Skills Assessments

Developed for Los Angeles Unified School District Teachers Using Open Court Reading 2000

Grade 6

Unit 3

Student Name

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In 1854, the Omaha signed away their hunting lands in Nebraska. That same year, a baby girl, Susette, was born to Omaha Chief Iron Eyes and his wife, Mary. The Chief was also known as Joseph La Flesche. According to Omaha custom, a child had no special tribal name for the first four years of life. It was only after the Omaha ceremony called “Turning of the Child” that Susette’s father declared her a member of the tribe. She was given the name Bright Eyes. She would become a leader in the fight for Native-American rights.

Susette grew up in two worlds. Her father was part-French and part-Omaha. Therefore, he brought the cultures of both worlds to her. He was convinced that if his people were to survive the many changes they were facing, they would have to follow the white man’s example. The great herds of bison his people depended on for food were disappearing. Iron Eyes knew they would have to find other things besides bison to eat. He encouraged his people to cultivate corn and wheat on their farms.

One of Iron Eyes’s most important goals was to educate his children. At the age of six, Susette was sent to a mission boarding school with her older brother, Louis. Susette was a shy child, and her early days at the school were unbearable. The food was unfamiliar, and the bed was uncomfortable. She was embarrassed to speak English with the other children because she could not speak it very well. Eventually, she became accustomed to her new surroundings. She loved her studies and took a great interest in reading. At the end of each school week, Susette and Louis would ride home on their ponies to their land along the Missouri River.

Susette’s other world always welcomed her. Sitting comfortably on a bison robe in her grandmother’s lodge, Susette would listen to the beautiful legends and songs of her people. As she grew older, Susette knew she wanted to help her people by becoming a teacher. However, when she was fifteen, her education was interrupted. The Indian Agent closed the mission boarding school. There was not enough money to run it. Susette was heartbroken.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.
1. Why did the author say that Susette grew up in two worlds?

   ○ A. Her father was part-French and part-Omaha.
   ○ B. Susette was sent to an English-speaking boarding school with her brother.
   ○ C. Iron Eyes encouraged his people to follow the white man’s example.
   ○ D. all of the above

2. Susette’s early days at the mission boarding school were unbearable.
   The word *unbearable* means

   ○ A. excitable.
   ○ B. dull.
   ○ C. educational.
   ○ D. miserable.
With the help of a former teacher, she was able to attend the Institute for Young Girls in New Jersey. She spent two years at the Institute. She graduated with honors in 1875. Susette was happy to return home, but there were many problems waiting. She had grown accustomed to freedom, but now she couldn’t leave the reservation without a pass from the Agent. To make matters worse, Susette could not obtain a teaching position. The Indian Agent told her there were not any positions available. Susette studied the laws governing the reservation. She learned that a qualified Native American must be given first priority for any teaching position in the reservation school. She wrote letters to the Indian Commissioner in Washington, D.C., but had to wait two years before she finally obtained a teaching job.

Susette loved teaching. Yet, she became distressed by the problems of her people. More and more land was being taken from Native Americans. In its place they were offered hostile land in a remote place called the Indian Territory, far away from their original home. In 1877, the Omahas’ close friends, the Poncas, were ordered to give part of their ancestral land to the Dakotas. The Poncas were forced to move to the Indian Territory.

Standing Bear, the leader of the Poncas, decided to escape from the Indian Territory with his family and some friends. It seemed sure there would be trouble. In bitterly cold weather, the little group traveled 500 miles to the Omaha reservation. There, Iron Eyes gave Standing Bear and the others protection. But they were told they could not stay. Standing Bear and his family were ordered back to the Indian Territory. Standing Bear refused to go and was imprisoned with his followers.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.
3. The Indian Agent told Susette there weren’t any teaching positions available. From the following reasons, which one best explains why she continued to try to obtain a teaching job?

- A. Susette wanted to share with others the beautiful legends and songs of her people.
- B. Susette wanted to teach her people how to cultivate corn and wheat.
- C. Susette’s education and the freedoms she had experienced made her realize there were ways to achieve her goal of becoming a teacher.
- D. The Indian Agent encouraged Susette to study the law and write to the Indian Commissioner.

4. Which of the statements does not show that Susette stood up for her rights as a Native American once she graduated?

- A. Susette did not accept the Indian Agent’s rejection.
- B. Susette made sure the reservation laws were followed.
- C. Susette wrote letters to the Indian Commissioner in Washington, D.C.
- D. Susette became distressed by the problems of her people.

