



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.2

Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.3

Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.6

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

“Earthlings, Meet Venus” Informational Text and Questions

Due: Friday, May 29th

Directions: Read the informational text “Earthlings, Meet Venus”, and answer the questions that follow.

EARTHLINGS, MEET VENUS

by Rachel Slivnick 2018 **7th Grade** Lexile: 1100

In this informational text, Rachel Slivnick describes one of the planets in our Solar System, Venus. **As you read, take notes on Venus’ environment.**



"Size comparison of Venus and Earth. Approximate scale is 29 km/px." by NASA is in the public domain.

[1]

What are your neighbors like? Chances are you have some friendly neighbors, some quiet neighbors, and some people who live on your block that are downright weird and maybe even a little



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scary. Well, Earth *a*lso has neighbors — in fact, Earth has millions of stars, planets, moons, asteroids, and other planets as fellow residents in our galactic neighborhood. While we can't stroll over to our celestial neighbors to say hello or borrow a cup of sugar, Earth does share a galaxy with seven other planets that rotate around the same sun.

Our galactic neighborhood has a lot of different personalities, from gas giants to freezing balls of ice. However, everyone in the solar system agrees — if you can't take the heat, stay away from Venus. It's the hottest and most deadly planet in the Milky Way, and it just happens to be our closest neighbor. Yikes!

DO YOU WANT TO DROP BY AND SAY HELLO?

Venus may be our next door neighbor, but a visit to Venus won't be very pleasant for us Earthlings. First, it will take three to four months in a spaceship to fly the 23.7 million miles to Venus, so pack for a long trip. As you step out of your spaceship, you try to take a big gulp of fresh air... but no luck. The atmosphere of Venus is made almost entirely of carbon dioxide, which is deadly for humans to breathe. Once you've donned³ your spacesuit, don't expect a glass of water. There is no liquid on Venus, although scientists believe that for the first two billion years of the planet's life Venus had liquid oceans. Any liquid on Venus has long since evaporated due to the extreme heat.

Venus is the warmest planet in our solar system, with a surface temperature of 900 degrees Fahrenheit. To compare, your oven at home only reaches about 500 degrees Fahrenheit. Think about how it feels when you open a hot oven, with the burning air rushing out and heating up an entire room. Imagine an entire planet that feels that hot! Even if you could survive the heat, Venus isn't the most beautiful place to hang out. The surface of the planet is hot, rocky, and bare. During your visit, you would spot hundreds of extinct volcanoes, along with omnipresent⁴ yellow clouds full of sulphuric acid. If you try to take a walk to see a volcano up close, you may find it very difficult to move. That's because the carbon-dioxide atmosphere is so thick that walking on Venus would feel as if you were moving underwater. Furthermore, the atmospheric pressure on Venus is much higher



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than Earth's — in fact, the pressure on your body on Venus would be the equivalent of diving over 3,000 feet into the ocean. If you plan on paying this neighbor a visit, make sure your spacesuit is thick enough to withstand the pressure!

THE MOST POPULAR PLANET ON THE BLOCK

[5]

Even though Venus isn't the most hospitable planet in our solar system, it has certainly been a popular place to visit. Since 1962, over 40 spacecrafts have flown around Venus or landed on the surface. Scientists are interested in Venus not only because it is our closest neighbor but because it seems like Earth and Venus *should* have a lot in common; both planets are a similar size in both diameter and mass. However, as more and more kinds of spacecraft visit Venus, the differences between Earth and Venus are becoming more apparent.

The first successful mission to Venus was completed by NASA's *Mariner 2*. Launched on August 8th, 1962, this brave visitor reached Venus in 110 days. In 1970, the *Venera 7* actually landed on the surface of Venus and withstood the pressure and heat for about 50 minutes, sending data back to Earth before crumpling and burning up. In 1998, the *Magellan* spacecraft was launched. The goal? To create a map of Venus. Thanks to the *Magellan*, we know about the flat, volcanic surface of Venus. This year, the space probe *Akatsuki* is zooming around Venus, collecting information about the atmosphere of this inhospitable planet. The more we learn about Venus, the more we realize what an unfriendly planet it is.

