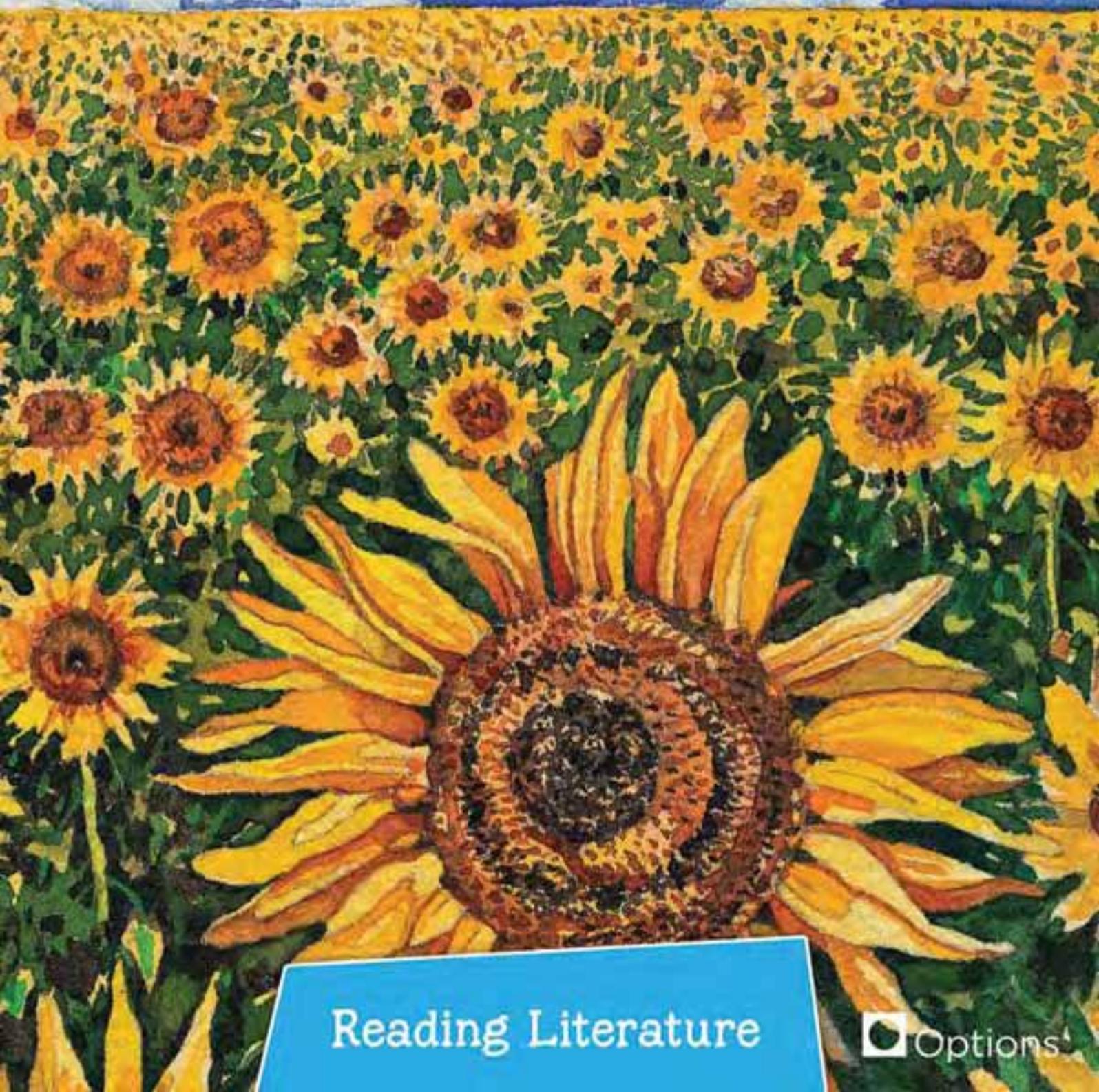


# COMMON CORE

Grade 5

English Language Arts

# CLINICS



Reading Literature

 Options

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# Compare and Contrast Characters

## Learn About It

A **character** is a person, animal, or other creature in a story. When you **compare** characters, you find ways they are *similar*. When you **contrast** them, you find ways they are *different*. To compare and contrast characters, notice how they are described as well as how they speak and act. You might also find clues in the ways other characters react to them.

