



For the hybrid or  
virtual classroom.

**6<sup>TH</sup>**  
**GRADE**  

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**VOLUME 6.2**

**Historical Nonfiction**  
*Children of the Dust Bowl*

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## Introduction

For years, teachers have used reading activities to induce readers to interact with a text in order to build comprehension. Probably the most commonly used reading activity is one in which students read a portion of the text and then answer short-answer and multiple-choice questions. This read-and-answer-questions lesson format is meant to influence and strengthen students' comprehension, yet teachers still report students, "just don't understand what they read." Reading guides offer another solution.

Studies report that reading guides:

- improve reading comprehension
- benefit all readers
- increase the transfer of skill to new material, and
- are a pleasant change from the typical read-and-answer-questions lesson format

## What is a Reading Guide?

A *reading guide* is a formative assessment tool as well as a tool for building comprehension. Students complete reading guides after having read a portion of assigned text. Rather than a list of questions, reading guides provide a list of statements about the key ideas, details, and inferential thinking prompted by the text. Some of the statements are true based on details in the text. Other statements do not match up to the ideas in the text. After reading, students read through these statements and select those that are true.

The reading guides we have created for the *Read Side by Side Reading Program* are meant to be used as an *exit ticket* after students have participated in the read-aloud lesson. These guides have been specifically created for the virtual classroom—especially when students are participating in pre-recorded read-aloud lessons. Reading guides will serve as an accountability tool, and will also draw students' attention to the important ideas and themes in the text. They will increase students' engagement in virtual lessons.

The reading guides we provide are fillable PDF files. You may share these files with students electronically. They will input their answers into the text boxes provided, save, and send the assignment back to you to be graded. You may also print the reading guides for students, and use them in a traditional pencil-to-paper method.

You will notice that the reading guides we have prepared are hierarchical. The guides move from literal thinking, to inferential thinking, to interpretive thinking. Use the record keeping form provided, and also the record keeping form available in the *Assessment and Intervention Guide for the Read Side by Side Reading Program* (Dewitz & Collinge, 2020) to keep data on students' ability to note *key ideas and details* in the text, infer the author's purpose for using *craft and structure*, and interpret the text through the *integration of knowledge*.

## How to Use Reading Guides

1. After students have listened to or read a portion of the book, provide students with the corresponding reading guide to complete on their own or with a partner.
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss their answers.  
(In the study listed, reading guides seemed to be more valuable when students have the opportunity to discuss their answers.)
3. Use reading guides as a formative assessment tool, allowing you to pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses or misconceptions and plan further instruction or intervention.
4. As with any classroom tool, use reading guides judiciously so that students participate in a variety of comprehension building activities. While we provide a reading guide to go with each of the reading assignments, it is not necessary to use all of them.

### Reference:

Armstrong, D. P., Patberg, J., and Dewitz, P. "Reading Guides-Helping Students Understand." *Journal of Reading*, vol. 31, no. 6 (1988), pp. 532-541.

# Reading Guide 1

*Children of the Dust Bowl*

Pages 1 - 2

## **Directions:**

Some statements listed below are most likely to be true, based on the ideas and details in the text. At least one statement below is not likely to be true based on details in the text.

As you read each statement, ask yourself, “Is this statement most likely to be true based on ideas and details in the text?”

- If the answer is **yes**, mark the statement with the letter **Y**.
- If the answer is **no**, mark the statement with the letter **N**.

## **Key Ideas and Details** (literal details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The Great Depression and the drought in the Great Plains forced a migration of people to California.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When the migrants arrived to California, they found that many jobs were available.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The migrants called themselves “Okies” and to them it stood for pride, courage, and a determination to accept hardship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. John Steinbeck wrote the book “The Grapes of Wrath” which is a true story.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. “The Grapes of Wrath” was considered a controversial book at the time and was banned from many libraries.

## **Craft and Structure** (inferential ideas and details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Life was always easy for farmers in Oklahoma in the 1930’s.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Some people in California were offended by the migrants who were poor and uneducated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Despair means the complete loss or absence of hope.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. John Steinbeck felt empathy for the migrants in California.

## **Integration of Knowledge** (interpretive ideas)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The Okies accepted hardship without showing weakness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Allowing people to starve should not be considered a crime.

## Reading Guide 2

*Children of the Dust Bowl*

Pages 2 - 10

### **Directions:**

Some statements listed below are most likely to be true, based on the ideas and details in the text. At least one statement below is not likely to be true based on details in the text.

As you read each statement, ask yourself, “Is this statement most likely to be true based on ideas and details in the text?”

