

EXCEL

EXCEL [3]

- Careers
- Fantasy
- Mythology
- Romance
- Teenage Firsts

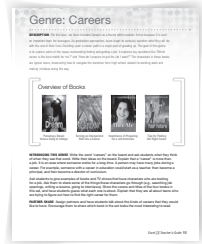
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Instructional Support Components

This guide contains instructional support for each book.

GENRE OVERVIEW AND LESSON PLAN (one for each genre): Use



these pages to introduce and discuss the genres in this set. Lessons are appropriate for whole class or small group

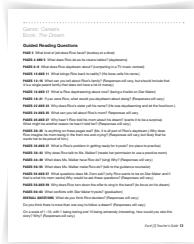
instruction.

BOOK LESSON PLAN (one for each book): Use



these pages to introduce the books, to teach or review specific reading skills, and to

introduce any special vocabulary in the books. Lessons are appropriate for whole class, small group, or individual instruction.

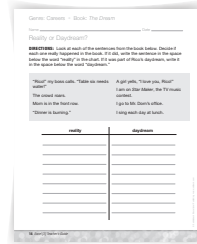


GUIDED READING QUESTIONS (one

for each book): Use these pages after the initial reading of the book. These questions allow for a deeper rereading of the book

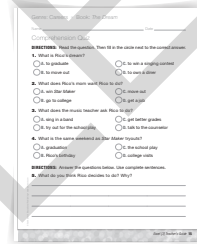
and an exploration of the book's issues and character dynamics. Questions are appropriate for whole class, small group, or individual instruction.

COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY (one for each



book): Use these pages to monitor comprehension and build reading skills. Activities are appropriate for paired or independent work.

BOOK QUIZ (one for each book):



Use these pages to assess comprehension. Quizzes are a mix of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short-answer questions.

Implementation Options

Excel is intended as a supplemental set of books for classroom use. The lesson plans and guided reading questions in this guide are designed for both small groups and individual students. Here are some options for implementation:

- Display the books as part of a classroom library and allow students to self-select titles. Use the reproducible activity and quiz for each book to monitor comprehension.
- Form small groups for genre exploration. Assign two or more books from a genre set to each small group. Use the genre overviews and lesson plans to introduce each genre. As each group completes a book, use the guided reading questions to spur discussion and to check comprehension. Have the groups complete a presentation on how the books represent the genre they are exploring. Use the reproducible activities and quizzes for the books to monitor comprehension.
- Use selected titles for intervention with teens reading below level. Assign a specific title to a group and use the lesson plan in this guide to introduce the book and teach any special vocabulary. Have the students read the book independently or as part of a small group. Use the guided reading questions after the first read to build comprehension and encourage book discussion. Then assign the reproducible activity. Students may work independently or in pairs. Use the quiz to assess comprehension.

Clark, C. & Rumbold, K. "Reading for Pleasure: A Research Overview." National Literacy Trust, 2006.
Cullinan, B. E. "Independent Reading and School Achievement." American Association of School Librarians, 2000.

National Endowment for the Arts. "To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence." Research Report #47. 2007.

Walberg, H.J. "Scientific Literacy and Economic Productivity in International Perspective." *Daedalus*, 112, 1–28. 1983.

Correlations to the Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading

Saddleback has correlated the *Teen Emergent Reader Libraries* to the anchor standards to show how extremely low readability materials incorporate higher level comprehension and text analysis expectations and requirements.

Common Core Anchor Standard	Genre Pages	Book Lesson Plan	Guided Reading Questions	Comprehension Activity	Book Quiz
CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.			✓		✓
CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.			✓	✓	✓
CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.			✓	✓	✓
CCRA.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.		✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA.R.5 Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.		✓	✓		✓
CCRA.R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.		✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.		✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA.R.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.			✓		✓
CCRA.R.9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA.R.10 Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

*Note: Standard 10 focuses on range, quality, and complexity of text. This library represents the range expected by the Common Core standards, but the readability is kept simple for emergent and beginning readers to foster accessibility.

