

Grade 4

Unit 8

Assessment Guide: Unit Assessment

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Grade 4

Unit Assessment

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

8.1

Unit 8
Assessment

Reading and Language

Reading

Read the following text and answer the questions using complete sentences.

The Toad and the Boy

Adapted from “The Toad and the Boy” from *Old Indian Legends*, by Zitkala-Ša

The waterfowls were flying over the marshy lakes. It was now the hunting season. Hunters, with bows and arrows, were wading waist-deep in the wild rice. Inside the largest teepee, a young Dakota mother was busy with her quillwork. As she carefully wrapped red porcupine quills around the fringes of a buckskin cushion, her black-eyed baby boy cooed and laughed beside her. The baby reached his tiny hands and kicked his little feet at the strings of his beaded bonnet hanging above him.

The mother set aside her quills and threads as her baby fell fast asleep. Leaning on one hand and softly whispering a little lullaby, she covered her baby with a light blanket. It was almost time for her husband to return.

Realizing she needed willow sticks for the fire, the mother quickly tightened her blanket around her waist, and, with a short-handled ax slipped through her belt, she hurried away toward the wooded ravine. She was strong and swung an ax skillfully. Her loose buckskin dress was made for such freedom. Soon, she returned home, carrying a bundle of long willows on her back with a loop of rope over her shoulders.

Near the entrance of her teepee, she bent low, shifting the bundle and lifting the rope from over her head with both hands. She dropped the wood to the ground and disappeared into her teepee. Moments later, she ran out crying, “My son! My little son is gone!” Her keen eyes scanned her surroundings, but there was no sign of her child anywhere.

She ran with clenched fists to the nearest teepees and called, “Has anyone seen my baby? He’s gone! My little son is gone!”

The women rushed out of their teepees. “We have not seen your child! What happened?” they asked. With great tears in her eyes, the mother told her story.

“We will search with you,” they assured her. And they started off.

They met the returning hunters, who turned around and joined the search for the missing child. Along the shore of the lakes, among the high-grown reeds, they looked in vain. He was nowhere to be found. After many days and nights, the search was abandoned. It was sad, indeed, to hear the mother wailing aloud for her little son.

As autumn turned to winter, the birds flew south. The teepees around the lakes disappeared, except for one single, lonely dwelling.

Until the winter snow covered the ground and ice covered the lakes, the wailing woman’s voice echoed from that solitary teepee, joined by the distant sound of the father’s mournful song.

Ten summers and as many winters had passed since the child’s mysterious disappearance. Each autumn, the hunters returned for the hunting season, and the grieving parents returned to search for their lost son.

Late in the tenth season, when, one by one, the teepees were folded and the families left the lake region, the mother walked again along the lake shore, weeping. One evening, across the lake from where the crying woman stood, a pair of bright black eyes peered at her through the tall reeds and wild rice. A young boy stopped his play among the tall grasses. His long hair was carelessly tossed from his round face and hung down his brown back and shoulders. He wore a garment of woven sweet grass. Crouching low to the marshy ground, he listened to the wailing voice. As the voice grew hoarse, and sobs shook the slender figure of the woman, the boy’s eyes grew dim and wet.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8
Assessment

Finally, when the moaning stopped, he sprang to his feet and ran like a bobcat, with swift outstretched toes. He rushed into a small hut of reeds and grasses.

“Mother! Mother! Tell me what voice I heard. It pleased my ears, but made my eyes wet!” he said, breathless.

“Ah, my son,” grunted a big, green toad. “It was the voice of a weeping woman you heard. My son, do not say you like it. Do not tell me it brought tears to your eyes. You have never heard me weep. I can please your ear and break your heart. Listen!” replied the toad.

The toad stepped outside and stood by the entryway. She had reared a large family of little toads, but none of them had won her affection, nor had they ever shown her love. She had heard the human woman’s wailing and marveled at the throat that produced the strange sound. Now, in her great desire to keep the stolen boy a while longer, she ventured to cry as the Dakota woman did. In a gruff, scratchy voice she yelled, “Hin-hin, doe-skin! Hin-hin, Ermine, Ermine! Hin-hin, red blanket, with white border!”

