one of the main causes of the Civil War? (<i>Slavery</i>) • Who won the war in 1865 and ended slavery? (<i>The Union</i>) • In which part of the United States were the Confederate states located? (<i>The south</i>) • Where were most of the Union states located? (<i>The north</i>) 	<p>“Harriet Tubman” Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does Jim want to run away? (<i>To be free</i>) • How did Harriet Tubman become a conductor on the Underground Railroad? (<i>She returned for her family.</i>) • Why do Harriet and the others have to go to Canada? (<i>A new law says slaves can be arrested in free states.</i>) • When does Jim become a free man? (<i>When the train crosses the bridge to Canada</i>)
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Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
summit poised forge ahead vengeance show promise	reception despise unheeded scornful writhe	plantation ruts fit licking snicker

We are almost done reading about the amazing life of Harriet Tubman. Ask to hear more about her!

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 9 (after Lesson 90)

Your child has completed Lessons 81–90 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some things your child has learned.

What’s New?

<p>A New Play <i>All in Favor</i> by Morton K. Schwartz takes place in a backyard during a summer afternoon. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the characters in the play? (<i>Eddie, Nancy, Sidney, Harriet, Tom, Dorothy, and Alvin</i>) • What has to happen before Nancy can join the club? (<i>She has to be elected.</i>) • How do Nancy’s friends seem to feel about the vote? (<i>They all say they voted for her.</i>) 	<p>The 1840s Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why didn’t houses have electricity? (<i>They hadn’t figured out how to bring it into houses.</i>) • Name some electrical appliances people didn’t have in the 1840s. (<i>Clock radio, TV, heater, and so on</i>) • The whole family ate 3 meals a day together. How have family eating habits changed since then? 	<p>Life in the 1840s We have finished reading about life in the 1840s. Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were schools different in the 1840s? (<i>Kids finish at age 14, there is only one room and one teacher, and students of all ages attend the same class.</i>) • Do you think life would have been easier or more difficult in the 1840s? • How was medical care in the 1840s different from modern medical care? (<i>Families took care of most medical problems on their own.</i>)
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Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
regiment sensation staggering deception unanimous	dumbfounded exception astound corridor rigid	ambush dwindle bulky settler endure

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 10 (after Lesson 100)

Your child has completed Lessons 91–100 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some things your child has learned.

What’s New?		
<p>Tom Sawyer Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of boy is Tom Sawyer? (<i>A troublemaker</i>) • Why do the other boys want to whitewash the fence? (<i>Tom makes it seem very fun.</i>) • Are whitewash and paint the same thing? (<i>No, whitewash is water and white powder.</i>) • Why does Tom try to impress the Adored Unknown Girl? (<i>To win her admiration.</i>) 	<p>More About Tom Sawyer Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do Huck and Tom think they can get rid of warts? (<i>With stump water, beans, or a dead rat</i>) • How does Tom win Becky’s heart? (<i>By teasing her and writing “I love you” on his slate.</i>) • What is the tragedy in the graveyard? (<i>Outlaw Joe kills the doctor and blames it on Muff Potter.</i>) 	<p>Review Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the <i>Dazzler</i> a sloop? (<i>Yes</i>) • Name 2 of the 3 large cities that surround most of the San Francisco Bay? (<i>Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose</i>) • In which part of the United States were most of the Confederate states located? (<i>The South</i>)

Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
perplexed	lapse	critical
vicious	logic	scuffle
tranquil	ailment	blunder
fragment	wistful	pathetic
contemplate	lull	oath

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 11 (after Lesson 110)

Your child has completed Lessons 101–110 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*, Grade 5. Here’s an update on some things your child has learned.

What’s New?		
<p>Tom Sawyer Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Muff Potter’s confession? (<i>He killed the doctor.</i>) • What do you think Outlaw Joe tells the sheriff about Muff Potter? • Where do you think Tom and Huck get their beliefs about stray dogs, dead rats, and warts? 	<p>Tom and Becky Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does Becky ignore Tom’s antics? (<i>She’s angry with him.</i>) • How do Becky and Tom try to get even with each other? (<i>Tom flirts with Amy, and Becky pretends to be interested in a boy Tom hates.</i>) • Why does Tom take Becky’s punishment? (<i>To save her and earn her admiration back.</i>) 	<p>Muff Potter: Innocent or Guilty? Ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does Muff Potter’s lawyer try to prove? (<i>Muff Potter is innocent.</i>) • What does the other lawyer try to prove? (<i>Muff Potter is guilty.</i>) • Who makes sure the lawyers follow the rules? (<i>The judge</i>) • Who will decide if Potter is innocent or guilty? (<i>The jury</i>)

Here are some words your child has been learning. Ask your child to use each one of these words in a sentence.

Vocabulary		
ghastly antic crestfallen indifferent anatomy	villain atmosphere isolated haggard trifle	interfere utterly eternity amid throng

We are still enjoying *Tom Sawyer*. It’s a classic story about youth and mischief. Ask your child about his or her favorite character!

Activity Page

On the next page, you’ll find an activity you can do with your child. Have fun!

Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grade 5 / Home Letter 12 (after Lesson 120)

Your child has completed Grade 5 of *Reading Mastery Signature Edition*! We have worked on many reading, writing, language, and research skills this year. Take a moment to congratulate your child on a job well done!

Even though the school year is ending, there are many things you can do to help your child continue to improve their reading, writing, and language skills:

- Continue to read to your child and have your child read to you, even if it's only for a few minutes each day. This shows your child that you think reading is important.
- Encourage your child to spend time reading silently every day. Your child is now capable of reading a wide range of books independently. Model the joy of reading by taking time to make it a family event.
- Enroll your child in a recreational reading program at the public library. Visit the library to borrow books as often as possible. Show them how to look for books on subjects of interest or how to ask the librarian for help.
- Keep paper, pens, and pencils available for writing. Ask your child to write something each day. Ideas include: journal writing, short stories, labeling the family photo album or scrapbook, notes to you, letters to friends and family, grocery lists, or lists of household chores.

Books to Read

Children of this age enjoy adventure books, science fiction, historical fiction, and mysteries. There are also many interesting reference books about nature, hobbies, and sports. There is a book to enjoy on almost any subject you can imagine! Here are some books that you and your child may enjoy reading together.

Library Shelf
<i>Tuck Everlasting</i> by Natalie Babbitt <i>In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson</i> by Bette Bao Lord <i>Tornado</i> by Betsy Byars <i>Shadow Spinner</i> by Susan Fletcher <i>Justin Morgan Had a Horse</i> by Marguerite Henry <i>Shiloh</i> by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor <i>The Illustrated Book of Myths: Tales & Legends of the World</i> by Neil Philip <i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i> by Mildred D. Taylor

Activity Page

On the next page, you'll find a fun activity you can do with your child. Enjoy!