

Christmas Language Arts

The Smallest Reindeer

Name: _____

Ever since Roger was born, he was always the smallest reindeer. He had never met anyone as small as he was. All of his family members and their friends seemed so huge to him. Roger was sad about being so small. His family was out on a walk and all he could think about was how his siblings seemed compared to him. He couldn't walk as fast as them and as strong as they were. He just wanted to be their size. As his family became denser, Roger's parents were worried, but they were becoming a burden to walk, but Roger thought that his parents and they admitted that they were anymore. After another day, he had become so dense that it was harder to move. Roger had a good idea for direction. He had a clue where they might be and on the way, he told his family to stay put. He squeezed through some of the tight spaces and was able to see a way out. He ran back and told his family. Now, he was very proud to be so small.

ice skating

candy canes

The Smallest Reindeer

Name: _____

1. What happens in the beginning of the story?

2. Why was Roger sad?

3. What happens in the middle of the story?

4. Why did the other reindeer get stuck?

What happens at the end of the story?

Literal Meaning
Nonliteral Meaning

The elf yawned after a long day of making toys in the toy shop.

That mug of hot cocoa is calling my name!

relatives

What's Included

Each domain will have 3-4 activities.

The domains are:

- Reading Literature
- Reading Informational
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening
- Language
- Foundational Skills

There will be a mix of:

- partner activities
- whole group activities
- independent activities
- small group options



What Teachers Say

"This is the best resource for continuing to focus on objectives and targets while celebrating such a festive time of year. It is difficult with all the excitement going on to keep student's focused and this supplement material serves this purpose successfully!"

"This was a good resource. Ready to go , and easy to use. It made lesson planning much easier."

"My students really enjoyed reading the informational texts and using the writing packet. There are so many great resources in this activity pack."

"My students enjoyed using this resource for reading comprehension! They enjoyed both the fiction and nonfiction articles."



Standards-Based

All of these activities are standards-based activities. What makes these unique is that they are themed to a holiday or a season!

Domain	Skills Hit
Reading Literature: RL	RL.3.4, RL.4.4- Figurative Language RL.3.5, RL.4.5- Story Structure RL.3.7, RL.4.7- Illustrations RL.3.2, RL.4.2- Moral of the Story
Reading Informational: RI	RI.3.3, RI.4.3- Connections RI.3.6, RI.4.6- Point of View RI.3.5, RI.4.7- Text Features RI.3.7, RI.4.7- Visuals and Media
Writing: W	W.3.3, W.4.3- Narrative and Sequencing Practice W.3.3, W.4.3- Narrative Writing W.3.1, W.4.1- Opinion and Linking Words Practice W.3.1, W.4.1- Opinion Writing
Speaking & Listening: SL	SL.3.1, SL.4.1- Collaborative Discussion SL.3.4, SL.4.4- Reporting on a Topic SL.3.5, SL.4.5- Audio Recordings and Visual Displays
Reading Foundational Skills & Language: RF, L	L.3.1.h, L.4.2.c- Conjunctions RF.3.3.d, RF.4.3.a- Irregular Spelling L.3.5.a, L.4.5.a- Nonliteral Language RF.3.3.c, RF.4.3.a- Multisyllable Words

Reading Literature

Name _____

Santa's Running Late

On Christmas Eve, Santa had trouble getting his reindeer rounded up. He knew he needed to leave to deliver presents, but he couldn't find two reindeer. After looking for a few hours, he finally found them behind the barn eating hay. Santa rushed them to the sled and he sped off into the sky like a rocket. He knew he'd gotten a late start. He was going to have to make up time to get all the presents delivered before morning. Santa was busy as a bee as he hustled from house to house. After the first few houses, he came up with an idea. If he dropped the presents down the chimney, he could save time. He wouldn't have to go up and down the chimney. By doing this, he might stand a chance at getting back on schedule. He was as clever as a fox. Santa told the reindeer how behind schedule they were and how much time they needed to make up. The reindeer understood and fought tooth and nail to fly quicker to help Santa. After an eternity of going as quickly as possible, Santa was able to finally get back on schedule. With just minutes to spare before the sun rose, he lifted off from the last house and headed back north.



