

Educator Information and Directions

Student Objectives

1. Make inferences about a text
2. Make a claim based on a text
3. Cite textual evidence to support a claim

Be sure to prepare the PDF before your student watches the video.

Day One:

- ☐ Watch introductory video, complete guided notes and practice, and review material with online practice.

Day Two:

- ☐ Complete the vocabulary graphic organizer, read and annotate the article, and review material with online practice.

Day Three:

- ☐ Read and annotate the passage, review the mini-lesson on inferences, complete the graphic organizer, and review material with online practice.

Day Four:

- ☐ Read and annotate the passage, complete the graphic organizer, and review material with online practice.

Day Five:

- ☐ Read and annotate the passage, review the mini-lesson on RACE format, complete the RACE response, complete the self-assessment.

Suggested Gold:

Reward your child with 100 Gold/\$coops for each activity on this PDF.

Extension Activities



Research and explore...

what life was like in the early 1900s in Canada, the setting of *The Blue Castle*, or explore another location during this time period and compare and contrast the two.



Read...

Anne of Green Gables by Lucy Maud Montgomery or *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott



Create...

A drawing or collage that demonstrates what makes a place feel "like home."

Educator Strategies for Support

In order to deepen your student's understanding, consider discussing each reading passage before your child completes the activities. If the complexity of the passages from *The Blue Castle* creates frustration, consider reading them together to increase comprehension.

Icon Key for Activities



Complete while watching video



Mini-lesson



Student Practice



Writing Activity



Critical Thinking Activity

Day 1

To-Do List

- ☐ **Watch** the video “Home Is What You Make It.”
- ☐ **Complete** the guided notes.
- ☐ **Complete** level 1 of online practice.



Guided Notes: Complete by recording what you observe from the video.



What makes a place feel “like home”?

Citing Textual Evidence: Key Terms

- **Claim** - a _____ that identifies your position on a topic
 - When you make a **claim**, you are making a point and arguing that it is accurate.
- **Textual evidence** - pieces of _____ from a text that we use to prove ideas, opinions, beliefs and arguments
- **Direct quote** - the exact _____ from a text that’s taken and used in another piece of writing
- **Cite** - to quote or reference a text to provide _____ for an argument or statement

How to Cite Textual Evidence

Step 1: _____ the entire passage.

Step 2: Make a _____ about the text.

Step 3: Look for textual _____ that supports your claim.

Step 4: _____ your argument, starting with your claim, and use textual evidence to back it up.

Citing Textual Evidence Practice

Step 1: Read the text below.

During the early 20th century, life for women was very different from today. Women had specific expectations placed on them. They were mainly seen as homemakers and had to take care of the house, raise children, and make sure their husbands were happy. Women were not encouraged to pursue education or have careers. Their job was to get married and be mothers. They were expected to be polite, modest, and obedient, and their opinions were often ignored in important matters. Women couldn't vote and had limited job options. This meant that they had fewer opportunities and rights compared to men. It was a time of inequality, but women started fighting for their rights during this period.

What was expected of women during the early 20th century?

Step 2: Write your claim about the text in the box below. Be sure to answer the question above in your claim.

Step 3: Return to the passage and underline or highlight two sentences that support your claim.

Step 4: Write your claim, including textual evidence to support it, using the sentence frames below.

In the early 20th century, women were expected _____

According to the passage, _____

Day 2

To-Do List

- ☐ **Complete** the vocabulary graphic organizer.
- ☐ **Read** and **annotate** the introductory article, "Stepping Back in Time: Women's Lives in the 1900s and Lucy Maud Montgomery's *The Blue Castle*."
- ☐ **Complete** level 2 of online practice.



Vocabulary: Complete the chart below by adding a personal connection, drawing, or other reminder to help you better understand each word.

Term	Definition	Your Connection
grotesque	unnaturally odd or ugly	
sinister	looks, feels, or seems evil or harmful	
ramification	a consequence or result of something	
chivalry	relating to the brave and honorable ways of knights in the Middle Ages	
relinquish	to give something up or to let something go	
dictatorial	behaving in a way that's bossy and controlling	



Reading Passage: Read and annotate the article below.

