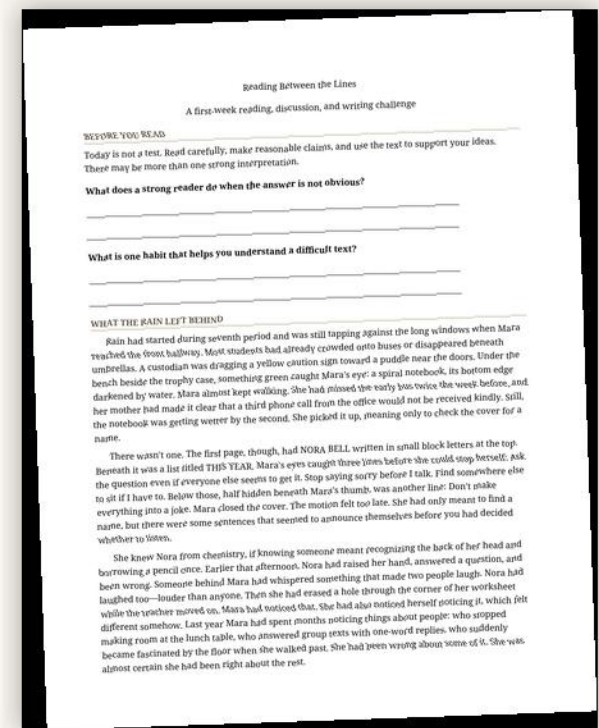


First Week ELA Diagnostic WITHOUT THE DREAD

A low-pressure close reading,
discussion, and writing sample for
secondary ELA.

45-60 MINUTES

GRADES 8-12



Students read an original short story, discuss possible
interpretations, and write a brief evidence-based response.
You get helpful first-week insight without making the day
feel like a test.

What is included?

Student Packet

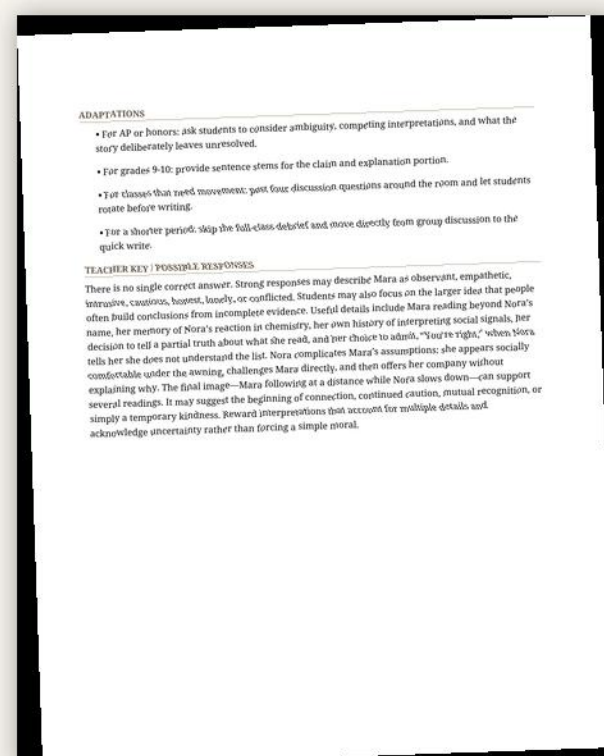
- before-reading quickwrite
- original short story
- first response questions
- discussion organizer
- short writing sample

Teacher Guide

- 45-minute pacing
- 60-minute pacing
- discussion notes
- what to look for
- extension options

Presentation Slides

- student-facing directions
- story slides
- discussion prompts
- writing prompt
- closing reflection



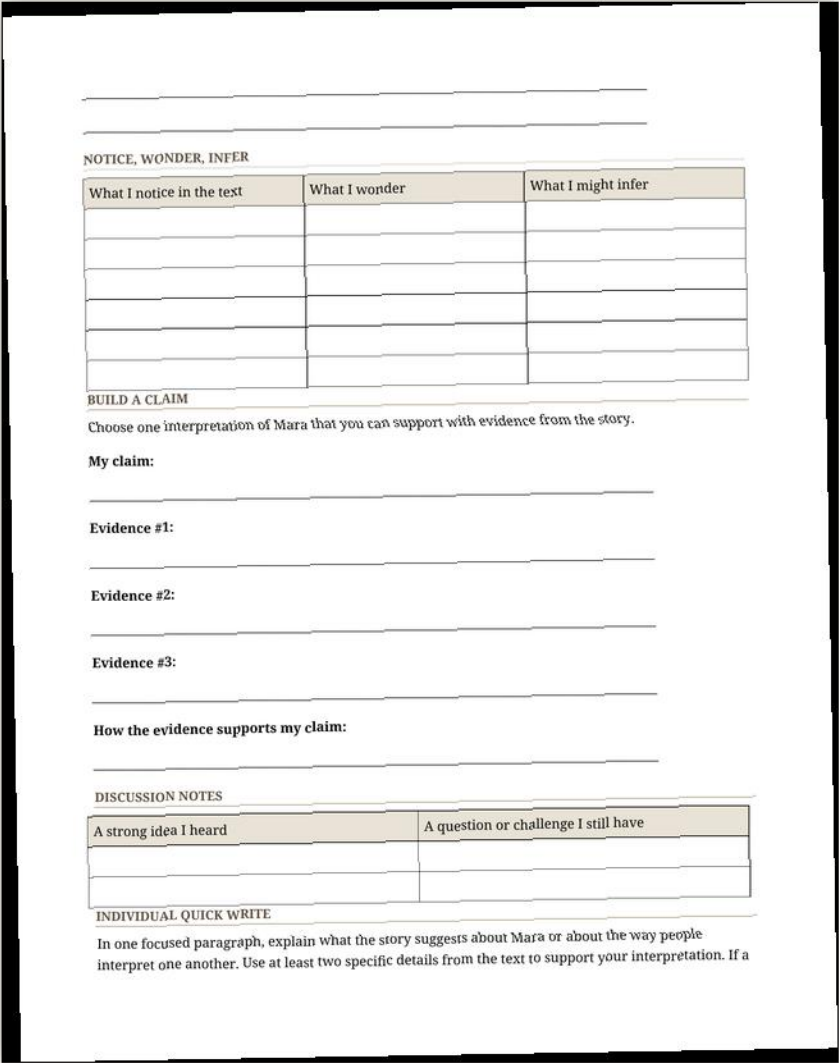
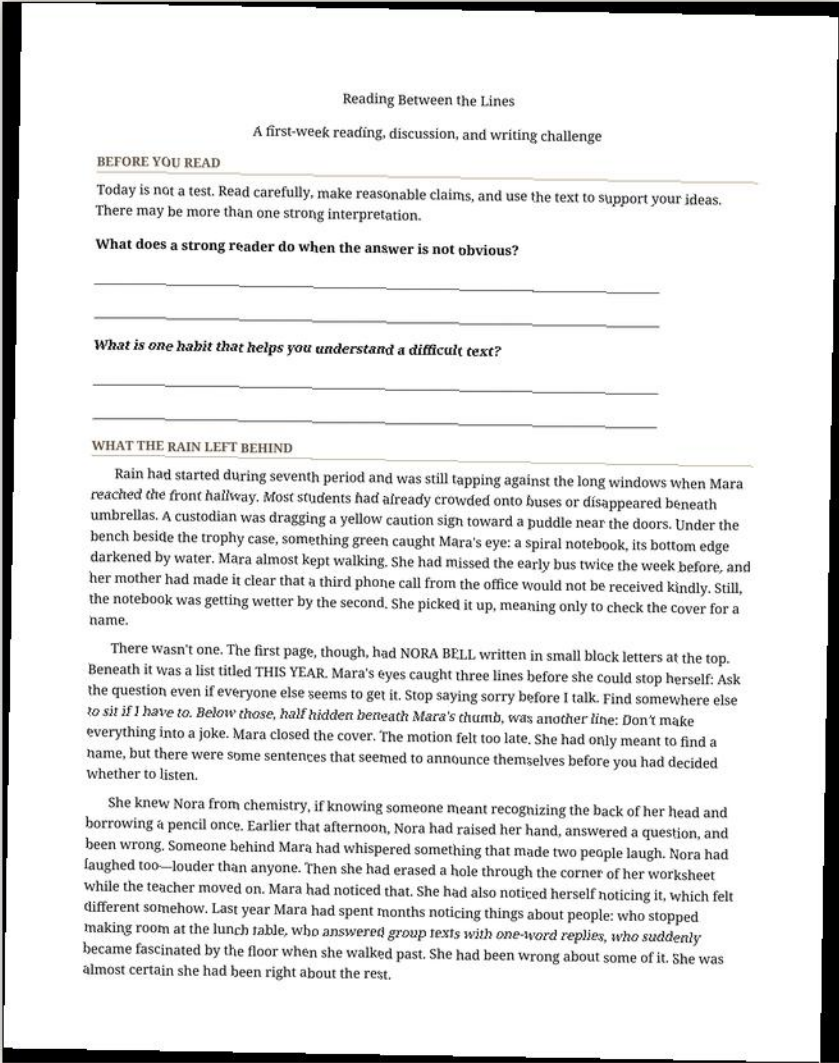
The lesson flow

- 1 Warm-up**
Students think about what strong readers do when the answer is not obvious.
- 2 Read**
Students read the original story, What the Rain Left Behind.
- 3 Discuss**
Students compare first impressions, claims, and evidence.
- 4 Write**
Students complete a short evidence-based response you can actually use.



The goal is not a heavy grade. The goal is to quickly see how students read, talk about text, and support ideas.

Inside the student packet



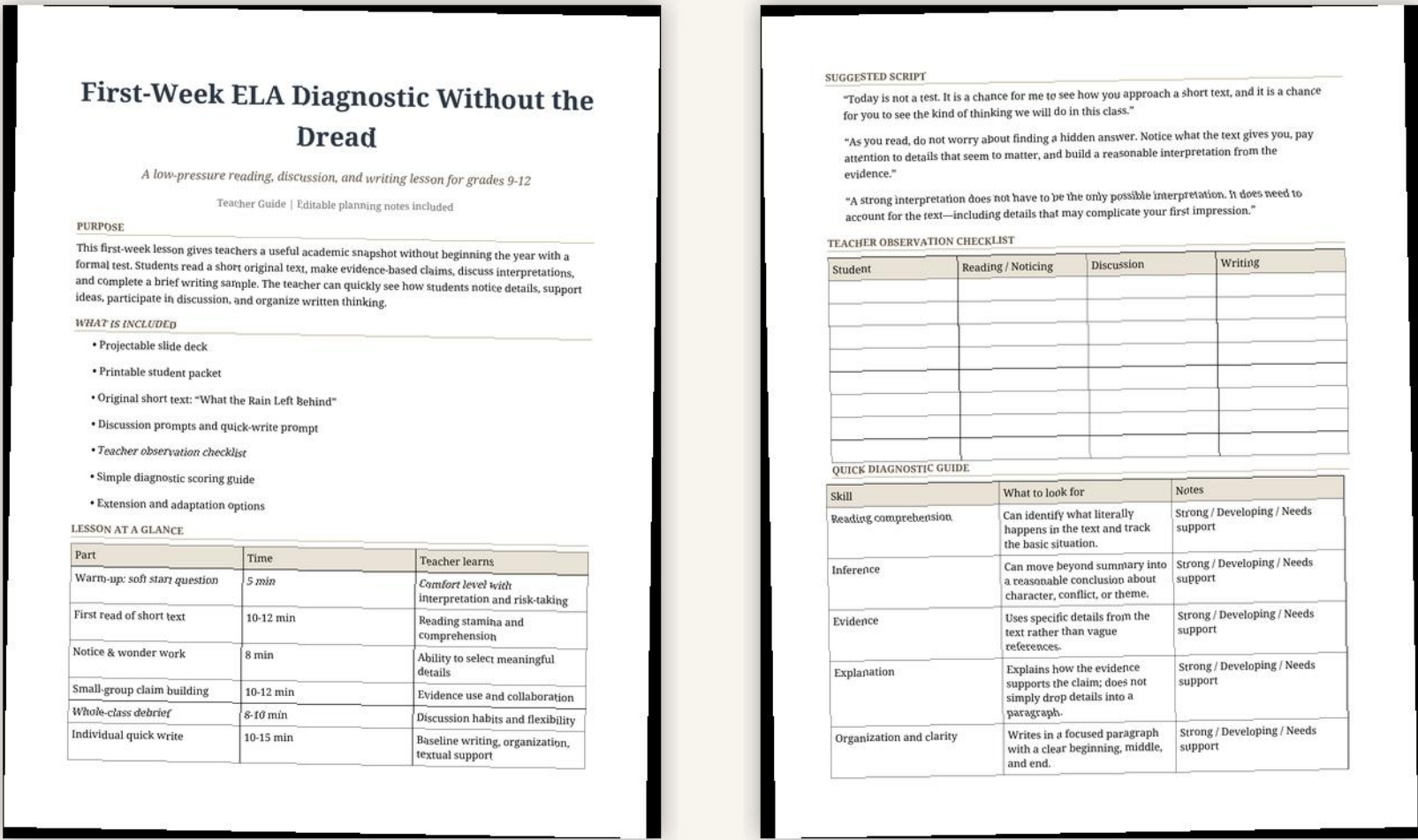
The student-facing lesson is called Reading Between the Lines so students do not feel like they are taking a diagnostic test.

PRINTABLE

LOW PRESSURE

TEXT BASED

Teacher support is included.



The guide includes pacing options, teacher language, discussion guidance, suggested look-fors, and ways to use the writing sample without turning the first week into a formal test.

Designed for the first week, useful beyond it.

Use this when you want to start the year with a real English lesson: reading closely, talking thoughtfully, and writing from evidence.



BACK TO SCHOOL

FIRST WEEK OF ELA

CLOSE READING

INFERENCE

CHARACTERIZATION

WRITING SAMPLE

Best fit: grades 8-12 ELA, especially teachers who want something more meaningful than an icebreaker but less intimidating than a formal pretest.