Name _____

Santa's Running Late

1. Why was Santa running behind schedule?
2. What kind of figurative language is "sped off into the sky like a rocket"?
3. What do you think "clear as a fox" means?

What does fighting "tooth and nail" mean?

How long did it take for Santa to catch up?

Name _____

The Smallest Reindeer

Ever since Roger was born, he was always the smallest reindeer. He had never met anyone as small as he was. All of his family members and their friends seemed so huge to him. Roger was sad about being so small. His family was out on a walk and all he could think about was how his siblings seemed so big compared to him. He couldn't walk as fast as them and he wasn't as strong as they were. He just wished that he could grow to be their size. As his family kept walking, the woods became denser. Roger's parents were usually good navigators, but they were becoming a bit confused. They continued walking, but Roger thought they might be lost. He asked his parents and they admitted they did not really know where they were anymore. After another half hour, they were lost. Roger's parents were so dense that it was hard for the reindeer to move. Roger had a good sense for direction. He had a clue about where they might be and an idea. He told his family to stay put. He squeezed through some of the tight spaces and was able to see a way out. He ran back and told his family. Now, he was very proud to be so small.



Name _____


The Smallest Reindeer

1. What happens in the beginning of the story?
2. Why was Roger sad?
3. What happens in the middle of the story?
4. Why did the other reindeer get stuck?
5. What happens at the end of the story?

Name _____

Not As Easy As It Seems

Santa is always focused on his list of naughty and nice children during the holidays. So, he has to divide up all of the other chores around the North Pole for everyone else so they still get done. This year, two elves named Sandy and Leroy drew the task of decorating the Christmas tree. Decorating the Christmas tree at the North Pole is no easy task. It is expected to be one of the best-looking Christmas trees in the world, so it must be done exactly right. Sandy and Leroy were nervous because they'd never decorated it before, and it was such an important job. They formulated a plan about how to do it. They would start at the top and work down. Leroy would stand at the top of the ladder. Sandy would stay near the base to keep it steady. From there, she would also be able to hand more ornaments and more lights up to Leroy. The elves got to work on the tree once their gameplan was complete. It took them much longer than they thought it would, but they finally completed it after 4 hours. It was so well done that even Santa said, "Sandy and Leroy, you really knocked it out of the park!"



Name _____

Not As Easy As It Seems


1. Why is decorating the North Pole tree such an important task?
2. How does the illustration help you?
3. Did Sandy and Leroy put up ornaments or lights first and how do you know?
4. What kind of mood is being conveyed in the picture?

How did Sandy and Leroy do?

Name _____

Third Time's a Charm

Simon loved everything about Christmas. He loved hanging up the lights, decorating the tree, and going caroling. But his favorite activity was baking Christmas cookies. Simon had always helped his mom bake Christmas cookies during the holidays. They would make so many cookies that Simon couldn't even count them. They gave the cookies away to friends, family, and co-workers. Of course, they ate a lot of them too. This year, Simon asked his mom if he could try baking some cookies on his own. His mom agreed and off Simon went rounding up ingredients for his first batch. Simon pre-heated the oven and got to work on the dough. After he cut them out with Christmas shapes, he put them into the oven. When Simon pulled them out a little later, they were burnt. He was disappointed, but he made another batch 20 minutes later, those cookies came out burnt as well. Simon became more determined than ever. He paid very close attention to the third batch. He pulled them out after 12 minutes. These were perfect. He had successfully made Christmas cookies on his own. His determination paid off.



Name _____

Third Time's a Charm

1. What did Simon and his mom do with Christmas cookies?
2. What did Simon want to try this year?
3. What happened to Simon's first two batches of cookies?
4. What happened to Simon's attitude after the second batch of burnt cookies?
5. Is the mood of the story?

