An Unexpected Surprise for the Twins  
Character Analysis Independent Practice

Directions: Read the passage. Then choose the best answer to each question. Circle the answer you choose.

Lisa and Stephie are twins. Lisa is older. She was born two minutes before Stephie. Two minutes is not much, but everyone calls Lisa the older sister. Every morning except this one, Lisa is up and dressed first. She’s ready to go to school while Stephie is still brushing her teeth. Stephie is always late.

“Come on, Stephie, we’ll be late,” Lisa says almost every day. And almost every day, they are late.

Not this morning. Stephie was up and out of bed before Lisa.

“Hurry! Get up, Lisa. Get up, lazybones. We’ll be late for school again!” yelled Stephie.

Lisa rubbed her eyes. She looked at the clock and saw how late it was. She was surprised that Stephie was up and dressed fast. Mom was still in bed, but they ate their cereal and drank their milk. Then they raced to school.

“We’re late again,” said Lisa.

“Yes, but it wasn’t me this time. You slept too late. You made us late,” said Stephie. They ran faster and faster. Soon they saw the school. No children were in the schoolyard.

“Uh oh,” said Lisa. “This time we’re very late. All the kids are in class.”

Up the school’s steps they flew and pulled on the door. It did not open!

“Let us in!” cried Stephie. “We promise not to be late again.”

“One minute! One minute!” came a voice from inside.

Slowly the door opened. Mr. Green stuck his head out. He was the school janitor. “What’s all the noise about?” he asked. “Well, good morning,” he said to the twins. “You’re Lisa and Stephie, aren’t you? How nice for you to visit me this morning.”

“What do you mean, to visit you?” asked Stephie.

Mr. Green smiled. “No one comes to visit me on Saturdays.”

*Story adapted from I’m Studying Reading! (Book C)*
An Unexpected Surprise for the Twins  
Character Analysis Independent Practice

1. What is Lisa doing differently in this story?
   A. sleeping late  
   B. eating  
   C. drinking milk  
   D. racing to school

2. How did Lisa feel when she saw that Stephie was already dressed?
   A. kind  
   B. angry  
   C. lost  
   D. concerned

3. How did the twins feel when they did not see students in the schoolyard?
   A. silly  
   B. worried  
   C. happy  
   D. full

4. Which of these character traits best describes Mr. Green?
   A. kind and friendly  
   B. angry and upset  
   C. lost and confused  
   D. mean and grouchy

5. Why were the twins surprised?
   A. They forgot it was Saturday.  
   B. Mom was not angry.  
   C. Their teacher was not angry.  
   D. All the kids were waiting for them.

6. We know that Lisa is usually very responsible because
   A. she is always late to school.  
   B. she rubbed her eyes after she woke up.  
   C. she is very upset when she gets to school and doesn't see children in the schoolyard.  
   D. she is older than Stephie by two minutes.
7. Which of these character traits best describes Stephie?

A. calm and easy-going  
B. bossy and loud  
C. helpful and friendly  
D. funny and cheerful

8. Who do you think would make a better friend - Lisa or Stephie? Write your answers on the lines below. Use information from the story to help you explain why they would make the best friend.

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Rosa’s Cat Visitor
Predicting Outcomes Independent Practice

Directions: Read the passage and answer the questions.

Rosa saw the orange cat every morning on the way to school. It was not a kitten, but it was little. It would come out from under a parked car to have its ears scratched, meowing like mad. “Kitty, you’re gabby,” Rosa would say. “You’re gabby, gabby, gabby.”

Rosa began to worry about her little friend. Would it have a place to go inside when the weather turned cold? If it did, would Rosa get to see it in the winter? She decided that she would talk to her parents about the cat.

“Maybe it’s just a stray,” her father said. “We’ll have to check around to see if it has an owner.”

1. What do you think Rosa will most likely ask her parents?
   A. “How old is the cat?”
   B. “Why does the cat meow so much?”
   C. “May I keep the cat as a pet?”
   D. “How cold will it be this winter?”

2. What name will Rosa probably give the cat?
   A. Tramp
   B. Gabby
   C. Little Cat
   D. Stray

3. What will the cat most likely do the next time it sees Rosa?
   A. Run and hide.
   B. Come out to get its ears scratched.
   C. Stay under the car.
   D. Follow her to school.
The Never-Ending Peek-a-boo! Game
Predicting Outcomes Independent Practice

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the questions.

