

Print these **Lexia Skill Builders®** to use as pencil and paper practice activities that will reinforce and extend skills acquired online.

Level	Activity	# of pages
Core5 L16	Passage Comprehension 5	8
	Total	8



- 1 **Read and underline the definition** of the word below. Knowing this word and its definition will help you complete the following activities.

ecosystem (noun) An ecosystem is all living, and nonliving things in an area.

- 2 **Reread the informational text on the next page**, “Keystone Species.” Informational texts give facts about a topic. **Explore the diagram** to help you understand the written information.
- 3 The main idea of this text is in bold print in Paragraph 1. **Put a star (★) next to the main idea.**
- 4 Bullet points with information about keystone species are included in a text box. Use this information to **write a definition of a keystone species in your own words.**

- 5 The information in this text shows a cause and effect relationship. The cause is underlined in Paragraph 4. **Put the letter C in the margin next to the cause.**
- 6 Three effects are underlined in Paragraph 5. **Put the letter E in the margin next to each effect.**
- 7 **Complete the chart by rewriting the information in your own words.** Use the markings you made on the text to help you paraphrase the text.

main idea	
cause	
effect 1	
effect 2	
effect 3	

- 8 **Write a summary of the text** on another page. Use information from your chart and the diagram on the next page to help you.

★ **Work with a partner to research another keystone species. Create a multimedia presentation using video, photos, or diagrams to explain what you learn.**



Keystone Species

1 Ecosystems are filled with connections. An ecosystem is all the plants, animals, and nonliving things in a particular area. **One connection that can have a big impact on an ecosystem is the link between predator and prey animals.**

What to Know

- Keystone species are living things that have a major impact on how an ecosystem works.
- If you take a keystone species away, the whole ecosystem suffers.
- They are often a predator. (They eat prey animals.)



2 Take the example of sea otters and sea urchins. Sea otters are mammals that live in the North Pacific Ocean. They are supremely suited for marine life. Their flipper-like hind feet help them swim. They sleep and eat while floating on their backs, often among the large seaweeds called kelp.

3 Sea otters eat an enormous amount of food. The animals they eat are called prey animals. A preferred prey animal is the sea urchin. Sea urchins are small, spiny animals with round bodies. They live on the sea bottom, eating algae and kelp.

4 During the 1700s and 1800s, it was a profitable business to hunt sea otters for their wonderful fur. Otter-fur hats and coats were popular. Overhunting brought sea otters to the edge of extinction. Not until the twentieth century did laws protect them. By then, damage to marine ecosystems had already been done.

5 Without sea otters to prey on them, the numbers of sea urchins grew nonstop. Sea urchins munched on kelp plants. They kept gobbling until the kelp forests disappeared. The giant green plants were central to the ecosystem where they grew. Kelp provided not just food but also shelter. When the kelp vanished, so did the fish and shellfish that needed it to survive.

6 Biologists have a name for an animal that plays a key role in the health of its ecosystem. It's called a *keystone species*. Sea otters are a keystone species.



- 1 **Read and underline the definition** of the word below. Knowing this word and its definition will help you complete the following activities.

perceive (verb) To perceive is to notice something.

- 2 **Reread the story on the next page**, “Lost on the Trail.” It is fantasy—a story about magic, unrealistic events, and imaginary creatures.
- 3 Go back to the story, and **circle the names of the two main characters**.
- 4 The setting where the fantasy takes place is described in Paragraph 1. **Put a box around the setting**.
- 5 The main characters face a problem, which is described in Paragraph 1. **Put a star (★) in the margin next to the problem**.
- 6 The main characters try to solve their problem in a series of events. **Put a checkmark (✓) in the margin next to the three major events** (Paragraphs 2, 5, and 8).
- 7 The problem is solved in the resolution, near the end of the story. **Put a smiling face (☺) next to the resolution**.
- 8 **Complete the chart below in your own words**. Use the markings you made on the text to help you.

main characters	
setting	
problem	
major event 1	
major event 2	
major event 3	
resolution	

- 9 On another page, **write a summary of the story**. Use information from your chart to help you.
- ★ **Create a board game based on the story you read. Include key details about characters, setting, and events.**



Lost on the Trail

1 Clyde and his friend Ajay often walked on Pine Lane, a dirt path beside a wooded area known as the Enchanted Forest. One day, the boys were walking with Clyde's dogs, Bric and Brac. Suddenly, both dogs barked excitedly and ran into the woods. Clyde called after them again and again, but when the dogs did not return, he told Ajay, "We'll have to go and get them."

2 The two boys entered the woods and called loudly for the dogs. There was no sign of Bric or Brac, but there was a sign on a board nailed to a tree. The boys walked right past it. They didn't notice that it read, "Magic Wish Trail."

3 After calling vainly, Clyde said, "There are so many trees and shrubs, we'll never be able to see Bric and Brac. Too bad we're not dogs because we could track those pups in no time. We'd just use our amazing sense of smell."

4 Ajay rolled his eyes and said, "Yeah, I wish!"

5 At once, a breeze ruffled the boys' hair. "I feel strange," each said simultaneously. Looking at each other, both cried out, "You're a bloodhound!"

6 The bloodhounds shouted at each other for a while, using their low, hoarse voices to howl their shock and alarm. But then, without thinking, they both began sniffing the ground. "A fox must have taken this trail," said Ajay.