“Stepping Back in Time: Women’s Lives in the 1900s and Lucy Maud Montgomery’s <i>The Blue Castle</i>”	Notes
<p>Sometimes, books can be like time machines, letting us step into different times and places. One of these books is <i>The Blue Castle</i> by Lucy Maud Montgomery, better known as the author of <i>Anne of Green Gables</i>. This book helps us understand how different life was for women in the early 1900s.</p> <p>Women’s Lives in the 1900s: A Different World</p> <p>Life in the early 1900s was really different, especially for women. Back then, women were mostly expected to stay at home, take care of their families, and help with house chores. They didn’t usually go to college or work outside the home.</p> <p>Did you know that women couldn’t even vote back then? In the United States, most women only got the right to vote in 1920 after a lot of hard work and protests. In Canada, where Lucy Maud Montgomery was from, some women could vote starting from 1918.</p> <p>The Story of <i>The Blue Castle</i></p> <p>In <i>The Blue Castle</i>, the main character is a woman named Valancy Stirling. She’s 29 years old and lives with her family that treats her pretty poorly.</p> <p>Like many women in the early 1900s, Valancy was expected to be quiet, to obey her family, and to get married one day. But when she gets a letter telling her she only has one year left to live, she decides to break these old rules. She leaves her family’s home to live life the way she wants to.</p> <p>Dreaming of <i>The Blue Castle</i></p> <p>The “Blue Castle” in the book isn’t a real place. Instead, it’s a daydream that Valancy uses to cope with her situation, and it can be seen as symbol of the dreams that Valancy and other women like her have. They dream of things like being free to</p>	

<p>“Stepping Back in Time: Women’s Lives in the 1900s and Lucy Maud Montgomery’s <i>The Blue Castle</i>”</p>	<p>Notes</p>
<p>make their own choices, speak their minds, and live lives not just limited to house chores or taking care of children.</p> <p>When Valancy decides to leave her family and create her own “Blue Castle,” she’s taking a big step. She’s choosing to live a life that doesn’t follow the old rules for women. This is a key part of the book and reflects what many women in the 1900s were beginning to think and feel.</p> <p>Home: More Than Just a House <i>The Blue Castle</i> also explores the idea of “home.” For Valancy, her family’s home isn’t a happy place. It’s where she’s always being told what to do and can’t be herself. But when she leaves and creates her own “Blue Castle,” she makes a new home. It’s a place where she can be happy and be herself. This shows us that a “home” isn’t just a place – it’s where you feel like you truly belong and can be yourself.</p> <p>Wrapping Up Reading <i>The Blue Castle</i> gives us a look into how different things were for women in the early 1900s. Despite these differences, women like Valancy dreamed of a better and freer life. The book also helps us understand that a “home” isn’t just about where you live – it’s about where you feel like you can be your best self. So, thanks to Lucy Maud Montgomery, we can learn a lot from a book that was published way back in 1926!</p>	



Day 3

To-Do List

- ☐ **Read** and **annotate** the excerpt from *The Blue Castle*.
- ☐ **Review** the mini-lesson on inferences.
- ☐ **Complete** the textual evidence practice.
- ☐ **Complete** level 3 of online practice.



Read & Annotate: As you read the excerpt from Chapter One of *The Blue Castle*, by Lucy Maud Montgomery, annotate the text and take notes as needed.

Reading Context: In this passage, the main character, Valancy, wakes up on a gloomy day feeling sad about her life. She is about to turn 29 years old and feels like she is an “old maid” because she is still unmarried. It’s important to note that this story is set in the early 1900s in a Canadian town called Deerwood. In this setting, women are expected to marry young, have children, and be homemakers. There are few options for unmarried women like Valancy.

<i>The Blue Castle</i> : Chapter One	Notes
<p>“Valancy wakened early, in the lifeless, hopeless hour just preceding dawn. She had not slept very well. One does not sleep well, sometimes, when one is twenty-nine on the morrow, and unmarried, in a community and connection where the unmarried are simply those who have failed to get a man.</p> <p>Deerwood and the Stirlings had long since relegated Valancy to hopeless old maidenhood. But Valancy herself had never quite relinquished a certain pitiful, shamed, little hope that Romance would come her way yet—never, until this wet, horrible morning, when she wakened to the fact that she was twenty-nine and unsought by any man.</p> <p>Ay, there lay the sting. Valancy did not mind so much being an old maid. After all, she thought, being an old maid couldn’t possibly be as dreadful as being married to an Uncle Wellington or an Uncle Benjamin, or even an Uncle Herbert. What hurt her was that she had never had a chance to be anything but an old maid. No man had ever desired her.</p> <p>The tears came into her eyes as she lay there alone in the faintly greying darkness. She dared not let herself cry as hard as she wanted to, for two reasons. She was afraid that crying might bring on another attack of that pain around the heart. She had</p>	