Reading Informational

Christmas Tree Timeline

Christmas trees are the most popular Christmas decoration in the United States. Some people decorate their homes with an artificial Christmas tree. However, other people use a real Christmas tree. Christmas trees are evergreen trees. They have needles instead of leaves. They usually come from tree farms, which are large areas specifically for growing certain types of trees. Before Christmas trees can be planted, the earth must be plowed and leveled. The Christmas trees on tree farms are often planted elsewhere and transplanted to the tree farm. People at the farm will attempt to keep the farm free of weeds and anything that could impair the trees' growth. Fertilizer is applied and the trees are pruned, removing most of the lower branches. The trees will eventually get the edges of the tree cut so they have their desirable cone shape. The entire process takes about six years. Once the trees get to at least six feet tall, they are harvested and put up in living rooms all over the world.



Christmas Tree Timeline

1. What do you think artificial means and why?
2. What needs to happen before Christmas trees can be planted?
3. What does pruning the tree do?
4. At what point are the trees cut down?
5. What separates Christmas trees from real trees?

Last-Minute Shopping

Most people finish their Christmas shopping weeks or even months ahead of the holiday itself. However, there are some people who procrastinate and shop up until the last second. These people doing shopping with just days to spare face a different set of obstacles than those people who finished their holiday shopping early. The best deals on gifts are offered well ahead of Christmas. The two days for the best discounts are Black Friday and Cyber Monday. These are the Friday and Monday after Thanksgiving, almost a whole month before Christmas. Last-minute shoppers don't get these kinds of deals.

Last-minute shoppers also have to put up with bigger crowds. While it is not popular, there are still enough people who did not buy early gifts that there are huge crowds in the last few days before Christmas. Shoppers at this time also don't have as many choices. Lots of products sell out ahead of time. It is a wise idea to get shopping done well ahead of time so you don't deal with this.



Last Minute Shopping

1. What do you think procrastinate means?
2. When are the best deals on Christmas gifts offered?
3. What is the author's point of view on last-minute shopping?
4. Why does the author think that?
5. Name 2 reasons the author gives to get shopping done early.

Gingerbread Cookies

Christmas Tradition

A popular Christmas tradition is baking cookies. Although it is not the most popular cookie year-round, the gingerbread cookie is in demand during the winter holidays. It is common to make the cookies into the shapes of small gingerbread people. After the cookies are cut out with a cookie cutter and baked, they are often decorated with icing and other adornments. This Christmas pastime is often done with family members, especially children.

Gingerbread cookies are flavored with ginger, cloves, nutmeg, and cinnamon. They also have an assortment of variations from other traditions, honey or sugar.

Other Forms

Gingerbread is formed into more than just cookies shaped like people. Another holiday tradition involves making a gingerbread house. The walls and roof of the house are made out of baked gingerbread, just like cookies. These are then decorated with icing and candy is applied on top of the icing to add color and style.



Gingerbread Cookies

1. What is the most common form for gingerbread cookies?
2. Name 2 last features you see.
3. What is the author's point?
4. What do the illustrations do?
5. How does the image support the text?

Wrapping Gifts

All across the world, people exchange gifts for Christmas. With the internet playing such a large role, gift buying is as easy as ever. Many people complete their entire holiday shopping list without even leaving the house. Items are shipped directly to the home of the purchaser. For as easy as it is to acquire the presents, one thing that has not changed is wrapping them. For Christmas, most people still wrap up gifts that they bought for someone else. The process of wrapping gifts is not nearly as simple as the purchase. People wrap gifts in special wrapping paper and adorn the gift with bows and ribbons. Sometimes, people use a sticker to indicate who the gift is from and who should get it.