7 The two bloodhounds trotted along, sniffing and commenting on the aromatic information that creatures had left behind. They detected the moist fragrance of frogs, the damp smell of rodents, and the wispy perfume of insects.

8 "And here is the route that Bric and Brac took," said Clyde confidently. "They were chasing a squirrel, but it climbed that tree over there, so they gave up and went this way." The bloodhounds followed the scent until they reached the edge of the Enchanted Forest. Before them, on Pine Lane, Bric and Brac stood waiting.

9 Stepping out of the forest and onto the path, the bloodhounds passed through an invisible wall. They transformed instantly into human boys.

10 "Oh, look," Clyde said to Ajay. "Bric and Brac came out of the woods on their own."

11 "I'm glad we didn't have to go into the Enchanted Forest," added Ajay. "I've heard that weird things happen there."



- 1 **Read and underline the definition** of the word below. Knowing this word and its definition will help you complete the following activities.

develop (verb) To develop is to improve.

- 2 **Reread the drama on the next page**, “Talent Show Tryouts: A Skit in One Act.” Dramas, or plays, are stories that are performed by actors.
- 3 Go back to the drama, and **circle the cast of characters**.
- 4 Dramas also have stage directions—information about the setting and directions for the actors that are not spoken aloud.
 - a **Put a box around the stage directions that describe the setting.**
 - b **Underline the stage directions that describe the Director.**
- 5 The words that actors read aloud in a drama are called lines.
 - a The Director’s first lines show that he is motivated to accomplish a goal. **Put a star (★) in the margin next to the Director’s lines that describe his goal.**
 - b The Director’s lines at the end of the drama show that he did not accomplish his goal. **Put a smiling face (☺) in the margin next to the Director’s lines in the resolution.**
- 6 **Complete the chart below in your own words.** Use the markings you made on the drama to help you paraphrase the text.

main characters	
setting	
goal	
resolution	

- 7 What does the Director learn about developing a skill? **Write a sentence to state this theme.**

- 8 **Write a summary of the drama** on another page. Use information from your chart to help you.

★ **Read the drama aloud with a partner. Remember that the stage directions are not read aloud.**



Talent Show Tryouts: A Skit in One Act

Cast of Characters

DIRECTOR **VINCE**, a mind reader

[*The DIRECTOR is sitting on a chair in a dark auditorium. VINCE walks confidently onto the stage.*]

DIRECTOR. Welcome to the tryouts for the Stixville Talent Show. I'll be directing the show, and I want to find the most talented acts in town. What is your name and your talent?

VINCE. I'm Vince the Mind Reader.

DIRECTOR. [*Skeptically*] You can tell what I'm thinking?

VINCE. Sure! Right now, you're thinking that I can't really read minds.

DIRECTOR. True, but too obvious. Let's get a sample of your act.

[*VINCE takes a deck of cards out of his pocket and shuffles the cards.*]

VINCE. Pick a card, any card, and I'll tell you what it is.

DIRECTOR. OK, I've picked a card.

VINCE. Now put it back in the deck, anywhere at all.

[*As the DIRECTOR puts the card back in the deck, VINCE leans over to view the card*]

DIRECTOR. [*Surprised*] Hey, you just looked at it before I put it back!

VINCE. No, I didn't.

DIRECTOR. Yes, I saw you look right at it!

VINCE. OK, OK, I had to take a peek because I haven't perfected the trick yet.

DIRECTOR. [*Sighing*] Go home and practice—for a long, long time.

[*VINCE sulks and exits.*]

DIRECTOR. [*Thoughtfully*] Directing a talent show is a lot harder than I thought it would be. Of course, it is my first time. I might need more practice.





- 1 **Read and underline the definition** of the word below. Knowing this word and its definition will help you complete the following activities.

reflect (verb) To reflect is to send something, like light, back.

- 2 **Reread the poem on the next page**, “City Lights” by Lee Bennett Hopkins. Poets use the sound, as well as the meaning, of words to express feelings and ideas.
- 3 Poems often have words that rhyme. The rhyme in this poem connects the descriptions of city lights. **Circle two words in the poem that rhyme.**
- 4 The vivid words in this poem help readers form pictures in their minds. **Put a checkmark (✓) in the margin next to three words that describe how city lights look or what they do.**
- 5 Alliteration is the repetition of beginning sounds in words. **Underline three pairs of repeated beginning sounds in the poem.**
- 6 **Complete the chart.** Use the markings you made on the poem to help you.

rhyming words	
vivid words	
words with alliteration	

- 7 The rhythm of a poem is like a drumbeat that goes with groups of words. **Read Lines 2 to 9 aloud, and listen for the rhythm. Then, describe the rhythm.**

- 8 The poem has a central message, or theme, about what keeps the city “awake all night.” **Write a sentence to state this theme.**

- 9 The city lights described by the poet most likely have different sources, including light that is reflected off skyscraper windows. On another page, **draw the scene you imagine after reading the poem.**

★ **What is your city or town like at night? Write your own poem to describe its sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and/or feelings. Try including rhyme, rhythm, and alliteration in your lines.**



City Lights
by Lee Bennett Hopkins

- 1 Blazing lights
- 2 flicker
- 3 flash
- 4 glitter
- 5 gleam
- 6 twinkle
- 7 sparkle
- 8 bedazzle
- 9 beam
- 10 so
- 11 brilliantly
- 12 bright.
- 13 Reasons
- 14 why
- 15 city
- 16 stays
- 17 awake
- 18 all
- 19 night.