NEIGHBORHOOD GOSSIP: VENUS IN HUMAN CULTURE

While Venus could earn the nickname of "most unwelcoming neighbor" due to its deadly air, crushing pressure, and lethal heat, this planet has always captivated humans. Why do we love a



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planet that would kill us within milliseconds of arriving? Simple — Venus is the brightest object in our sky besides the moon and sun. People looking up at night can always spot Venus burning brightly.

In fact, for thousands of years Venus was mistaken for a particularly bright star. Venus is named after the Roman goddess of love, beauty, and desire. Edgar Allan Poe and William Blake both wrote poetry about the “evening star,” which we now know refers to Venus. In the mid-twentieth century, people around the world were fascinated with space travel and the possibility of life beyond Earth. Ray Bradbury, the famous science fiction author, wrote two short stories imagining life on Venus: “All Summer In a Day” and “The Long Rain.” He was inspired by the clouds that cover 98% of Venus’s surface and wrote about a planet full of rain, plants, and creatures.

Bradbury wasn’t the only one optimistic about our closest planetary neighbor. Many thought that Venus — with a similar size and proximity to the sun as Earth — was the most likely of all planets to support life. Wouldn’t it be great if our closest neighbor had friendly aliens for us to hang out with and a comfortable planet to host a sleepover on?

[10]

Unfortunately, Venus will never be the best friend next door. As we learn more and more about this planet, we have realized that the conditions on Venus cannot support life. Temperatures that are hot enough to melt lead, air that is poisonous to breathe, pressure that would turn our bodies into mush, and clouds full of acid means that our closest neighbor in the galaxy couldn’t be more different from Earth.

1.

RI.2

PART A: Which statement best expresses the central idea of the text?

A.

Venus has captured many science fiction writers’ attention due to its bright appearance and inhospitable environment.



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B.

Venus, the closest planet to Earth, has intrigued people despite its dangerous environment that could easily kill humans.

C.

While Venus' temperature and pressure are harmful to life, scientists believe its distance from the sun could help promote life.

D.

Scientists believe that over time, Venus' environment will change to be more similarly hospitable to Earth's environment.

2.

RI.1

PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

A.

"There is no liquid on Venus, although scientists believe that for the first two billion years of the planet's life Venus had liquid oceans." ([Paragraph 3](#))

B.

"In 1970, the Venera 7 actually landed on the surface of Venus and withstood the pressure and heat for about 50 minutes, sending data back to Earth before crumpling and burning up." ([Paragraph 6](#))

C.

"While Venus could earn the nickname of 'most unwelcoming neighbor' due to its deadly air, crushing pressure, and lethal heat, this planet has always captivated humans." ([Paragraph 7](#))



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D.

“He was inspired by the clouds that cover 98% of Venus’s surface and wrote about a planet full of rain, plants, and creatures.” ([Paragraph 8](#))

3.

RI.3

Which statement best describes the relationship between Earth and Venus?

A.

Earth and Venus have both gone through phases of being unable to support life.

B.

Earth and Venus exist close by each other and are of similar sizes.

C.

Earth and Venus both orbit the sun at the same rate.

D.

Earth and Venus have more in common than any other two planets.

4.

RI.6

Which statement best captures the author’s point of view on Venus?

A.

Venus is an interesting planet, but not one that humans will likely be able to visit any time soon.



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B.

Venus is a mysterious planet that scientists have much more to learn about.

C.

Venus is an important planet to Earth that humans may be traveling to in the near future.

D.

Venus shouldn't interest as many people as it does, since it could easily kill anyone who visits.



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.B

Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.2.B

Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

“Earthlings, Meet Venus” Writing Questions

Due: Friday, May 29th

Directions: After reading the informational text “Earthlings, Meet Venus”, answer the questions below in paragraph form. Use text evidence in your answer. Write 2 to 3 paragraphs for each answer.

1). How have scientists been able to learn about Venus, despite its dangerous environment? What other inhospitable places on — and beyond — Earth have scientists been able to study? What makes this possible? Use details from the text in your answer.