5. Who was Standing Bear?

- A. the Indian Commissioner
- B. chief of the Omaha Indians
- C. chief of the Poncas
- D. the Indian Agent

6. Why was Standing Bear sent to prison?

- A. He wouldn’t live in the Indian Territory set up by the government.
- B. The government wanted to use Standing Bear as a test case.
- C. The government was trying to prevent a war.
- D. The Poncas were a hostile tribe and didn’t like the Omaha reservation.
The long battle that Susette knew could not be avoided had finally arrived. A group of concerned citizens formed a committee to help Standing Bear and his people stay in Nebraska. Susette was asked to speak to a group in an Omaha church about the Poncas’ problem. She was only twenty-three years of age, and she was terrified. However, Susette agreed. Her speech was a success. It contributed greatly to Standing Bear’s release. In April of 1879, a judge upheld the Poncas’ rights. He ruled that an Indian is a person within the meaning of the law and cannot be imprisoned without good reason. In his judgment, Standing Bear and his followers had not committed a crime by leaving Indian Territory. The judge said that no lawful authority existed to make them return.

It wasn’t long after that first speech and the decision granting certain rights that Susette began a lecture tour. She met with many famous writers and historians. She testified before a special Senate committee investigating the removal of the Poncas. Susette was a frail, shy person, but her determination far outweighed her fear of speaking to large audiences.

Susette believed in freedom. One of her most famous sayings was “Law is liberty.” She knew that once Native Americans became United States citizens they would be entitled to the protection of the Constitution.

In March of 1880, the Senate committee said, “A great wrong has been done to the Poncas.” Later, Congress passed a bill which said that Standing Bear and his followers would not have to return to the Indian Territory. Unfortunately, those already there would not be permitted to leave.

In her lifetime, Susette tried to bring justice to her people. She died in May, 1903. The epitaph on her tombstone reads: “She did all that she could to make the world happier and better.” Susette would have been proud to know that in 1924 citizenship was conferred on all Native Americans born in the United States.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.
7. How did Susette help Standing Bear and his people?
   ○ A. She hired a lawyer to defend them.
   ○ B. She made a speech in their defense.
   ○ C. She became a news correspondent.
   ○ D. She moved to Washington, D.C.

8. According to the selection, Susette said, “Law is liberty.”
   What did she mean by that?
   ○ A. The laws of the Constitution required Native Americans to return to
      Indian Territory.
   ○ B. Native Americans are citizens.
   ○ C. The laws of the Constitution would protect Native Americans once they
      became United States citizens.
   ○ D. all of the above

9. Susette La Flesche is known because she was
   ○ A. a leader in the fight for Native-American schools.
   ○ B. the first Native-American school teacher.
   ○ C. the first Native-American Congresswoman.
   ○ D. a leader in the fight for Native-American rights.

10. What is the main point the author wants you to learn from this selection?
   ○ A. By taking a stand, one person can make a difference.
   ○ B. One person can make a difference by becoming famous.
   ○ C. Most Indian Agents were unfair to Native Americans.
   ○ D. Susette needed help from famous people.
DIRECTIONS: Read the sentences below. Identify and circle each adverb.

1. The championship basketball game is now beginning.

2. Neil Armstrong, the first American astronaut to land on the moon, triumphantly took his first steps.

DIRECTIONS: Rewrite the following sentences, using capital letters and punctuation to show all direct quotations.

3. After running the motor a few minutes to heat it up Orville recalled I released the wire that held the machine to the track, and the machine moved forward into the wind.

4. Do twenty push-ups demanded the basketball coach and run three laps around the field before practice ends.

5. The legend of King Minos and his Minotaur has existed for centuries stated the instructor.
DIRECTIONS: Read the following sentences.

Step one: Circle the **prepositional phrase(s)** in each sentence.
Step two: Underline the **subject** with one line.
Step three: Underline the **correct verb form** with two lines.

6. The scientists in the field (study, studies) the migration patterns of animals.

7. The dog across the street (come, comes) to visit us often.

8. The clothes for my grandfather (fit, fits) him perfectly.

DIRECTIONS: Read the following sentences. Circle the **prepositions** and underline the **prepositional phrases**.

9. Kimberly and Krista met each other at the movie theater where *Spiderman* was playing.

10. Paul played the grand piano in the concert hall yesterday.

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10
DIRECTIONS: Read all of the sentences. If an underlined word is misspelled, fill in the bubble next to the answer you have chosen. If none of the underlined words are misspelled, fill in the bubble next to “No mistake.”

