

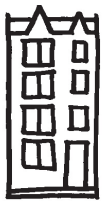
A Common Core State Standards-  
Aligned Discussion & Project Guide  
for Grades Preschool - 3

# MAXIMILLIAN VILLAINOUS

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WRITTEN BY MARGARET CHIU GREANIAS

ILLUSTRATED BY LESLEY BREEN WITHROW



RP | KIDS

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*Maximillian Villainous is a monster who doesn't have the heart to be a villain. His famous family pulls pranks on the likes of Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy, and Max spends his time undoing them. So when he brings home a bunny to be his sidekick, Max's disapproving mother hatches a plan. She challenges Max and the bunny to become a devious duo; otherwise . . . the bunny hops. If they want to stay together, Max and the bunny have no choice but to go against their nature. They blunder into villainy with comical effect until Max discovers that embracing his good heart may just be the key to pulling off the most devious deed of all and winning his family's acceptance.*

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## Pre-Reading Discussion Questions

### Consider the illustration on the front cover of the book:

- Describe the action in the illustration.
- Examine the monster holding a rabbit featured in the center of the page. Consider the monster's feelings about the rabbit.
- Observe the collection of framed pictures arranged on the wall behind the young monster. Identify who the individuals depicted in the frames may be and their connection with the young monster holding the rabbit.
- Illustrations are pictures that tell stories. Closely observe the details in this illustration, then tell the story this illustration represents.

### Consider the title of the book - MAXIMILLIAN VILLAINOUS:

- The root for the word *Maximillian* is “maximum,” which means biggest, largest, and supreme. Make a connection between the the word Maximillian and the young monster featured in the illustration.
- The root for the word *Villainous* is “villain.” Explain all that you know about villains.
- If the title, MAXIMILLIAN VILLAINOUS, represents the young monster's name, predict how it represents his character. Do you think he is a big villain? Why or why not?
- After the considering the illustration on the front cover and its title, predict what the book is going to be about.

### Meet the author - Margaret Chiu Greanias:

- List the tools authors use to tell stories.
- On her website, author Margaret Chiu Greanias discusses her first attempt at writing a picture book, which did not turn out well. How about you? Is writing easy for you? Or do you struggle a little with it, like Margaret did when she was young?
- Margaret attributes a love of reading as the inspiration for writing MAXIMILLIAN VILLAINOUS. Consider the connection between reading and writing. Tell how each activity supports the other.
- To learn more about Margaret Chiu Greanias, access her website at [margaretgrianias.com](http://margaretgrianias.com).



### Meet the illustrator - Lesley Breen Withrow:

- On her website, illustrator Lesley Breen Withrow says that some of her earliest memories as a child involve drawing with her Nana. Consider how those experiences may have inspired the work that she does today.
- Lesley says that she loves to bring a “fun and energetic spirit” to her pictures. Observe the illustration on the cover of the book. Identify details that both are fun and bring energy in this illustration.
- Ms. Withrow has created greeting cards, games, apps, and so many more creative products. Access her website at [lesleybreenwithrow.com](http://lesleybreenwithrow.com) to learn more about her work and her life.



## Post-Reading Discussion Questions



**Maximillian Villainous came from a long line of famous villains.  
But Max was different from his family.**

- The word “different” means to be odd, rare, or peculiar. Max looks like his family members. He appears to be monstrous like all of the others. Yet, somehow, Max is considered to be “different” from his family. Explain why this is so.
- Max comes from a family of “famous villains.” A villain is known to be wicked and evil. Examine how a villain might become famous.
- If you were Max, would you want to become a famous villain? Explain your answer.



**His mother bristled. “Maximillian, my poison, we are Villainous.  
A bunny is not a suitable sidekick.”**

- Typically, poison is a deadly substance, one that can make people very sick and sometimes even die. Most mothers call their children nice nicknames like “sweetie” or “honey.” Explain why Max’s mother refers to him as “my poison.”
- A “sidekick” is a close companion, partner, or friend. A hero and his sidekick typically act as a team as they face adventures together. Determine why Max’s mother feels that Bart the bunny is not a suitable sidekick for her son.
- Are bunnies villainous? Explain your answer.