- If the answer is **yes**, mark the statement with the letter **Y**.
- If the answer is **no**, mark the statement with the letter **N**.

### **Key Ideas and Details** (literal details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. In 1929 the stock market crashed, causing the price of wheat and corn to go up.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Great Depression made farming unprofitable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. 1931 was the beginning of a drought in the Panhandle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. In 1936, the dust storms began to blow away the dry, top-soil.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The dust storms lasted for two, long years.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Some people died of “dust pneumonia” which was when the dust caused severe damage to the lungs.

### **Craft and Structure** (inferential ideas and details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The people living in the Panhandle were not afraid of the blood-red dust clouds.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The dust storms threatened the livestock and the crops.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. People in the Panhandle lost hope.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The banks showed sympathy to the farmers who became bankrupt.

### **Integration of Knowledge** (interpretive ideas)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Many Okies had no choice but to leave the Panhandle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Hope is the last thing ever lost.

## Reading Guide 3

*Children of the Dust Bowl*

Pages 11 - 20

### **Directions:**

Some statements listed below are most likely to be true, based on the ideas and details in the text. At least one statement below is not likely to be true based on details in the text.

As you read each statement, ask yourself, “Is this statement most likely to be true based on ideas and details in the text?”

- If the answer is **yes**, mark the statement with the letter **Y**.
- If the answer is **no**, mark the statement with the letter **N**.

### **Key Ideas and Details** (literal details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The Okies were told thousands of workers were needed in California to harvest crops.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Handbills were advertisements that told about the workers needed in California.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The Dust Bowl Migration was the second-largest migration of people in U. S. history.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Between 1935 and 1940, over one million Okies migrated to California.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The journey to California took anywhere from three to six days.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The migrants crossed the Black Mountains and 143 miles of desert.

### **Craft and Structure** (inferential ideas and details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The Okies showed inner-strength.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Adversity describes difficulties or misfortunes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The Okies would never forget the hardships they endured on the “Mother Road”.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. To make it to California was considered a miracle.

### **Integration of Knowledge** (interpretive ideas)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. The Okies were not fooled by the rumors of what life would be like in California.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. When you hit rock bottom, the only way to go is up.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. What one hopes for is always better than what one has.

## Reading Guide 4

*Children of the Dust Bowl*

Pages 22 - 39

### **Directions:**

Some statements listed below are most likely to be true, based on the ideas and details in the text. At least one statement below is not likely to be true based on details in the text.

As you read each statement, ask yourself, “Is this statement most likely to be true based on ideas and details in the text?”

- If the answer is **yes**, mark the statement with the letter **Y**.
- If the answer is **no**, mark the statement with the letter **N**.

### **Key Ideas and Details** (literal details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. In California there were too many jobs, and not enough workers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The average field worker worked 16 hours a day, and seven days a week, for \$4.00.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Farms often produced more than could be picked or sold.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. ‘Okietown’ was the name given to the well-outfitted camps the Okies lived in.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Farm-labor camps were built to provide better living conditions to the migrants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The migration caused the schools in California to become overcrowded.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The Okies faced prejudice and were treated unfairly.

### **Craft and Structure** (inferential ideas and details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. To the Okies who traveled from the Panhandle, California looked like paradise.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A rumor is a circulating story or report that is likely to be true.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Surplus means a shortage of something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Some people believed it was wrong that the Okies were forced to live in unsanitary conditions.

### **Integration of Knowledge** (interpretive ideas)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Every cloud has a silver lining.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Everyone should be given a chance to learn.



# Reading Guide 5

*Children of the Dust Bowl*

Pages 40 - 49

## **Directions:**

Some statements listed below are most likely to be true, based on the ideas and details in the text. At least one statement below is not likely to be true based on details in the text.

As you read each statement, ask yourself, “Is this statement most likely to be true based on ideas and details in the text?”

- If the answer is **yes**, mark the statement with the letter **Y**.
- If the answer is **no**, mark the statement with the letter **N**.

## **Key Ideas and Details** (literal details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Leo Hart almost died of dust pneumonia.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Leo Hart was a teacher in California during the 1930’s.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. In 1939, he became the Kern County superintendent of education.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Some Californians wanted all Okie children removed from all public schools.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Leo Hart planned to build a school for the Okie children several miles from the farm-labor camp.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The school was built using tax-payer’s money.

## **Craft and Structure** (inferential ideas and details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Leo Hart felt sympathetic to the Okie children and wanted to do something to help them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Leo Hart believed that if he became superintendent, he would be in a position to help the Okie children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. He believed all children should be treated equally.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Leo Hart wanted the Okie children to feel ashamed of who they are.