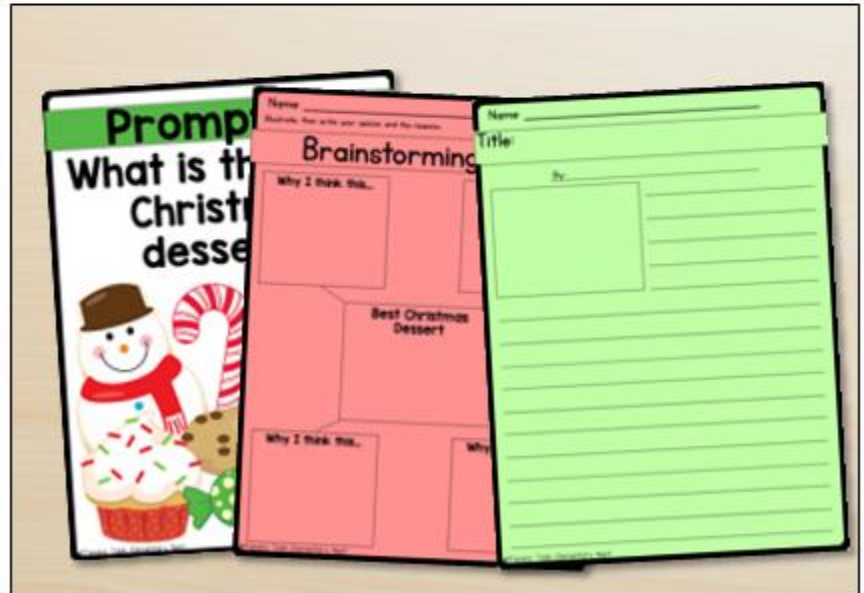
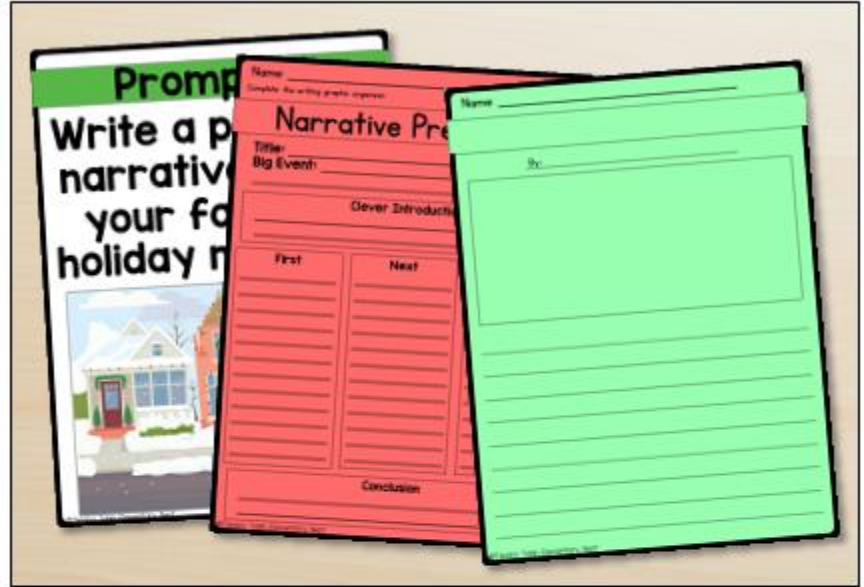
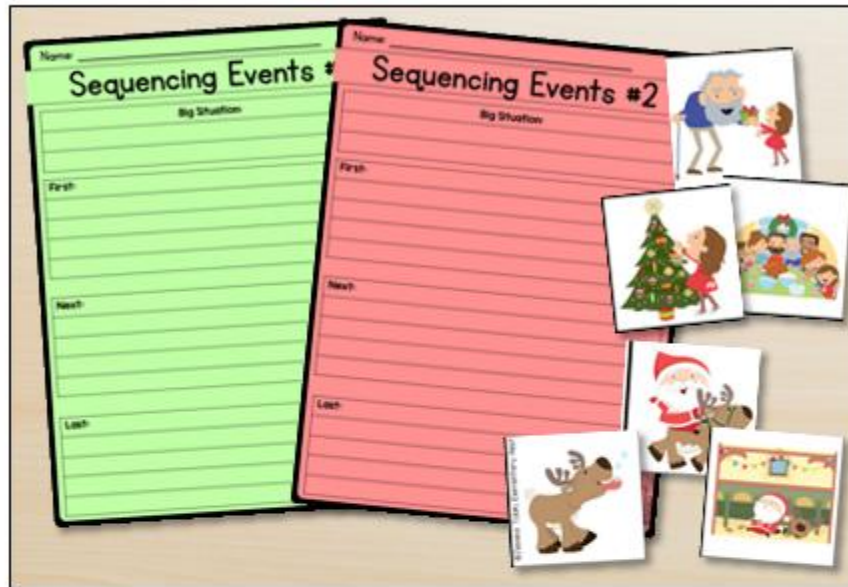
To wrap a gift, the paper needs to be wrapped around the gift and then folded over in a neat fashion. It should then be taped. Run the edge of some scissors along a ribbon to make it curl over and look fancy. Tape the back of a bow to the top of the gift. This will make it look more appealing.