2) How does Venus' atmosphere and temperature help us understand its environment? Use details from the text in your answer.



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All Summer in a Day Short Story and Questions

Due: Friday, June 5th

Directions: Read the short story and answer the questions that follow.

ALL SUMMER IN A DAY

by Ray Bradbury 1954 Lexile: 780

Ray Bradbury is one of the most celebrated authors in literary history. He is best known for his novels *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Illustrated Man*, and *The Martian Chronicles*. He was also awarded the National Medal of Arts in 2004. In this short story, children living on the planet Venus are told that an exciting event will happen soon.



"Rain" by Inge Maria is licensed under CC0.

[1]

"Ready?"

"Now?"

"Soon."

"Do the scientists really know? Will it happen today, will it?"

[5]

"Look, look; see for yourself!"



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The children pressed to each other like so many roses, so many weeds, intermixed, peering out for a look at the hidden sun.

It rained.

It had been raining for seven years; thousands upon thousands of days compounded and filled from one end to the other with rain, with the drum and gush of water, with the sweet crystal fall of showers and the concussion of storms so heavy they were tidal waves come over the islands. A thousand forests had been crushed under the rain and grown up a thousand times to be crushed again. And this was the way life was forever on the planet Venus, and this was the schoolroom of the children of the rocket men and women who had come to a raining world to set up civilization and live out their lives.

“It’s stopping, it’s stopping!”

[10]

“Yes, yes!”

Margot stood apart from them, from these children who could never remember a time when there wasn’t rain and rain and rain. They were all nine years old, and if there had been a day, seven years ago, when the sun came out for an hour and showed its face to the stunned world, they could not recall. Sometimes, at night, she heard them stir, in remembrance, and she knew they were dreaming and remembering gold or a yellow crayon or a coin large enough to buy the world with. She knew they thought they remembered a warmth, like a blushing in the face, in the body, in the arms and legs and trembling hands. But then they always awoke to the tating drum, the endless shaking down of clear bead necklaces upon the roof, the walk, the gardens, the forests, and their dreams were gone.

All day yesterday they had read in class about the sun. About how like a lemon it was, and how hot. And they had written small stories or essays or poems about it.

I think the sun is a flower



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That blooms for just one hour.

[15]

That was Margot's poem, read in a quiet voice in the still classroom while the rain was falling outside.

"Aw, you didn't write that!" protested one of the boys.

"I did," said Margot, "*I did.*"

"William!" said the teacher.

But that was yesterday. Now the rain was slackening,¹ and the children were crushed in the great thick windows.

[20]

"Where's teacher?"

"She'll be back."

"She'd better hurry; we'll miss it!"

They turned on themselves, like a feverish² wheel, all tumbling spokes.

Margot stood alone. She was a very frail girl who looked as if she had been lost in the rain for years and the rain had washed out the blue from her eyes and the red from her mouth and the yellow from her hair. She was an old photograph dusted from an album, whitened away, and if she spoke at all her voice would be a ghost. Now she stood, separate, staring at the rain and the loud wet world beyond the huge glass.

[25]

"What're *you* looking at?" said William.

Margot said nothing.



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“Speak when you’re spoken to.” He gave her a shove. But she did not move; rather she let herself be moved only by him and nothing else. They edged away from her, they would not look at her. She felt them go away. And this was because she would play no games with them in the echoing tunnels of the underground city. If they tagged her and ran, she stood blinking after them and did not follow. When the class sang songs about happiness and life and games her lips barely moved. Only when they sang about the sun and the summer did her lips move as she watched the drenched windows.

And then, of course, the biggest crime of all was that she had come here only five years ago from Earth, and she remembered the sun and the way the sun was and the sky was when she was four in Ohio. And they, they had been on Venus all their lives, and they had been only two years old when last the sun came out and had long since forgotten the color and heat of it and the way it really was. But Margot remembered.

“It’s like a penny,” she said once, eyes closed.

[30]

“No it’s not!” the children cried.

“It’s like a fire,” she said, “in the stove.”

“You’re lying, you don’t remember!” cried the children.

