

Language Arts 3+4—Extra Dictation Passages

Extra Dictation Passages

We hope that you will encourage your children to practice writing each day. We understand, though, that there are some days when your children will feel... well, let's just say "uninspired." On those days, what should you do?

Should you just let them skip writing? Not if you want them to grow and excel as a writer. Mercilessly browbeat them into submission? Not if you want to keep your sanity! Instead, just assign one of the extra dictation passages below.

Your children will gain additional writing practice without the additional challenge of a regular assignment. You'll avoid a battle of the wills with a reluctant writer. Use the extra time you gain to discuss things with your children. Why are they feeling uninspired? Show them love and support and help them regroup in preparation to hit the ground running again tomorrow.

For your convenience, we have provided extra dictation passages for you to use over the length of this course.

By the Great Horn Spoon!

pg. 3

The ship was bound for the gold fields with 183 passengers—not counting the stowaways. Hundreds of gold-seekers had been left at the dock clamoring for passage. The California fever was sweeping through the cities and towns and villages like a heady wind.

pg. 98

The steward tells me they're Digger Indians. Quite tame. They dig for roots and acorns and are a menace to nothing but wasps and grasshoppers—which they consider a delicacy.

pg. 125

Campfires along the river lit their way back to town. Carrying their shoes, the two partners were stuffed full of sowbelly-and-beans and between them they were richer by a thimbleful of gold. Jack's feet ached from hours in the ice cold mountain stream, but he was too elated to care.

The Cabin Faced West

pg. 38

"I could teach you all the letters," Ann offered. "I could teach you how to write sometime, if you want."

pg. 110

The man smiled. He leaned down toward Ann. "Would you tell her," he said, "that General George Washington would like to take supper with her?"

Freedom Train

pg. 7

A hundred years before, the captain of a sailing vessel had kidnapped Harriet's great-grand mother. Carrying her across the ocean from her African home to a crowded wharf in Baltimore, he sold her to the highest bidder. Now her children and her children's children and their children belonged to Master, as surely as did his cows and pigs.

pg. 104

Anything but your life and liberty. Where you think Mistress'll go when she finds you're missing? Straight to the old folks' cabin. Without meaning to, Ma'll give our plans away. And get herself into a peck of trouble, too.

pg. 123

Harriet cooked for her charges on a crude outdoor stove and washed their clothing in water melted down from blocks of snow. She nursed them, begged for them, prayed for them, fighting to keep them from despair by coaxing and pleading, by scolding and scorn.

pg. 168

"You're free!" Harriet had to repeat it again and again. "Mr. Lincoln gave freedom to everybody. And the Union Army's come to see you get your share."

When she explained the purpose of her mission, information poured forth.

George Washington Carver

pg. 8

"The boy sees things we do not," she answered softly. "I cannot grow flowers in the garden. The boy can. He is friend to the birds and animals. He talks to them, sings with them."

pg. 40

"Young man, I'm afraid there has been a mistake," he said softly. "We cannot enroll you here at Highland."

"But I have your letter of acceptance!" I exclaimed. "You told me to come today and I am here."

The man shook his head. "We do not take colored students here."

pp. 108-109

"We will be able to use every peanut we have raised. Harvest each and every peanut crop. We can use peanuts to wash with, to drink, to rub on our bodies—for just about anything. We have found the answer."

"We?" the student asked. "But you were alone in the lab, weren't you?"

"Oh, no," I replied. "I was not alone for a moment."

The Great Turkey Walk

pg. 7

I was just readin' in the papers about Denver. Biggest boomtown you ever saw, what with gold littering the very streets like it is. But they ain't got nothin' to eat there but beans and bread and coffee, three times the day. Turkeys on the hoof'd go for five dollars a head out there.

pg. 27

You're really growing up, Simon. Truly spreading your wings. Don't you ever let anybody make fun of you or your enterprise on this trip. They'll only be saying things from jealousy, because you're doing something, and they're not. You're going to make a fine job of it, going to be a fine man one day.

pg. 110

Mr. Peece gazed on me sorrowfully. "Too much strong drink and guns don't go together, son. A man loses his perspective. Starts to let off a little steam. Pretty soon, somebody gets hurt." He stopped. "Gave up guns when I took to serious drinking. Least I had enough sense for that."