1.  ○ A. Due to the outpouring of donations, the orphanage had an abundance of food.
   ○ B. Jerry’s telegraphic style of writing allowed him to do exceptionally well on written exams.
   ○ C. The epidemic led to an influx of patients in the emergency room.
   ○ D. No mistake

2.  ○ A. Cesar Chavez was a reformer who organized labor unions for farm workers.
   ○ B. The interior design of the home made everyone marvel.
   ○ C. Dr. King stood at a lectern to address the members of his congregation.
   ○ D. No mistake

3.  ○ A. The cherished relics of Franklin D. Roosevelt are on display in Washington, D.C.
   ○ B. An autobiography of someone’s life can be written in the form of a novel.
   ○ C. The article about the Civil Rights Movement helped us to understand the importance of that event.
   ○ D. No mistake

4.  ○ A. The biotechnology researcher discovered the cancer-killing antibody by chance.
   ○ B. Put an antiseptic on your wound after it is cleansed.
   ○ C. Activists tried to abolish logging in national forests.
   ○ D. No mistake

5.  ○ A. The strong taste of garlic was displeasing to my taste buds.
   ○ B. The closed caption message kept appearing on our television screen.
   ○ C. When people protest an issue, they are exercising their right to free speech.
   ○ D. No mistake
6.  ○ A. The sweater on the top shelf wasn’t reachable, so I asked the clerk for assistance.
   ○ B. The young girl devoured the chocolate-covered pretzel.
   ○ C. It was a struggle to maintain order on the playground after the fire drill.
   ○ D. No mistake

7.  ○ A. The flight attendant safely secured the luggage in the airliner’s compartment.
   ○ B. Mr. Bolden happily received the Distinguished Teacher of the Year award.
   ○ C. We wrote a friendly letter to our sponsor to thank them for the contributions made to our school.
   ○ D. No mistake

8.  ○ A. Making fudge brownies from scratch takes a long time.
   ○ B. The sign at the zoo said, “Do not badger the animals.”
   ○ C. A math teacher has knowledge of mathematical equations.
   ○ D. No mistake

9.  ○ A. The cameraman used a telephoto lens to get a picture of the deer.
   ○ B. Preface your speech with an explanation of why you were invited to the event.
   ○ C. She won an award for her photograph of Mount Shasta.
   ○ D. No mistake

10. ○ A. The children’s laughter filled the auditorium.
     ○ B. During the interview, the reporter asked people to respond in complete sentences.
     ○ C. The equator is an imaginary line that divides the earth into the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.
     ○ D. No mistake

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10
PART 1 — Antonyms

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence. Choose the word that means the opposite of the underlined word. Then fill in the bubble next to the word you have chosen.

1. After 50 years, the downtown buildings still looked the same, giving people a sense of continuity.
   - A. incorporation
   - B. superiority
   - C. appreciation
   - D. interruption

2. If the discord between the English and American colonies had been resolved, the Revolutionary War might have been prevented.
   - A. disobedience
   - B. agreement
   - C. resistance
   - D. incident

3. The image of refugees huddling in the cold rain had a profound effect on the relief worker.
   - A. rebellious
   - B. tremendous
   - C. insignificant
   - D. deported

PART 2 — Multiple Meanings

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence. Read and answer the question. Fill in the bubble next to the answer.

4. Each new year, tribal leaders would fast to cleanse their bodies and prepare themselves for future challenges. In which sentence is the word fast used in the same way as in the sentence above?
   - A. The men, having known each other since they were in preschool, were fast friends.
   - B. The doctor told his patient to fast 24 hours before the blood test.
   - C. When mother checked on the twins who had been playing all day, she found them fast asleep in their beds.
   - D. The shutters were locked fast because of the impending storm.

5. The ladies’ sewing circle met on the first Thursday of each month. In which sentence is the word circle used in the same way as in the sentence above?
   - A. Do you know how to calculate the area of a circle?
   - B. Their circle of friendship began when they formed a neighborhood book club.
   - C. Spectators excitedly watched the long-distance runners circle the track.
   - D. Astronomers tracked the satellite’s circle around the earth.
PART 3 — Context Meaning

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence. Using context, choose the word that means the same or about the same as the underlined word. Then fill in the bubble next to the word you have chosen.

6. The detective knew he would have to verify the anonymous tip before he talked to the police chief.
   ○ A. unidentified
   ○ B. proposed
   ○ C. motley
   ○ D. refunded

7. People resisted the king, their oppressor, with nonviolent civil disobedience.
   ○ A. picketed
   ○ B. ally
   ○ C. abuser
   ○ D. reformer

PART 4 — Synonyms

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence. Choose the word that means the same, or about the same, as the underlined word. Then fill in the bubble next to the word you have chosen.