<i>The Blue Castle: Chapter One</i>	Notes
<p>had a spell of it after she had got into bed—rather worse than any she had had yet. And she was afraid her mother would notice her red eyes at breakfast and keep at her with minute, persistent, mosquito-like questions regarding the cause thereof.</p> <p>‘Suppose,’ thought Valancy with a ghastly grin, ‘I answered with the plain truth, “I am crying because I cannot get married.” How horrified Mother would be—though she is ashamed every day of her life of her old maid daughter.’</p> <p>But of course appearances should be kept up. ‘It is not,’ Valancy could hear her mother’s prim, dictatorial voice asserting, ‘it is not maidenly to think about men.’</p> <p>The thought of her mother’s expression made Valancy laugh—for she had a sense of humour nobody in her clan suspected. For that matter, there were a good many things about Valancy that nobody suspected. But her laughter was very superficial and presently she lay there, a huddled, futile little figure, listening to the rain pouring down outside and watching, with a sick distaste, the chill, merciless light creeping into her ugly, sordid room” (Montgomery).</p>	



Mini-lesson: Inferences

When you’re reading, making an **inference** involves taking clues from the text and combining them with your own knowledge and experiences to come up with an idea that isn’t explicitly stated in the text. It’s about reading between the lines and figuring out things the author doesn’t directly tell you.

For example, let’s say you’re reading a novel, and one of the characters is constantly yawning, forgetting things, and has trouble keeping his eyes open. The book doesn’t say, “this character is very tired.” But from these clues, you can infer – make an educated guess – that he didn’t get a good night’s sleep.

Making inferences helps you better understand what you’re reading. It allows you to delve deeper into the text and makes your reading experience more engaging. As you grow and read more complex texts, you’ll find that authors often rely on their readers’ ability to make inferences. So, consider yourself a detective when you’re reading. Look for the clues and piece them together to understand the hidden layers of the story!



Textual Evidence Practice: Complete the table below by making inferences and finding evidence in the passage to answer the questions below. Some of the table has been filled in to help get you started!

How does Valancy feel about her herself and her life?
What does Valancy want in life?

Inference	Evidence	How the evidence supports my inference:
Valancy feels...		
	“What hurt her was that she had never had a chance to be anything but an old maid. No man had ever desired her.”	
Valancy wants...		

Day 4

To-Do List

- ☐ **Read** and **annotate** the excerpt from *The Blue Castle*.
- ☐ **Complete** the textual evidence graphic organizer.
- ☐ **Complete** levels 4-5 of online practice.