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson

pg. 26

Father bowed. "It is good that you are here, my wife."

"It is good to be here, my husband." Mother, too, bowed.

Taking one of Father's hands in her left and one of Mother's in her right, Shirley jumped up and down. "Take us home, Father. Take us home."

pg. 140

In the morning the shame had not gone away. It cast a stillness within her like the hush of new snow. She began to see things she had failed to see before. Once again, her parents had slept through the alarm. But only now did she realize it was because of the long hours they worked. Worked to build a new life for them in America. Worked without complaint, always with cheer. How could she have deceived them so?

The Lewis and Clark Expedition

pg. 28

We take for granted today the wild creatures which roam our continent. But to Lewis and Clark they were as strange as some of the weird fish from the very bottom of the ocean are to us now.

pp. 48-49

I beheld the Rocky Mountains today for the first time. I reflected upon the difficulties which this snowy barrier probably would throw in my way to the ocean. I thought of the sufferings and hardships of myself and party in them. This in some measure counterbalanced the joy I had felt.

Old Yeller

pg. 1

We called him Old Yeller. The name had a sort of double meaning. One part meant that his short hair was a dingy yellow, a color that we called "yeller" in those days. The other meant that when he opened his head, the sound he let out came closer to being a yell than a bark.

pp. 61-62

But that day when I saw him in the spring, so helpless against the angry she bear, I learned different. I knew then that I loved him as much as I did Mama and Papa, maybe in some ways even a little bit more.

So it was only natural for me to come to love the dog that saved him.

Om-kas-toe

pg. 20

Only one man had not spoken yet. He had listened to all the arguments before he rose from his seat to speak. He was the oldest man in the band. His name was Old Man. Everyone listened carefully as he spoke.

pg. 132

Now all the men could talk about was how to get more of these amazing animals. How could they get them? Their enemies would never give them away or even trade for them. The only way the Blackfeet could get more elkdogs would be to take them from the enemy. This would be dangerous.

Phoebe the Spy

pg. 16

And so it was that a few days later Phoebe packed two clean aprons and a bottle of her father's best cider into a bundle, said good-bye to her family, and set off to save George Washington's life.

Plain Girl

pg. 8

"Esther is learning here at home," Father said slowly in a heavy stubborn voice. "We Amish people believe in the law; you should know it. But we do not believe in a bad law that forces men to send their children to learn bad ways. We are able to teach our children everything they will need to know here on the farm."

pg. 96

"You remember when Jacob's barn burned, Esther?" Dan asked. "A new one was built for him in a week, remember, and filled with hay. That could only happen here—with the People. That's one of the things I have learned since I went away."

She had never thought such a thing was strange, but only natural.

pp. 121-122

"I see," he said after a time. But what it was he saw she didn't learn just then; the bell was ringing. He stood up quickly and said, "Esther, I'll think about this awhile. I don't know—I never thought about such a thing with you."

pp. 140-141

Her cheeks were very pink from the cold, and she was laughing a little now. "Esther, when Dan wants all the new things and says I want all the old things, do you know what I tell him? What if I had to invent how to make every pie and every cake and had learned nothing from mother at all? How foolish would that be?" Her eyes were sparkling. "He said the pies had convinced him. He said he was sure he could not make any better pies with a tractor!"

Pocahontas and the Strangers

pg. 36

Pocahontas worked with them. In the afternoon she helped them weave grass into a large fishing net.

pg. 45

"Our men say John Smith is the leader," said Hapsis. "Your father does not trust them. If the leader is gone, it will be easier to drive the rest away."

pg. 169

"Rebecca, we cannot go now," he said. "All London wants to see you. And soon a man will be here to paint your picture."

"Why am I so tired?" she asked. "Once I could work all day and never be tired."

"You must rest more," he said. "Try to sleep late in the morning. After the Christmas holidays we will go away for a while."

The Wright Brothers

pg. 42

Finally Will told his father that when he got better he was going to help him all he could. Maybe he too would become a minister.