**“Fine,” his mother said. “But you must prove you are a devious duo.  
Succeed at one of these villainous tasks—and he’s yours.”**

- The word “devious” means to be crooked, dishonest, or sneaky. Tell why Max’s mother wants Bart and him to be a “devious duo.”
- Consider the list of Three Villainous Tasks. His mother is challenging him to succeed at only one of the tasks. Explain why succeeding at any of these tasks is difficult for Max to do.
- What stands in the way of Max being truly villainous, like his family would like for him to become? Explain your answer.





**They just had to succeed in a spectacular way and become famous.  
No more Mr. Nice Max.**

- Max has become “desperate,” which means that the situation he is dealing with is close to being hopeless. Explain why Max is feeling this way.
- Define the problem. What is at stake if Max is unable to meet at least one of the Villainous Tasks? What does Max stand to lose? Explain your answer.
- “Spectacular” means astonishing, miraculous, or amazing. Saving a lephrechaun, befriending Cupid, and establishing the bunny brigade are all pretty spectacular things to do. Explain why Max and his family do not consider these things to be successful.



**“If that bunny is still here tomorrow, I will launch him into space,”  
said his mother.**

- Explain what is meant by “evil up.” Determine whether Max has the ability to “evil up.”
- Max loves Bart. Describe how Max must have felt when his mother said that she would “launch” Bart into space.
- Examine how Max’s love for his rabbit helped him to discover the solution to his problem. Tell how he turned a bad situation into a very happy one for everyone involved.



**“My ray of darkness, clearly you take after me,” said his mother.  
“Bart, welcome to the family. I’m stealing these newspapers.  
I want to share them with all your aunts and uncles.”**

- Explore how Max was able please his family while being true to who he is.
- Tell why it is important to note that Max’s mother welcomed Bart into the family.
- Examine how Max’s love for bunnies affected the rest of his family.
- Explain how being “different” from others can sometimes be a very good thing.



## Compare & Contrast Points of View

**Objective:** To consider how point of view shapes the context of the story.

**Materials:**

- MAXIMILLIAN VILLAINOUS, the book
- The Compare & Contrast Points of View Template (Guide, page 7)
- Pencil

**Procedure:**

- Examine the “Three Villainous Tasks” his mother assigned for Max to complete.
  - Define the word “steal.” Discuss his mother’s point of view of the term as compared with the way Max “stole” from others.
  - Explore his mother’s intention when she instructed Max to make someone cry. Tell how Max obeyed his mother’s wish in a thoughtful way.
  - Examine the definition of the word “devious” from both Max’s and his mother’s points of view.
- Print the **Compare & Contrast Points of View Template**. Instruct students to describe each character’s point of view and tell the reasons why they interpret each task in the way that they do. (See example below for additional clarification.)
- Encourage students to share their work with the class.



### Three Villainous Tasks for Max



*Mother's point of view:*

Explain Mother's perspective of stealing here.

*Reason why:*

Tell why she feels that stealing is a good thing to do.

← Steal Something →

*Max's point of view:*

Explain Max's perspective of stealing here.

*Reason why:*

Tell how Max managed to steal in his own way. Describe how his actions benefitted others.