Read this passage. Notice how you learn about Ned and Kevin from what they say and do.

“Wake up! Wake up!” shouted Ned. “We’re going to be late!”

Kevin looked at the alarm clock. “We still have three hours,” he mumbled. “Calm down and give me another half hour to sleep, OK?”

Ned knew his brother was right, but he had been planning for the science fair for months, and today was the day. Ned paced for fifteen minutes and then whispered in Kevin’s ear, “Are you awake yet?”

“I am now,” laughed Kevin. “Come on. Let’s go win you a prize.”

Ned	Kevin
Ned is going to the science fair.	Kevin is going to the science fair.
Ned is excited and nervous.	Kevin is relaxed.
Ned takes the science fair seriously.	Kevin takes the science fair seriously.

# Try It

Read the passage. Underline clues that tell you what the characters Mia and Louise are like. Use the questions to help you.

## Vacation Olympics

**M**y mother's friend Mrs. Mahoney invited us for a three-day weekend at her house near the beach. Mrs. Mahoney has two kids, Mia and her twin sister Louise. They look a lot alike, but they are quite different. Mia is really good at sports, while Louise is really good at art. One thing they have in common, though, is that they are both very competitive. So we had a new contest every day!

On the first day, we went to the ocean. We had a contest to see who could ride a wave for the longest distance. At first, I rode a really long wave, and everyone cheered, "Go, Lily!" Then Louise tried, but she didn't get very far. Finally, Mia rode an even longer wave than I did.

"Hurray, I'm the winner!" Mia bragged.

"Yeah, I guess so," sulked Louise. "You win today's contest."

On the second day, the water was too calm for waves. So we decided to see who could build the best sandcastle. All of our castles were big. My castle had a lot of bridges. Mia's castle had interesting towers. Louise's castle was decorated with seashells.

"Whose castle do you think is best?" asked Louise.

"Are you kidding?" asked Mia. "There's no question about it, Louise. Yours is clearly the best." And she was right.

On the third day, I wanted the chance to finally win at something. But it was pouring rain. Luckily, I am really good at board games!

Authors sometimes compare and contrast characters. What words in the first paragraph signal similarities and differences?

To compare characters, notice how they respond to similar events. How are Mia and Louise's reactions after each contest similar and different?



How is the narrator, Lily, similar to Mia and Louise?

## Apply It

Read the drama. Underline clues that help you compare and contrast the characters in the story. Answer the questions on the next page.

adapted from

### **Donkey's Disguise**

*by Aesop*

*Setting: A meadow.*

*Donkey is eating some grass. Goose waddles in.*

DONKEY: Hey there, Goose!

*Goose ignores Donkey and waddles past. Dog trots in.*

DONKEY: Hey there, Dog!

*Dog ignores Donkey and trots away.*

DONKEY: Nobody pays attention to me. But I've got a way to fix that!

*Donkey disguises himself as a lion. Goose comes back in, and Donkey pounces.*

GOOSE: (*screaming*) Lion! Lion! (*Goose runs away in terror.*)

DONKEY: This is fun!

*Dog enters. Donkey pounces again. Dog howls in terror and runs away.*

DONKEY: This is my best idea ever! I'm just as clever as Fox! He's always tricking other animals. Now it's my turn to trick him.

*Donkey goes to Fox's hole and waits for him to come out. As soon as Fox shows his whiskers, Donkey pounces.*

DONKEY: I'm going to eat you up! Run away, Fox!

*Fox doesn't move.*

DONKEY: Aren't you afraid of a big, ferocious lion?

FOX: (*calmly*) That's a fine disguise you have there, Donkey. I might have been fooled if you hadn't said anything. But there's no way you can hide your ridiculous braying voice. You know, clothes may disguise a fool, but his words will give him away.

*Fox goes smugly back into his hole.*

Answer these questions about "Donkey's Disguise." Write your answers in complete sentences.



How do Goose and Dog react differently to Donkey when he is in disguise?

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How are Goose and Dog alike?

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How is Fox different from Goose and Dog?