Not knowing that the syllables of a Dakota’s cry are the names of loved ones gone, the toad mother sought to please the boy’s ear with the names of valuable objects. Having shrieked in a torturous voice and mouthed extravagant names, the old toad rolled her tearless eyes with great satisfaction. As she hopped back into her dwelling, she asked, “My son, did my voice bring tears to your eyes? Did my words bring joy to your ears? Do you not like my wailing better?”

“No, no!” pouted the boy, impatiently. “I want to hear the woman’s voice! Tell me, mother, why the human voice stirs all my feelings!”

The toad mother said to herself, “The human child has heard and seen his real mother. I fear I cannot keep him longer. Oh, no, I cannot give away the pretty creature I have taught to call me ‘mother’ all these winters.”

“Mother,” went on the child’s voice, “tell me one thing. Tell me why my little brothers and sisters are all different from me.”

The big, green toad looked at her lumpy, green toad children and said, “The eldest is always best.”

This reply quieted the boy for a while. The old toad mother watched her stolen human son closely. Whenever he wandered off alone, she shoved one of her own children after him, saying, “Do not come back without your big brother.”

And so, the boy with the long, loose hair spent his days on a marshy island hidden among the tall reeds, always accompanied by a little toad brother or sister. One day, a hunter, wading in the deep waters, spotted the boy. He had heard of the baby stolen long ago.

“That’s him!” murmured the hunter to himself. He ran to his teepee and shouted, “I saw a black-haired boy playing among the reeds!”

Immediately, the grieving father and mother cried out, “That’s him! That’s our boy!” Quickly, the hunter led them to the lake. He peeked through the wild rice and pointed a shaky finger toward the boy, engrossed in his play and unaware that he was being watched.

“That’s him! That’s him!” cried the mother, overflowing with anticipation. “My baby boy!”

The young boy, startled, turned toward the familiar sound and met his human mother’s gaze. In an instant, the voice that had haunted his dreams was given a face. It dawned on him that this was his birth mother, who had yearned for his return all these years.

“Mother!” shouted the boy. He sprang up and sprinted across the marshy landscape toward his parents. His mother and father, their hearts filled with hope, ran toward him. When they met, they shared an emotional, tearful embrace, their cries of joy reverberating through the wilderness.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8
Assessment

Pulling back from their heartfelt reunion, the boy looked at his little toad sister, his heart torn between joy and sorrow. “I will miss you,” he confessed, as a tear slipped down his cheek. He sighed and continued, “Although I love you and the rest of our toad family, I’ve always had this empty feeling deep inside, a feeling that something was missing. I now understand what that was. I am not, nor have I ever been, a toad. My true home is with my human parents.”

The toad sister nodded in acceptance. “We will miss you, big brother,” she croaked softly, her small voice dampened with sadness. “Although you are not a toad, you will always be our brother. Our bond remains unchanged, no matter where you go.”

The boy knelt and gathered his toad sister in a careful, tender hug. He then set her down, and, hand in hand with his human parents, took his first steps into his new life.

1. How would you describe the setting in the beginning of “The Toad and the Boy”? Use specific details in the text to support your answer.

2. Reread this section of the text:

The waterfowls were flying over the marshy lakes. It was now the hunting season. Hunters, with bows and arrows, were wading waist-deep in the wild rice. Inside the largest teepee, a young Dakota mother was busy with her quillwork. As she carefully wrapped red porcupine quills around the fringes of a buckskin cushion, her black-eyed baby boy cooed and laughed beside her. The baby reached his tiny hands and kicked his little feet at the strings of his beaded bonnet hanging above him.

The mother set aside her quills and threads as her baby fell fast asleep. Leaning on one hand and softly whispering a little lullaby, she covered her baby with a light blanket. It was almost time for her husband to return.

Realizing she needed willow sticks for the fire, the mother quickly tightened her blanket around her waist, and, with a short-handled ax slipped through her belt, she hurried away toward the wooded ravine. She was strong and swung an ax skillfully. Her loose buckskin dress was made for such freedom. Soon, she returned home, carrying a bundle of long willows on her back with a loop of rope over her shoulders.

After rereading the text, how would you describe the young Dakota mother's character traits? Use textual evidence to support your inferences.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8
Assessment

3. Reread this section of the text:

She ran with clenched fists to the nearest teepees and called, “Has anyone seen my baby? He’s gone! My little son is gone!”

The women rushed out of their teepees. “We have not seen your child! What happened?” they asked.

With great tears in her eyes, the mother told her story.

