

Drama Digital Grades

SUPPORTING TASK STIMULI – SIGHT READING AND UNSEEN TEXT

These stimuli are for use during the period of

24 Aug-30 Sept 2023

There is a choice of stimulus for each grade. Choose **ONE** stimulus to use in your exam.

Make sure you have followed the instructions for these tasks in the [syllabus](#) and to access the reflection questions.

SIGHT READING

Speech and Drama Grade 2

1. The Girl and the Puma

Five hundred years ago when the Spanish entered South America, Native American tribes often fought back against the invaders. One way tribes could put pressure on the Spanish was to surround their settlements. This is what happened in the early 1500's when Maldonado, a Spanish girl, was 15 years old.

Hostile Native Americans of the Querandi tribe had encircled the Spanish settlement where Maldonado lived. Before long, their food supplies were depleted. The people faced starvation. They begged their captain to allow them to take their chances and leave the settlement in search of food - but this the captain would not allow.

Famished, Maldonado escaped the settlement and fled into the jungle. As night fell, she heard with alarm the calls of wild animals. Where could she safely sleep for the night? But there was one call that drew her closer. It was a cry of pain. She followed the sound to a cave where she found a puma that had just given birth.

Maldonado helped the mother puma clean the cubs. Later, she watched the babies while the mother went out to hunt. And so days went by.

One day, while Maldonado was gathering food and the mother puma was inside the cave with her cubs, the girl was surprised by Querandi warriors. They captured her and brought her to their village. Fearing the worst, Maldonado braced herself for the death she felt certain was to come.

OR

2. The Boy Who Vanished

Long, long ago there lived a very rich nobleman who had a wonderful baby boy. The night before his son was born, the father had a dream. He dreamt that the only way his son would reach adulthood would be if the child's feet never touched the earth until he was twelve years old.

Great care was taken that this should be avoided, and as the years passed, he was always diligently guarded. Sometimes he was carried in his nurses' arms, sometimes the servants carried him in a chair, but the boy's feet never touched the ground. So it passed until the child was nearly twelve years old.

Now when the child's twelfth birthday drew near, the father began to plan a magnificent feast. One day while the preparations were in progress, a frightful noise, followed by most unearthly yells, shook the castle. In her terror, the nurse dropped the child and ran to the window. On turning around to pick up the boy again, imagine her alarm when she found him no longer there! The child's feet had touched the floor, and now the child was gone.

24 Aug-30 Sept 2023

Speech and Drama Grade 3

1. Yuuki and the Tsunami

Yuuki's village was nestled by the shore below a small mountain. One day, Yuuki was playing on top of the small mountain, watching the preparations below for a festival that was going to take place that very night to celebrate a wonderful rice crop.

All of a sudden, Yuuki felt an earthquake beneath his feet. It was not strong enough to frighten anybody, but Yuuki, who had already felt dozens of shocks, thought it was odd - a long, slow, spongy motion. The houses below, by the sea, rocked gently several times, then all became still again. Soon after, Yuuki noticed something even more strange. The sea darkened all of a sudden and it seemed to be rushing backward, toward the horizon.

With a gasp, Yuuki suddenly remembered the words of his grandfather. His grandfather had told the boy how his own father's father had told him that just before a terrible tsunami, the sea suddenly and quickly rolls backward. Yuuki, his breath heavy, ran down the mountainside to warn the people of the impending danger.

"Get back, get back!" shouted the boy. "There is terrible danger!"

"What are you talking about, Yuuki?" laughed one person. "Look at all the great new shells on the beach!"

"No, no! You don't understand!" cried Yuuki. "You must run away! Up to the mountain! Everybody!"

But no one would listen to him. They all laughed in his face and carried on romping in the new sand and watching the sea roll backward even more.

OR

2. The Husband Who Minded the House

Once upon a time there was a man so surly and cross that he never thought his wife did anything right in the house. One evening, in hay making time, he came home, scolding and swearing, and showing his teeth and making a fuss about everything in sight.

"Dear love, don't be so angry," said his wife. "I'll tell you what we'll do. Tomorrow let's change our work. I'll go out with the mowers and mow, and you shall stay at home and mind the house."

Yes! The husband thought that would do very well. "To do nothing but stay home all day long," he said, "would be easy indeed."

So, early next morning, his wife took a scythe over her neck and went out into the hayfield with the mowers and began to mow. The man stayed behind to mind the house and do the work at home.

First of all, he wanted to churn the butter. But when he had churned a while, he got thirsty. So he went down to the cellar to tap a barrel of ale. Just when he was putting the tap into the barrel, he overheard the pig come into the kitchen. Then off he ran up the cellar steps, with the tap in his hand, as fast as he could, to look after the pig, lest it should knock over the butter churn. But when he got up, he saw the pig had already knocked the churn over, and stood there, poking about with his snout and grunting amongst the cream.

Speech and Drama Grade 4

1. *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Graham

The Mole had long wanted to make the acquaintance of the Badger. He seemed, by all accounts, to be such an important personage and, though rarely visible, to make his unseen influence felt by everybody about the place. But whenever the Mole mentioned his wish to the Water Rat he always found himself put off. "It's all right," the Rat would say. "Badger'll turn up some day or other - he's always turning up - and then I'll introduce you. The best of fellows! But you must not only take him *as* you find him, but *when* you find him."

"Couldn't you ask him here - dinner or something?" said the Mole.

"He wouldn't come," replied the Rat simply. "Badger hates Society, and invitations, and dinner, and all that sort of thing."

"Well, then, supposing we go and call on *him*?" suggested the Mole.

"O, I'm sure he wouldn't like that at *all*," said the Rat, quite alarmed. "He's so very shy, he'd be sure to be offended. I've never even ventured to call on him, at his own home myself, though I know him so well. Besides, we can't. It's quite out of the question, because he lives in the very middle of the Wild Wood."

"Well, supposing he does," said the Mole. "You told me the Wild Wood was all right, you know."

"O, I know, I know, so it is," replied the Rat evasively. "But I think we won't go there just now. Not *just* yet. It's a long way, and he wouldn't be at home at this time of year anyhow, and he'll be coming along some day, if you'll wait quietly."

The Mole had to be content with this. In the winter time the Rat slept a great deal, retiring early and rising late.

OR

2. *The Confessions of Arsène Lupin* by Maurice Leblanc

After he had been round the walls of the property, Lupin returned to the spot from which he started. It was perfectly clear to him that there was no weak spot in the walls; and the only way of entering the extensive grounds of the Castle was through a little low door, firmly bolted on the inside, or through the principal gate, which was overlooked by the keeper's cottage.

"Very well," he said. "We must employ heroic methods." Pushing his way into the wood where he had hidden his motor-bicycle, he unwound a length of twine from under the saddle and went to a place which he had noticed earlier on. At this place, which was far from the road, on the very edge of the wood, a number of large trees, standing inside the park, overlapped the wall.

Lupin fastened a stone to the end of the string, threw it up and caught a thick branch, which he drew down to him and straddled. The branch, in recovering its position, raised him from the ground. He climbed over the wall, slipped down the tree, and sprang lightly on the grass. Fearing that he might be seen, he concealed himself behind a clump of fir-trees. From there, with the help of a spy-glass, he studied the dark and melancholy front of the manor-house. All the windows were closed and barricaded with solid shutters. The house might easily have been uninhabited.

"Goodness" muttered Lupin. "It's not the liveliest of residences. I shall certainly not come here to end my days!"

Speech and Drama Grade 5

1. **The Blue Lenses** by *Daphne du Maurier*

This was the day for the bandages to be removed and the blue lenses fitted. Marda West put her hand up to her eyes and felt the bandage. The days had passed into weeks since the operation, and she had laid there suffering no physical discomfort, but only the anonymity of darkness, a negative feeling that the world and the life around was passing her by. As for the operation itself, it had been successful. Here was definite promise. A hundred per cent successful.

'You will see,' the surgeon told her, 'more clearly than ever before.'

But always during these days of waiting, she had the fear that everybody at the hospital was being too kind. Therefore, when at last it happened, when at his evening visit the surgeon said, 'Your lenses will be fitted tomorrow,' surprise was greater than joy. She could not say anything, and he had left the room before she could thank him. 'You won't know you've got them, Mrs West' — the day-nurse assured her, leaving.