Wrapping Gifts

1. What are people put on wrapped gifts?
2. How do many people purchase Christmas gifts?
3. How does the image contribute to the text?
4. What else should be in the image and why?
5. Based on the text and image, is this a well-wrapped gift? Why or why not?

Writing



Foundational Skills & Language

Conjunctions

Name: _____

Draw a sentence about the topic you picked using the conjunction.

for

Santa

hot cocoa

yet

but

candy canes

car

nor

Spelled Correctly

Spelled Incorrectly

I had to climb a ladder to put the star on the tree.

The reindeer on the huge racket on the roof last night.

Santa and the reindeer ate too many cookies again.

The elf caught the snowball that his friend threw at him.

Dad said I could wrap my brother's gift today.

My friend was friends with the baby reindeer.

Mom said we could make a pie or cake.

She gave her a candy after he built the toys.

Literal or Nonliteral?

Name: _____

Card # _____

Literal or Nonliteral?

1. Rudolph's nose was so bright, it could have lit up the entire night sky.
Literal Meaning _____
Nonliteral Meaning _____

2. For Christmas dinner, we ate turkey, mashed potatoes, and juice.
Literal Meaning _____
Nonliteral Meaning _____

3. There was a blanket of snow covering the driveway and yard.
Literal Meaning _____
Nonliteral Meaning _____

4. The elf decorated ten sugar cookies for his family members yesterday.
Literal Meaning _____
Nonliteral Meaning _____

5. These Christmas lights shone as bright as the sun.
Literal Meaning _____
Nonliteral Meaning _____

6. The elf climbed the tall ladder to reach the top of the Christmas tree.
Literal Meaning _____
Nonliteral Meaning _____

Multisyllable Words

Name: _____

Word _____

Write it broken apart into syllables. Then, circle the vowels in each syllable.

present

marshmallow

caroling

gingerbread

stocking

peppermint

Speaking & Listening

This story made me because...

The character reminded me of...

This story reminds me of...

My least favorite event was... because...

The best part of the story was... because...

The setting of the story was... which changed the story by...

Topic: pumpkin pie

Topic: reindeer

Topic: hot cocoa

Topic: evergreen trees

Name: _____

My Topic: _____

Quick notes for my presentation.

Visual Display for Fictional Story

Name: _____

Title: _____

Peculiar Prompt: a surprise squirrel living in your Christmas tree

Peculiar Prompt: a reindeer taking a nap on your roof

Peculiar Prompt: an elf singing a Christmas carol at your front door

Instructions Included

Each domain comes with 3-4 activities.

These activities are explained in detail with a teacher instruction page. Consider this your mini lesson guide page!

Speaking & Listening Activities

Activity 1: Collaborative Discussion (SL.3.1, SL.4.1)

Teacher will read a fictional book aloud to the class, or partners will read a book together side by side (depending on how independent your readers are). After they finish reading the story, students will answer one question at a time to participate in a conversation about the story they just read. Book Suggestions: Olive the Other Reindeer, How Santa Lost His Job, The Mitten, The 12 Sleighs of Christmas, Little Red Elf



Activity 2: Reporting on a Topic (SL.3.4, SL.4.4)

Each student will get a topic to research. Load up on children's books at the library and let them research to gain facts and information or allow them to use a kid-safe search engine. After they've done this, ask them to present their information to a group of 3-4 students. Accountable talk from the listeners is also expected during these presentations.



Activity 3: Audio Recordings & Visual Displays (SL.3.5, SL.4.5)

Students will choose one of the four peculiar prompts to write a story about. They will write a fictional story about this picture. Then, students will use a recording device (app, tape recorder, computer program) to record themselves reading their story. Then, students will create a picture that represents their story as closely as possible. They will try to fit as much detail into the picture as possible.