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How does Donkey think he is similar to Fox?

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How does Fox show that he is different from Donkey?

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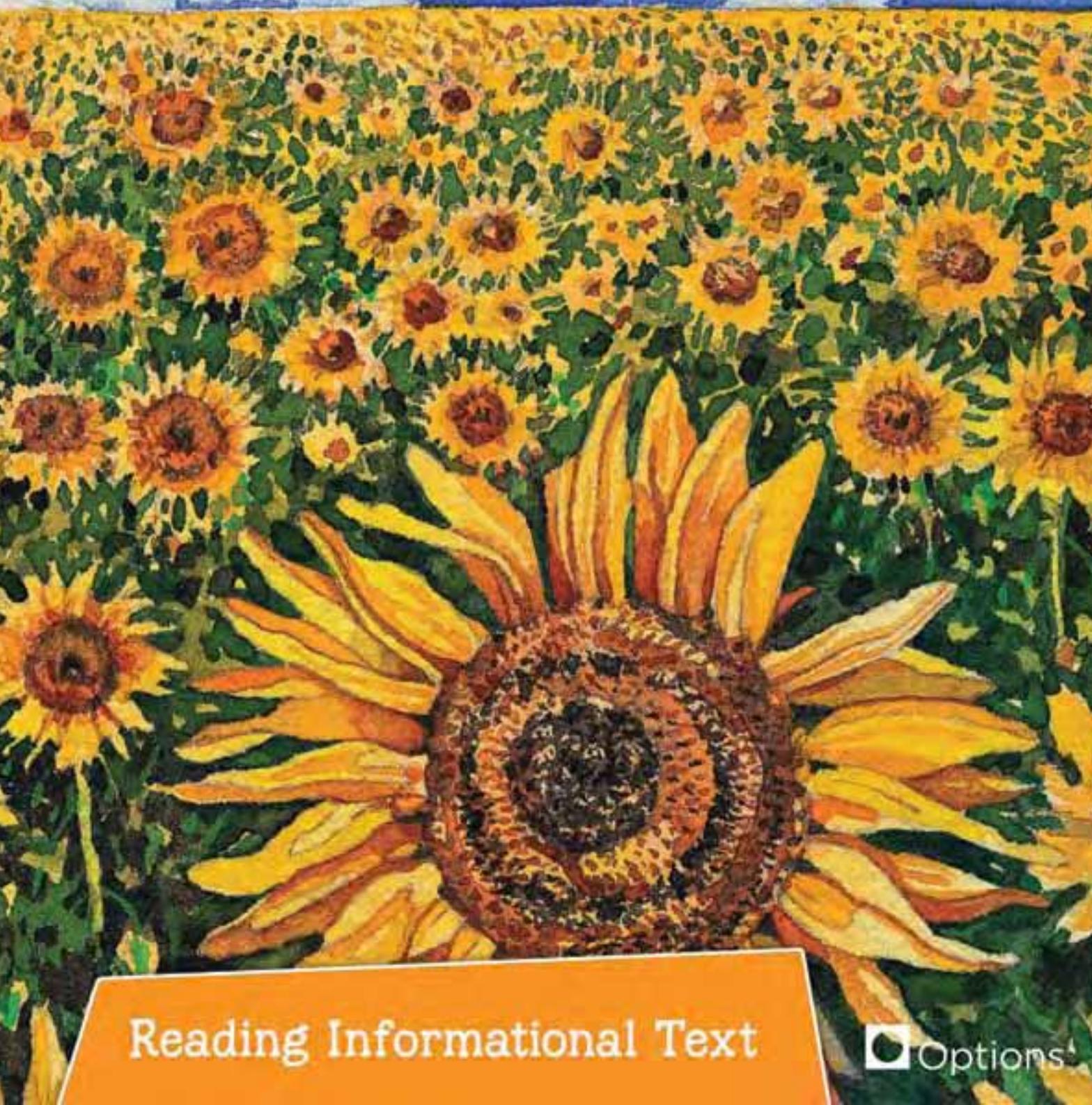
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# COMMON CORE