What can you infer about how the mother is feeling? Use textual evidence to support your inference.

4. Why does the toad mother have a great desire to please the boy’s ear and break his heart? Use textual evidence to support your answer.

5. What evidence in the text tells you approximately how old the boy is the first time he hears the wailing voice while playing in the tall grass? Explain your answer.

6. The text states, “As autumn turned to winter, the birds flew south. The teepees around the lakes disappeared, except for one single, lonely dwelling.” Who lives in the teepee that remains? Use a specific detail from the text in your answer.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8
Assessment

7. What is the meaning of the word *mournful* as it is used in the text?

*Until the winter snow covered the ground and ice covered the lakes, the wailing woman's voice echoed from that solitary teepee, joined by the distant sound of the father's **mournful** song.*

8. What is a theme in “The Toad and the Boy”? Provide evidence from the text to support your answer.

9. What is the meaning of the word *engrossed* as it is used in the text?

*He peeked through the wild rice and pointed a shaky finger toward the boy, **engrossed** in his play and unaware that he was being watched.*

- a. displeased with something
- b. deeply involved in an act
- c. singing loudly
- d. crying without comfort

10. What specific detail from the text explains why the boy is always accompanied by a little toad brother or sister while in the tall reeds? Include a line of dialogue from the text to support your answer.
- a. The boy never wants to leave his toad brothers or sisters while playing.
 - b. The boy begs each day to take his toad brothers and sisters along.
 - c. The toad mother shoves them behind the boy whenever he wanders off alone.
 - d. The boy must babysit his little toad brothers and sisters.

Supporting dialogue from the text: _____

11. Why does the text state that the boy's heart was "torn between joy and sorrow" while saying goodbye to his toad sister?
- a. The boy was excited to finally leave the toad family.
 - b. The boy will miss his toad family, but he is excited to meet his human parents.
 - c. The boy and his toad sister are not close at all.
 - d. The toad family has always made the boy sad.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8
Assessment

12. What is the meaning of the word reverberating as it is used in the text?

*His mother and father, their hearts filled with hope, ran toward him. When they met, they shared an emotional, tearful embrace, their cries of joy **reverberating** through the wilderness.*

- a. echoing
- b. whispering
- c. clapping
- d. dancing

13. What does the toad sister say that explains the relationship between the boy and his toad family?

Language

14. Which compound sentence below has correct comma placement?

- a. We were late to the concert but, we still had a great time.
- b. We were late to the concert but we still, had a great time.
- c. We were late to the concert, but we still had a great time.
- d. We were late, to the concert, but we still had a great time.

15. Which compound sentence below has correct comma placement?
- a. The boy, was happy and he still had hope.
 - b. The boy was happy, and he still had hope.
 - c. The boy, was happy, and he still had hope.
 - d. The boy was happy and, he still had hope.
16. Select the sentence without punctuation, capitalization, or spelling errors.
- a. The baby disappeared from his Dakota mother for many years.
 - b. The baby, disappeared from his dakota mother for many years.
 - c. The Baby disappeared from his Dakota mother for many years.
 - d. The baby disappeared from His Dakota mother for many years
17. Select the sentence with proper punctuation.
- a. Have you ever visited the tall reeds?
 - b. The days moved slowly in the marshy lakes and, the nights were long.
 - c. The toads played, in the wilderness.
 - d. The toad mother did not want to lose her human son.
18. Correct the following sentence to reflect proper capitalization, punctuation, and spelling: *What did the taod brothers and sisters play in the Wilderness.*
Write the correct sentence on the line below:
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DATE: _____

Unit 8

Assessment

[illegible]

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8

Assessment

Writing

The text leaves the circumstances of the boy's disappearance ambiguous. In other words, the reader does not know exactly how the boy was taken away from his human mother. Drawing on the details in the story, write a scene that explains how the boy ends up with the mother toad. Be sure to

- include dialogue, descriptive language, and sensory details,
- use transitional words and phrases,
- use descriptive details that clearly narrate the sequence of events, and
- edit for spelling and conventions.

[illegible]

Grade 4

Answer Keys

ASSESSMENT ANSWER KEYS

NAME: _____
DATE: _____

8.1 Unit 8
Assessment
CONTINUED

Pulling back from their heartfelt reunion, the boy looked at his little toad sister, his heart torn between joy and sorrow. "I will miss you," he confessed, as a tear slipped down his cheek. He sighed and continued, "Although I love you and the rest of our toad family, I've always had this empty feeling deep inside, a feeling that something was missing. I now understand what that was. I am not, nor have I ever been, a toad. My true home is with my human parents."

