

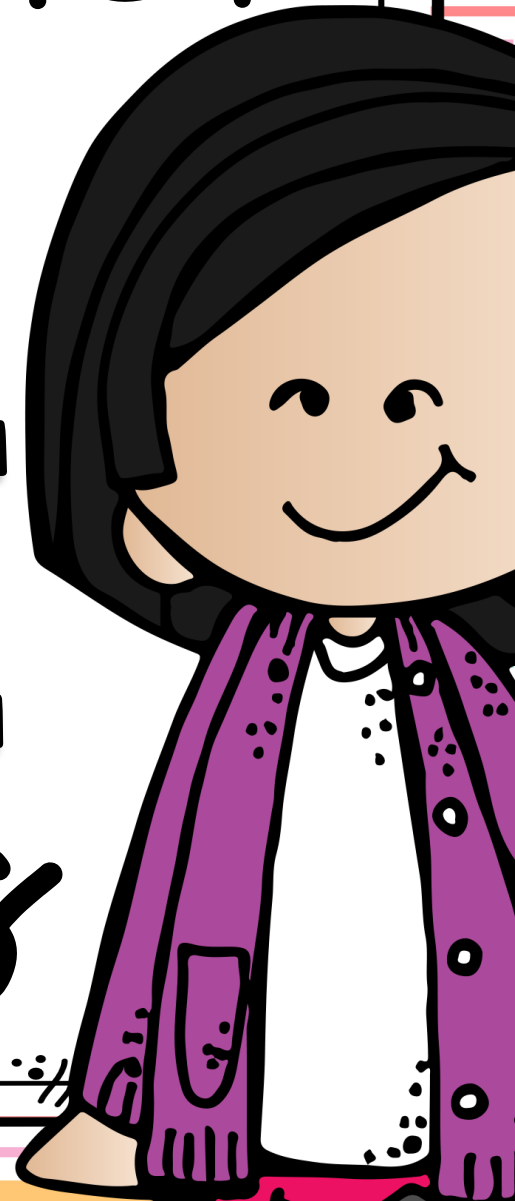
# DECEMBER

COMPREHENSION

READING

PASSAGE

Activities



## AMY PURDY

Amy Purdy is a professional snowboarder. She also wakeboards and skateboards. She is a public speaker, as well. An interesting fact about Amy is that she had both of her lower legs removed, at 19 years old. She never thought that she would ever be able to play sports again. She worked hard and was determined to achieve her goals.

Amy was born on November 7, 1979 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Amy had a bacterial infection called osteomyelitis. This type of infection caused her legs not to get enough blood. As a result, doctors had to remove her legs. She began snowboarding seven months after her surgery. After about five months of snowboarding, she won her first place in a competition. Overall, she has two bronze medals, one silver medal, and one gold medal.

In 2014, Amy wrote a book about her life after her amputation. In her book, Amy talks about how her legs taught her to have big dreams and how she has two prosthetic, or fake, legs. She has a snowboarding career, Amy has partnered with Toyota. She stars in several of the commercials.

Her most recent success was on *Dancing with the Stars*. She came in second place, and she scored the dancers on a ten-point scale.

Amy is a role model to children and young adults. She is only 19 years old. She spends her time on her snowboarding journeys. She enjoys sharing her story with others. She is part of an organization that helps people with disabilities. She is a snowboarder, wakeboarder, and surfer. She is willing to work for it."

## WRITING THANK-YOU NOTES

### SHORT ANSWER:

1. What is the first step when writing a thank-you note?

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## HOT CHOCOLATE AND THE SNOWSTORM

The snow fell on the ground like a blanket. I watched the snowflakes as they danced through the air. I had waited several months for this trip to the mountains. My family was going skiing for the first time, and I was very excited! I had all of my gear ready to go by the door. I could hear my sisters bickering upstairs. The two of them fight like cats and dogs. Dad was looking through his suitcase for his thermal socks. My mom was making some sandwiches and packing snacks for our long day on the mountain.

I started to hear a loud noise. "BEEP! BEEP!" It was coming from my dad's phone. I went to the table to pick it up, and that's when my heart dropped. There was a red weather alert flashing at the top of his phone. It read, "Snow blizzard warning - please stay inside and avoid all roadways. Roads and bridges are iced over."

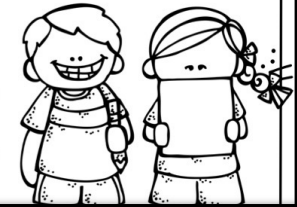
Water started to fill my eyes. I was so disappointed. It's funny how your mood can change in an instant. My sisters began walking down the stairs, still arguing. I didn't mean to, but I lost my cool. "Will you two just hush? We have real problems to handle. We can't go skiing today because of a blizzard!" I shouted.

My sisters were statues. They didn't move or speak; they just stared at me in disbelief. Sarah started blaming Natalie for us not being able to go skiing.

ing a text?

True False

True False



## AMY PURDY

### SHORT ANSWER:

1. What caused Amy to lose her legs?

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2. Based on the article, how would you describe Amy Purdy?

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3. What does the word "amputated" mean as it is used in paragraph 1?