## Compare & Contrast Points of View Template



### Three Villainous Tasks for Max



*Mother's point of view:*

*Reason why:*

← 1. Steal  
Something →

*Max's point of view:*

*Reason why:*

*Mother's point of view:*

*Reason why:*

← 2. Make  
Someone  
Cry →

*Max's point of view:*

*Reason why:*

*Mother's point of view:*

*Reason why:*

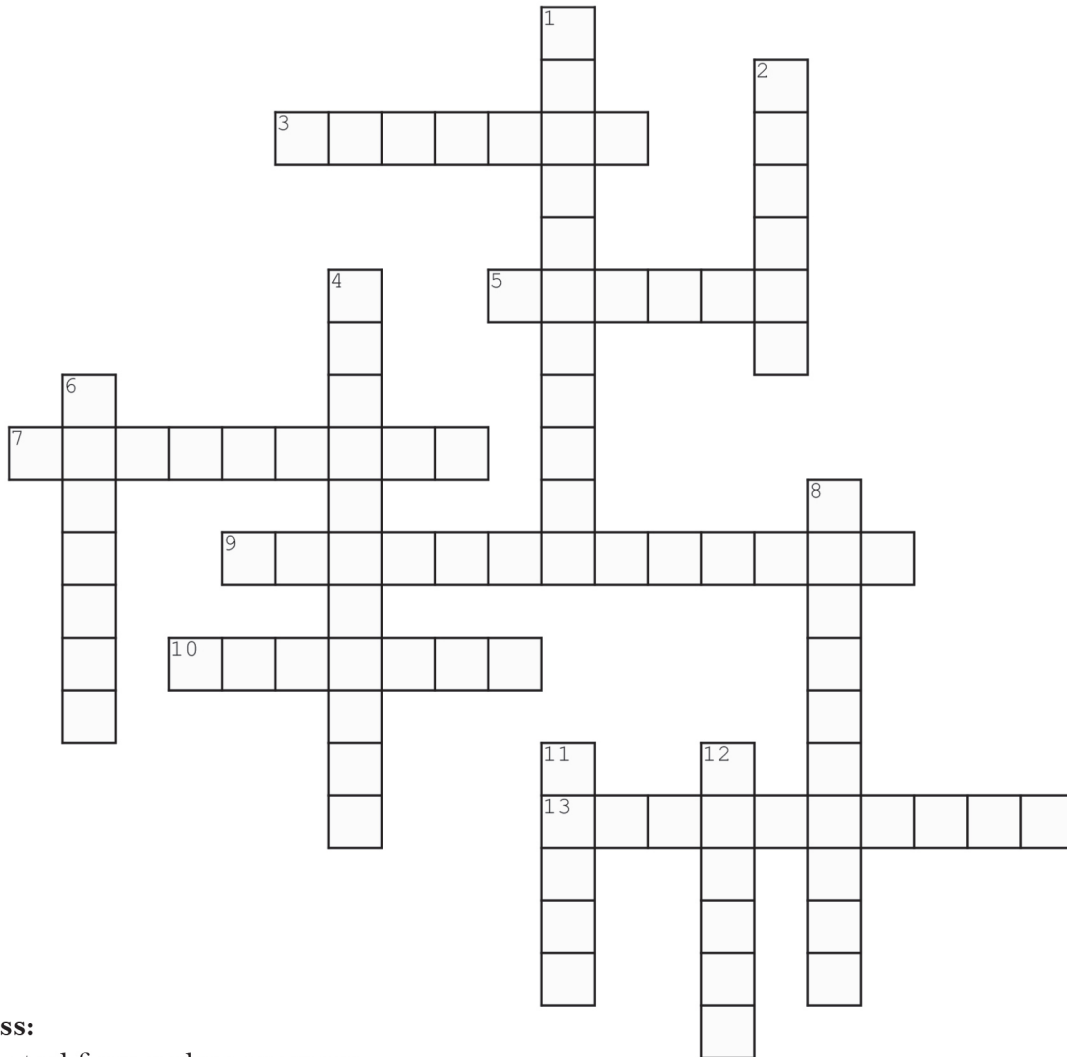
← 3. Gain Fame  
by Being  
Devious →

*Max's point of view:*

*Reason why:*



## Vocabulary Crossword Puzzle



### Across:

3. To steal from a place or person
5. A public march in celebration of something
7. Not the same as another or each other
9. Surprised, astonished
10. Showing a skillful use of underhanded tactics
13. Showing consideration for the needs of other people

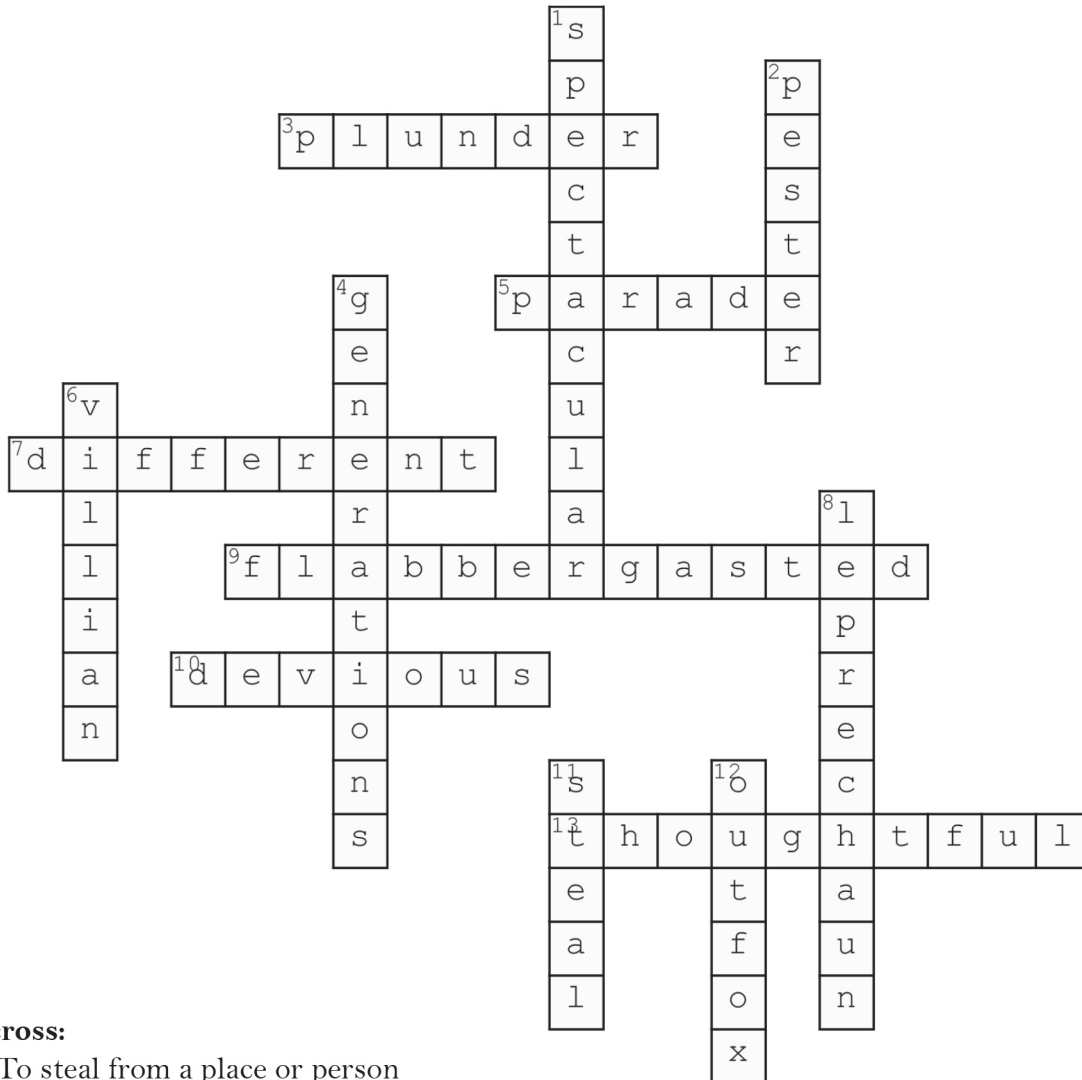
### Down:

1. Beautiful in a dramatic and eye-catching way
2. To trouble or annoy someone with persistent requests or interruptions
4. A set of family members that generally are born and live during the same time period.
6. A person or thing responsible for trouble, harm, or damage
8. A small, mischievous sprite wearing green
11. To get the better of someone by being more clever





## Vocabulary Crossword Puzzle Answers



### Across:

3. To steal from a place or person
5. A public march in celebration of something
7. Not the same as another or each other
9. Surprised, astonished
10. Showing a skillful use of underhanded tactics
13. Showing consideration for the needs of other people

### Down:

1. Beautiful in a dramatic and eye-catching way
2. To trouble or annoy someone with persistent requests or interruptions
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## Plot Analysis - Retelling the Story

**Objective:** To determine central ideas of a text and analyze their development by summarizing the key supporting details and ideas.

### Materials:

- MAXIMILLIAN VILLAINOUS, the book
- The Plot Analysis - Retelling the Story Template (Guide, page 11)
- Pencil
- Markers

### Procedure:

- After reading MAXIMILLIAN VILLAINOUS, encourage students to verbally retell various aspects of the story.
  - Identify the main character of the story.
  - Examine the main character's problem. Discuss what he wants and what is standing in his way.
  - Describe the setting. Tell where the story takes place.
  - Explain what happened. Discuss the most important events that occurred in the story.
  - Summarize the ending. Tell how the characters changed as a result of the events that took place in the story.
- Using the **Plot Analysis - Retelling the Story Template**, instruct students to retell the story by illustrating and labeling each aspect of the plot. (See example below for clarification.)
- Encourage students to share their work with the class.