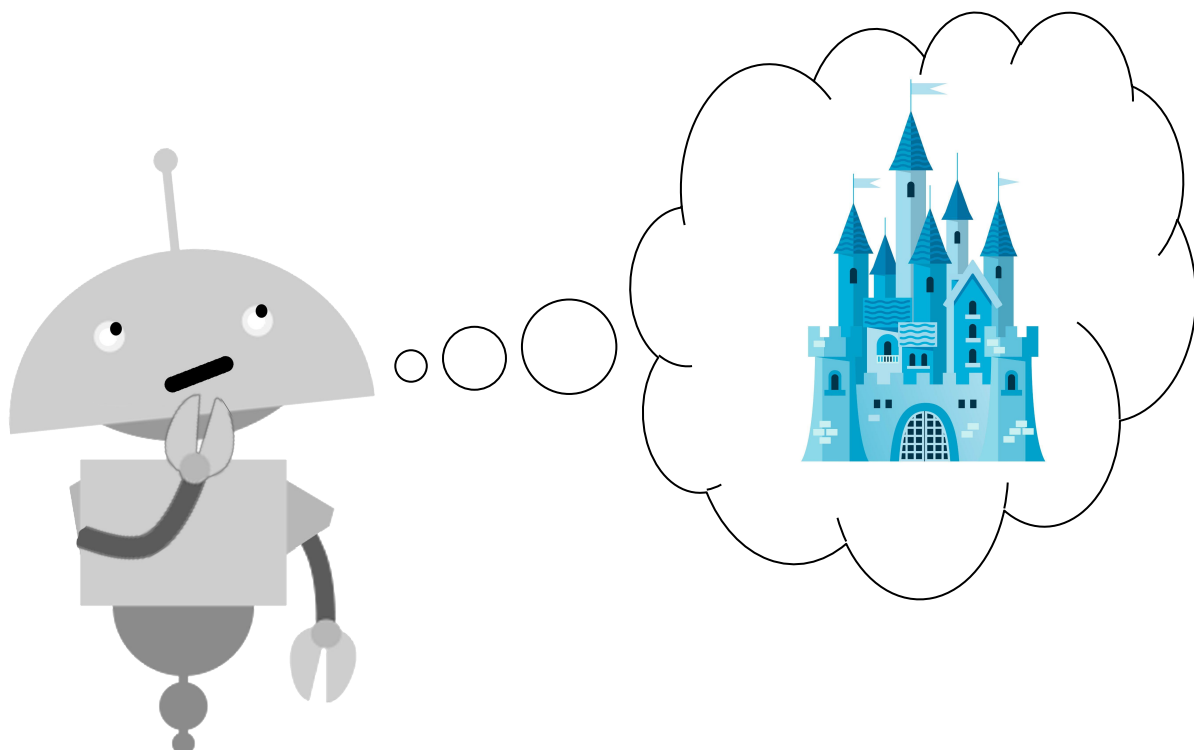
Read & Annotate: As you read the excerpt from Chapter One of *The Blue Castle*, by Lucy Maud Montgomery, annotate the text and take notes as needed.

Reading Context: In this passage, Valancy begins to reflect on her room and how dissatisfied she is with it. Then we are introduced to the Blue Castle of Valancy's day dreams.

<i>The Blue Castle: Chapter 1 Continued</i>	Notes
<p>“[Valancy] knew the ugliness of that room by heart—knew it and hated it. The yellow-painted floor, with one hideous, ‘hooked’ rug by the bed, with a grotesque, ‘hooked’ dog on it, always grinning at her when she awoke; the faded, dark-red paper; the ceiling discoloured by old leaks and crossed by cracks; the narrow, pinched little washstand; the brown-paper lambrequin with purple roses on it; the spotted old looking-glass with the crack across it, propped up on the inadequate dressing-table; the jar of ancient potpourri made by her mother in her mythical honeymoon; the shell-covered box, with one burst corner, which Cousin Stickles had made in her equally mythical girlhood; the beaded pincushion with half its bead fringe gone; the one stiff, yellow chair; the faded old motto, “Gone but not forgotten,” worked in coloured yarns about Great-grand-mother Stirling’s grim old face; the old photographs of ancient relatives long banished from the rooms below...</p> <p>Every room in the house was ugly, of course. But downstairs appearances were kept up somewhat. There was no money for rooms nobody ever saw. Valancy sometimes felt that she could have done something for her room herself, even without money, if she were permitted. But her mother had negatived every timid suggestion and Valancy did not persist. Valancy never persisted. She was afraid to. Her mother could not brook opposition. Mrs. Stirling would sulk for days if offended, with the airs of an insulted duchess.</p>	