Rudy liked to play with his little brother, Sal. Sal was only three years old. He liked to play peek-a-boo. Sal would cover his eyes with his hands. Then he would move his hands away, laugh, and yell, “Peek-a-boo!” After awhile, Rudy got tired of playing the game, but Sal wanted to play longer. Then Rudy had an idea. He had Sal sit in front of a big mirror.

4. Who will Sal play peek-a-boo with at the end of the story?
   A. Rudy
   B. His mother
   C. His father
   D. Himself

5. How will Sal most likely feel about this game when he is Rudy’s age?
   A. He will not want to play the game.
   B. He will still play the game.
   C. He will cry when he plays the game.
   D. He will forget how to play the game.

6. What will Rudy most likely do in the future?
   A. Go over to a friend’s house to play peek-a-boo.
   B. Teach his brother, Sal, new games.
   C. Not play games with anyone.
   D. Fight with his brother.
Moon Child: A Japanese Legend
Drawing Conclusions/Text Evidence Independent Practice

Directions: Read the passage and answer the questions using information from the passage to support your ideas.

1. Long ago in Japan, there once lived a kind bamboo cutter and his wife. Although they loved each other very much, they had a deep sadness in their lives. The bamboo cutter and his wife were sad because they had no children. Every morning, the wife would get up early and pray to Mount Fuji, a holy mountain, for a child. Each day the husband worked in the bamboo forests from sunrise until sunset.

2. One beautiful morning, the bamboo cutter’s wife woke up, went to the window, and looked toward the mountain. She saw a very bright ray of light high on the side of the mountain. The beam of light came down from the mountain and touched the ground at her feet. Surely this was a sign!

3. She woke her husband in great excitement. She told him the mountain had finally answered her prayers. She exclaimed, “The mountain has given us a child in answer to my prayers, dear husband! Go quickly to the mountain and bring home the child who is waiting there.”

4. The kind bamboo cutter did not believe that the ray of light his wife saw meant anything. However, he loved her very much and did not want to hurt his wife’s feelings. The bamboo cutter got up, dressed, and left for the mountain. He worried that his wife would be disappointed when he returned home without a child. Walking up the path, the bamboo cutter thought about the work he needed to do at home.
When he got to the place where the bright ray of light was coming from, he was really surprised to see a small girl in a bamboo tree. The bamboo cutter asked, “Who are you?”

“I am Moon Child,” she told him. “I have been sent by my mother, the Moon, to be with you and your sad wife. My mother, the Moon, feels sorry for your wife, and she will let me stay with you only until I am grown. Then I will have to return to my mother who will miss me very much until I return. Please bring me to your home and your wife.”

The pleased bamboo cutter took Moon Child out of the bamboo tree and carried her down from Mount Fuji. After a while, the bamboo cutter arrived back home with Moon Child. His wife was filled with joy. The little girl was happy with her new parents. The bamboo cutter and his wife remained very happy, too.

Moon Child stayed with the bamboo cutter and his wife as she grew up. As the years went by, she grew up and became a beautiful, young woman. Always cheerful, she made those around her feel the same. She brought much joy into the lives of the bamboo cutter and his wife.

Moon Child had grown up and had become a beautiful, young woman. The bamboo cutter and his wife worried because they knew she would soon return to her mother, the Moon. One day the bamboo cutter and his wife woke up and saw a bright beam of light coming down from Mount Fuji. Moon Child was not in their house. Moon Child had left to rejoin her mother, the Moon, in the sky, as she had promised.

The reader can conclude that Moon Child --
A. was a special gift to the old couple.
B. did not like her new earth home.
C. became afraid of Mount Fuji.
D. thought she was better than others.
2. Which sentence from the story shows that Moon Child made others feel happy?
A. *The little girl was happy with her new parents.*
B. *The bamboo cutter took the child out of the tree.*
C. *As the years went by, she grew up and became a beautiful, young woman.*
D. *Always cheerful, she made those around her feel the same.*

3. Which sentence from the story shows that the bamboo cutter did not believe his wife’s prayer for a child had been answered?
A. *Every morning, the wife would rise early and pray to Mount Fuji, a holy mountain, for a child.*
B. *The mountain had given us a child in answer to my prayers, my dear husband.*
C. *He worried that his wife would be disappointed when he returned home without a child.*
D. *Walking up the path, the bamboo cutter thought about the work he needed to do at home.*

4. From the story, the reader can conclude that the bamboo cutter is --
A. daring and careless.
B. lazy and selfish.
C. funny and playful.
D. respectful and caring.

