

Topic: Friendship

Text Type: Narrative Fiction

Word Count: 658

Lexile® Measure: 1120L

Skills: Reading for Meaning
Phrasing with Dashes
Intonation
Rate
Timed Reading

Lesson 1

Time: 10–15 minutes

Skills: Reading for Meaning

Student Pages: “Musical Message” (Student Copy)

Lesson 2

Time: 15–20 minutes

Skills: Phrasing with Dashes

Student Pages: “Musical Message” (Student Copy)

Lesson 3

Time: 15 minutes

Skills: Intonation

Student Pages: “Musical Message” (Student Copy)

Lesson 4

Time: 15 minutes

Skills: Rate

Student Pages: “Musical Message” (Student Copy)

Lesson 5

Time: 15–20 minutes

Skills: Timed Reading

Student Pages: “Musical Message” (Student Copy)

Teacher Pages: “Musical Message” (Teacher Copy), Fluency Chart

Lexile Level: 1120L
Non-transferable license:
ref: 3/21/2020-21312192

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Reading for Meaning

Distribute “Musical Message” (Student Copy). **Follow along with me as I read this story. The title is “Musical Message.”** Read the story aloud to students. Read the passage with expression, proper phrasing, and intonation. Model appropriate rate as you read. After reading, ask the following questions to engage students in a discussion about the story:

- **What is this passage about?**
- **Do you think Marissa should have taken the risk she did? Why or why not?**
- **What does this story remind you of?**

Discuss any words students may not be familiar with.

Assign partners. Avoid pairing students of significantly different proficiencies. This results in less frustration. Also, the more proficient reader may serve as a model. Partners should be changed periodically.

It is important to model the expectations of partner reading. You may do this by role-playing with one student, or you may select two students to role-play the following:

- how to sit with your partner (Have partners sit close together so that the partner who is reading can use a low inside voice and still be heard.)
- how to read with your partner (Partner A reads. Partner B listens carefully and follows along. Partner A underlines lightly with a pencil any words he or she finds interesting or does not know. Partners may also assist with words if needed by using the following correction procedure:
 - If a student reads a word incorrectly, skips a word, or does not know a word, his or her partner points to the word and says, “What is this word?”
 - If the student reads the word correctly, the partner says, “Yes, that word is _____. Please reread the sentence.”
 - If the student does not know the word, the partner says, “That word is _____. Please reread the sentence.”
 - The student repeats the word and rereads the sentence.)
- how to dialogue with each other after the reading (Have students discuss what the passage is about and which words in the passage they found interesting or did not understand.)

After these procedures have been modeled, have students practice. Discuss behaviors that are unacceptable as well.

Lexile Level: 1120L
 ref: 3/21/2020-21312192

Independent Practice

Now, I want you to get with your partner and read “Musical Message” together. Using a pencil, lightly underline any words you find interesting or do not know as you read. Partner A will read the first paragraph and stop. Then partner B will read the same paragraph. Discuss what you read and any words you found interesting or did not understand. Then follow the same procedure with the following paragraphs until you reach the end of the passage.

Walk around and observe students as they read together. If necessary, remind students of the expectations for partner reading.

Lexile Level: 1120L
Non-transferable license:
ref: 3/21/2020-21312192

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Musical Message” (Student Copy). **We will practice reading “Musical Message” fluently.**

Reading fluently means reading the words correctly, at an appropriate rate, and with correct phrasing and intonation. Reading fluently is not about reading fast but about reading at an appropriate rate. Fluent reading should sound like you are talking. The way we read a text affects our comprehension.

Each lesson will focus on one or two aspects of fluency. **Today, we will practice fluency by looking at signals authors include in the text, such as dashes.**

A dash inserted in the text usually means the author is going to add additional information or an example. When you come to a dash in the text, you pause longer than you would for a comma.