The toad sister nodded in acceptance. "We will miss you, big brother," she croaked softly, her small voice dampened with sadness. "Although you are not a toad, you will always be our brother. Our bond remains unchanged, no matter where you go."

The boy knelt and gathered his toad sister in a careful, tender hug. He then set her down, and, hand in hand with his human parents, took his first steps into his new life.

- How would you describe the setting in the beginning of "The Toad and the Boy"? Use specific details in the text to support your answer.

Answers may vary, but they could include a setting that is in the wilderness, in a marsh, or near a lake. Students may cite textual evidence, such as "The waterfowls were flying over the marshy lakes. It was now the hunting season. Hunters, with bows and arrows, were wading waist-deep in the wild rice."

Unit 8 Unit Assessment

7

- Reread this section of the text:

The waterfowls were flying over the marshy lakes. It was now the hunting season. Hunters, with bows and arrows, were wading waist-deep in the wild rice. Inside the largest teepee, a young Dakota mother was busy with her quillwork. As she carefully wrapped red porcupine quills around the fringes of a buckskin cushion, her black-eyed baby boy cooed and laughed beside her. The baby reached his tiny hands and kicked his little feet at the strings of his beaded bonnet hanging above him.

The mother set aside her quills and threads as her baby fell fast asleep. Leaning on one hand and softly whispering a little lullaby, she covered her baby with a light blanket. It was almost time for her husband to return.

Realizing she needed willow sticks for the fire, the mother quickly tightened her blanket around her waist, and, with a short-handled ax slipped through her belt, she hurried away toward the wooded ravine. She was strong and swung an ax skillfully. Her loose buckskin dress was made for such freedom. Soon, she returned home, carrying a bundle of long willows on her back with a loop of rope over her shoulders.

After rereading the text, how would you describe the young Dakota mother's character traits? Use textual evidence to support your inferences.

Answers may vary, but they could include inferences that the Dakota mother is caring or hard working. Students may cite textual evidence, such as "Inside the largest teepee, a young Dakota mother was busy with her quillwork;" "Leaning on one hand and softly whispering a little lullaby, she covered her baby with a light blanket;" "She was strong and swung an ax skillfully."

8

Unit 8 Unit Assessment

NAME: _____
DATE: _____

8.1 Unit 8
Assessment
CONTINUED

- Reread this section of the text:

She ran with clenched fists to the nearest teepees and called, "Has anyone seen my baby? He's gone! My little son is gone!"

The women rushed out of their teepees. "We have not seen your child! What happened?" they asked.

With great tears in her eyes, the mother told her story.

What can you infer about how the mother is feeling? Use textual evidence to support your inference.

Answers may vary, but they could include inferences that the mother is feeling worried, emotional, or sad. Students may cite textual evidence, such as "With great tears in her eyes, the mother told her story."

- Why does the toad mother have a great desire to please the boy's ear and break his heart? Use textual evidence to support your answer.

Answers may vary, but they could include inferences that the toad desired love and wanted to have the effect on the boy's heart that his mother's voice had on him. Students may cite textual evidence, such as "She had reared a large family of little toads, but none of them had won her affection, nor had they ever shown her love. She had heard the human woman's wailing and marveled at the throat which produced the strange sound. Now, in her great desire to keep the stolen boy a while longer, she ventured to cry as the Dakota woman did."

Unit 8 Unit Assessment

9

- What evidence in the text tells you approximately how old the boy is the first time he hears the wailing voice while playing in the tall grass? Explain your answer.

The boy is approximately 10 years old the first time he hears the wailing voice. Students may cite textual evidence, such as "Ten summers and as many winters had passed since the child's mysterious disappearance. Each autumn, the hunters returned for the hunting season, and the grieving parents returned to search for their lost son."

- The text states, "As autumn turned to winter, the birds flew south. The teepees around the lakes disappeared, except for one single, lonely dwelling." Who lives in the teepee that remains? Use a specific detail from the text in your answer.