5. Which sentence below shows how the couple felt about Moon Child leaving Earth?
A. *My mother, the Moon, feels sorry for your wife, and she will let me stay with you only until I am grown.*
B. *The pleased bamboo cutter took Moon Child out of the bamboo tree and carried her down from Mount Fuji.*
C. *The bamboo cutter and his wife worried because they knew she would soon return to her mother, the Moon.*
D. *One day the bamboo cutter and his wife woke up and saw a bright beam of light coming down from the Mount Fuji.*
Splat!
Cause and Effect Independent Practice

Directions: Read the passage. Then choose the best answer to each question.

This morning, I decided to make breakfast for my older sister Jane. I wanted to do something nice for her, so a smoothie seemed like a good idea. First, I put fresh bananas in the blender. Then, I turned it on. Whoosh! Banana mush went everywhere!

"You forgot the lid!" exclaimed Jane. "Do you want me to help you, Karen?"

"No, thanks," I said.

I looked at the huge mess that I had created. Bananas splattered on the cabinets, banana mush dripping from the counter, and bananas all over the floor. There were no more bananas in the house, so I couldn't make Jane another smoothie. I decided that I would make pancakes for her.

I started to mix the pancake batter, but realized that I didn't add milk and eggs. I went over to the refrigerator, grabbed two eggs, and placed the eggs on the counter. As soon as I turned around to grab the milk, I heard a low rumbling sound behind me.

"Karen, watch out!" yelled Jane.

It was too late. The eggs rolled off of the counter and onto the floor. Plop! Plop! The eggs smashed and formed a little puddle next to the banana mush.

"Okay, Jane. I think I need your help," I said.

We decided to clean up the mess before finishing the pancake batter. Jane added the milk and eggs to the batter, and finally, we were ready to cook. Jane heated the pan, and I poured in the batter. When the first side of the pancake was done, Jane flipped the pancake high into the air. It landed neatly back in the pan.

"Wow!" I said. "Can I try?"

"Watch me flip the pancake one more time, and then I'll let you try," Jane said.

My sister stood back. She hurled the pancake into the air, but it didn't flip. It just kept going higher and higher towards the ceiling. Splat! It hit the ceiling and stuck fast.

I smiled and said, "Jane, it looks like you need my help."

She laughed and said, "Yes, that sounds like a great idea!"
Splat!
Cause and Effect Checkpoint

1. Why did Karen decide to make a smoothie for her sister?

A. Jane was angry with her.
B. Jane asked her to make breakfast.
C. Karen wanted to do something nice for Jane.
D. Karen wanted to use the blender.

2. What caused the banana mush to splatter on the cabinets, counter, and floor?

A. Karen placed fresh bananas in the blender.
B. Karen forgot to put the lid on the blender before turning it on.
C. The eggs rolled off of the counter and formed a puddle next to the banana mush.
D. Jane tossed a pancake high into the air.

3. Look at the diagram below.

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Cause
Karen placed two eggs on the counter.

Effect
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Which of the following belongs in the effect box?

A. Karen forgot to add milk and eggs to the batter.
B. The eggs rolled off the counter and smashed onto the floor.
C. Banana mush splattered on the cabinets.
D. Karen poured the batter into a pan.

4. Complete the following T-chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSE</th>
<th>EFFECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane flipped the pancake high into the air.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding Main Idea in Fiction
An Unusual Green Thumb: Checkpoint for Grade 3

1 All I did was show my little sister how to grow plants. Dig a hole. Put in a seed. Cover it with dirt. Water it. Wait. Could anybody misunderstand something so simple? You wouldn’t think so.

2 Laynie had her own watering can so she could “help” me in the garden. One day after everything was watered, she started sprinkling water on another spot. I walked over and saw a fresh patch of dirt near the fence. “Did you plant something there?” I asked.

3 “Yes, Brad” she said. “I’m growing a pencil.” She stopped sprinkling the water on the ground. “My purple pencil got too small, so I planted it, just the way you said. How long does it take to grow a new pencil?”

4 I should have explained things right then, but I didn’t know what to say. “Uh… I never grew one before,” I replied.

5 I didn’t want Laynie to be disappointed so, I got what seemed like a great idea. I dug up Laynie’s pencil and “planted” a new purple pencil in its place. The next day, Laynie raced outside to the garden. When she saw the new pencil, Laynie jumped up and down excitedly. “My pencil grew!” she shouted. Laynie drew pictures with it all afternoon.