Such a calm, comfortable voice, and the way she shifted the pillows and held the glass to the patient's lips, the hand smelling faintly of the Moray French Fen soap. These things gave confidence and implied that she could not lie.

'Tomorrow I shall see you,' said Marda West, and the nurse, with the cheerful laugh that could be heard sometimes down the corridor outside, answered, 'Yes, I'll give you your first shock.'

It was a strange thought how memories of coming into the nursing-house were now dim.

'Aren't you feeling excited?' This was the low, soft voice of her night-nurse, who, more than the rest of them, understood what she had endured. Nurse Brand was a person of sunlight, of bearing in fresh flowers, of admitted visitors.

OR

2. *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë

"And shall I see you again, Helen, when I die?"

"You will come to the same region of happiness: be received by the same mighty, universal Parent, no doubt, dear Jane."

Again I questioned, but this time only in thought. "Where is that region? Does it exist?" And I clasped my arms closer round Helen; she seemed dearer to me than ever; I felt as if I could not let her go; I lay with my face hidden on her neck. Presently she said, in the sweetest tone—

"How comfortable I am! That last fit of coughing has tired me a little; I feel as if I could sleep: but don't leave me, Jane; I like to have you near me."

"I'll stay with you, *dear* Helen: no one shall take me away."

"Are you warm, darling?"

"Yes."

"Good-night, Jane."

"Good-night, Helen."

She kissed me, and I her, and we both soon slumbered.

When I awoke it was day: an unusual movement roused me; I looked up; I was in somebody's arms; the nurse held me; she was carrying me through the passage back to the dormitory. I was not reprimanded for leaving my bed; people had something else to think about; no explanation was afforded then to my many questions; but a day or two afterwards I learned that Miss Temple, on returning to her own room at dawn, had found me laid in the little crib; my face against Helen Burns's shoulder, my arms round her neck. I was asleep, and Helen was—dead.

Her grave is in Brocklebridge churchyard: for fifteen years after her death it was only covered by a grassy mound; but now a grey marble tablet marks the spot, inscribed with her name, and the word "Resurgam."

Speech and Drama Grade 6

1. **Lie on the Beam** by *John Victor Peterson*

The spirit of the Leader rides with us, thought the destroyer's commander. The very force of his will has caused those fools below to leave their beam on. And they are members of the race that seeks to dictate terms to the Leader! So ignorant they are, so unenlightened. They are unfit to rule. By the great god Zabir—nay, not by that false god, but by the Leader, we are the only ones fit to rule and we shall!

"Andrakalarn marsti virki!" he shrilled into the intercommunication tube.

The moment of reckoning—in twelve minutes!

Meanwhile Charleston's space-yacht was following the destroyer down the strange layer of wild winds in Venus' stratosphere. Some time before he had reached out a pudgy hand to turn on his infrared view-plates and the destroyer stood out sharply on the visual grid.

"Damn it!" the fat millionaire was thinking, "no state of war exists. Why should that Martian blast the patrol ship and tear away my broadcast antenna with a torp?"

The air was extremely rough. The yacht pitched and yawed, and with the pitching and yawing Charleston found his daughter Ginny at his side.

"Father, what is wrong?" she queried.

"There's a des—" Jimmie started.

"Harrrrumph!" Charleston burst.

Jimmie was squelched.

"Just following another ship down which acts kind of peculiarly," explained the millionaire. "Wish I could report him to the Authority. Can't, though, a—er—meteor tore away the antenna!"

"Why are you swerving your course?" Ginny knew her rocket-ships.

"Winds are pretty bad. Seem to be coming full force from the southeast if you can trust the compass. Had to tack around to counteract their force." Charleston of course couldn't admit that his infrareds didn't allow for variable headwinds and compass deviations and therefor weren't as dependable as the Authority's beams.

