

MOON'S FIRST FRIENDS

One Giant Leap for Friendship

An Educator Guide to *Moon's First Friends* A Common Core State Standards Aligned Educator's Guide for Grades 1, 2, 3

Note: The activities in this guide align with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for Grades 1, 2, and 3, but standards for other grades may also apply.

Prepared by We Love Children's Books



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About the Book

From high up in the sky, the Moon has spent her whole life watching Earth and hoping for someone to visit. Dinosaurs roam, pyramids are built, and boats are made, but still no one comes. Will friends ever come visit her? Commemorate the extraordinary *Apollo 11* spaceflight mission with this heartwarming story of the Moon who just wants a friend.

About the Author

Susanna Leonard Hill is the award-winning author of more than a dozen books for children. She teaches an online picture-book writing class and does frequent school and library visits. She lives in New York's Hudson Valley with her husband, children, and two rescue dogs. Visit her online at susannahill.com.

About the Illustrator

Elisa Paganelli was born in Modena, Italy in 1985, and since childhood, she could not resist the smell of paper and pencils. She attended the Institute of Art and subsequently graduated from the European Institute of Design (IED) in Turin with a degree in illustration. As a post-grad, she worked as an art director in a communication and advertising agency and also ran a successful design shop/studio for six years. Visit her online at elisapaganelli.com.

Praise for *Moon's First Friends*

"Hill imagines the *Apollo 11* Moon landing from the perspective of the moon itself. In Paganelli's **friendly illustrations**, the moon is an anthropomorphic, bright-eyed blue sphere with rosy cheeks who communicates with the changing world throughout history. Despite how she tries to make friends, from saber-toothed tigers to early air balloonists, all of Earth's denizens remain planet-bound. Not even an early airplane can reach her... At last, the Moon meets the astronaut of *Apollo 11*: 'The astronaut walked across her surface with great bounding steps that made her dust bloom.' Hill concludes this **light moon-landing story** with back matter, including photographs, a timeline of the Earth's eras, and details about the *Apollo 11* mission. Ages 4-8."

—*Publishers Weekly*



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Pre-Reading Questions & Activities

As a class, perform a “picture walk” through the book. Based on the illustrations, what do students think this book will be about? Are there any main or recurring characters? Is this book a story, an informational text, or a combination of both?

This book tells the story of people landing on the moon, from the point of view of the moon! What do students know about the moon and the moon landing?

The story in this book will make more sense if students understand the basics of the earth, its moon, and the sun. Review these elements—the sun, the moon, and the earth. How are these three related? Which of these are students familiar with?

Vocabulary

This story is about the moon and how people finally made it into space to visit her. Before reading, prepare students by discussing the following words and their meanings. Ask students to be on the lookout for these words as you read the book. When you encounter one, use context clues to reinforce what the word means and make a real-life connection to its use.

lumbering
dinosaurs
glorious
earthbound

conjured
marveled
pyramid
new moon

majestic
purposefully
ventured
capsule

launch pad
spaceships
stages
spindle legs

bounding
astronauts

L 1.4, 1.5, 2.4, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5

Post-Reading Discussion Questions and Activities

First, Next, and Last

Break students into pairs for a “think-pair-share” exercise—“think” about the following questions, “pair” with another student, and “share” information. Summarize the story: What happens first, next, and last? Do things have to happen in this order? Who is the main character? How does she feel at the beginning of the book? How does she feel by the end? What happens to cause these changes? What is the theme or “big idea” of this book? Come together as a class and have pairs share their insights.

RL 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7

SL 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Pictures and Words

A picture book draws its power from combining the strengths of words and illustrations to tell a story. Break the class into small groups and assign each one a page or spread for closer examination. What information do readers get from the pictures? What information comes from the text? How do the elements work together? Ask volunteers from each group to walk the class through their findings.

RL 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.7

SL 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5



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Figurative Language

Moon's First Friends uses words and phrases that are rich in imagery. The Moon becomes "queen of the night sky," campfires are "like stars," and hopes soar. Read the book again, and have students raise their hands when they hear an instance of figurative language (metaphor, simile, or words that appeal to the senses). Pause and discuss what feeling, emotion, or atmosphere the phrase communicates to the reader. Why do they think the author chose this phrase?

RL 1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.4, 3.1, 3.4

SL 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.4

L 3.5

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As a class, use the QR code in the book to play Neil Armstrong's famous first words when he set foot on the moon. The subtitle of this book is *One Giant Leap for Friendship*. Discuss how this subtitle is a play on Neil Armstrong's words. Now that they know the origin of the subtitle, how does it foreshadow what is going to happen in the story?

SL 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Happy Anniversary

July 29, 2019, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first landing on the moon. This triumph was the culmination of the space race, when the United States and the USSR were competing to be the first to the moon. During the years leading up to the actual landing, the space program was on everyone's mind. When the *Apollo 11* rocket launched, the whole country was glued to their televisions, following the mission. As a class, use library and internet resources to make a timeline of important events leading up to the landing. Use the information in the back of the book to learn about the mission itself. Have a viewing party, where you pretend it is 1969 and you are watching this event live! How do students think they would have felt had they been alive back then?

RI 2.3, 3.3

W 1.7, 1.8, 2.7, 2.8, 3.7, 3.8

SL 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Other Far-Out Space Stories

Thanks to the anniversary of the lunar landing, there are more books than ever about the moon. Select other books about the moon to read and discuss as a class. How are they different from *Moon's First Friends*? How are they similar?

RL 1.9

RI 1.9, 2.9, 3.9

SL 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Fiction/Nonfiction

Moon's First Friends tells the story of the first moon landing from the point of view of the moon. Obviously, the moon isn't really alive, so this story is fiction. However, it is full of facts about the moon and the moon landing. As a class, read the book closely. What parts are fiction and what details are true? Why do students think the author took this approach? Does it make the book more interesting



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to read? Why? How is this book different from other picture books the class has read? Make a list of the facts about the moon that you found in the book and display it in the classroom.

RL 1.1, 1.5, 1.7, 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.7

RI 1.1, 2.1, 3.1

SL 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Cosmic Dance

The moon circles the earth once every 29.5 days. The earth rotates at the same time—making one complete revolution each day. And the earth and moon are moving around the sun. All this movement is very confusing and hard to imagine. Team with a science instructor at your school to present an integrated unit explaining the phases of the moon.

SL 1.3, 2.3, 3.3

Sky-Viewing Lab

One of the spreads in this book shows the moon going through its phases and describes it as a dance. The nonfiction section also discusses the phases of the moon. Have students ever noticed the way the moon changes appearance from night to night? List the official dates for the upcoming phases of the moon and display them in the class. Have students go outside on these nights to observe the moon and draw what they see. Come together as a class and share observations. What phase was the moon in? How has it changed since the last observation? What will the next one probably look like? Use library or internet resources to find information on the way the moon orbits the earth and why its appearance changes. This may also be combined with more extensive exercises on the sun, the earth, and the moon.

W 1.7, 1.8, 2.7, 2.8, 3.7, 3.8

SL 1.1, 1.5, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.5

Phenomenon: Eclipse

One spread of this book discusses how “At high noon, the Moon slipped purposefully between the Earth and the Sun, blocking all the daylight.” Come together as a class for a discussion. What does this scene in the book describe? Have students ever heard of an eclipse? Have they experienced one? Using media resources, explain the science behind what is happening during an eclipse.

RL 1.1, 1.7, 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.7

SL 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Phenomenon 2: The Gravity of the Situation

One spread of this book shows the Moon saying to the dinosaurs, “If you come up here, you won’t feel so heavy—you’ll feel lighter than air!” Ask students what they think this statement means. Introduce the concept of gravity to students, and working with an adult if necessary, have them research gravity on the moon as compared to on the earth. Come together as a class and discuss their findings. Would the dinosaurs really have felt lighter? How would people feel? How does this explain the line in the text that says the astronauts “seemed delighted with how far they could travel with each stride”?



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RL 1.1, 1.7, 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.7

W 1.7, 1.8, 2.7, 2.8, 3.7, 3.8

SL 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Leaving Your Mark

The astronauts of *Apollo 11* left a plaque on the moon that reads as follows:

"HERE MEN FROM THE PLANET EARTH FIRST SET FOOT UPON THE MOON
JULY 1969, A.D.
WE CAME IN PEACE FOR ALL MANKIND"

Discuss with the class the meaning of this message and its importance. The plaque did not claim the moon for any individual country; it conveyed the message that landing on the moon was a victory for everyone on earth. Ask students to imagine they were part of the first moon landing. What message would they want to leave behind for all time? Have each student design and draw their own commemorative plaque, and display their timeless messages for all the class to see.

SL 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5

Astronauts Three

Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins were the first people to make it to the moon. These three astronauts captivated the imagination not only of our country but of the world. Now, fifty years after their historic triumph, their stories are every bit as interesting but a little less well-known. Remedy this by having students participate in a group research project. Break students into three groups and, working with an adult, use library or internet resources to learn more about their astronaut and his accomplishments. Have each group prepare a presentation with visual aids—posters, hand-out sheets, models, etc.—to introduce their astronaut to the rest of the class and answer the following questions: How did he become an astronaut? What were his responsibilities in the mission?

W 1.7, 1.8, 2.7, 2.8, 3.7, 3.8

SL 1.4, 1.5, 2.4, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5

Fun Fast Facts–Nonfiction Facts

Gather the class and test what facts they learned from the book about the moon with these questions! After they have answered the questions below, can they come up with new questions of their own for the rest of the class to answer?

- In what month did the *Apollo 11* rocket take off for the moon?
- What did the visitors from earth leave on the moon?
- Does the moon give off light? Why does it glow?
- Why do astronauts wear space suits? What do the suits do?
- How long does it take for the moon to revolve around the earth?
- Name the three astronauts from the *Apollo 11* trip to the moon.
- How big was the Saturn V rocket that sent the first humans to the moon?
- How many parts were there to the first rocket?
- What country first sent astronauts to the moon?
- What did the astronauts bring back from the moon?