But she remembered and stood quietly apart from all of them and watched the patterning windows. And once, a month ago, she had refused to shower in the school shower rooms, had clutched her hands to her ears and over her head, screaming the water mustn’t touch her head. So after that, dimly, dimly, she sensed it, she was different, and they knew her difference and kept away.

There was talk that her father and mother were taking her back to Earth next year; it seemed vital to her that they do so, though it would mean the loss of thousands of dollars to her family. And so, the children hated her for all these reasons of big and little consequence. They hated her pale snow face, her waiting silence, her thinness, and her possible future.

[35]



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“Get away!” The boy gave her another push. “What’re you waiting for?”

Then, for the first time, she turned and looked at him. And what she was waiting for was in her eyes.

“Well, don’t wait around here!” cried the boy savagely. “You won’t see nothing!”

Her lips moved.

“Nothing!” he cried. “It was all a joke, wasn’t it?” He turned to the other children. “Nothing’s happening today. Is it?”

[40]

They all blinked at him and then, understanding, laughed and shook their heads. “Nothing, nothing!”

“Oh, but,” Margot whispered, her eyes helpless. “But this is the day, the scientists predict, they say, they know, the sun...”

“All a joke!” said the boy, and seized her roughly. “Hey, everyone, let’s put her in a closet before teacher comes!”

“No,” said Margot, falling back.

They surged about her, caught her up and bore her, protesting, and then pleading, and then crying, back into a tunnel, a room, a closet, where they slammed and locked the door. They stood looking at the door and saw it tremble from her beating and throwing herself against it. They heard her muffled cries. Then, smiling, they turned and went out and back down the tunnel, just as the teacher arrived.

[45]

“Ready, children?” She glanced at her watch.

“Yes!” said everyone.

“Are we all here?”

“Yes!”



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The rain slackened still more.

[50]

They crowded to the huge door.

The rain stopped.

It was as if, in the midst of a film concerning an avalanche,³ a tornado, a hurricane, a volcanic eruption, something had, first, gone wrong with the sound apparatus,⁴ thus muffling and finally cutting off all noise, all of the blasts and repercussions⁵ and thunders, and then, second, ripped the film from the projector and inserted in its place a peaceful tropical slide which did not move or tremor. The world ground to a standstill. The silence was so immense⁶ and unbelievable that you felt your ears had been stuffed or you had lost your hearing altogether. The children put their hands to their ears. They stood apart. The door slid back and the smell of the silent, waiting world came in to them.

The sun came out.

It was the color of flaming bronze and it was very large. And the sky around it was a blazing blue tile color. And the jungle burned with sunlight as the children, released from their spell, rushed out, yelling, into the springtime.

[55]

“Now, don’t go too far,” called the teacher after them. “You’ve only two hours, you know. You wouldn’t want to get caught out!”

But they were running and turning their faces up to the sky and feeling the sun on their cheeks like a warm iron; they were taking off their jackets and letting the sun burn their arms.

“Oh, it’s better than the sunlamps, isn’t it?”

“Much, much better!”



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They stopped running and stood in the great jungle that covered Venus, that grew and never stopped growing, tumultuously,⁷ even as you watched it. It was a nest of octopi,⁸ clustering up great arms of flesh-like weed, wavering,⁹ flowering this brief spring.

[60]

It was the color of rubber and ash, this jungle, from the many years without sun. It was the color of stones and white cheeses and ink, and it was the color of the moon.

The children lay out, laughing, on the jungle mattress, and heard it sigh and squeak under them, resilient¹⁰ and alive. They ran among the trees, they slipped and fell, they pushed each other, they played hide-and-seek and tag, but most of all they squinted at the sun until the tears ran down their faces, they put their hands up to that yellowness and that amazing blueness and they breathed of the fresh, fresh air and listened and listened to the silence which suspended them in a blessed sea of no sound and no motion. They looked at everything and savored¹¹ everything. Then, wildly, like animals escaped from their caves, they ran and ran in shouting circles.

They ran for an hour and did not stop running.

And then —

In the midst of their running one of the girls wailed.

[65]

Everyone stopped.

The girl, standing in the open, held out her hand.

“Oh, look, look,” she said trembling.