OR

2. **Curious, If True: Strange Tales** by *Elizabeth Gaskell*

And we followed him back into his own house. We went into the kitchen first. Such an array of bright copper and tin vessels I never saw; and all the wooden things were as thoroughly scrubbed. The red tile floor was spotless when we went in, but in two minutes it was all over slop and dirt with the tread of many feet; for the kitchen was filled, and still the worthy miller kept bringing in more people under his great crimson umbrella. He even called the dogs in, and made them lie down under the tables.

His daughter said something to him in German, and he shook his head merrily at her. Everybody laughed.

'What did she say?' I asked

"She told him to bring the ducks in next; but indeed if more people come we shall be suffocated. What with the thundery weather, and the stove, and all these steaming clothes, I really think we must ask to leave.'

My friend asked the daughter of the house for permission to go into an inner chamber and see her mother. It was granted, and we went into a sort of saloon, over-looking the river; very small, very bright, and very close. The floor was slippery with polish; long narrow pieces of looking-glass against the walls reflected the constant motion of the river opposite; a white china stove, with some old-fashioned ornaments of brass around it; a sofa, covered with velvet, a table before it, and a piece of woollen carpet under it; a vase of artificial flowers; and, lastly, an alcove with a bed in it, on which lay the paralysed wife of the good miller, knitting busily, formed the furniture. I spoke as if this was all that was to be seen in the room; but, sitting quietly, while my friend kept up a brisk conversation in a language which I only half understood, my eye was caught by a picture in a dark corner of the room, and I got up to examine it more closely.

UNSEEN TEXT

Speech and Drama Grade 7

1. *The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald

We went in. To my overwhelming surprise the living-room was deserted. 'Well, that's funny,' I exclaimed.

'What's funny?'

She turned her head as there was a light dignified knocking at the front door. I went out and opened it. Gatsby, pale as death, with his hands plunged like weights in his coat pockets, was standing in a puddle of water glaring tragically into my eyes.

With his hands still in his coat pockets he stalked by me into the hall, turned sharply as if he were on a wire, and disappeared into the living-room. It wasn't a bit funny. Aware of the loud beating of my own heart I pulled the door closed against the increasing rain.

For half a minute there wasn't a sound. Then from the living-room I heard a sort of choking murmur and part of a laugh, followed by Daisy's voice on a clear artificial note:

'I certainly am awfully glad to see you again.'

A pause; it endured horribly. I had nothing to do in the hall, so I went into the room.

Gatsby, his hands still in his pockets, was reclining against the mantelpiece in a strained counterfeit of perfect ease, even of boredom. His head leaned back so far that it rested against the face of a defunct mantelpiece clock, and from this position his distraught eyes stared down at Daisy, who was sitting, frightened but graceful, on the edge of a stiff chair.

'We've met before,' muttered Gatsby. His eyes glanced momentarily at me, and his lips parted with an abortive attempt at a laugh. Luckily the clock took this moment to tilt dangerously at the pressure of his head, whereupon he turned and caught it with trembling fingers, and set it back in place. Then he sat down, rigidly, his elbow on the arm of the sofa and his chin in his hand.

'I'm sorry about the clock,' he said.

My own face had now assumed a deep tropical burn. I couldn't muster up a single commonplace word out of the thousand in my head.

'It's an old clock,' I told them idiotically.

I think we all believed for a moment that it had smashed in pieces on the floor.

OR

2. **Flaxman** by Margaret Fuller

We deemed the secret lost, the spirit gone,
Which spake in Greek simplicity of thought,
And in the forms of gods and heroes wrought
Eternal beauty from the sculptured stone,—
A higher charm than modern culture won
With all the wealth of metaphysic lore,
Gifted to analyze, dissect, explore.
A many-colored light flows from one sun;
Art, 'neath its beams, a motley thread has spun;
The prism modifies the perfect day;
But thou hast known such mediums to shun,
And cast once more on life a pure, white ray.
Absorbed in the creations of thy mind,
Forgetting daily self, my truest self I find.

24 Aug-30 Sept 2023

Speech and Drama Grade 8

1. *Night and Day* by Virginia Woolf

The three of them stood for a moment awkwardly silent, and then Mary left them in order to see that the great pitcher of coffee was properly handled, for beneath all her education she preserved the anxieties of one who owns china.