Grade 5

English Language Arts

# CLINICS



Reading Informational Text

 Options

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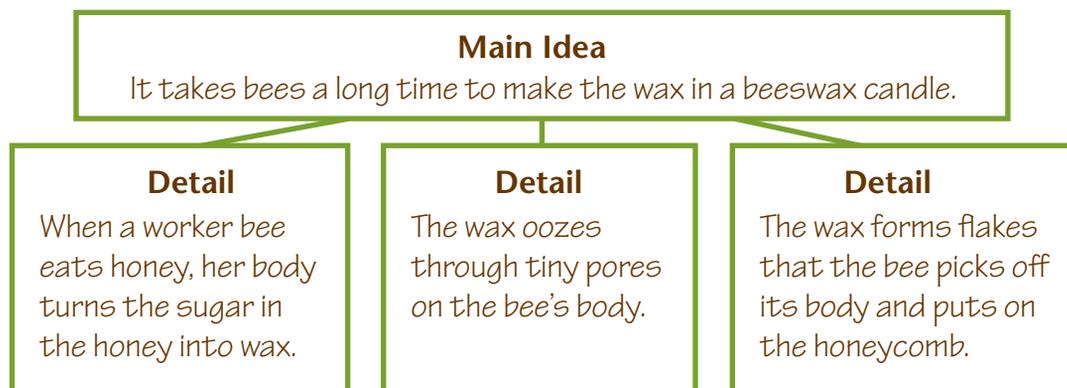
# Main Idea and Supporting Details

## Learn About It

When you read to gain information, look for the **main idea**. That is the most important idea of a passage, or what the passage is mainly about. Then look for **details** that support, or back up, the main idea. Details help explain or prove a statement. Writers use facts and examples to illustrate their key ideas. You will usually find out about the main idea at the beginning of a text. Then, supporting details follow the idea they back up.

Read this passage. Notice how the writer gives the main idea and then provides supporting information.

A beeswax candle smells sweet and burns relatively quickly—but it is not fast to make. When a worker bee eats honey, her body turns the sugar in the honey into wax. This wax oozes through tiny pores on the bee’s body, sort of like when you sweat. Then the wax forms flakes that the bee picks off its body and puts onto the honeycomb. Think of all the bees it takes to make one candle!



# Try It

Read the passage. Underline the sentence that names the main idea. Place a star next to the supporting details. Use the questions to help you.

## Attack the Plaque

**T**iny bacteria creep in your mouth all the time, ready to attack even the hardest surfaces of your teeth. Do not give up—fight back! Just a toothbrush, floss, and a little information are all you need to win the battle against tooth decay.

Germs called *plaque* live on your teeth all the time. These bacteria create acids that can break down the hard enamel on your teeth. The result is tooth decay and cavities. Acids caused by plaque can also damage your gums and the bones around your teeth. Luckily, there are a few simple things you can do to keep plaque under control.

Brushing your teeth daily is a great way to start. When you do, brush just a few teeth at a time. Make sure that you get every side. Pay close attention to the chewing surfaces of your top and bottom teeth, where germs can hide out. Dentists recommend brushing for at least three minutes to make sure you have removed as much plaque as possible. Using dental floss will help you clean in-between teeth. You should also replace your toothbrush every three or four months.

Your diet also affects your teeth. Foods with a lot of sugar contribute to plaque buildup. Bacteria in your mouth turn sugar into a kind of glue that mixes with the plaque. That makes it harder for the bacteria to get washed away with your saliva.

You have the tools you need to attack the plaque. Do not let the bacteria win the battle!

Identify the main idea introduced in the first paragraph. Then look for supporting details that explain or prove that idea.

Every paragraph has a main idea, too. Ask yourself a question based on the main idea. For example: How can my diet affect my teeth? The answer will help you identify the supporting details.



How do supporting details back up the main idea of this passage?

# Apply It

Read the passage. Find the main idea and look for details that support it. Answer the questions on the next page.

## The Three Sisters

**T**hree sisters gardens are a classic American tradition, but do not let the name confuse you. The “sisters” are not people—they are corn, beans, and squash. All three grow together in a mound, or small hill.

This idea came from Native Americans, who started planting these gardens hundreds of years before Columbus arrived in America. They were the first people to grow corn, beans, and squash for food. They were also the first to interplant these crops. The Native Americans grew them from wild plants.