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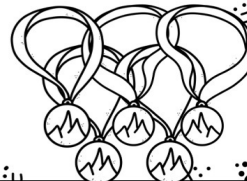
### TRUE/FALSE:

4. Amy wrote a book in 2014. True False

5. Amy had both arms amputated. True False

6. Amy won *Dancing with the Stars*. True False

7. Amy has starred in commercials. True False



## CANDY CANES

Candy canes are a popular candy that are enjoyed during the winter months. They used to be plain white, but they are now easily recognized by their red and white stripes.

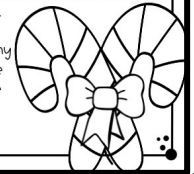
### Common Uses

It is believed that candy canes were originally used in the 1700s to keep German choir boys quiet during their performances. Another story of candy canes is that they were used to keep fussy babies from crying. Now, families use candy canes to decorate their Christmas trees. Candy canes are also used in many desserts and as toppings for hot chocolate. The iconic peppermint flavor makes them popular treats during the winter.

### How to Make Candy Canes

The first step candymakers take when making candy canes is to cook a big batch of sugar water and corn syrup. This creates a thick and sticky mixture. Next, they mix together corn starch and peppermint flavoring. As they mix the two together, the peppermint binds, or clings, to the starch. Then, candymakers put the starch mixture in the middle of the syrupy mixture. The new mixture is placed on a machine that continually folds the mixture to mix the sticky mixture with the starch mixture. This helps ensure that the peppermint flavoring mixes throughout the whole mixture. To make the mixture stiffer, candymakers add cold water while mixing.

At this point, the mixture has a yellow color. To make the mixture white, workers stretch the mixture over and over. A machine sometimes pulls the mixture around to change the color to white. Workers then add a red candy mixture to the outside of the white batch. They send the new log of candy through a machine that slices the sugary mixture. Once it is skinny enough, candymakers cut the candy log. Then they send the sticks through a machine that adds the plastic wrapper. Finally, the candy canes are bent to have the signature hook shape.



five fiction & nonfiction close reading passages with comprehension questions

## STEPS IN A PROCESS

Directions: Use the graphic organizer below to explain the steps it takes to make candy canes. Remember, it is acceptable to include two steps in one section.

1

FIRST

2

3

4

5

## NARRATIVE WRITING

Prompt: Write about a time in your life when you had to work hard or overcome something difficult. If you can't think about a challenging event, create a story in which the main character has to persevere to overcome a challenge.

## AUTHOR'S PURPOSE

Directions: Use the graphic organizer to explain the author's reasoning for writing the passage.

DETAIL

DETAIL

DETAIL

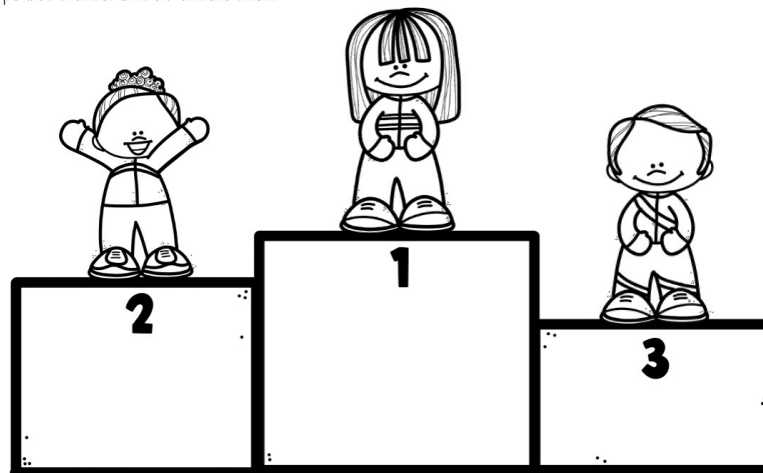
## THANK-YOU NOTE

Prompt: On the space below, write a thank-you letter to a classmate. Thank them for a gift, a favor, or for being helpful or polite.

Greeting

## PODIUM FACTS

Directions: On the podium below, write the three most interesting details you learned about Amy Purdy. Put your details in order of importance, with 1 being the most important. Write your detail about each podium number in the numbered box.



STANDARDS-BASED  
ACTIVITIES & WRITING PROMPTS  
FOR EACH PASSAGE.

# CLOSE READING

## FICTION

Underline the

characters

se

### MARKING UP THE TEXT FICTION

1. Underline the characters and the setting.
2. Draw a ★ next to the problem and the solution.
3. Circle unfamiliar words or phrases.
4. Put a ? next to any part of the story you don't understand or have questions about.

# CLOSE READING

## NONFICTION

Put exclamation points (!) next to details you find interesting.

3.

NOT SO WIMPY TEACHER

NOT SO WIMPY TEACHER

ANCHOR CHARTS FOR  
TEACHERS & STUDENTS.



## STORY ELEMENTS

Directions: Use the graphic organizer below to complete the story elements from the story.