They came slowly to look at her opened palm. In the center of it, cupped and huge, was a single raindrop.

She began to cry, looking at it.

[70]



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They glanced quietly at the sky.

“Oh. Oh.”

A few cold drops fell on their noses and their cheeks and their mouths. The sun faded behind a stir of mist. A wind blew cool around them. They turned and started to walk back toward the underground house, their hands at their sides, their smiles vanishing away.

A boom of thunder startled them and like leaves before a new hurricane, they tumbled upon each other and ran. Lightning struck ten miles away, five miles away, a mile, a half mile. The sky darkened into midnight in a flash.

They stood in the doorway of the underground for a moment until it was raining hard. Then they closed the door and heard the gigantic sound of the rain falling in tons and avalanches, everywhere and forever.

[75]

“Will it be seven more years?”

“Yes. Seven.”

Then one of them gave a little cry.

“Margot!”

“What?”

[80]

“She’s still in the closet where we locked her.”

“Margot.”

They stood as if someone had driven them, like so many stakes, into the floor. They looked at each other and then looked away. They glanced out at the world that was raining now and raining and raining steadily. They could not meet each other’s glances. Their faces were solemn and pale.



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They looked at their hands and feet, their faces down.

“Margot.”

[85]

One of the girls said, “Well...?” No one moved.

“Go on,” whispered the girl.

They walked slowly down the hall in the sound of cold rain. They turned through the doorway to the room in the sound of the storm and thunder, lightning on their faces, blue and terrible. They walked over to the closet door slowly and stood by it.

Behind the closet door was only silence.

They unlocked the door, even more slowly, and let Margot out.

Multiple Choice Questions

1.

RL.6

What do **paragraphs 65-72** reveal about the kids' point of view?

A.

The kids are ready to return to the underground house.

B.

The kids realize that the rain is less enjoyable than the sun.

C.

The kids are afraid of the dangerous weather that is approaching.



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D.

The kids do not enjoy the rain, but they understand that it is important.

2. A theme of this story is that children are —

A.

happy when they are playing with their friends.

B.

cruel to people who are different.

C.

kind to those who need help.

D.

unwilling to admit a mistake.

3.

RL.3

How does the constant rain on Venus affect the children in the story?

A.

The constant rain has made the children sensitive to sunlight.

B.

The constant rain has put the children in a bad mood and made them mean.

C.

Venus has changed the way humans think and the children have lost their imagination.

D.

The constant rain has made children doubtful that the sun will even appear

4.

RL.4

How does the phrase “They looked at everything and savored everything” in [paragraph 61](#) contribute to the narrator’s tone?



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A.

It creates a celebratory tone because the children feel freed by the appearance of the sun.

B.

It creates a light-hearted tone because the children do not believe the sun is really shining.

C.

It creates an intense tone because the children are focused on remembering the moment instead of enjoying it.

D.

It creates an urgent tone because the children are rushing since they know the rain will soon return.



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

All Summer in a Day Essay Question

Due: Friday, June 5th

1.

Margot moved from Earth to Venus. How can major changes in people's lives affect their views and the way they think about the world? Write about a time when you were influenced by a major change in your life. Write at least 2 paragraphs, using specific life examples.



ESSAY Due Friday June 12th

CCSS W1a-e, W4,5,7,8

Using what you learned from *Dedication of the Aerospace Medical Health Center* speech by John F. Kennedy and *Why Exploring the Ocean is Mankind's Next Giant Leap* by Philippe Cousteau, and any other research you may want to include, **Write a persuasive speech to inspire listeners to rise to great challenges, or persuade others whether major exploration is worth the risk. (3-5 paragraphs). Fill out the graphic organizer below to help you before you start writing.**

A successful persuasive speech....

- Contains an engaging introduction that clearly establishes the claim being made
- Supports key points with reasoning and relevant evidence pulled from a variety of solid, credible sources
- Uses language that effectively conveys ideas and adds interest
- Concludes by leaving the audience with a lasting impression

Claim:

Reason #1:	Reason #2
Evidence:	Evidence:
Evidence:	Evidence:
Evidence:	Evidence: