

ACTIVITY 1.6 continued

5 Reread the first paragraph of “What Happened During the Ice Storm,” then pause to pose the question, *What are the effects of the freezing rain throughout the first paragraph?*, which is the first Returning to the Text question. Through the discussion, help students to recognize the dual nature of the ice storm—how it resulted in beauty (“shine with ice,” “branches glistened”) and destruction (branches “broke like glass”). Also highlight the contrast between the safe animals and the graphic depiction of the pheasants: “Their eyes froze shut.”

6 Read the rest of the story aloud.



TEXT COMPLEXITY

Overall: Accessible

Lexile: 590L

Qualitative: Low Difficulty

Task: Moderate (Analyze)

1.6

My Notes

Short Story

What Happened During the Ice Storm

by **Jim Heynen**

1 One winter there was a freezing rain. How beautiful! people said when things outside started to shine with ice. But the freezing rain kept coming. Tree branches glistened like glass. Then broke like glass. Ice thickened on the windows until everything outside blurred. Farmers moved their livestock into the barns, and most animals were safe. But not the pheasants. Their eyes froze shut.

2 Some farmers went ice-skating down the gravel roads with clubs to harvest the pheasants that sat helplessly in the roadside ditches. The boys went out into the freezing rain to find pheasants too. They saw dark spots along a fence. Pheasants, all right. Five or six of them. The boys slid their feet along slowly, trying not to break the ice that covered the snow. They slid up close to the pheasants. The pheasants pulled their heads down between their wings. They couldn't tell how easy it was to see them huddled there.

3 The boys stood still in the icy rain. Their breath came out in slow puffs of steam. The pheasants' breath came out in quick little white puffs. Some of them lifted their heads and turned them from side to side, but they were blindfolded with ice and didn't flush. The boys had not brought clubs, or sacks, or anything but themselves. They stood over the pheasants, turning their own heads, looking at each other, each expecting the other to do something. To pounce on a pheasant, or to yell Bang! Things around them were shining and dripping



flush: suddenly fly off

Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions

1. What are the effects of the freezing rain throughout the first paragraph? What are some ways in which the freezing rain makes things outdoors look beautiful? What are some ways in which the freezing rain is destructive? [RL.9-10.1](#)

2. Reread paragraph 2. Why do the farmers leave their houses? What sentence from the text supports your response? Why do the boys leave their houses? What do the farmers intend to do

when they get outside? What do the boys intend to do? [RL.9-10.1](#)

3. Write two sentences from the text that support the inference that the boys' intentions toward the pheasants may differ from those of the farmers. What do the boys neglect to bring with them when they leave their houses? What do they do when they find the pheasants? [RL.9-10.1](#)

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8 RETURNING TO THE TEXT: Have students return to the text as they respond to the text-dependent questions. If students have difficulty answering the questions, rephrase them or break them down into smaller parts. See the Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions boxes for suggestions.

9 For question 3, have students observe the telling details that help them distinguish between the intentions of the farmers and the boys. Ask students for specific quotes to demonstrate textual evidence of the farmers' and the boys' intentions. Have students annotate the text as you discuss and/or display the following examples.

Farmers' intentions: "with clubs to harvest the pheasants"

Boys' intentions: "The boys went out into the freezing rain to find pheasants too."; "The boys had not brought clubs, or sacks, or anything but themselves."; "They stood over the pheasants ... looking at each other, each expecting the other to do something. To pounce on a pheasant, or to yell Bang!"; "He covered two of the crouching pheasants with his coat ..."; "The other boys did the same."

Point out that there is one line that directly states the farmers' intentions, but readers must follow multiple clues to speculate about the boys' intentions. Discuss how this uncertainty about the boys builds as the story unfolds, making readers scared for the pheasants.

10 Invite volunteers to share their responses.

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Returning to the Text

- Return to the text as you respond to the following questions. Use evidence from the text to support your responses.
- Write any additional questions you have about the short story in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

1. What are the effects of the freezing rain throughout the first paragraph?

In the first paragraph, the freezing rain makes "... things outside start to shine with ice," and the "Tree branches glistened like glass." It is beautiful but it is also destructive. The tree branches "broke like glass," and the eyes of the pheasants "froze shut."

2. Reread paragraph 2. Why do the farmers leave their houses? What sentence from the text supports your response? Why do the boys leave their houses?