The three plants help each other during the growing season. The stiff corn stalks provide a natural support for the bean vines. Once they have grown, the bean vines make the corn stalks more stable, so they are less likely to blow over in heavy winds. The beans also add nitrogen to the soil, which the corn needs to grow. The low-growing squash helps the garden because its large leaves shade the soil. This shade keeps weeds down and prevents the soil from becoming too dry.

Even after they are harvested, these three plants keep working together. When you eat them, they provide a balanced meal. The corn has lots of carbohydrates, which provide energy, while the beans are rich in protein. The squash is full of vitamins, and its seeds have healthy vegetable oil, too.

The three sisters can still work together after hundreds of years. These plants help one another grow bigger and stronger. They also help people connect with the history of the land. What will you think of the next time you see the three sisters growing together?



Answer these questions about “The Three Sisters.” Write your answers in complete sentences.

1 What main idea about the three sisters does this passage support?

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2 What is one detail in the second paragraph that supports the fact that the idea of the three sisters came from Native Americans?

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3 What is the main idea of the third paragraph?

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4 Why does the writer mention nitrogen in the third paragraph?

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5 What details in the passage support the idea that a three sisters garden is still useful today?

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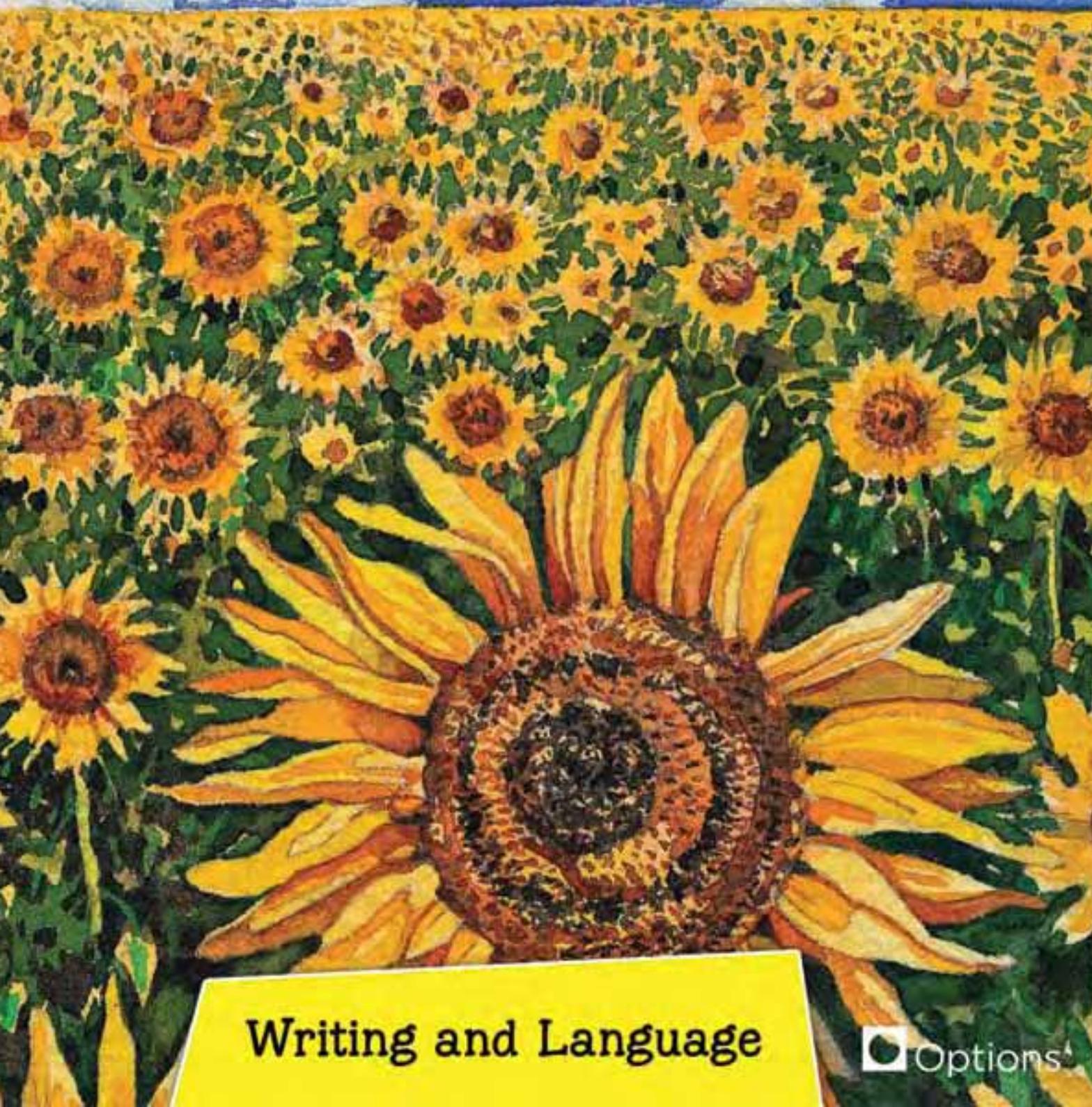
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# COMMON CORE