His wise father shook his head and smiled. "Each one of us is given a task to do by God," he said. "I don't think he wants either you or Orville to be ministers. I don't know what plans he has for you. I think they are big plans."

pg. 99

Within two weeks Orv had a dozen scientific magazines in which there were articles about gliding. They were written for the most part by college professors, inventors, engineers, and scientists. Perhaps a man would find that the only way to launch a glider was against the wind. Being a scientist, he wouldn't keep the knowledge to himself. He'd write an article for a magazine so that everyone would know about it.

The Seventeenth Swap

pg. 28

By the time Eric started home from school he'd added several items to both his lists and was counting on Angel to add some more. It was a letdown to spot her trotting off in the opposite direction, jabbering ninety-to-nothing at Debbie Clark as they both headed for Debbie's mother's car and, presumably, Debbie's fancy house down beside the lake.

pg. 38

Eric pushed back through the curtains, glancing at the big clock over the cigar counter. Might as well go on home and stare at his lists as to keep on tramping around like this, accomplishing nothing. He was beginning to feel a strong need of advice, without the dimmest notion of where to go for it, or precisely what to ask for when he got there.

pg. 121

At 8 a.m. Wednesday morning Eric was standing in Robert Sparrow's studio, starting bravely on the second paragraph of what had turned out to be an awfully involved explanation of the request he had just made. Robert Sparrow, garbed in an awning-striped terrycloth bathrobe, with his hair on end, was peering at him over a mug of coffee and listening intently.

Shades of Gray

pg. 87

Suddenly Will realized how much he was going to miss Meg. She wasn't silly and helpless like other girls he'd known—or like his sisters, he thought with a pang. Was it because she was a country girl, or because she'd always been expected to do her share in a family with no slaves—a family that actually took pride in working hard?

pg. 119

"We were there in September of sixty-four," Jim began, "and our orders were to destroy the breadbasket of the Confederacy, to help bring an end to the war by making it impossible for Southern forces to get the food they needed to continue their fight."

Will's letter, pg. 150-151, edited

Dear Jim,

After my father and brother were killed, I hated all Yankees, but now I understand that there were good men fighting on both sides—and that some good men didn't fight. I also understand now that people have to decide for themselves what is right and then stand up for what they believe in.

I hope you are well. Everyone here sends their good wishes.

Yours,

Will Page

The Sign of the Beaver

pg. 9

One of those pieces of advice his father had been so fond of giving him had been about Indians. "They won't bother you," he said. "Most of 'em have left for Canada. The ones who stayed don't want to make any trouble. But Indians take great stock in politeness. Should you meet one, speak to him just the same as to the minister back home."

pp. 87-88

When Matt could find nothing to answer, Attean went on. "White man kill my mother. She go out with two squaw to find bark for make basket. White man come through woods and shoot with gun. My mother do them no harm. We no longer at war with white men. Just same they kill for get scalp. White men get money for Indian scalp. Even scalp of children."

Thimble Summer

pg. 35

Okra had a creamy blossom with a dark red center like a hollyhock, the eggplants were starred with purple; gone-to-seed onions were topped with globes of lacy bloom, and each squash vine, vivid as a jungle growth, spread dark leaves above enormous orange flowers.

pg. 50

"Look here," said Garnet's father suddenly. "You seem like a person with some sense. Maybe I could use you on my farm for a while. I'm building a new barn and, though Jay's pretty good as a helper, I think that if I had two boys working instead of one, I'd get through a lot faster. Would you like to try it?"

pg. 86

"This cream," quacked the lady, "is made from the oil of young turtles. Apply it at night just before retiring, and pat in vigorously." Here the lady slapped her face heartily in demonstration. "If used constantly it is guaranteed to remove lines, wrinkles, double chins, and freckles, and is beneficial to the tenderest skin."

pg. 134

"Well, I don't know," he said after a while. "Maybe you've got the right idea: but I still think I'd like to travel some, and see the world. But maybe when I got that out of my system I'd like to come back and farm with father. If you bought land next to ours we might work it all together and be partners and have a swell place. What do you think?"

Eric smiled with pleasure.

Turn Homeward, Hannalee

pg. 69

"Rosellen, you'd work for Yankees?"

She nodded slowly. "You heard what that old lady told us. I'd work for Yankees before I'd go to one of their jails. I think you'd best bear that in mind, too. That train ride was like a jail on wheels, and remember how bad it was. Just think what a real bluebelly prison would be like. ■