8. Aristocrats, dressed in their finest clothes, strolled up and down the street to attract attention.
   ○ A. chaperons
   ○ B. deluded people
   ○ C. shopkeepers
   ○ D. upper-class people

9. The audience was so riveted by the play that when it ended the theater was momentarily silent.
   ○ A. insistent
   ○ B. dulcet
   ○ C. quelled
   ○ D. attentive

10. This prodigious statue of Abraham Lincoln, sculpted by Daniell French, conveys the president’s importance in American history.
    ○ A. curvaceous
    ○ B. contested
    ○ C. enormous
    ○ D. boycotted

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10
The Boston Tea Party in 1773 was not a party. It was a risky act of defiance. The events that led up to this act began in England.

A British business had more tea than it could sell in England. The British Parliament let the company sell its excess tea tax-free to American colonists. This gave the company an unfair advantage over local merchants who had to pay taxes. Even though the cost of the tea was lower, colonists were unwilling to pay the unjust taxes.

People in Philadelphia decided to boycott. They forced British tea agents to resign their positions. Colonists in other areas tried blocking the company’s ships. They wanted to keep the vessels from docking in their ports. People in Boston tried the same thing. They were unsuccessful. Three British ships docked in Boston’s harbor. The ships’ officers refused to leave the port.

To protest, colonist Samuel Adams and fifty followers, carrying hatchets and dressed like Mohawk Indians, boarded the ships. They chopped chests of tea open and threw them into the harbor. Paul Revere spread the word of the anti-tax protest.

On April Fool’s day in 1774, the King of England closed the Boston port. The governor of Massachusetts did not support the colonists. Ben Franklin printed unflattering letters about the governor. England scolded Franklin for his critical words. Tax laws and the dressing down of Franklin hardened the colonists. Inevitably, the disputes led to the American Revolution.
Jacob Riis moved to the United States from Denmark when he was twenty-one. Living in his new homeland was difficult. Unable to find work for a long time, he suffered severe hardships. Eventually, he became a police reporter and photographer for the New York Tribune. He was assigned to work in the Lower East Side. There poverty abounded. Although Jacob had been quite poor, he was shocked at the awful conditions of ordinary people who were living in the slums.

Jacob vowed to improve the intolerable situations. He photographed the perilous streets, housing blight, and alleyways. Then he wrote a book entitled How the Other Half Lives. The book depicted slum dwellings and abuses of lower-class urban life. It was an effective tool for his cause. After reading the book, Teddy Roosevelt, who was the New York Police Commissioner at the time, called Riis and said, “I have read your book, and I have come to help.” It has been stated that Mr. Riis was “the most useful citizen in America.”

Riis, now famous, pushed harder for reform. Living conditions of tenement dwellers improved. Drinking water was purified. Fewer people were contracting cholera, yellow fever, and small pox. His unrelenting efforts helped improve the lives of people across the nation.
Persuasive Writing Assessment Prompt

Writing Situation: The City Council does not want to allow pets in the park. The police will ticket pet owners for having their pets in the park. Decide whether you support this policy or not. Write a paper to persuade the City Council either to allow or not allow pets in the park.

Audience: The City Council

Directions for Writing: Consider the selections you read in the Taking a Stand unit and how the different characters defended their beliefs. Think about the City Council’s plan to establish this new park policy and your position for or against their proposal. Write a 3-5 paragraph essay to explain and support your position with logical arguments. Your paragraphs should acknowledge the opposition of your position. Support your position convincingly and logically. Your concluding paragraph should explain to the City Council what you would like them to do.

You will score the most points if you use the following checklist.

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<th>Revising for Genre: Persuasive</th>
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<tr>
<td>You should:</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ write multiple paragraphs stating a clear position</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ support your position with organized and relevant evidence</td>
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<td>_____ acknowledge and address the opposition's concerns to your point of view</td>
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<td>_____ provide counter-arguments to those who would not agree with your position</td>
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<th>Revising for Writing Strategies (Traits)</th>
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<tr>
<td>You should:</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ use language that engages the reader and states a clear purpose</td>
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<td>_____ organize your paragraphs in an effective way</td>
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<td>_____ conclude with a detailed summary of what you want the City Council to do</td>
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<th>Proofreading for Conventions</th>
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<td>You should:</td>
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<td>_____ use correct punctuation, capitalization, and grammar</td>
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<td>_____ use simple, compound and complex sentence structure to express your thoughts</td>
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<td>_____ use correct spelling</td>
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