The human mother and father live in the teepee. Students may cite textual evidence, such as "Until the winter snow covered the ground and ice covered the lakes, the wailing woman's voice echoed from that solitary teepee, joined by the distant sound of the father's mournful song."

10

Unit 8 Unit Assessment

NAME: _____
DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8
Assessment

7. What is the meaning of the word *mournful* as it is used in the text?

*Until the winter snow covered the ground and ice covered the lakes, the wailing woman's voice echoed from that solitary teepee, joined by the distant sound of the father's **mournful** song.*

Answers may vary, but they could include it means full of sadness or grief.

8. What is a theme in "The Toad and the Boy"? Provide evidence from the text to support your answer.

Answers may vary, but students should name a plausible theme (1 point) and include textual evidence to support the theme (1 point).

9. What is the meaning of the word *engrossed* as it is used in the text?

*He peeked through the wild rice and pointed a shaky finger toward the boy, **engrossed** in his play and unaware that he was being watched.*

- a. displeased with something
- ☒ b. deeply involved in an act
- c. singing loudly
- d. crying without comfort

Unit 8 Unit Assessment

11

10. What specific detail from the text explains why the boy is always accompanied by a little toad brother or sister while in the tall reeds? Include a line of dialogue from the text to support your answer.

- a. The boy never wants to leave his toad brothers or sisters while playing.
- b. The boy begs each day to take his toad brothers and sisters along.
- ☒ c. The toad mother shoves them behind the boy whenever he wanders off alone.
- d. The boy must babysit his little toad brothers and sisters.

Do not come back without your big

Supporting dialogue from the text: **brother." (1 point)**

11. Why does the text state that the boy's heart was "torn between joy and sorrow" while saying goodbye to his toad sister?

- a. The boy was excited to finally leave the toad family.
- ☒ b. The boy will miss his toad family, but he is excited to meet his human parents.
- c. The boy and his toad sister are not close at all.
- d. The toad family has always made the boy sad.

12

Unit 8 Unit Assessment

NAME: _____
DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8
Assessment

12. What is the meaning of the word *reverberating* as it is used in the text?

*His mother and father, their hearts filled with hope, ran toward him. When they met, they shared an emotional, tearful embrace, their cries of joy **reverberating** through the wilderness.*

- ☒ a. echoing
- b. whispering
- c. clapping
- d. dancing

13. What does the toad sister say that explains the relationship between the boy and his toad family?

Answers may vary, but they could include one or more of the following explicit details from the text: "We will miss you, big brother," she croaked softly, her small voice dampened with sadness. "Although you are not a toad, you will always be our brother. Our bond remains unchanged, no matter where you go."

Language

14. Which compound sentence below has correct comma placement?

- a. We were late to the concert but, we still had a great time.
- b. We were late to the concert but we still, had a great time.
- ☒ c. We were late to the concert, but we still had a great time.
- d. We were late, to the concert, but we still had a great time.

Unit 8 Unit Assessment

13

15. Which compound sentence below has correct comma placement?

- a. The boy, was happy and he still had hope.
- ☒ b. The boy was happy, and he still had hope.
- c. The boy, was happy, and he still had hope.
- d. The boy was happy and, he still had hope.

16. Select the sentence without punctuation, capitalization, or spelling errors.

- ☒ a. The baby disappeared from his Dakota mother for many years.
- b. The baby, disappeared from his dakota mother for many years.
- c. The Baby disappeared from his Dakota mother for many years.
- d. The baby disappeared from His Dakota mother for many years

17. Select the sentence with proper punctuation.

- ☒ a. Have you ever visited the tall reeds?
- b. The days moved slowly in the marshy lakes and, the nights were long.
- c. The toads played, in the wilderness.
- d. The toad mother did not want to lose her human son.

18. Correct the following sentence to reflect proper capitalization, punctuation, and spelling: *What did the taod brothers and sisters play in the Wilderness.*

Write the correct sentence on the line below:

What did the toad brothers and sisters play in the wilderness? 1 point per correction (3 points)

14

Unit 8 Unit Assessment

NAME: _____
DATE: _____

8.1
CONTINUED

Unit 8
Assessment

19. What is being compared in the simile "he sprang to his feet and ran like a bobcat, with swift outstretched toes?" What does this simile reveal?

Answers may vary, but they could include that it compares the boy to a bobcat; it means the boy was moving quickly with similar movements as a bobcat.

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Amplify CKLA

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