Ralph could think of nothing further to say; but could one have stripped off his mask of flesh, one would have seen that his will- power was rigidly set upon a single object--that Miss Hilbery should obey him. He wished her to stay there until, by some measures not yet apparent to him, he had conquered her interest. These states of mind transmit themselves very often without the use of language, and it was evident to Katharine that this young man had fixed his mind upon her. She instantly recalled her first impressions of him, and saw herself again proffering family relics. She reverted to the state of mind in which he had left her that Sunday afternoon. She supposed that he judged her very severely. She argued naturally that, if this were the case, the burden of the conversation should rest with him. But she submitted so far as to stand perfectly still, her eyes upon the opposite wall, and her lips very nearly closed, though the desire to laugh stirred them slightly.

"You know the names of the stars, I suppose?" Denham remarked, and from the tone of his voice one might have thought that he grudged Katharine the knowledge he attributed to her.

She kept her voice steady with some difficulty.

"I know how to find the Pole star if I'm lost."

"I don't suppose that often happens to you."

"No. Nothing interesting ever happens to me," she said.

"I think you make a system of saying disagreeable things, Miss Hilbery," he broke out, again going further than he meant to. "I suppose it's one of the characteristics of your class. They never talk seriously to their inferiors."

Whether it was that they were meeting on neutral ground to-night, or whether the carelessness of an old grey coat that Denham wore gave an ease to his bearing that he lacked in conventional dress, Katharine certainly felt no impulse to consider him outside the particular set in which she lived.

OR

2. *Medea by Euripides*

JASON: I ought not to be rash, it seems, in speech,
But like the skilful pilot, who, with sails
Scarce half unfurled, his bark more surely guides,
Escape, O woman, your ungoverned tongue.
Since you the benefits on me conferred
Exaggerate in so proud a strain, I deem
That I to Venus only, and no god
Or man beside, my prosperous voyage owe.
Although a wondrous subtlety of soul
To you belong, 'twere an invidious speech
For me to make should I relate how Love
By his inevitable shafts constrained you
To save my life. I will not therefore state
This argument too nicely, but allow,
As you did aid me, it was kindly done.
But by preserving me have you gained more
Than you bestowed, as I shall prove: and first,
Transplanted from barbaric shores, you dwell
In Grecian regions, and have here been taught
To act as justice and the laws ordain,
Nor follow the caprice of brutal strength.
By all the Greeks your wisdom is perceived,
And you acquire renown; but had you still
Inhabited that distant spot of earth,
You never had been named. I would not wish
For mansions heaped with gold, or to exceed
The sweetest notes of Orpheus' magic lyre,
Were those unfading wreaths which fame bestows
From me withheld by fortune. I thus far
On my own labours only have discoursed.
For you this odious strife of words began.
But in espousing Creon's royal daughter,
With which you have reproached me, I will prove
That I in acting thus am wise and chaste,
That I to you have been the best of friends,
And to our children. But make no reply.
Since hither Iolchos' land I came,
Accompanied by many woes, and such
As could not be avoided, what device
More advantageous would an exile frame
Than wedding the king's daughter? Not through hate
To you, which you reproach me with, not smitten
With love for a new consort, or a wish
The number of my children to augment:
For those we have already might suffice,
And I complain not. But to me it seemed
Of great importance that we both might live
As suits our rank, nor suffer abject need,

Cont.

Well knowing that each friend avoids the poor.
I also wished to educate our sons
In such a manner as befits my race
And with their noble brothers yet unborn,
Make them one family, that thus, my house
Cementing, I might prosper. In some measure
Is it your interest too that by my bride
I should have sons, and me it much imports,
By future children, to provide for those
Who are in being. Have I judged amiss?
You would not censure me, unless your soul
Were by a rival stung. But your whole sex
Hath these ideas; if in marriage blest
Ye deem nought wanting, but if some reverse
Of fortune e'er betide the nuptial couch,
All that was good and lovely ye abhor.
Far better were it for the human race
Had children been produced by other means,
No females e'er existing: hence might man
Exempt from every evil have remained.

24 Aug-30 Sept 2023