### CHARACTERS

Cora, Aunt Jada,  
Corbin, and Nana

### SETTING

Nana's kitchen

### PROBLEM/ SOLUTION

Corbin didn't have  
enough ingredients

### BEGINNING

Cora's family had a  
gingerbread  
competition. They  
divided  
into teams  
and began



### MIDDLE

Cora, Aunt Jada, and  
Corbin worked on  
their designated  
parts of the  
gingerbread house

## FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Directions: In the boxes below, write examples of the types of figurative language from the story.

### SIMILE

"The snow fell on  
the ground like a  
blanket."

### METAPHOR

"My sisters were  
statues."

### IDIOM

"This was just  
another bump in the  
road."

### ONOMATOPOEIA

"BEEP! BEEP!"



## WRITING THANK-YOU NOTES

### SHORT ANSWER:

1. What is the first step when writing a thank-you note?

The first step when writing a thank-you note is to create a greeting.

2. Why is it important to write a thank-you note instead of sending a text?

Receiving a thank-you note makes the person feel appreciated.

3. When should you send a thank-you note?

You should write a thank-you note when someone does something nice for you or buys you a gift.

### TRUE OR FALSE:

4. Never sign your name when writing a thank-you note.

True False

5. Always send your letters quickly.

True False

6. Thank-you notes should be sent for gifts.

True False



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ANSWER KEYS FOR ACTIVITIES &  
QUESTIONS ARE INCLUDED.

# DECEMBER READING PASSAGES *at a glance*

Day 1 Close Reading Mark up the Text "Candy Canes"	Day 2 Comprehension Questions "Candy Canes"	Day 3 Standards-Based Activity Steps in a Process "Candy Canes"	Day 4 Writing: Opinion "Candy Canes"
Day 5 Close Reading Mark up the Text "Amy Purdy"	Day 6 Comprehension Questions "Amy Purdy"	Day 7 Standards-Based Activity Podium Facts "Amy Purdy"	Day 8 Writing: Narrative "Amy Purdy"
Day 9 Close Reading Mark up the Text "Thank-You Notes"	Day 10 Comprehension Questions "Thank-You Notes"	Day 11 Standards-Based Activity Author's Purpose "Thank-You Notes"	Day 12 Writing: Writing a Thank You Note "Thank-You Notes"
Day 13 Close Reading Mark up the Text "Gingerbread House Contest"	Day 14 Comprehension Questions "Gingerbread House Contest"	Day 15 Standards-Based Activity Story Elements "Gingerbread House Contest"	Day 16 Writing: Narrative Writing "Gingerbread House Contest"
Day 17 Close Reading Mark up the Text "Hot Chocolate and the Snowstorm"	Day 18 Comprehension Questions "Hot Chocolate and the Snowstorm"	Day 19 Standards-Based Activity Figurative Language "Hot Chocolate and the Snowstorm"	Day 20 Writing: Explanatory "Hot Chocolate and the Snowstorm"

THIS UNIT COVERS THE FOLLOWING COMMON CORE ELA STANDARDS: RI.3.1, RI.3.3, RI.3.4, RI.3.7, RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RL.3.6, W.3.1, W.3.2, W.3.3

NOT SO WIMPY TEACHER

Includes an at a glance page to help with planning.

# GETTING STARTED

## Teacher Directions & Tips

Close reading is an important skill for students to learn and helps students become independent readers and has the most meaning as possible.

This resource includes:

- anchor charts for both fiction and nonfiction texts
- student reference sheets to use during close reading
- an "At A Glance" plan for implementing the reading activities
- fiction and nonfiction reading passages
- reading comprehension questions
- standards-based reading activities
- read and respond writing pages

This resource can be used over the course of a month or your needs.

The close reading writing

### ANCHOR CHARTS

There are a variety of anchor charts that can be printed and displayed or projected for students to reference during close reading time. I have included anchor charts that explain the steps of close reading, as well as how to mark up the text during close reading time.

If this is the first time you have implemented close reading in the classroom, I would recommend modeling this reading strategy with students, repeatedly referencing the anchor charts often before having students practice it on their own.

### STUDENT REFERENCE SHEETS

You can print and allow students to use different formats to choose from, how to annotate or mark up the text as well as how you would like to refer to this

the text, skills, standards, and activity is planned out, and you

### FICTION & NONFICTION READING PASSAGES

Each month has a mix of rigorous fiction and nonfiction texts. Each text focuses on a different reading standard or skill. These passages were made with the intent that students would have the opportunity to circle, underline, add symbols, and annotate thoughts as they closely read. Passages include all types of topics, including science and social studies.

### READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Each close reading text has a set of standards-based reading comprehension questions that will have your students thinking deeply about the passage, as well as referring to the passage in search of text evidence that supports their answers.

### STANDARDS-BASED READING ACTIVITIES

Each passage has a standards-based activity that will have your students practicing specific reading skills while having fun and staying engaged. These activities might include filling in graphic organizers, deciphering a secret message, or matching parts of the story with vocabulary. The activities vary depending on the reading skill your students are working on.

### READ & RESPOND WRITING ACTIVITIES

Each text has a question that requires students to respond through their writing. These questions will have students analyzing the text and using it as evidence to support the answers they write.

NOT SO WINNY TEACHER

INCLUDES detailed teacher directions & tips