



acadience® reading 7–8

Oral Reading

Student Materials

Grade 8 | Progress Monitoring 3

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Soup Kitchen Volunteers

► Early Saturday morning, I stood outside the soup kitchen with other members from my school’s student council. Even though being on the student council required that I be there, I looked forward to volunteering. What my classmates didn’t know was that the time I spent at the soup kitchen meant more to me than just collecting community service hours.

For 11 years, my life seemed like a perfect picture, but two autumns ago my family’s circumstances changed drastically. My mother’s employment suddenly ended and we were no longer able to pay our bills. We had to leave our apartment and move into the spare bedroom of one of Mom’s friends. Mom and I occasionally went to sleep with rumbling stomachs because we couldn’t afford groceries and felt guilty about continually accepting food from friends. That’s when we discovered the soup kitchen, where a nightly meal in a warm environment felt like a safe harbor from worry.

Over time, as soup kitchen volunteers began to recognize us and learn our names, we felt very welcome, and we knew the workers genuinely cared about our situation. One of the volunteers even told Mom about a really cool skills training program. Things weren’t always so great, though. I remember some vivid, disdainful glances from some of the volunteer workers. Other volunteers were just plain patronizing, which was terribly offensive. Mom and I just wanted a safe place to eat a warm meal; we didn’t need pity and we didn’t deserve judgment.

After several months, Mom found part-time work as a receptionist and continued in the skills training program. I found an enclave of elderly people in the neighborhood that hired me to purchase and deliver their weekly groceries. We saved our money and eventually were able to move into a tiny apartment.

I’ll never forget the caring people at the soup kitchen on both sides of the dinner line. Last week, as I was serving meals, I often caught a glimpse of a confused expression on a fellow volunteer’s face. I didn’t share my story, but I noticed that most of the new volunteers seemed to relax and adopt a kind expression and tone. I’m hopeful that these experiences will teach my classmates what I learned two autumns ago, that everyone deserves to be treated with respect.

In a Spin

► Imagine watching a world champion skater glide in smooth, wide arcs around an ice rink. Her arms gracefully outstretched, the skater moves powerfully to the center of the arena. She raises and extends one leg, and begins to rotate, or spin, in a compact circle. As the skater draws her arms nearer to her chest and lowers her raised leg, her body rotates faster and faster until it becomes a blur. What you are observing is a display of athleticism and artistic expression. It also demonstrates the physics of conservation of angular momentum.

An object in motion has momentum, which is the product of the object's mass and velocity. Mass refers to the amount of matter in an object, and velocity is its speed in a particular direction. The Law of the Conservation of Momentum states that momentum remains constant unless there is an external force. If the mass of the moving object does not change and neither does its velocity, then the object will remain in motion until something interferes with it to change its motion.

Angular momentum relates specifically to an object's rotation around a center point, or axis, and provides a way to describe the amount of spin that an object such as a yo-yo or a skater demonstrates. For a rotating object, angular momentum can be expressed as the formula "mass times velocity times radius." The radius is the distance of the object from the axis. Because angular momentum is also conserved, if no external force acts on the object, altering the radius will cause a proportional shift in velocity.

For the skater, the radius is the distance of her outstretched arms and leg from her center of rotation. She begins her spin with her arms and one leg extended from her body, creating a large radius; her mass remains constant. When she pulls her arms and leg in closer to her body, she decreases the radius, thus increasing the velocity of her rotation. Consequently, she spins faster. When she is ready to slow the rotation, she extends her arms and leg outward again, increasing the radius and decreasing the velocity. The skater displays a perfect example of the conservation of angular momentum.

The next time you observe a skater spinning rapidly on the ice, watch how she changes the speed of her rotation by manipulating her arms and legs.

Spanish Rule in the Philippines

► In 1521, Ferdinand Magellan tried to sail around the world and landed in a group of islands in the East Indies. Magellan, thought to be the first European to land there, claimed the islands for Spain, naming them the Philippines for Spain's King Philip II. This marked the start of Spain's 300 years of control.

The Indigenous, or Native, Peoples of the Philippines did not like to be under the control of the Spanish and within a year of landing on the islands, Magellan was killed in a battle between the Spaniards and a group led by a chief from a nearby island. Spain worked to set up a colony to gain riches from the spice trade and continued to send explorers to the islands. Finally, in 1565, a group led by Miguel de Legazpi arrived and was able to establish a permanent colony within many small, Native communities. Manila, the capital that was founded by de Legazpi, offered many natural resources. It was located on Manila Bay, which was a strategic harbor. There was plenty of food available, both from the water and from rice lands near the town. Manila became the center of Spanish life in the area. All civil, military, religious, and business activities took place in Manila. A Spanish governor and the powerful royal court ruled the land.

Keeping control of the colony was not easy. The Spanish faced uprisings from the Native Peoples who resented their control and began to fight against Spanish rule. Along with attacks on land, the Spanish faced trouble at sea. English pirates, hoping to steal gold and other riches, attacked the Spanish ships, called galleons. Spanish battles with the Dutch, who were also trying to build a strong presence in the East Indies, drained money from the colony as well.

Spanish control ended for a short time when British forces invaded the islands in 1762. The British left two years later, but the occupation had weakened Spain's hold on power. Calls for independence began; they lasted through the 1800s, and a short revolution began and ended in 1896. When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, the Philippine forces joined with American troops. Spanish forces were defeated. As part of the peace treaty, the United States took possession of the Philippines, ending Spanish rule.