<i>The Blue Castle: Chapter 1 Continued</i>	Notes
<p>The only thing Valancy liked about her room was that she could be alone there at night to cry if she wanted to.</p> <p>But, after all, what did it matter if a room, which you used for nothing except sleeping and dressing in, were ugly? Valancy was never permitted to stay alone in her room for any other purpose. People who wanted to be alone, so Mrs. Frederick Stirling and Cousin Stickles believed, could only want to be alone for some sinister purpose. But her room in the Blue Castle was everything a room should be.</p> <p>Valancy, so cowed and subdued and overridden and snubbed in real life, was wont to let herself go rather splendidly in her day-dreams. Nobody in the Stirling clan, or its ramifications, suspected this, least of all her mother and Cousin Stickles. They never knew that Valancy had two homes—the ugly red brick box of a home, on Elm Street, and the Blue Castle in Spain. Valancy had lived spiritually in the Blue Castle ever since she could remember. She had been a very tiny child when she found herself possessed of it. Always, when she shut her eyes, she could see it plainly, with its turrets and banners on the pine-clad mountain height, wrapped in its faint, blue loveliness, against the sunset skies of a fair and unknown land. Everything wonderful and beautiful was in that castle. Jewels that queens might have worn; robes of moonlight and fire; couches of roses and gold; long flights of shallow marble steps, with great, white urns, and with slender, mist-clad maidens going up and down them; courts, marble-pillared, where shimmering fountains fell and nightingales sang among the myrtles; halls of mirrors that reflected only handsome knights and lovely women—herself the loveliest of all, for whose glance men died. All that supported her through the boredom of her days was the hope of going on a dream spree at night. Most, if not all, of the Stirlings would have died of horror if they had known half the things Valancy did in her Blue Castle.</p> <p>For one thing she had quite a few lovers in it. Oh, only one at a time. One who wooed her with all the romantic ardour of the age of chivalry and won her after long devotion and many deeds of derring-do, and was wedded to her with pomp and circumstance in the great, banner-hung chapel of the Blue Castle.</p>	

<i>The Blue Castle: Chapter 1 Continued</i>	Notes
<p>At twelve, this lover was a fair lad with golden curls and heavenly blue eyes. At fifteen, he was tall and dark and pale, but still necessarily handsome. At twenty, he was ascetic, dreamy, spiritual. At twenty-five, he had a clean-cut jaw, slightly grim, and a face strong and rugged rather than handsome. Valancy never grew older than twenty-five in her Blue Castle, but recently—very recently—her hero had had reddish, tawny hair, a twisted smile and a mysterious past.</p> <p>I don't say Valancy deliberately murdered these lovers as she outgrew them. One simply faded away as another came. Things are very convenient in this respect in Blue Castles.</p> <p>But, on this morning of her day of fate, Valancy could not find the key of her Blue Castle. Reality pressed on her too hardly, barking at her heels like a maddening little dog. She was twenty-nine, lonely, undesired, ill-favoured—the only homely girl in a handsome clan, with no past and no future. As far as she could look back, life was drab and colourless, with not one single crimson or purple spot anywhere. As far as she could look forward it seemed certain to be just the same until she was nothing but a solitary, little withered leaf clinging to a wintry bough” (Montgomery).</p>	





Textual Evidence Practice: Complete the table below by making inferences and finding evidence in the passage to answer the questions below. Some of the table has been filled in to help get you started!

How does Valancy feel about her home?
How does the Blue Castle compare to her home?

Inference	Evidence	How the evidence supports my inference:
Valancy feels...		
	“Valancy sometimes felt that she could have done something for her room herself, even without money, if she were permitted. But her mother had negatived every timid suggestion and Valancy did not persist. Valancy never persisted. She was afraid to.”	
Compared to her home, the Blue Castle is...		

Day 5

To-Do List

- ☐ **Read** and **annotate** the excerpt from *The Blue Castle*.
- ☐ **Review** the mini-lesson on Citing Textual Evidence with RACE Format.
- ☐ **Complete** the RACE response writing activity.



Read & Annotate: As you read the excerpt from Chapter Twenty-Eight of *The Blue Castle*, by Lucy Maud Montgomery, annotate the text and take notes as needed.

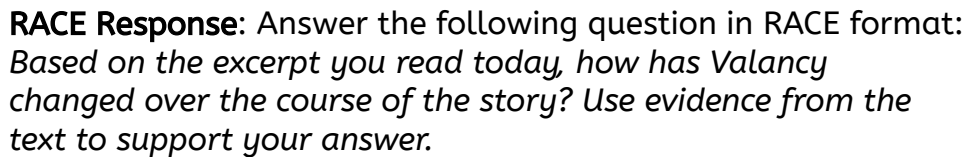
Reading Context: Valancy is diagnosed with a heart condition and is told she only has one year to live. As a result, she decides to leave her family behind, no longer wishing to be miserable in their company. Her family repeatedly tries to get her to return home, so Valancy searches for a permanent solution to her conundrum. During this time, Valancy falls in love with an unconventional man named Barney who her family looks down on. Valancy decides to propose marriage to Barney, telling him about her heart condition and her desire to live the rest of her life in peace and happiness. Barney accepts her proposal and the two are married.