Grade 5

English Language Arts

# CLINICS



Writing and Language

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# Write an Opinion

## Learn About It

An **opinion** is what someone thinks, feels, or believes. When you write something that states your opinion, you need to support it with **reasons, facts, and details**. Your reasons should follow a logical order. You might decide to start strong and begin with your most persuasive reason. Or you might decide to end strong by saving your strongest reason for last. Words like *therefore, consequently, and specifically* can help you show how your ideas are connected. A **conclusion** sums up your argument.

Read this passage. Look for the writer's opinion and the reasons, facts, and details that support it.

Our city needs a new dog run. Right now, there is only one small area in Hawkens Park where dogs are officially allowed. It is so popular that it is always overcrowded. Since Oak Park is being closed for renovation, I think part of it should be reserved for our four-footed friends. It is almost three times as big as Hawkens Park, so there is definitely room. If dogs have a nice place to play, fewer owners will break park rules and let their dogs run off-leash. Consequently, everyone would benefit from the new dog run, not just dog owners.

<b>Opinion</b>	Part of Oak Park should be made into a dog run.
<b>Reason</b>	The current dog run in Hawkens Park is popular and overcrowded.
<b>Reason</b>	Oak Park is three times as big as Hawkens Park.
<b>Reason</b>	There will be fewer off-leash dogs if they have an official place to play.
<b>Conclusion</b>	A new dog run will benefit the whole town, not just dog owners.

# Try It

Read the passage. Underline the sentence that states the opinion. Place a star next to each reason that supports the opinion. Use the questions to help you.

## Ban the Ban

**R**ight now, students at our school are not allowed to bring handheld video games to school. I think the ban should be lifted. There are many reasons why these games should be allowed at school.

First of all, allowing video games at school does not mean that students will be using them during class time. We can maintain strict rules about when they are permitted.

However, during lunch, recess, and after school, students should be allowed to enjoy themselves. Students who have long bus rides to school should be allowed to play video games. Video games are one of the most popular activities these days. A recent survey of students at our school showed that 78 percent enjoy playing video games at least once a week.

Some people think video games are antisocial, but that is just not true. Watch players huddle together around a screen, encouraging one another and taking turns, and you will see what I mean. These games encourage healthy competition among friends.

Video games are not a waste of time, either. They teach hand dexterity and flexible problem solving. Many of them help students develop logical thinking skills, too.

Most importantly, we should let our students take responsibility for their own choices. Adults are always saying that we need to be more responsible, but then they take away our options. We can only show that we are mature if you give us the chance.

I hope the school will consider ending the ban on handheld video games. It is time to end this unfair rule.

What opinion does the writer support in this essay?

What supporting reason does the writer provide in each paragraph?



Do you think the writer's argument is convincing?  
Why or why not?

# Apply It

Read the writing prompt. Plan your response in the graphic organizer.

PROMPT



Think about a change you would like to see in your school, such as a longer lunch or recess, healthier options in the school cafeteria, less homework, a change in the dress code, or a new after-school club. Write a persuasive essay in which you persuade your school principal to make this change.

<b>Opinion</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	
<b>Conclusion</b>	