Write the following sentence on the board: *It was more like a song and dance—a complicated series of lyrics and moves including elements of hip-hop, disco, and even the tango.* Read the sentence aloud with expression, pausing accordingly at the commas and the dash. **Here the author gives us more information about Marissa and Nikhil’s secret handshake. When I pause a little longer at the dash, it adds drama to the sentence.**

Guided Practice

Look through the passage to find another place where the author uses a dash. As students locate each dash, have them practice reading the sentence aloud. Provide feedback or additional modeling, if necessary.

Independent Practice

Review the expectations for partner reading with the students. **Now, practice with your partner.** Have each student read the passage as before, one paragraph at a time. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on how students respond to the dashes. If necessary, model how to pause at dashes again.

Lexile Level: 1120L
Non-transferable license:
ref: 3/21/2020-21312192

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Musical Message” (Student Copy). **Let’s continue to practice reading fluently. In this lesson, we’ll practice intonation.**

Intonation involves stressing or emphasizing some words more than others. We do this naturally when we are talking. This is important in reading as well. It helps to carry the author’s message. Words in this passage that the author wants emphasized, or stressed, are italicized.

Let’s look at the third paragraph. Which word in this paragraph did the author italicize? (any) **Listen to me read the sentence with this italicized word.** Read the following sentence, emphasizing the italicized word: **She didn’t want to take *any* day off because that would mean missing her class with Nikhil.**

Reading with intonation adds drama and interest to the story.

Guided Practice

Look at the eighth paragraph, beginning with “When Marissa clicked . . .” Allow time for students to locate the paragraph. **Which words should be emphasized in this paragraph?** Allow time for students to answer. **Yes, the words *Send* and *actual*.** **Follow along as I read this paragraph. Listen to me read with proper phrasing and intonation.** Read the following paragraph, emphasizing the italicized words and using proper phrasing:

When Marissa clicked *Send*, she felt as if she were committing her own form of heresy: a betrayal of her former relationship with Nikhil. She knew this action wouldn’t end in an *actual* fatality, but it might mean the demise of their friendship.

Now, read the paragraph with me. Try to make your voice stay with mine as we read. Read the paragraph with the students.

Independent Practice

Review the expectations for partner reading with students. **Now it’s time to practice with your partner. Place emphasis on the italicized words. These words will help convey the message.** Have students read the passage with their partner. Partners should take turns reading one paragraph at a time. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on proper phrasing and intonation. If necessary, model correct phrasing and intonation again for students.

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Musical Message” (Student Copy). **Let’s continue to practice reading fluently. This time we will focus on rate.**

Rate is the speed at which you read the passage. Most of the time, reading is done at a normal pace. But sometimes, to add interest, you might read a sentence more quickly or slowly than the rest of the passage. The message that the author is conveying lets you know how to read the words.

This story is read at a normal rate. Reading the passage at a rate that sounds like talking will help you better understand the message the author is conveying.

Guided Practice

Let’s practice reading at a normal rate with the first two paragraphs. First, listen to me read. Read the first two paragraphs aloud, fluently.

Now, read with me. Try to make your voice stay with mine. Read along with students.

Independent Practice

Now it is your time to practice with your partner. Have students read the passage with their partner. Partners should take turns reading one paragraph at a time. After both have read the passage, have students discuss what the passage is all about. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on rate, phrasing, and intonation. If necessary, model rate, phrasing, and intonation again for students.

Lexile Level: 1120L
Non-transferable license:
ref: 3/21/2020-21312192

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Timed Reading

Redistribute or have students take out “Musical Message” (Student Copy). **While you are reading with your partner today, I will listen to each of you read. I will call you over one at a time and have you read for 60 seconds. Then we will set fluency goals together. Remember what is expected during partner reading. I want each partner to read the passage twice. You may begin.**

While students are reading, call one student over at a time and listen to him or her read the passage for 60 seconds. Encourage students to do their best reading.

For each student, use a copy of “Musical Message” (Teacher Copy) to mark words that the student has trouble reading. If the student does not know a word, point to the word and say “This word is ____.” Have him or her read the word and continue reading the passage.

As students read, listen for proper phrasing and intonation. Provide positive feedback on their efforts when they are done.

When the student begins reading, start a timer or use a clock with a second hand. At the end of 60 seconds, tell the student to stop reading. Subtract the number of words that gave the student trouble from the total number of words the student read. This results in the student’s Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM).

(Total Number of Words Read) – (Number of Problematic Words) = (Number of Words Correct Per Minute)

Example: (101 Words Read) – (3 Problematic Words) = 98 WCPM

Give each student a Fluency Chart. Assist the student in charting his or her WCPM with a bar graph. The student should keep the graph to record readings of various other passages over time. Readings of the same passage may be recorded as well. Each time a passage is read, have the student write its title in the Title section of the chart and shade in the correct amount for WCPM on the graph. It will be motivating for the student to see his or her growth over time.

Each student will need to set his or her own fluency goal. Take the student’s initial WCPM and help him or her set a reasonable goal. A reasonable goal would be adding one or two words to his or her WCPM each week. The goal can be a monthly goal or a six- to nine-week goal.

Have students take the passage home and continue to practice. They can read the passage to a family member while practicing rate, phrasing, and intonation. They can also have a family member time them as they practice reading for 60 seconds.

Musical Message

Marissa clicked *Send*, and off went the project draft to her partner and best friend, Nikhil. She imagined that in a few days, she and Nikhil would be celebrating the completion of the project with their “secret handshake,” which wasn’t really a handshake at all. It was more like a song and dance—a complicated series of lyrics and moves including elements of hip-hop, disco, and even the tango. Every year, they added a new move and a phrase to go with it.

Marissa and Nikhil had bonded in kindergarten, when they had the dubious distinction of being the first two children on and off the school bus every day. Once, they had calculated how much more time they had spent on the bus than the other kids. It turned out that eight minutes a day equaled twenty-four hours a year—more than three full days of school! As a result, they felt entitled to at least three extra vacation days. When confronting a challenging exam or some other unpleasant task at school, they often joked that they should take the day off.

Now that they were in high school, though, they rode different buses, which had caused Marissa to realize something surprising. She didn’t want to take *any* day off because that would mean missing her class with Nikhil.

She still remembered the shock she’d received on the first day of high school, when she had spotted a cute boy rummaging in his locker—only to recognize, moments later, that it was Nikhil! Unconsciously, her feelings for him had deepened. Protective of their friendship, though, Marissa had been hiding those feelings ever since.

Until today, that is. Today, Marissa had perfected and executed a plan that, she believed, would reveal her feelings to Nikhil, but only if he was looking for them.

For humanities class, she and Nikhil were working on a project about the Greek philosopher Plato and a recent discovery about his writings. While inspecting Plato’s ancient manuscripts—long scrolls with narrow columns—a scholar in England had realized that in every twelfth line of text, Plato mentioned music. Apparently, Plato was using a mathematical code to communicate a secret musical message! This discovery linked Plato to a group of thinkers known as the Pythagoreans. They believed that the relationship between math and music was the key to understanding the universe. At the time, such thinking was considered radical and even dangerous. It challenged the idea that only the gods held the key to the universe—a key unavailable to limited human minds.

Therefore, Plato had been forced to write in code. If he had been identified as a Pythagorean, he might have been killed for heresy, or religious dissent, just as his teacher Socrates had been.

When Marissa clicked *Send*, she felt as if she were committing her own form of heresy: a betrayal of her former relationship with Nikhil. She knew this action wouldn’t end in an *actual* fatality, but it might mean the demise of their friendship.

Responsible for the written portion of their slide show, Marissa had formatted the text like a scroll and then carefully embedded a key word from the lyrics of their “secret handshake” in every twelfth line of the text. In the final twelfth line—which fell in the conclusion of the presentation—she had added a word that suggested a new move for this year’s addition to the handshake. She had written, “Plato did not *embrace* the dominant ideas of his age. Instead, he relentlessly pursued the truth.”

* * *

Within an hour came a knock on Marissa’s front door. In a state of near panic, she glanced in the mirror, smoothed her hair, and forced herself to stroll casually to the entryway.

Upon opening the door, she knew instantly that Nikhil had deciphered the code. Smiling, he skipped right over the first nine moves of the secret handshake and went straight to the hug she had suggested.

Lexile Level: 1120L
Non-transferable license:
ref: 3/21/2020-21312192

Musical Message

Marissa clicked <i>Send</i> , and off went the project draft to her partner and best friend, Nikhil.	16
She imagined that in a few days, she and Nikhil would be celebrating the completion of the project with their “secret handshake,” which wasn’t really a handshake at all. It was more like a song and dance—a complicated series of lyrics and moves including elements of hip-hop, disco, and even the tango. Every year, they added a new move and a phrase to go with it.	34 52 68 83
Marissa and Nikhil had bonded in kindergarten, when they had the dubious distinction of being the first two children on and off the school bus every day. Once, they had calculated how much more time they had spent on the bus than the other kids. It turned out that eight minutes a day equaled twenty-four hours a year—more than three full days of school! As a result, they felt entitled to at least three extra vacation days. When confronting a challenging exam or some other unpleasant task at school, they often joked that they should take the day off.	97 115 135 153 169 183
Now that they were in high school, though, they rode different buses, which had caused Marissa to realize something surprising. She didn’t want to take <i>any</i> day off because that would mean missing her class with Nikhil.	198 214 220
She still remembered the shock she’d received on the first day of high school, when she had spotted a cute boy rummaging in his locker—only to recognize, moments later, that it was Nikhil! Unconsciously, her feelings for him had deepened. Protective of their friendship, though, Marissa had been hiding those feelings ever since.	236 253 266 274
Until today, that is. Today, Marissa had perfected and executed a plan that, she believed, would reveal her feelings to Nikhil, but only if he was looking for them.	289 303
For humanities class, she and Nikhil were working on a project about the Greek philosopher Plato and a recent discovery about his writings. While inspecting Plato’s ancient manuscripts—long scrolls with narrow columns—a scholar in England had realized that in every twelfth line of text, Plato mentioned music. Apparently, Plato was using a mathematical code to communicate a secret musical message! This discovery linked Plato to a group of thinkers known as the Pythagoreans. They believed that the relationship between math and music was the key to understanding the universe. At the time, such thinking was considered radical and even dangerous. It challenged the idea that only the gods held the key to the universe—a key unavailable to limited human minds.	318 332 349 363 378 393 408 426
Therefore, Plato had been forced to write in code. If he had been identified as a Pythagorean, he might have been killed for heresy, or religious dissent, just as his teacher Socrates had been.	442 458 460
When Marissa clicked <i>Send</i> , she felt as if she were committing her own form of heresy: a	477

Lexile Level: 1120L
Non-transferable license:

betrayal of her former relationship with Nikhil. She knew this action wouldn't end in an *actual* 493
fatality, but it might mean the demise of their friendship. 503

Responsible for the written portion of their slide show, Marissa had formatted the text like 518
a scroll and then carefully embedded a key word from the lyrics of their "secret handshake" in 535
every twelfth line of the text. In the final twelfth line—which fell in the conclusion of the 553
presentation—she had added a word that suggested a new move for this year's addition to the 570
handshake. She had written, "Plato did not *embrace* the dominant ideas of his age. Instead, he 586
relentlessly pursued the truth." 590

* * *

Within an hour came a knock on Marissa's front door. In a state of near panic, she glanced 608
in the mirror, smoothed her hair, and forced herself to stroll casually to the entryway. 623

Upon opening the door, she knew instantly that Nikhil had deciphered the code. Smiling, he 638
skipped right over the first nine moves of the secret handshake and went straight to the hug she 656
had suggested. 658

Lexile Level: 1120L
Non-transferable license:
ref: 3/21/2020-21312192