## **Integration of Knowledge** (interpretive ideas)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Okie children are ordinary kids with hopes and dreams.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. A person’s a person, no matter how small.

# Reading Guide 6

*Children of the Dust Bowl*

Pages 50 - 59

## **Directions:**

Some statements listed below are most likely to be true, based on the ideas and details in the text. At least one statement below is not likely to be true based on details in the text.

As you read each statement, ask yourself, “Is this statement most likely to be true based on ideas and details in the text?”

- If the answer is **yes**, mark the statement with the letter **Y**.
- If the answer is **no**, mark the statement with the letter **N**.

## **Key Ideas and Details** (literal details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The Okie children, the teachers, the principal, and Leo Hart built Weedpatch School.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. An old railroad car was remodeled into a classroom.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The children learned carpentry, plumbing, and other skills.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A garden was planted on the school grounds to provide crops for the school’s kitchen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The Okie children were taught to raise, slaughter, and butcher their own livestock.

## **Craft and Structure** (inferential ideas and details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Self-sufficient means relying on outside help to satisfy one’s basic needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The teachers were there for the money, not the children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The children considered digging a hole for the pool a chore, and didn’t like having to dig during recess and after school.

## **Integration of Knowledge** (interpretive ideas)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Determination and hard work won’t change your fate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Anything is possible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Misfortune makes happiness sweeter when it comes.

# Reading Guide 7

*Children of the Dust Bowl*

Pages 60 - 77

## **Directions:**

Some statements listed below are most likely to be true, based on the ideas and details in the text. At least one statement below is not likely to be true based on details in the text.

As you read each statement, ask yourself, “Is this statement most likely to be true based on ideas and details in the text?”

- If the answer is **yes**, mark the statement with the letter **Y**.
- If the answer is **no**, mark the statement with the letter **N**.

## **Key Ideas and Details** (literal details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Half of the day was spent in class; the other half of the day was spent building the school and tending the crops and livestock.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Most children were able to attend school every day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Weedpatch School was an “emergency school” for the Okies for 5-years, and then it became part of the public-school district.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Today there is no longer a school where Weedpatch School once stood.

## **Craft and Structure** (inferential ideas and details)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Okie children began to feel like they were special.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The school had many disciplinary problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The story of Leo Hart, the Okie children, and Weedpatch School has a happy ending.

## **Integration of Knowledge** (interpretive ideas)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Where you are now is not where you are going.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. It is possible to achieve anything.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A hero is someone who is intent on making the world a better place for himself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. People will never forget how you made them feel.

# Reading Guides ANSWER KEY

## *Children of the Dust Bowl*

*The numbers below indicate the statements that should be marked with the letter Y.*

**Reading Guide 1:**

1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11

**Reading Guide 2:**

2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12

**Reading Guide 3:**

1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13

**Reading Guide 4:**

2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13

**Reading Guide 5:**

2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

**Reading Guide 6:**

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11

**Reading Guide 7:**

1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 11

## Recording Sheet: Reading Guides for *Children of the Dust Bowl*

Student:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
	<b>Key Ideas &amp; Details</b>	___/5	___/6	___/6	___/7	___/6	___/5	___/4	___/39
	<b>Craft &amp; Structure</b>	___/4	___/4	___/4	___/4	___/4	___/3	___/3	___/26
	<b>Integration Of Knowledge</b>	___/2	___/2	___/3	___/2	___/2	___/3	___/4	___/18

# *The Assessment and Intervention Guide for the Read Side by Side Reading Program*

Peter Dewitz & Sarah Collinge, 2020

As a companion to the read-aloud and book club guides, this book inspires teachers as they build assessments into their daily instruction. Formative assessments take the lead, empowering teachers to make instructional decisions, place students accurately in texts appropriate to their level and interest, and provide explicit feedback to move learners forward.

This guide outlines reliable, valid, and useful assessment tools, including:

- surveys of reading motivation and interest;
- observational notes;
- conference forms and scripts;
- standardized assessments;
- running records for each book club title (available online);
- checklists;
- rubrics;
- record-keeping forms; and
- a six-lesson unit preparing students for state testing.

The goal of reading instruction is not only to help students gain comprehension skill, but to ignite their interest and motivation to read. This book complements and is essential to the *Read Side by Side Reading Program*. The intervention strategies give teachers the tools to ensure that all students can succeed with the program, even those who struggle with reading, raising student achievement and increasing students' confidence and competence as readers.

To purchase, please visit  
[www.shop.readsidebyside.com](http://www.shop.readsidebyside.com)