The farmers intend to find and kill the pheasants that are freezing in the rain. "Some farmers went ice-skating down the gravel roads with clubs to harvest the pheasants that sat helplessly in the roadside ditches." The intention of the boys is not clear: "The boys went out into the freezing rain to find pheasants too."

3. Write two sentences from the text that support the inference that the boys' intentions toward the pheasants may differ from those of the farmers.

"The boys had not brought clubs, or sacks, or anything but themselves."

"They stood over the pheasants, turning their own heads, looking at each other, each expecting the other to do something. To pounce on a pheasant, or to yell Bang!"

4. How are the beautiful and destructive results of the ice storm reflected in the actions of the farmers and the boys?

The farmers are part of the ice storm's destructive results—they use the storm as an opportunity to harvest pheasants easily. The boys are part of the ice storm's beautiful results—through their experience with the pheasants in the storm, they learn to behave mercifully.

Working from the Text

5. Reread the first three paragraphs of the story and work with a partner to answer the following question: How does a sense of danger to the pheasants gradually build as the story unfolds? Discuss the cumulative impact of details expressed through the author's word choice on the overall tone for the pheasants.

Focus on the Sentence

Write multiple sentences that tell why readers might become more and more nervous about what will happen to the pheasants. You can use the following sentence frame to help you write each of your sentences:

The sense of danger to the pheasants gradually builds because of _____.

The sense of danger to the pheasants gradually builds because of the uncertainty of the boys' actions.

The sense of danger to the pheasants gradually builds because of the vulnerability of the pheasants.

The sense of danger to the pheasants gradually builds because of the intensity of the ice storm.

After you have finished writing your sentences, combine them into one longer complex sentence. Use parallel structure in your longer sentence.

The sense of danger to the pheasants gradually builds because of the uncertainty of the boys'

actions, the vulnerability of the pheasants, and the intensity of the ice storm.

Appreciating the Author's Craft

Participate in a collaborative discussion of the following questions with your classmates.

- In paragraph 3, how does the author link the boys and the pheasants? In what ways do the boys begin to feel like the pheasants?
Both the boys and the pheasants have breath coming out in "puffs of steam," and they both are "turning their ... heads" in the icy rain as ice continues to harden on them. "Ice was hardening on the boys' caps and coats. Soon they would be covered with ice too."

11 Have partners work together to answer the Working from the Text question.

12 Have partners discuss the Focus on the Sentence question about why readers become more and more nervous for the pheasants as the story unfolds. Suggest that students take a paragraph-by-paragraph approach to find three reasons readers' sense of danger to the pheasants builds.

13 Introduce sentence combining as a way to compose one longer complex sentence out of the multiple sentences students wrote using the same sentence frame. Offer partners these tips for combining the sentences:

- Use parallel structure when wording the different noun phrases following "because of." If the first noun phrase begins with *the* and a noun, then all of the items in the series that follows should begin in the same way.
- Consider the best order for sentence combining. To follow the story's chronology, order information from the three sentences as follows: *The sense of danger to the pheasants gradually builds because of the intensity of the ice storm, the vulnerability of the pheasants, and the uncertainty of the boys' actions.*

14 Use students' combined sentences addressing the buildup of tension in the story as a segue to discuss the Appreciating the Author's Craft questions.

15 Note how Heynen shows that the boys are building empathy toward the pheasants as they mirror the pheasants' movements and sensations (e.g., breath of both the pheasants and the boys coming out in "puffs," the pheasants and the boys turning their heads, and the boys feeling the sensation of gradually becoming covered in ice, just like the pheasants).

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16 Underscore the boys' earlier indecision about what to do with the pheasants and how the story could have ended differently, with the boys following another impulse. (Note: You will revisit this theme in Unit 2 with the poem "The Fight.")

17 Have students complete the Check Your Understanding sentence frame independently.

ASSESS

Review students' responses to the Check Your Understanding task and ensure that they have an appropriate, evidence-based analysis statement.

ADAPT

Sentence combining is one way to practice writing topic sentences. If students struggle with writing topic sentences, give them more opportunities to practice sentence combining.

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- How would the story's ending be different if the author removed "unsure of their footing" in the final sentence? Would you be more or less likely to think the boys will continue to behave empathetically, or sensitively, now that they've had this experience with the pheasants?

Check Your Understanding

State your analysis of the author's craft by completing the following sentence frame:

Heynen shows how the boys developed empathy for the pheasants by _____.