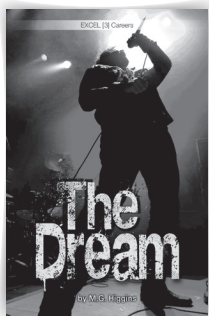
Book Overview Chart

Book	Fiction/ Nonfiction	Theme	Readability Level	Lexile Level	Word Count
Careers Genre					
The Dream	F	pursuing a dream versus going to college	1.2	150L	1280
Grow	F	turning an unexpected skill into a career	1.2	140L	1283
Hire Me	F	importance of preparing for a job interview	1.2	120L	1268
Your Future	N	tips for finding the right career	1.5	130L	1178
Fantasy Genre					
Family Curse	F	discovering a werewolf heritage	1.3	170L	1224
Freedom	F	goblin miner finds a mysterious egg	1.3	130L	1280
Witch	F	being sold as an apprentice to a witch	1.4	110L	1259
Movie Magic	N	how CGI makes fantasy movies look real	1.5	120L	1142
Mythology Genre					
Queen of the Dead	F	Greek myth of Persephone	1.2	100L	1249
Stolen Hammer	F	Norse myth of Thor dressed as a bride	1.4	150L	1110
Trickster	F	Native American myth of how people got fire	1.3	110L	1197
Gods of Myth	N	overview of gods of various mythologies	1.5	60L	1138
Romance Genre					
First Love	F	dealing with a breakup	1.4	120L	1204
Notice Me	F	realizing a crush on a friend	1.1	100L	1218
Ruby	F	a relationship develops between students with disabilities	1.1	120L	1267
A Day for Love	N	history of Valentine's Day	1.5	140L	1241
Teenage Firsts Genre					
Moving Out	F	getting a first apartment	1.0	100L	1297
My Voice, My Vote	F	realizing the importance of voting	1.5	100L	1218
A New Path	F	transitioning to college	1.2	120L	1295
License to Drive	N	steps to getting one's first driver's license	1.5	80L	1287

Genre: Careers

DESCRIPTION For this level, we have included Careers as a theme within realistic fiction because it is such an important topic for teenagers. As graduation approaches, teens begin to seriously question what they will do with the rest of their lives. Deciding upon a career path is a major part of growing up. The goal of this genre is to explore some of the issues surrounding finding and getting a job. It explores key questions like “Which career is the best match for me?” and “How do I prepare to get the job I want?” The characters in these books are typical teens, discovering how to navigate the transition from high school student to working adult and making mistakes along the way.

Overview of Books



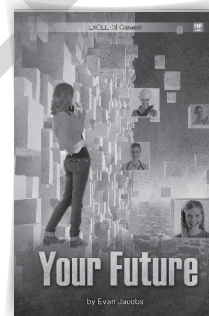
Pursuing a Dream
Versus Going to College



Turning an Unexpected
Skill into a Career



Importance of Preparing
for a Job Interview



Tips for Finding
the Right Career

INTRODUCING THIS GENRE Write the word “careers” on the board and ask students what they think of when they see that word. Write their ideas on the board. Explain that a “career” is more than a job. It is an area where someone works for a long time. A person may have many jobs during a career. For example, someone with a career in education could start as a teacher, then become a principal, and then become a director of curriculum.