Instructions Included

RL Passages

Passage 1:

Focus- Figurative Language

Standard- RL.3.4, RL.4.4

3rd Grade suggestions- Partner reading or choral read 2-3 times prior to comprehension questions

4th Grade suggestions- Independent reading prior to comprehension questions



Passage 2:

Focus- Structure

Standard- RL.3.5, RL.4.5

3rd Grade suggestions- Partner reading or choral read 2-3 times prior to comprehension questions

4th Grade suggestions- Independent reading prior to comprehension questions



Passage 3:

Focus- Illustrations

Standard- RL.3.7, RL.4.7

3rd Grade suggestions- Partner reading or choral read 2-3 times prior to comprehension questions

4th Grade suggestions- Independent reading prior to comprehension questions



Passage 4:

Focus- Moral of the Story

Standard- RL.3.2, RL.4.2

3rd Grade suggestions- Partner reading or choral read 2-3 times prior to comprehension questions

4th Grade suggestions- Independent reading prior to comprehension questions



RI Passages

Passage 1:

Focus- Connections

Standard- RI.3.3, RI.4.3

3rd Grade suggestions- Partner reading or choral read 2-3 times prior to comprehension questions

4th Grade suggestions- Independent reading prior to comprehension questions



Passage 2:

Focus- Point of View

Standard- RI.3.6, RI.4.6

3rd Grade suggestions- Partner reading or choral read 2-3 times prior to comprehension questions

4th Grade suggestions- Independent reading prior to comprehension questions



Passage 3:

Focus- Text Features

Standard- RI.3.5, RI.4.7

3rd Grade suggestions- Partner reading or choral read 2-3 times prior to comprehension questions

4th Grade suggestions- Independent reading prior to comprehension questions



Passage 4:

Focus- Visuals and Media

Standard- RI.3.7, RI.4.7

3rd Grade suggestions- Partner reading or choral read 2-3 times prior to comprehension questions

4th Grade suggestions- Independent reading prior to comprehension questions



Instructions Included

Language & RF Activities

Activity 1: Conjunctions (L.3.1b, L.4.2c)

Students will draw two cards. One is a conjunction card, and one is a topic card. They will create a sentence about the topic using the conjunction. They will record their sentence on the recording sheet.



Activity 2: Irregular Spelling (RF.3.3.d,)

Students will work with a partner to draw a sentence card. They will read the sentence aloud three times, then focus on the underlined word. If the word is spelled correctly, they will sort it under the correct category. If it's not, they will sort it under the incorrect category. (An optional recording sheet is provided.)



Activity 3: Nonliteral Language (L.3.5.a, L.4.5.a)

Students will work with a partner to draw a sentence card and read the sentence aloud three times. Then, they will determine if the sentence is literal or nonliteral and circle their answer on the card. (An optional recording sheet is provided.)



Activity 4: Multisyllable Words (RF.3.3.c,)

Students will draw a multisyllable word and divide it up by syllables, then circle the vowels in each syllable set. The teacher will model how to sound the syllables out, put a slash (/) mark to separate the syllables, then double check (circle) the vowels. (First is done as an example.)



Writing Activities

Activity 1: Narrative and Sequencing Practice (W.3.3, W.4.3)

Students will work with a partner to put three different story lines in order however they see fit. Then, they will write the one big situation with three events following. They will share their results with partners nearby to see if their story lines are different or similar to others.



Activity 2: Narrative Writing (W.3.3, W.4.3)

Teacher will put the prompt on the board for students. Students will brainstorm on their prewriting worksheet, then they will turn that into a writing piece. Ask them to focus on sequencing events just like they practiced in Activity 1.



Activity 3: Opinion and Linking Words Practice (W.3.1, W.4.1)

Teacher will write a list of linking words on the board or display the poster. Then, he or she will display one Christmas topic on the board at a time. Students will turn and talk with a nearby partner. They will share their opinion and reason for this topic while using at least one of the linking words from the list.



Activity 4: Opinion Writing (W.3.1, W.4.1)

Teacher will put the prompt on the board for students. Students will brainstorm on their prewriting worksheet, then they will turn that into a writing piece. Ask them to focus on the linking words they practiced in Activity 3.