<i>The Blue Castle: Chapter 28</i>	Notes
<p>“Valancy was happy—gloriously and entirely so. She seemed to be living in a wonderful house of life and every day opened a new, mysterious room. It was in a world which had nothing in common with the one she had left behind—a world where time was not—which was young with immortal youth—where there was neither past nor future but only the present. She surrendered herself utterly to the charm of it.</p> <p>The absolute freedom of it all was unbelievable. They could do exactly as they liked. No Mrs. Grundy. No traditions. No relatives. Or in-laws. ‘Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away,’ as Barney quoted shamelessly.</p> <p>Valancy had gone home once and got her cushions. And Cousin Georgiana had given her one of her famous candlewick spreads of most elaborate design. ‘For your spare-room bed, dear,’ she said.</p> <p>‘But I haven’t got any spare-room,’ said Valancy.</p> <p>Cousin Georgiana looked horrified. A house without a spare-room was monstrous to her.</p> <p>‘But it’s a lovely spread,’ said Valancy, with a kiss, ‘and I’m so glad to have it. I’ll put it on my own bed. Barney’s old patch-work quilt is getting ragged.’</p>	

<i>The Blue Castle: Chapter 28</i>	Notes
<p>‘I don’t see how you can be contented to live up back,’ sighed Cousin Georgiana. ‘It’s so out of the world.’</p> <p>‘Contented!’ Valancy laughed. What was the use of trying to explain to Cousin Georgiana. ‘It is,’ she agreed, ‘most gloriously and entirely out of the world.’</p> <p>‘And you are really happy, dear?’ asked Cousin Georgiana wistfully.</p> <p>‘I really am,’ said Valancy gravely, her eyes dancing.</p> <p>‘Marriage is such a serious thing,’ sighed Cousin Georgiana.</p> <p>‘When it’s going to last long,’ agreed Valancy.</p> <p>Cousin Georgiana did not understand this at all. But it worried her and she lay awake at nights wondering what Valancy meant by it.</p> <p>Valancy loved her Blue Castle and was completely satisfied with it. The big living-room had three windows, all commanding exquisite views of exquisite Mistawis. The one in the end of the room was an oriel window—which Tom MacMurray, Barney explained, had got out of some little, old “up back” church that had been sold. It faced the west and when the sunsets flooded it Valancy’s whole being knelt in prayer as if in some great cathedral. The new moons always looked down through it, the lower pine boughs swayed about the top of it, and all through the nights the soft, dim silver of the lake dreamed through it.</p> <p>There was a stone fireplace on the other side. No desecrating gas imitation but a real fireplace where you could burn real logs. With a big grizzly bearskin on the floor before it, and beside it a hideous, red-plush sofa of Tom MacMurray’s régime. But its ugliness was hidden by silver-grey timber wolf skins, and Valancy’s cushions made it gay and comfortable. In a corner a nice, tall, lazy old clock ticked—the right kind of a clock. One that did not hurry the hours away but ticked them off deliberately. It was the jolliest looking old clock...</p> <p>Her heart bothered her very little. When an attack threatened she was generally able to head it off with Dr. Trent’s prescription. The only bad one she had was one night when she was temporarily out of medicine. And it was a bad one. For the time being, Valancy realised keenly that death was actually waiting to pounce on her any moment. But the rest of the time she would not—did not—let herself remember it at all” (Montgomery).</p>	



1. **Restate** the question as the first sentence of your answer.
2. **Answer** the question in your next sentence.
3. **Cite** textual evidence to support your answer.
4. **Explain** how the textual evidence supports your answer.

[illegible]

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Home Is What You Make It

RACE Response Rubric

	4 - Exceeds Expectations	3 - Meets Expectations	2 - Attempts Expectations	1 - Needs Work
Response answers the prompt accurately and thoroughly.				
Appropriate textual evidence is included in the response.				
Response explains how textual evidence supports the claim.				



Self-Assessment: Evaluate the following statements, using the Growth Mindset O-Meter shown. Color in the corresponding number of stars to show your evaluation.

1. I can make an inference based on a text I've read.



2. I can make a claim about a text I've read.



3. I find textual evidence to support the claims I make.