6 "Whew! Well, that’s that," I thought. However, a few days later, Laynie was watering the same spot in the backyard.

7 “How long does it take to grow crayons?” she squealed, giggling. She bent down and whispered, “Grow. Come on, grow.”

8 Two days later, the pointy, little heads of new crayons sprouted from the ground, thanks to me. Laynie jumped up and down and yelled, “They look like flowers!” She “picked” them and ran into the house.

9 Next, Laynie “grew” a large soup spoon from a tiny teaspoon and a hand mirror from a piece of foil. She even grew a package of gum from a single stick of bubblegum. I kept my mouth shut! It was fun thinking of what could grow from Laynie’s “seeds.” And I enjoyed seeing her get excited.
One day I saw Laynie patting down some dirt, so I knew she’d just planted something. I asked Laynie what she was trying to grow. “It’s Molly, my goldfish. She jumped out of her bowl again.” Laynie said. “Grandma said we didn’t find her in time.” Then Laynie picked up her watering can and sprinkled that spot. My heart dropped when she asked, “How long does it take to grow a goldfish, Brad? Not long, I bet!” said Laynie. She knelt down to whisper, “Grow, Molly, grow!” before she skipped back to the house.

I couldn’t speak. I sat down with my back to the fence and asked myself, “Now what? How am I supposed to grow a new goldfish?” I thought for a long time. There was only one right thing to do. I got up, took some things from the shed, and went inside. When I laid the short pencil, crayon stubs, teaspoon, foil, and stick of gum on the table, Laynie looked confused. “Is that my pencil?” she asked.

I told her that we had to talk. I explained how I’d dug up and replaced all of her things from the garden. I told her that they did not really grow. “You replaced everything?” she screamed, as she shoved all of her old stuff off of the table. I felt horrible about what I had done to her, and still, the worst part hadn’t come yet.

“Laynie,” I said softly. “Molly isn’t going to grow either.”

She burst into tears and ran off. I felt like a worm. Later, I found her sitting next to where Molly was buried. I sat down and said, “I did something terrible and wrong, and I am so sorry. You can only grow things from seeds – not from pencils or foil or… dead things. OK?”

“Just seeds?” she asked. She looked at me for a minute. Then she said, “Oh, all right.”

We had a funeral for Molly. Then we planted some forget-me-not seeds on the grave. Laynie watered them every morning. A few days later, I saw Laynie carrying her watering can. I asked, “Laynie, what are you doing?”

“I’m growing something for you,” she said.

“From seeds?” I asked. Please, please, please, I thought.

“Oh course!” She passed me on her way to the house and announced. “I’m growing basketballs!”

When she was gone, I dug up the spot, unsure of what I’d find. The “basketball seeds” were small, and they smelled like… oranges! When I finally stopped laughing, I replanted them. Then I headed for the house to explain gardening to Laynie – one… more… time.

Adapted from: Mastering the TAKS Grade 3 in Reading and Writing
Finding Main Idea in Fiction
An Unusual Green Thumb: Checkpoint for Grade 3

1. Paragraphs 2-4 mainly tell about -
   A. how Laynie tries to grow a pencil in the garden.
   B. how Brad teaches Laynie how to care for plants.
   C. how watering cans are the best gardening tool.
   D. how Laynie is playing a joke on Brad in the garden.

4. What is the main idea of paragraph 10?
   A. Molly the goldfish likes to play in the dirt
   B. Grandma found a dead goldfish.
   C. Laynie thinks she can grow a live goldfish.
   D. Laynie sprinkles water on a place in the garden.

2. What is the main idea of paragraph 5?
   A. Watering the garden helps plants grow
   B. Laynie jumps up and down
   C. Laynie likes to draw pictures
   D. Laynie thinks she has grown a new pencil in the garden

5. The main idea of paragraph 12 is Laynie -
   A. discovers new ways to use gardening tools.
   B. screams and throws things at Brad.
   C. shows Brad the different things that she found in the shed.
   D. learns she was tricked into thinking she had grown things.

3. Paragraphs 8 and 9 are mainly about -
   A. how Laynie is “growing” unusual things in the garden.
   B. how people can grow anything they want to in gardens.
   C. how gum causes your mouth to stick shut.
   D. why Laynie was sad about her goldfish.

6. What is this story mainly about?
   A. A young girl magically grows unusual plants in a garden.
   B. A girl is sad because her pet goldfish has died.
   C. A brother learns a lesson about playing tricks on his young sister.
   D. A brother teaches his sister how to care for plants in a garden.