|   |
|---|
| Who is story about?<br><i>Identify the main character</i> |
| <i>Illustrate main character in scene</i>                 |
| Label:<br><i>Describe main character's action</i>         |

*Repeat process in the rest of the sections presented on the template.*



### Plot Analysis - Retelling the Story Template

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Who is story about? |
|                     |
| Label:              |

|                      |
|----------------------|
| What is the problem? |
|                      |
| Label:               |

|                                  |
|----------------------------------|
| Where does the story take place? |
|                                  |
| Label:                           |

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| What happened in the story? |
|                             |
| Label:                      |

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| How does the story end? |
|                         |
| Label:                  |



## The Family Wall

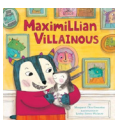
**Objective:** Write and illustrate a narrative about real or imagined experiences or events.

**Materials:**

- MAXIMILLIAN VILLAINOUS, the book
- You on the Wall of Fame Template (Guide, page 12)
- Pencil
- Markers

**Procedure:**

- Encourage students to observe the framed illustrated photographs featured on the first and last pages of the book. Determine how Max’s framed picture is similar, yet different from the others. Explain why Bart is included in Max’s photo.
- Make a connection between the Three Villainous Tasks and his picture being framed and hung on the wall with the others. Identify how Max earned a place on the family wall. Explain why his picture wasn’t framed and hung on the wall before he conquered the Three Villainous Tasks.
- Max “outfoxed” his family by honoring their wishes in his own, creative, and thoughtful way. Instruct the students to think of a time when they “outfoxed” someone by doing a good deed. These scenarios may be based on real experiences or fictional.
- Distribute copies of the **You on the Wall of Fame Template** to the students. Instruct them to write a description of their scenarios in the lined space beneath the frame. Tell them to draw a self portrait inside the frame, one in which they are depicted as celebrated heroes.
- Encourage students to share work with the class.



# You on the Wall of Fame



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## Common Core State Standards Alignment

| English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Literature |   | Discussion Questions | Point of View | Crossword | Retelling | Family Wall |
|---|---|----------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.1                              | With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.   | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.2                              | With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.   | ✓                    |               |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.3                              | With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.   | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.4                              | Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.   | ✓                    |               | ✓         |           |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.6                              | With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.  | ✓                    |               |           |           |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.9                              | With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.10                             | Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.   | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.1                              | Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.   | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.2                              | Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.3                              | Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.4                              | Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.   | ✓                    |               | ✓         |           |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.7                              | Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.9                              | Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.   | ✓                    | ✓             |           |           |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.10                             | With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1.  | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.1                              | Ask and answer such questions as <i>who</i> , <i>what</i> , <i>where</i> , <i>when</i> , <i>why</i> , and <i>how</i> to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3                              | Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.6                              | Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.                     | ✓                    | ✓             |           |           |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.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.                        | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.1                              | Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.   | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.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.                           | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.6                              | Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.   | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |



| English Language Arts Standards » Writing              |  | Discussion Questions | Point of View | Crossword | Retelling | Family Wall |
|--|--|----------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.2                                | Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.  |                      |               |           |           | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.3                                | Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.               |                      |               |           |           | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.2                                | Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.  |                      |               |           |           | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.3                                | Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.                      |                      |               |           |           | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.2                                | Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.   |                      |               |           |           | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.3                                | Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure. |                      |               |           |           | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2                                | Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.   |                      |               |           |           | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.3                                | Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.  |                      |               |           |           | ✓           |
| English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening |  |                      |               |           |           |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.1                               | Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>kindergarten topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups.  | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.2                               | Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.                 | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.3                               | Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.  | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.4                               | Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.   | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.5                               | Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.   |                      |               |           | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.6                               | Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.   | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1                               | Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>grade 1 topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups.   | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.2                               | Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.4                               | Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.5                               | Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.   |                      |               |           | ✓         | ✓           |



| English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening |  | Discussion Questions | Point of View | Crossword | Retelling | Family Wall |
|--|--|----------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1                               | Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>grade 2 topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups.   | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.2                               | Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.  | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.4                               | Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.  |                      |               |           | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1                               | Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 3 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. | ✓                    | ✓             | ✓         | ✓         | ✓           |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.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.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.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.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         |             |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.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.  | ✓                    | ✓             |           | ✓         | ✓           |