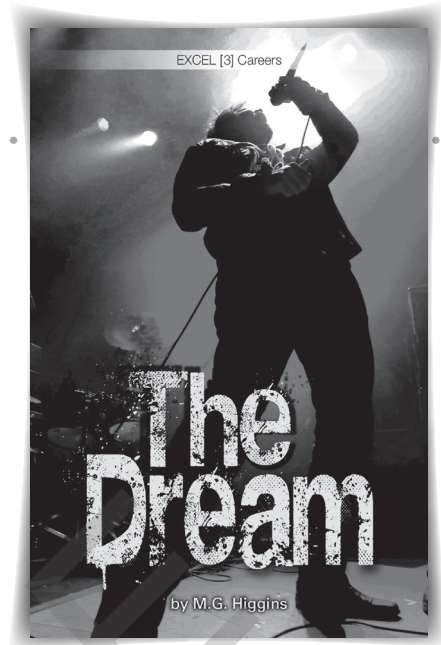
Ask students to give examples of books and TV shows that have characters who are looking for a job. Ask them to share some of the things these characters go through (e.g., searching job openings, writing a resume, going to interviews). Show the covers and titles of the four books in this set, and have students guess what each one is about. Explain that they are all about teens who are trying to figure out how to find the right career for them.

PARTNER SHARE Assign partners and have students talk about the kinds of careers that they would like to have. Encourage them to share which book in the set looks the most interesting to read.

Genre: Careers

Book: *The Dream*

SYNOPSIS This book explores the idea that there is more than one way to achieve a dream career and that sometimes dreams can shift when confronted with reality. Eighteen-year-old Rico's goal is to win *Star Maker*, a TV singing contest. He wants to be rich and famous and make his mom happy. But as the tryout date approaches, he realizes that what his mom really wants is to see him graduate and go to college. Rico has to make an important decision about the path he will take to achieve his dream.



The Dream

PREPARING TO READ Show students the cover of the book. Read them the following preview:

Star Maker. It is a TV singing contest, and it is all Rico can think about. He is sure the show is his path to being rich and famous. But this is Rico's senior year, and all his mom can talk about is college. Can Rico make his mom happy and pursue his dream?

Ask students to turn to a partner and talk about what they think will happen in this book based on the cover and the preview. Then ask for volunteers to tell the group some of their predictions.

READING SKILL Point out that most books let readers know what the main character is thinking about. Some books even take readers inside the mind of one or more characters. When this happens, the reader has to figure out what is really happening and what is just in the character's mind. Ask students how readers might be able to tell (e.g., things that are impossible in real life might show up in a character's thoughts or a book might use words like "what if" or "I think"). Show students the cover of *The Dream*. Explain that part of this story is based in reality and part of it goes inside the main character's dreams and daydreams. As students read, they should look for clues to decide whether what is happening is real or fantasy.

VOCABULARY LESSON This book includes a few words that are at a higher level than the rest of the book but are necessary for communicating the content. Teach these words before students read the story. Write each word on the board. If appropriate, have the students write each word on an index card, and then trace the letters as they say the word.

daydream good thoughts that distract people from what they are doing

graduation an event where people who finish school get their diplomas

guidance counselor a school employee who listens to students and gives them advice

Have students work with partners or small groups to come up with sentences using each of the vocabulary words. Ask students to share the sentences with the class.

Genre: Careers
Book: *The Dream*

Guided Reading Questions

PAGE 3 What kind of job does Rico have? (busboy at a diner)

PAGES 4 AND 5 What does Rico do as he cleans tables? (daydreams)

PAGES 6–9 What does Rico daydream about? (competing in a TV music contest)

PAGES 10 AND 11 What brings Rico back to reality? (His boss calls his name.)

PAGES 12–15 What can you tell about Rico's family? (Responses will vary, but should include that it is a single parent family that does not have a lot of money.)

PAGES 16 AND 17 What is Rico daydreaming about now? (being a finalist on *Star Maker*)

PAGES 18–21 If you were Rico, what would you daydream about doing? (Responses will vary.)

PAGES 22 AND 23 Why does Rico's sister yell his name? (He was daydreaming and let the food burn.)

PAGES 24 AND 25 What can you tell about Rico's mom? (Responses will vary.)

PAGES 26 AND 27 Why hasn't Rico told his mom about his dream? (wants it to be a surprise)
What might be another reason he hasn't told her? (Responses will vary.)

PAGES 28–35 Is anything on these pages real? (No, it is all part of Rico's daydream.) Why does Rico imagine his mom being in the front row and crying? (Responses will vary, but likely that he wants her to be proud of him.)

PAGES 36 AND 37 What is Rico's problem in getting ready for tryouts? (no place to practice)

PAGES 38–43 Why does Rico talk to Ms. Walker? (needs her permission to use a practice room)

PAGES 44–49 What does Ms. Walker have Rico do? (sing) Why? (Responses will vary.)

PAGES 50–55 What does Ms. Walker make Rico do? (talk to the guidance counselor)

PAGES 56 AND 57 What questions does Mr. Dorn ask? (why Rico wants to be on *Star Maker* and if that is what his mom wants) Why would he ask these questions? (Responses will vary.)

PAGES 58 AND 59 Why does Rico turn down the offer to sing in the band? (to focus on his dream)

PAGES 60–63 What conflicts with *Star Maker* tryouts? (graduation)

OVERALL QUESTIONS What do you think Rico decides? (Responses will vary.)

Do you think there is more than one way to follow a dream? (Responses will vary.)

On a scale of 1–10, with 1 being boring and 10 being extremely interesting, how would you rate this story? Why? (Responses will vary.)

Name _____ Date _____

Reality or Daydream?

DIRECTIONS: Look at each of the sentences from the book below. Decide if each one really happened in the book. If it did, write the sentence in the space below the word “reality” in the chart. If it was part of Rico’s daydream, write it in the space below the word “daydream.”

“Rico!” my boss calls. “Table six needs water!”

The crowd roars.

Mom is in the front row.

“Dinner is burning.”

A girl yells, “I love you, Rico!”

I am on *Star Maker*, the TV music contest.

I go to Mr. Dorn’s office.

I sing each day at lunch.

reality	daydream

Name _____ Date _____

Comprehension Quiz

DIRECTIONS: Read the question. Then fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

1. What is Rico's dream?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> A. to graduate | <input type="radio"/> C. to win a singing contest |
| <input type="radio"/> B. to move out | <input type="radio"/> D. to own a diner |

2. What does Rico's mom want Rico to do?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> A. win <i>Star Maker</i> | <input type="radio"/> C. move out |
| <input type="radio"/> B. go to college | <input type="radio"/> D. get a job |

3. What does the music teacher ask Rico to do?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> A. sing in a band | <input type="radio"/> C. get better grades |
| <input type="radio"/> B. try out for the school play | <input type="radio"/> D. talk to the counselor |

4. What is the same weekend as *Star Maker* tryouts?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> A. graduation | <input type="radio"/> C. the school play |
| <input type="radio"/> B. Rico's birthday | <input type="radio"/> D. college visits |

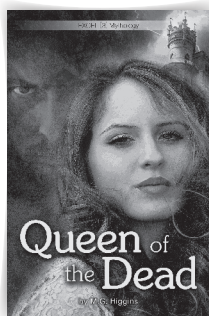
DIRECTIONS: Answer the questions below. Use complete sentences.

5. What do you think Rico decides to do? Why?

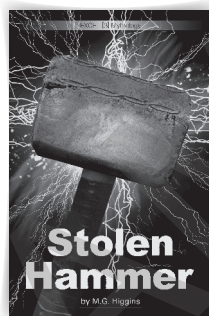
Genre: Mythology

DESCRIPTION Mythology is a genre that encompasses some of the oldest tales humans told and passed down from generation to generation. Myths are stories that helped ancient cultures explain the world around them. When natural disasters or challenging weather patterns disrupted normal day-to-day life or led to destruction and death, humans wanted explanations for events out of their control. These explanations generally involved powerful entities, particularly gods. Over time, each culture's mythology evolved and expanded to include origins of various gods and relationships between them. Natural occurrences like the seasons and powerful storms were explained in these ancient stories. Because different cultures had different mythologies, we are able to learn about their beliefs and daily activities through the stories they told. For this genre, myths from three different cultures are included, and the nonfiction book is an overview of various mythologies and their purposes.

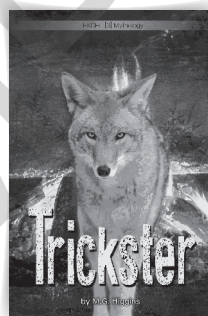
Overview of Books



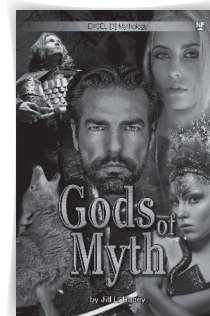
Greek Myth of Persephone



Norse Myth of Thor Dressed as a Bride



Native American Myth of How People Got Fire



Overview of Gods of Various Mythologies

INTRODUCING THIS GENRE Write the word “myth” on the board. Ask students to share what they know about myths, including where myths come from. Explain that these ancient stories were told to explain things that happened that humans did not understand, such as the seasons or a volcanic eruption. Myths were told before there was pen and paper and were passed down from generation to generation. Today, we have myths from many different cultures, including ancient Greece, ancient Scandinavia, and Native American tribes.

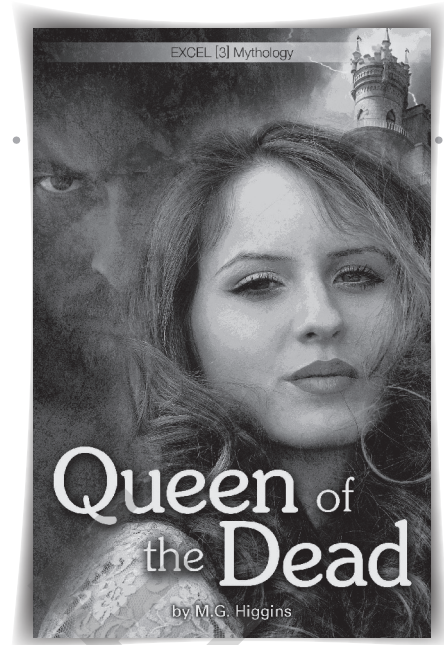
Ask students to name any myths they know of. Show the covers and titles of the four books in this set, and have students guess what each one is about. Explain that each of the fiction books is a myth from an ancient culture. The nonfiction book is an overview of many different mythologies.

PARTNER SHARE Assign partners and have students share any myths they know. Encourage them to share which book in the set looks the most interesting to read.

Genre: Mythology

Book: *Queen of the Dead*

SYNOPSIS This book retells the Greek myth of how Earth got seasons from the perspective of Persephone, the daughter of the Greek goddess of the harvest. Persephone is a happy, fun-loving child and is adored by her mother. But she also catches the interest of the god of the underworld, Hades. He kidnaps her and takes her to his underworld kingdom to be his queen. Persephone's mother is so distraught that she allows endless winter to encompass Earth until the king of the gods, Zeus, intervenes. The resulting deal explains why Earth has four seasons.



Queen of the Dead

PREPARING TO READ Show students the cover of the book. Read them the following preview:

Persephone loves her life. The daughter of a Greek goddess, she goes everywhere with her mother from the halls of Mount Olympus to the fields of Earth. But then someone else notices her sunny personality. Hades, king of the underworld, wants Persephone for himself, and he has the power to take her.

Ask students to turn to a partner and talk about what they know of the Greek myth of Persephone. Then ask for volunteers to share what they know with the group.

READING SKILL Remind students that myths were often used to explain natural events that early humans did not understand. One of those is the cycle of the seasons and why they occur. Point out that the early Greeks did not know about the tilt of Earth's axis or how that affected weather patterns, so they assigned control of the seasons to the goddess of the harvest. To them, the spring and summer seasons represented times when the goddess was happy and let plants grow. The fall and winter represented times when the goddess was sad and let plants die.

VOCABULARY LESSON This book includes a few words that are at a higher level than the rest of the book but are necessary for communicating the content. Teach these words before students read the story. Write each word on the board. If appropriate, have the students write each word on an index card, and then trace the letters as they say the word.

dismal gloomy and depressing

frantic wild with fear or worry

harvest the time when people pick ripe crops

Have students work with partners or small groups to come up with sentences using each of the vocabulary words. Ask students to share the sentences with the class.

Genre: Mythology
Book: *Queen of the Dead*

Guided Reading Questions

PAGE 3 Who is Demeter? (goddess of the harvest)

PAGES 4 AND 5 What is the home of the gods and goddesses? (Mount Olympus)

PAGES 6–9 How is Persephone different from other gods? (always happy and dancing)

PAGES 10–15 What happens one day when Persephone and Demeter are visiting Earth? (ground opens up and a man in a cart driven by four black horses comes out)

PAGES 16 AND 17 Who is the man in the cart? (Hades, god of the underworld)

PAGES 18–23 How would you feel if you were Persephone? (Responses will vary.)

PAGES 24–27 What is the palace in the underworld like? (dismal and dark)

PAGES 28 AND 29 Why did Hades kidnap Persephone? (to make her his queen; to bring light and joy to his kingdom)

PAGES 30–33 How does Persephone react to the offer to be queen? (refuses; is angry and sad)

PAGES 34 AND 35 What does Hades want Persephone to do? (eat)

PAGES 36–41 What does the old man give Persephone? (12 red seeds)

PAGES 42 AND 43 Why doesn't Persephone know how much time has passed? (no sun to tell time by)

PAGES 44 AND 45 Who comes with a message from Zeus? (Hermes, messenger god)

PAGES 46–49 What makes Zeus tell Hades to return Persephone? (Demeter is so upset that the earth is icy and cold and all the crops have died.)

PAGES 50–53 How did Hades trick Persephone? (got her to eat the fruit of the dead)

PAGES 54–57 What deal does Hades offer? (Persephone can spend half the year with her mother but must spend the other half with him.)

PAGES 58 AND 59 Would you take the deal if you were Persephone? Why or why not? (Responses will vary.)

PAGES 60–63 What happens when Persephone is with Demeter? (Fields turn green; crops grow.)

OVERALL QUESTIONS What does this myth explain? (why Earth has seasons)

What do you think of Hades based on this myth? (Responses will vary.)

On a scale of 1–10, with 1 being boring and 10 being extremely interesting, how would you rate this story? Why? (Responses will vary.)

Name _____ Date _____

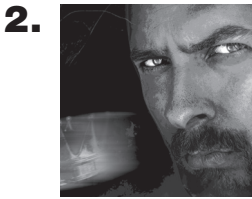
Greek Gods and Goddesses

DIRECTIONS: Draw a line from the name of each god or goddess to the description that fits.



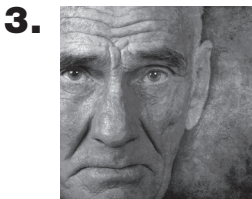
Demeter

queen of the dead



Hades

messenger god



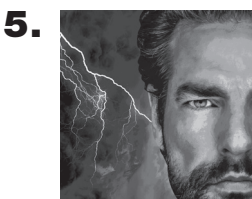
Hermes

goddess of the harvest



Persephone

leader of all the gods



Zeus

god of the underworld

EXCEL

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Careers

- The Dream
- Hire Me
- Grow
- Your Future 

Fantasy

- Family Curse
- Witch
- Freedom
- Movie Magic 

Mythology

- Queen of the Dead
- Trickster
- Stolen Hammer
- Gods of Myth 

Romance

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Teenage Firsts

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