RI 1.1, 1.7, 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.7



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It's a Marvelous Night for a Moon Dance

Moon's First Friends should make students intrigued to learn more about the moon. Plan an evening moon-watching event for the class. Coordinate with a science teacher or local stargazing group to provide additional support. Be sure to prepare students in advance for what they will see so they can get the most out of the evening. Astronomers use telescopes to study the moon and stars, but you don't need a telescope to gaze at the moon—a pair of binoculars gives a great viewing experience and they are easy to use. What else can students find in the night sky besides the moon? The next class day, discuss students' impressions. What did they see? How was looking at the moon through binoculars different from using the naked eye? What did they learn from this experience?

SL 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Internet Resources

First Men on the Moon: This site contains the audio transmissions between Mission Control and the astronauts of the *Apollo 11* mission, accompanied by a transcript and video from the capsule as it set down on the moon. Since they are the real transmissions, there is a lot of jargon used that isn't explained, but it captures the excitement and drama of the landing in a unique way.

<https://www.firstmenonthemoon.com/>

Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology: A site with a variety of resources including:

A dedicated section of STEM Activities for Families.

<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/teach/activity/stem-activities-for-families/>

A project to create a model of the earth-moon system using sports and toy balls

<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/teach/activity/modeling-the-earth-moon-system/>

Education.com: This site houses the content from the popular Kids' Astronomy site. There are a variety of lessons, worksheets, and suggestions available.

https://www.education.com/resources/earth-science/?referral_url=kidsastronomy.com

StarChild: NASA put together this site to provide information for kids about space and space exploration.

<http://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html>

NASA Space Place: Activities, information, and images for students and teachers.

<http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/>

NASA Kids Club: Games and activities about space. Be sure to check the navigation and explore the "For Students" and "For Educators" links available from the page.

<https://www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html>

SkyMaps.com: This site sells many supplies and accessories for stargazing and also provides a



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free sky map, revised monthly to reflect the current night sky. The map is in PDF format and can be printed or viewed on a computer.

<http://www.skymaps.com/downloads.html>

Visit the Common Core State Standards website to read about the individual standards listed in this guide: <http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/>

For Reference: Common Core State Standards Used

Reading Standards for Literature Grade 1 (RL)

Key Ideas and Details

- 1.1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- 1.2. Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- 1.3. Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

Craft and Structure

- 1.4. Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses,
- 1.5. Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 1.7. Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.
- 1.9. Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.

Reading Standards for Informational Text Grade 1 (RI)

Key Ideas and Details

- 1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 1.7. Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.
- 1.9 Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

Writing Standards Grade 1 (W)

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- 1.7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of how-to books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).
- 1.8. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.



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Speaking and Listening Standards Grade 1 (SL)

Comprehension and Collaboration

- 1.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
 - a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
 - b. Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.
 - c. Ask questions to clear up any confusion about the topics and texts under discussion.
- 1.2. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- 1.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- 1.4. Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- 1.5. Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

Language Standards Grade 1 (L)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- 1.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
 - a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b. Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word.
 - c. Identify frequently occurring root words (e.g., look) and their inflectional forms (e.g., looks, looked, looking).
- 1.5. With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
 - a. Sort words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
 - b. Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a duck is a bird that swims; a tiger is a large cat with stripes).
 - c. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are cozy).
 - d. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g., look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., large, gigantic) by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings.

Reading Standards for Literature Grade 2 (RL)

Key Ideas and Details

- 2.1. Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate



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understanding of key details in a text.

- 2.2. Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.
- 2.3. Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 2.7. Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

Reading Standards for Informational Text Grade 2 (RI)

Key Ideas and Details

- 2.1. Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 2.7. Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.
- 2.9. Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.

Writing Standards Grade 2 (W)

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- 2.7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).
- 2.8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Speaking and Listening Standards Grade 2 (SL)

Comprehension and Collaboration

- 2.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
 - a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
 - b. Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.
 - c. Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.
- 2.2. Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- 2.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- 2.4. Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.



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- 2.5. Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

Language Standards Grade 2 (L)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- 2.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
- Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., happy/unhappy, tell/retell).
 - Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., addition, additional).
 - Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).
 - Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases.
- 2.5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
- Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).
 - Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny).

Reading Standards for Literature Grade 3 (RL)

Key Ideas and Details

- 3.1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- 3.2. Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- 3.3. Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Craft and Structure

- 3.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 3.7. Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

Reading Standards for Informational Text Grade 3 (RI)

Key Ideas and Details

- 3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the



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text as the basis for the answers.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 3.7 Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
- 3.9 Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

Writing Standards Grade 3 (W)

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- 3.7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
- 3.8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

Speaking and Listening Standards Grade 3 (SL)

Comprehension and Collaboration

- 3.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
 - a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
 - b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
 - c. Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic, and link their comments to the remarks of others.
 - d. Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.
- 3.2. Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- 3.3. Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- 3.4. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.
- 3.5. Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.

Language Standards Grade 3 (L)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- 3.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.



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- a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat).
 - c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., company, companion).
 - d. Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
- 3.5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
- a. Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., take steps).
 - b. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are friendly or helpful).
 - c. Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered).