

# Loser

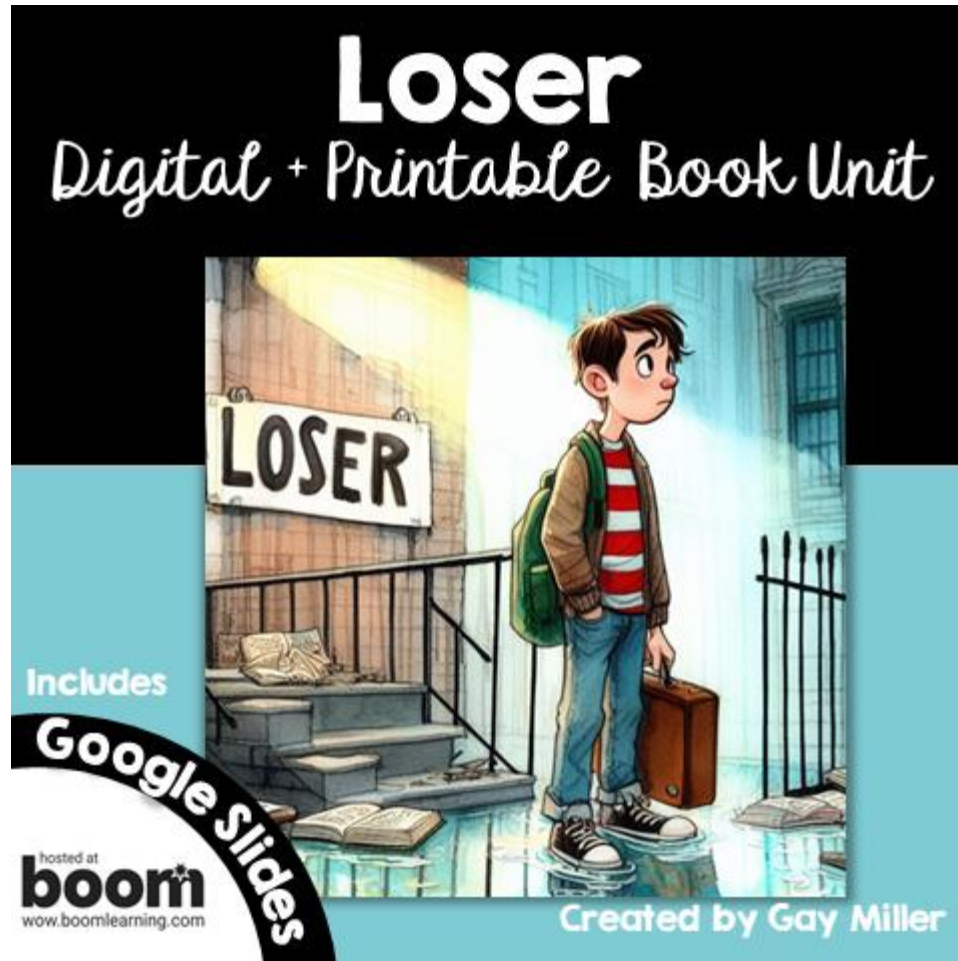
## Teaching Ideas

Gay Miller @  
Book Units  
Teacher

## Activity 1 – Novel Study Samples

For your convenience, I combined the novel study samples and the teaching activities into one PDF file. You will find the novel study samples following Activity 4.

You can check out the full novel study on TPT by clicking on the product cover below.



## Activity 2 – Loser Trivial Pursuit Game

### Loser Trivial Pursuit Game: Instructions

**Objective:** Be the first player to collect all six pie pieces by correctly answering questions from various categories related to the novel *Loser* by Jerry Spinelli.

#### Game Components:

- Game Board
- Question Cards for each category
- Pie pieces in four different colors
- Six-sided die

#### Setup:

- Each player chooses a game token and places it on the START space.
- Shuffle the Question Cards and place them face down.
- Place the pie pieces in a central area.
- The youngest player goes first.

#### Gameplay:

**These rules have been simplified from Trivial Pursuit to make for easier classroom play.**

1. Each player selects a marker. (If you have game markers from another game, I recommend using them. If you don't, I have placed printable ones at the bottom of this page.) These are used to track your spot on the game board. The pie shaped token of the same color keeps track of your score.
2. Roll the die to determine who starts the game. After the first player goes, play passes to the left (clockwise).
3. On a turn, roll the die and move your marker the number of spaces indicated on the die. You must move in only one direction during a turn; you cannot reverse direction in the middle of a roll. You can move toward the outer wheel or toward the center when on a spoke. You can move clockwise or counterclockwise when on the outer wheel.
4. After landing on a space, the player to your right selects the top card in the deck. (The reason for this is the answers to the questions are printed on the cards alongside the 'question.')
5. If you answer correctly, cover the pie shaped piece of the same color as the question you answered on the circular pie shaped token. For the printable version use anything you have readily available for this – beans, disks, game markers, etc.
6. Keep playing until someone has all four pie shaped pies. When a player gets all their pie pieces, that player may begin moving to the center of the board. Even after all pie shaped pieces are collected, players must continue to answer questions on each play. Players need to roll the exact number of spaces to get to the center space.
7. The first player to reach the center of the game board after collecting all 4 pie shaped pieces is the winner.

## Special Rules that will Shorten Playing Time:

**Shortcut Roll:** If a player lands on a color for which they already have a pie piece, they can roll again.

**No Return to Center:** Players do not have to return to the center after collecting a pie piece.

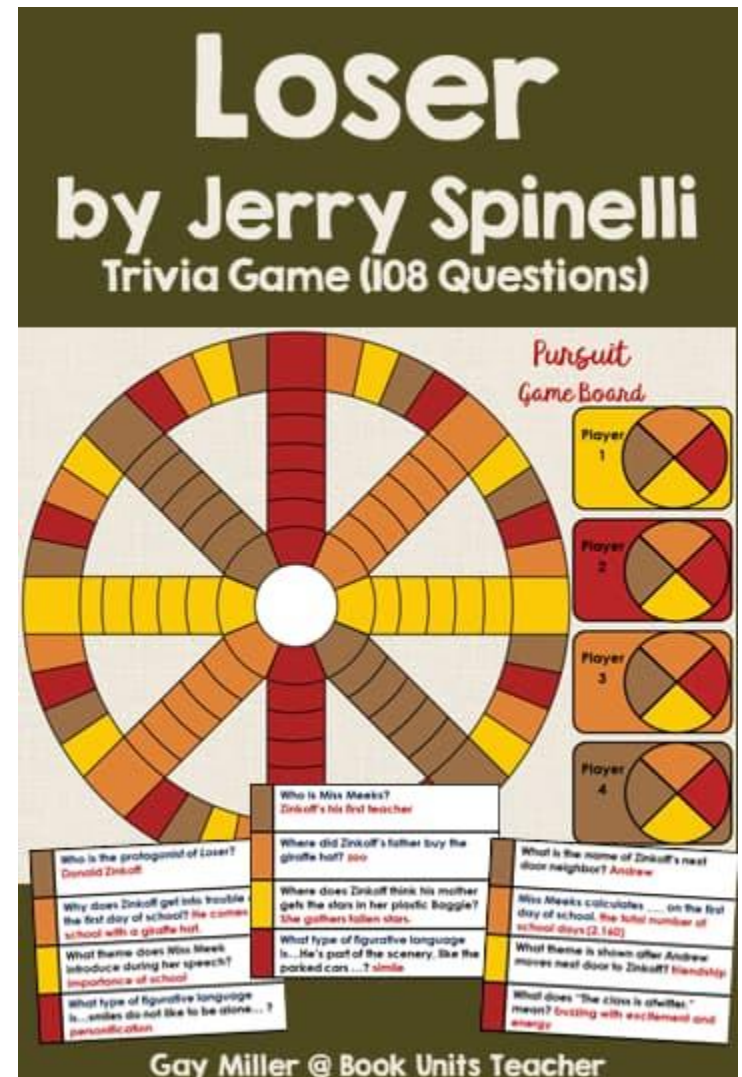
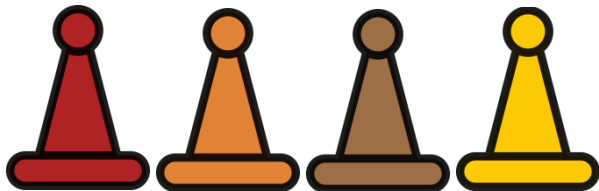
## Categories

- Characters and Settings
- Details and Problem/Solutions
- Symbolism and Theme
- Figurative Language and Vocabulary

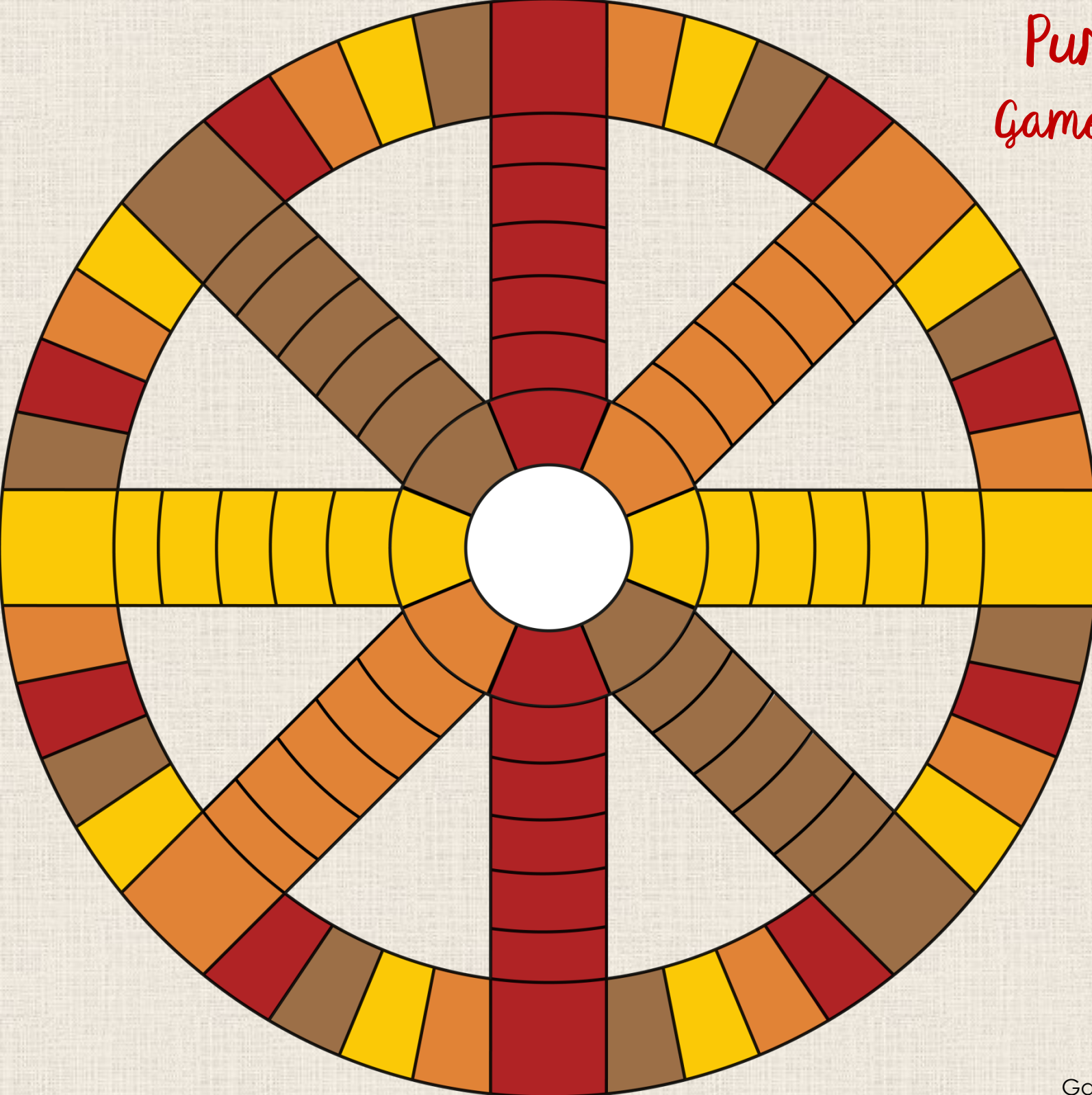
**Winning:** The first player to collect all six pie pieces wins the game.

The digital version of the game is provided in the [full novel study](#).

Game Pieces



# Pursuit Game Board



Player  
1

Player  
2

Player  
3

Player  
4

Who is the protagonist of <i>Loser</i> ? <b>Donald Zinkoff</b>	Who is Miss Meeks? <b>Zinkoff's his first teacher</b>	Who is Polly? <b>Zinkoff's younger sister</b>
Why does Zinkoff get into trouble on the first day of school? <b>He comes to school with a giraffe hat.</b>	Where did Zinkoff's father buy the giraffe hat? <b>zoo</b>	What problem does Zinkoff have with his stomach? <b>upside-down stomach valve</b>
What theme does Miss Meek introduce during her speech? <b>Importance of school</b>	Where does Zinkoff think his mother gets the stars in her plastic Baggie? <b>She gathers fallen stars.</b>	What do fallen stars symbolize? <b>wonder and connection to the universe</b>
What type of figurative language is...smiles do not like to be alone... ? <b>personification</b>	What type of figurative language is...He's part of the scenery, like the parked cars ...? <b>simile</b>	What does "Miss Meeks bites her tongue" mean? <b>She keeps quiet.</b>
What is the name of Zinkoff's next door neighbor? <b>Andrew</b>	How does Zinkoff's behavior on the first day of school reflect his personality traits? <b>shows his unique and carefree personality</b>	The narrator often refers to Zinkoff's parents as _____. <b>Mr. Z or Mrs. Z</b>
Miss Meeks calculates ____ on the first day of school. <b>the total number of school days (2,160)</b>	Miss Meeks puts on the train conductor's cap and initiates the ____."Learning Train"	What does a fourth grader do to try to upset Zinkoff on the first day of school? <b>take the giraffe hat</b>
What theme is shown after Andrew moves next door to Zinkoff? <b>friendship</b>	What does the trophy symbolize? <b>generosity and compassion</b>	How does the mood shift at the end of the soccer championship? <b>happy to sad when Zinkoff sees Andrew</b>
What does "The class is atwitter." mean? <b>buzzing with excitement and energy</b>	Define "She's a real honeybug." <b>Mr. Z expressing admiration or affection about his car</b>	What type of figurative language is...Words tickle him like fingertips in the ribs. ...? <b>simile</b>
What is the name of Zinkoff's elementary school? <b>John W. Satterfield Elementary School</b>	What imaginary place mentioned by Miss Meeks causes Zinkoff to laugh uncontrollably? <b>Jabip</b>	What nickname does Zinkoff earn after joining the soccer team? <b>Wild Foot</b>
What is the name of the Peewee League soccer team? <b>Titans</b>	What does Zinkoff bake to welcome Andrew? <b>a giant snickerdoodle</b>	What does Zinkoff give Andrew after the championship game? <b>his trophy</b>
Zinkoff values ____ more than personal achievements when he gives his trophy to Andrew. <b>friendship</b>	Zinkoff's friendly and agreeable interaction with the tall red-haired boy _____. <b>prevents a disagreement</b>	Zinkoff's handwriting in the "Writing My Own Name" activity is described as _____. <b>doodling</b>
What type of figurative language is ...The classroom is a sea of boggling eyes....? <b>metaphor</b>	What type of figurative language is ...Every Titan wears a sour puss. ....? <b>idiom</b>	What type of figurative language is ...They jump like kangaroos....? <b>simile</b>

Where does Andrew move? <b>Heatherwood</b>	Name one thing Mrs. Biswell dislikes about Zinkoff? <b>his laughter, sloppiness, and poor handwriting</b>	Who is the Waiting Man? <b>a neighbor who has been waiting for his brother for 32 years</b>
What does Zinkoff deliver on "Take Donald Zinkoff to Work Day" ? <b>self-made mail</b>	Zinkoff is asked to leave the classroom after an incident with Mrs. Biswell's cherished _____. <b>eraser</b>	Zinkoff wishes to participate in ____ but can't due to postal regulations. <b>Take Your Kid to Work Day</b>
After surgery Zinkoff compares himself to _____. <b>the Waiting Man</b>	The empty mailbag symbolizes _____. <b>A completed job and the emotional impact the day has on Zinkoff</b>	Why does Zinkoff cry after "Take Zinkoff to Work Day"? <b>He realizes the day is over.</b>
Define fervently...The night before, Donald went to bed fervently wishing for a blizzard the next day. <b>eagerly</b>	What does the idiom "piece a cake" mean? <b>easy to accomplish</b>	What emotion describes "Take Donald Zinkoff to Work Day." <b>joyful</b>
Why does Mrs. Biswell assign Zinkoff to the far back corner? <b>because of his behavior and laughing</b>	Hector Bins reveals he wrote _____ as his best friend, referring to his pet lizard. <b>"Nobody"</b>	Name the location where Zinkoff faces his fear of the darkness. <b>cellar</b>
Why does Zinkoff want to deliver the mail on Take Donald Zinkoff to Work Day? <b>to spend time with his dad</b>	Zinkoff misses ____ weeks of school and drives his mother crazy. <b>three</b>	Zinkoff is not afraid of darkness except in the cellar due to the imagined _____. <b>Furnace Monster</b>
What is the mood in the classroom when Zinkoff laughs continuously? <b>joyful</b>	Why does the author include using Polly as an alarm to keep Zinkoff from sneaking off to school? <b>to add humor</b>	Which big event changes the way students view Zinkoff during 5 <sup>th</sup> grade <b>Field Day</b>
Define silly goose...they peek again and see that the silly goose signed up for all eight instruments. <b>foolish person</b>	What type of figurative language is...beat the pants off 'em... ? <b>idiom</b>	Define...they bring the Purples back to a rousing victory by a nose. <b>The fast racers come from behind to win.</b>
Who is Mr. Yalowitz? Zinkoff's fourth grade teacher	How does Mr. Yalowitz contribute to Zinkoff's sense of self-worth ? <b>Positive remarks encourage Zinkoff.</b>	What nickname is Zinkoff given? <b>Loser</b>
How does Mr. Yalowitz contribute to Zinkoff's sense of self-worth in fourth grade? <b>increased self-esteem</b>	What is the primary challenge Zinkoff faces during his three weeks of recovery? <b>boredom</b>	The focus of Field Day shifts for fourth- and fifth-graders from fun to _____. <b>winning and losing (competition)</b>
Mr. Yalowitz encourages Zinkoff, spotlighting him and making _____ remarks. <b>humorous</b>	The unique test Zinkoff takes asks him a question about _____. <b>his best friend</b>	What impact does Zinkoff's nickname have on him? <b>does not change him from his unique perspective on life</b>
Define "Time to hit the trail." <b>It's time to leave or go away.</b>	Define "Zinkoff has been tagged and bagged." <b>Zinkoff has been labeled as a "loser."</b>	What type of figurative language is...he thinks he's out of the woods...? <b>idiom</b>

Whose house does Zinkoff casually mention visiting? <b>Hector Binns's house</b>	Why does Zinkoff decide not to go to school on Field Day? <b>He is feeling embarrassed and rejected.</b>	What does Gary Hobin become after the Yellows win big at Field Day? <b>the King of the School</b>
What event makes Zinkoff briefly popular in school? <b>receiving an A in geography</b>	At Monroe School, Zinkoff reunites with _____. <b>Andrew</b>	Zinkoff walked to elementary school. How will he get to Monroe Middle School? <b>bus</b>
What does the turkey sticker symbolize? <b>a moment of connection and understanding</b>	How does Zinkoff feel during graduation with the orchestra? <b>sense of nostalgia (melancholy)</b>	What item does Gary Hobin wear daily after the Yellows win big at Field Day? <b>a plastic gold medal</b>
What does "petrified" mean in the context of "petrified bubblegum"? <b>turned to stone or hardened</b>	What does the metaphor "a regular bulldozer in bed" imply about Binns? <b>He's a restless sleeper.</b>	What figurative language is used in "Hands sprout like weeds to be high-fived"? <b>simile</b>
Where does Zinkoff end up instead of going to school on Field Day? <b>at the house of an elderly woman</b>	How does Zinkoff feel about Monroe Middle? <b>intimidated by the large and unfamiliar environment</b>	How has Andrew changed since he moved away from Zinkoff's neighborhood? <b>confident</b>
Name one activity Zinkoff enjoys during the summer. <b>riding his bike, playing Monopoly, going to the beach</b>	Name one activity Zinkoff participates in during middle school. <b>clubs, band, basketball</b>	Why are students excited about the first snowflake? <b>They anticipate a snow day.</b>
What change does Zinkoff face as he enters Monroe Middle School? <b>Unfamiliar, large, intimidating place</b>	Which insect does Zinkoff compare the falling snow to? <b>moth</b>	What does Zinkoff's graduation from Satterfield Elementary symbolize? <b>growing up – the end childhood</b>
What type of figurative language is "Zinkoff ricochets like a pinball off milling bodies"? <b>simile</b>	What type of figurative language is "The spinning lights are far away now, a fallen spaceship." <b>metaphor</b>	Define "Katie, bar the door." <b>Watch out for trouble.</b>
Who does Zinkoff look for in the snow? <b>Claudia</b>	What unusual thing does Hector Binns collect? <b>earwax</b>	Polly celebrates Zinkoff's return by making him a _____. <b>paper snowflake</b>
What is the mood when Zinkoff searches for Claudia? <b>tense and anxious</b>	How does the community react to Donald's nighttime adventure? <b>with concern, supportive, surprise</b>	At the end of the novel, Bonce _____. <b>picks Zinkoff to be on his team</b>
How does the falling snow impact Zinkoff's emotions during his search for Claudia? <b>adds mystery and fear</b>	What does Zinkoff's persistence in searching for Claudia symbolize? <b>compassion and determination</b>	What does the snow changing to rain symbolize? <b>Zinkoff's changing emotions</b>
What does the phrase "he holds his tongue" mean? <b>He refrains from speaking.</b>	Define podium as used in "She stands at the podium and gives a speech"? <b>a raised platform for a speaker</b>	What figurative language is used in "It's like bumper cars at the fair"? <b>simile</b>



## Activity 3 – Loser Playlist

Have students create a playlist that reflects the mood and themes of the novel. Students need to explain each of their choices. Here is an example playlist.

"Brave" by Sara Bareilles - captures Zinkoff's courage as he faces challenges

"Count on Me" by Bruno Mars - highlights the theme of friendship throughout the story

"Happy" by Pharrell Williams - reflects the moments of joy and positivity in Zinkoff's life

"Imagine" by John Lennon - explores the imaginative and unique perspective that Zinkoff brings to the world

"Eye of the Tiger" by Survivor - symbolizes the determination and spirit Zinkoff shows in various situations

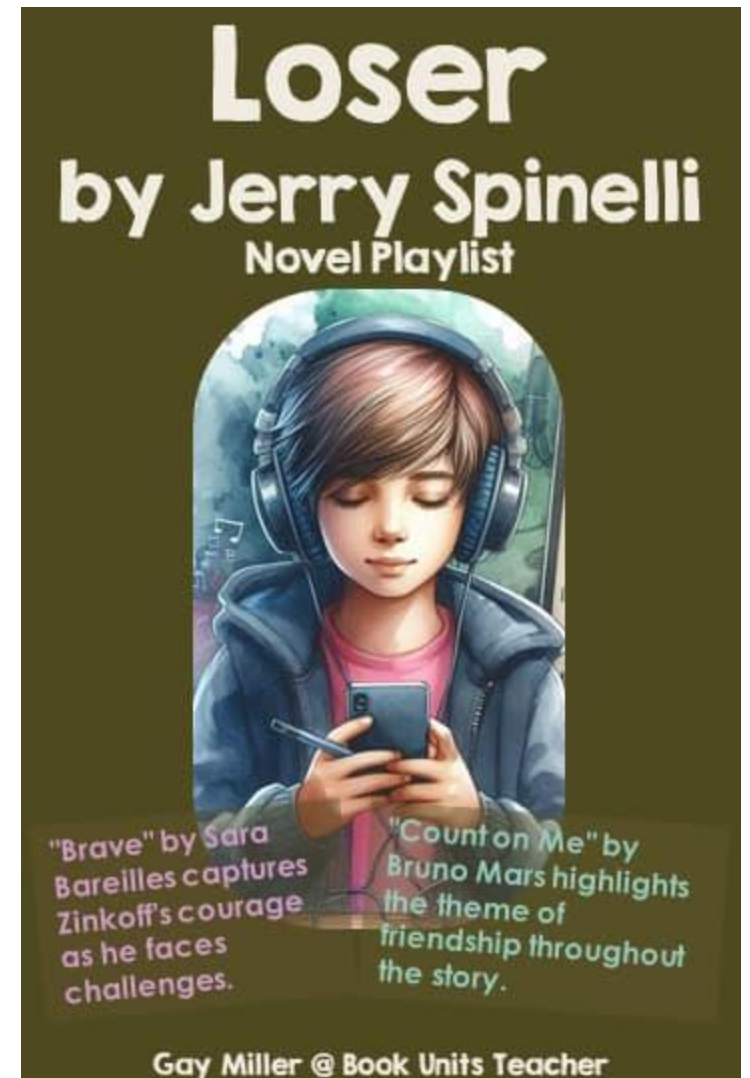
"Roar" by Katy Perry - embraces Zinkoff's individuality and the courage to be oneself

"Lean on Me" by Bill Withers - connects with the supportive relationships Zinkoff builds

"Somewhere Over the Rainbow" by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole - conveys the sense of hope and dreams in the novel

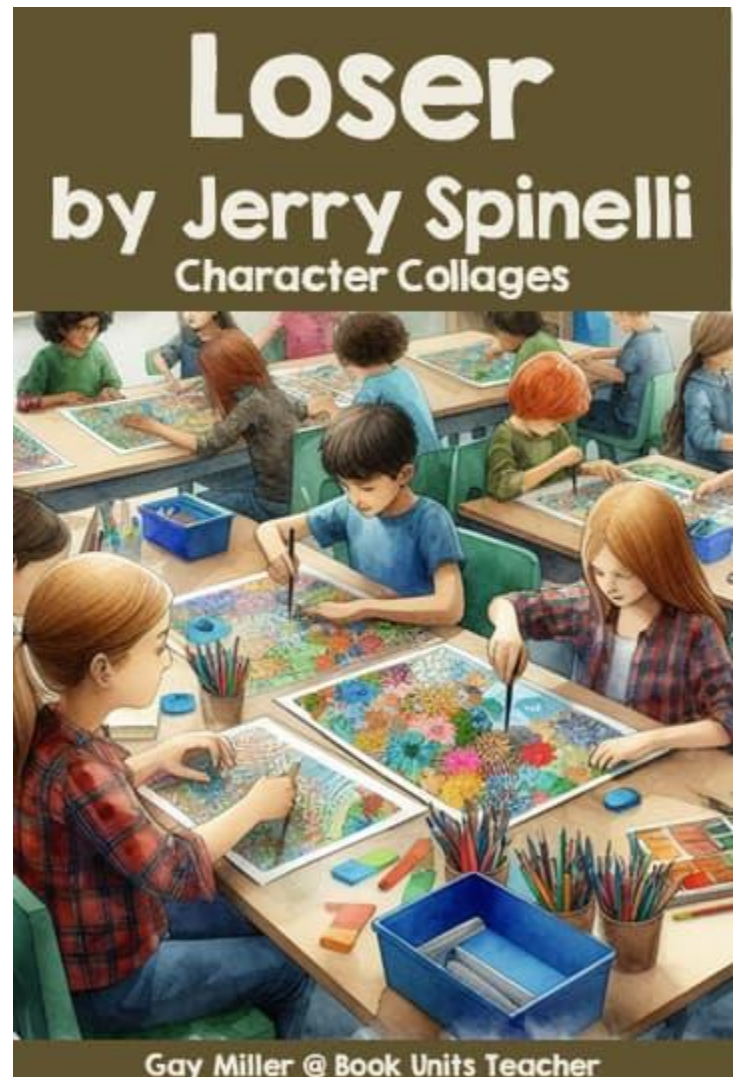
"A Thousand Years" by Christina Perri - captures the qualities of friendship portrayed in the story

"We Will Rock You" by Queen - represents the triumphs and challenges Zinkoff faces during Field Day



## Activity 4 – Character Collages

Have students create collages featuring Zinkoff and other characters. Encourage them to use symbols, quotes, and images to represent each character's personality. Display the collages in the classroom to celebrate their creativity.



# Loser

by Jerry Spinelli

*Preview*

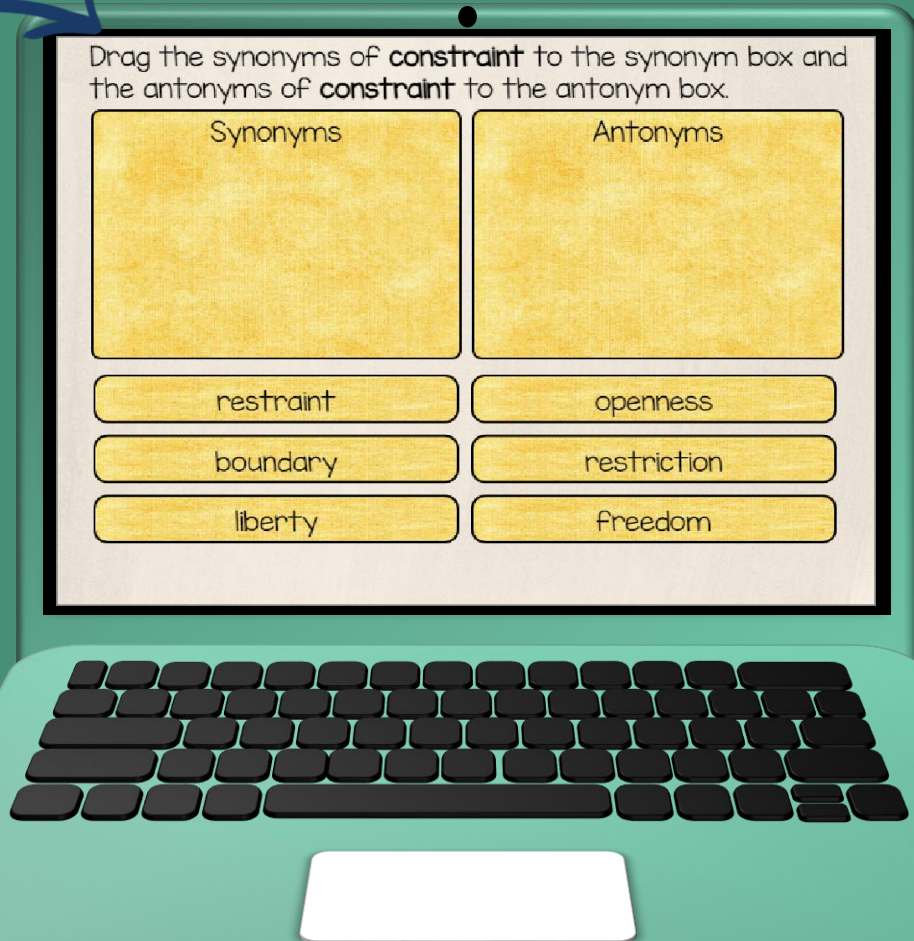
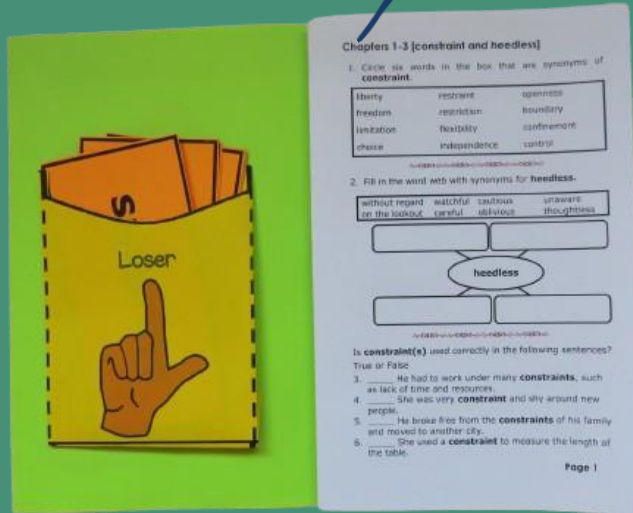
Try out this  
unit. Scroll  
down to see  
sample  
pages.





# PRINTABLE & DIGITAL VOCABULARY

Digital vocabulary practice is provided through Boom Learning Decks.



# 10 COMPREHENSION CHECKS

## Loser ~ Chapters 1-3

<p>1. Write S for simile and M for metaphor.</p> <p>_____ He's part of the scenery, like the parked cars.</p> <p>_____ ... his arms out like a swan diver...</p> <p>_____ Sooner or later the let-loose sidewalk pups will cross the streets.</p> <p>_____ He stomps up and down on the sidewalk as if it's a puddle.</p>	<p>2. Why does the narrator not know Zinkoff's name for a long time?</p> <p>a. Zinkoff never talks to anyone. b. Zinkoff is new to the neighborhood. c. The narrator is not interested in making friends. d. Zinkoff is part of the background, not standing out.</p>
<p>3. Why do you think the author uses the second-person point of view in Chapter 1?</p> <p>a. to create a mysterious atmosphere in the story b. to make the reader feel like they are a part of the narrator's experiences c. to emphasize Zinkoff's perspective on growing up d. to distance the reader from the events in the narrative</p>	<p>4. What theme is explored in Chapter 2 "The Bright Wide World"?</p> <p>a. friendship b. freedom and exploration c. competition d. loneliness</p>
<p>5. What is the cause of the kids racing against each other in Chapter 3?</p> <p>a. Zinkoff challenges them. b. They are bored. c. They want to impress their parents. d. Racing is a natural instinct.</p>	<p>6. How would you describe the mood when the kids race against each other in the alleys?</p> <p>a. sad and lonely b. exciting and competitive c. calm and peaceful d. frustrating and boring</p>
<p>7. Number these events in the correct sequence.</p> <p>_____ Everything becomes a race for the boys, from hitting a telephone pole with a stone to eating cupcakes.</p> <p>_____ Zinkoff experiences freedom for the first time as he races against a white car.</p> <p>_____ The kids start racing against each other as they explore the world.</p> <p>_____ The narrator talks about growing up with a kid named Zinkoff without really noticing him.</p>	<p>8. Match sentence halves.</p> <p>_____ Zinkoff is described as someone who seems to have more fun than others</p> <p>_____ Racing becomes a way of proving themselves</p> <p>_____ Zinkoff is so thrilled</p> <p>_____ The boys discover the joy of winning</p> <p>a) and separating from each other. b) by the bright wide world in front of him. c) but is not really noticed by them. d) and constantly find new ways to compete.</p>

Digital comprehension questions are provided though Boom Learning Decks.

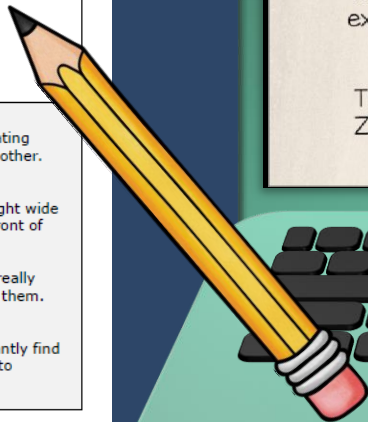
Number the details in the correct sequence.

Everything becomes a race for the boys, from hitting a telephone pole with a stone to eating cupcakes.

Zinkoff experiences freedom for the first time as he races against a white car.

The kids start racing against each other as they explore the world.

The narrator talks about growing up with a kid named Zinkoff without really noticing him.



# 15 Constructed Response Questions

Digital writing prompts are provided through Google Slides.

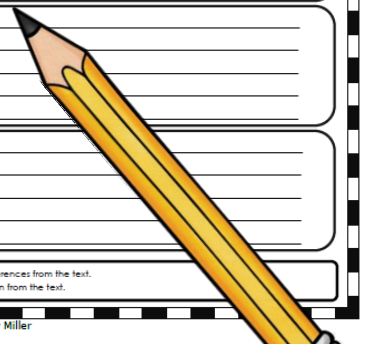
**Constructed Response - Responding to Text**

Answer the questions.

<b>Character Analysis</b> Describe Zinkoff's personality based on his actions and reactions in Chapter 2 when he experiences the bright wide world for the first time. How does his behavior reflect his feelings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>_____</li><li>_____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
<b>Theme Exploration</b> Identify a theme introduced in Chapter 2, "The Bright Wide World." Provide examples from the text that support this theme and explain why the theme is significant in the story.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>_____</li><li>_____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
<b>Inference and Prediction</b> Explain why Zinkoff finds so much joy in running and exploring the bright wide world. Then, predict how this newfound freedom might impact his interactions with others in future chapters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>_____</li><li>_____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
<b>Cause and Effect</b> What motivates the kids to race, and how does this activity affect their relationships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>_____</li><li>_____</li><li>_____</li></ul>

BL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.  
RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

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## Constructed Response – Responding to Text

Answer the questions.

### Character Analysis

Describe Zinkoff's personality based on his actions and reactions in Chapter 2 when he experiences the bright wide world for the first time. How does his behavior reflect his feelings?

Type answer here.

### Theme Exploration

Identify a theme introduced in Chapter 2, "The Bright Wide World." Provide examples from the text that support this theme and explain why the theme is significant in the story.

Type answer here.

### Inference and Prediction

Explain why Zinkoff finds so much joy in running and exploring the bright wide world. Then, predict how this newfound freedom might impact his interactions with others in future chapters.

Type answer here.

### Cause and Effect

What motivates the kids to race, and how does this activity affect their relationships?

Type answer here.



# What are Boom Cards?

Boom Cards are digital task cards that students play on the Boom Learning Website.

They...

- ✓ are fully digital – require no printing, paper, ink, etc.
- ✓ may be used on all modern browsers
- ✓ are played on devices connected to the Internet
- ✓ can be used for student practice at no cost to you

When you purchase this novel study from TPT, you will receive special links to these Boom Cards. When you click on one of these links, you will be asked to sign into your account or create a free account at the Boom Learning Website. The special links in the paid resource let the Boom Learning site know you have purchased the deck. When you click the link, Boom Learning sends the Boom Deck to your Boom Library, so your students can access them. Students can play for free or data will be tracked for you with the Boom Learning Paid Subscription.

Click here for a [playable preview on Boom Learning](#).





# Boom Learning Card Examples

What theme is explored in Chapter 2 "The Bright Wide World"?

- loneliness
- competition
- friendship
- freedom and exploration



How would you describe the mood when the kids race against each other in the alleys?

- Frustrating and boring
- exciting and competitive
- calm and peaceful
- sad and lonely



Drag to match - Match sentence halves.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Zinkoff is described as someone who seems to have more fun than others. | by the bright wide world in front of him. |
| The boys discover the joy of winning.                                   | and separating from each other.           |
| Zinkoff is so thrilled.   | but is not really noticed by them.        |
| Racing becomes a way of proving themselves.                             | and constantly find new ways to compete.  |

Is **constraint(s)** used correctly in this sentence?

He had to work under many **constraints**, such as lack of time and resources.



- YES
- NO

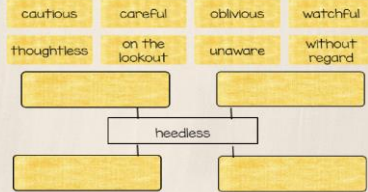
Is **constraint(s)** used correctly in this sentence?

She used a **constraint** to measure the length of the table.



- YES
- NO

Drag the synonyms of heedless to the boxes on the word web.



Type S for simile and M for metaphor.

- He's part of the scenery, like the parked cars.
- ... his arms out like a swan diver ...
- Sooner or later the let-loose sidewalk pups will cross the streets.
- He stomps up and down on the sidewalk as if it's a puddle.

Why does the narrator not know Zinkoff's name for a long time?

- Zinkoff never talks to anyone.
- Zinkoff is new to the neighborhood.
- The narrator is not interested in making friends.
- Zinkoff is part of the background, not standing out.

Why do you think the author uses the second-person point of view in Chapter 1?

- to make the reader feel like they are a part of the narrator's experiences
- to distance the reader from the events in the narrative
- to create a mysterious atmosphere in the story
- to emphasize Zinkoff's perspective on growing up

What is the cause of the kids racing against each other in Chapter 3?

- They are bored.
- Racing is a natural instinct.
- Zinkoff challenges them.
- They want to impress their parents.



Drag the synonyms of **constraint** to the synonym box and the antonyms of **constraint** to the antonym box.

- |           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| Synonyms  | Antonyms    |
| [ ]       | [ ]         |
| restraint | openness    |
| boundary  | restriction |
| liberty   | freedom     |

Is **constraint(s)** used correctly in this sentence?

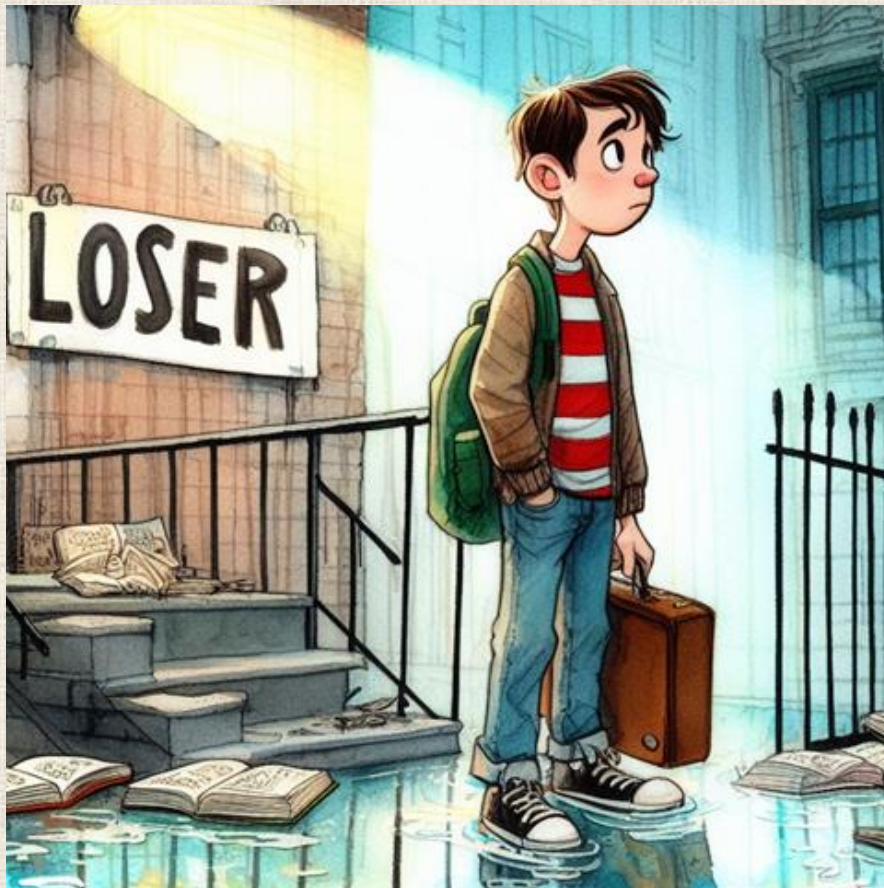
He had to work under many **constraints**, such as lack of time and resources.



- NO
- YES

# Loser

by Jerry Spinelli  
*Novel Study Samples*



*Created by Gay Miller*





**Thank you for  
downloading this novel  
study sample.**

**On the next pages, you will find the following pages  
from the unit including:**

- **Table of Contents for the Digital + Printable Version**
- **Lesson Plans at a Glance for the Full Unit**

### **FREE SAMPLE PAGES**

**The First Reading Selection plus Answer Keys  
(These pages are found in all versions of this unit.)**

- **Vocabulary Practice**
- **Comprehension Questions**
- **Constructed Response Writing Prompt  
(with and without the Common Core  
Standards)**



**Are you wondering what other novel  
studies I have available? You can see  
the complete list [here](#).**

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# Lesson Plans at a Glance

Read & Complete Comprehension Questions	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Practice Book	Constructed Response Question	Activities	Writing an Opinion Essay
Chapters 1-3	constraint heedless	Page 1	Responding to Text		Lesson 1 – Three Types of Opinion Essays and How to Get Started Writing an Opinion Essay
Chapters 4-6	hitch jabber	Page 2	Setting		Lesson 2 –Using Diagrams and the Chart Method for Researching Information
Chapters 7-9	intrepid etiquette	Page 3	Summarizing		Lesson 3 – Outlining Information
Chapters 10-12	atrocious mediocre	Page 4	Figurative Language Comparing Characters		Lesson 4 – Turning the Outline into Paragraph Format
Chapters 13-15	convalesce pronouncement	Page 5 Page 6 (Review)	Point of View		Lesson 5 – Writing the Introduction to an Essay
Chapters 16-18	hapless dollop	Page 7	Character Traits of Zinkoff Course of Action		Lesson 6 – Writing Strong Conclusions
Chapters 19-21	prominence diverting	Page 8	Character Change Acrostic		Lesson 7 – Using Transitions Effectively
Chapters 22-24	trounce skirmish	Page 9	Mood/Details Problem and Solution Chain		Lesson 8 – Revising and Editing
Chapters 25-27	silhouette slog	Page 10	Author's Tone Theme	Snowflake Craft	Lesson 9 – Gathering Relevant Information
Chapters 28-30	overlay balmy	Page 11 Page 12 (Review)	Plot Development	BINGO Game	Lesson 10 – Writing a Bibliography
	Vocabulary Test			Loser Trivia Game	

## Review

1. Add vowels to the nonsense words to create vocabulary words.

prnncmnt	_____
cnvlsc	_____
trcs	_____
tqtt	_____
mocr	_____
vrly	_____

Use the vocabulary words you just created to complete these sentences.

2. His performance was \_\_\_\_\_, not bad but not good either.
3. The king made a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ that he would abdicate the throne and leave the country.
4. She used a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ to add some text and stickers to her photo.
5. She learned the \_\_\_\_\_ of the tea ceremony from her grandmother.
6. She had to \_\_\_\_\_ for several weeks after she broke her leg in a skiing accident.
7. He received a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ grade on his math test because he didn't study at all.



8. Complete the analogies with a vocabulary word.  
 shadow : silhouette :: cream : \_\_\_\_\_  
 winter : balmy :: peaceful : \_\_\_\_\_  
 cover : overlay :: announcement : \_\_\_\_\_  
 recover : convalesce :: chat : \_\_\_\_\_  
 brave : intrepid :: terrible : \_\_\_\_\_  
 middle-of-the-road : mediocre :: defeat : \_\_\_\_\_  
 limit : constraint :: ignore : \_\_\_\_\_  
 mountain : prominence :: drag : \_\_\_\_\_  
 problem : hitch :: distracting : \_\_\_\_\_  
 unlucky : hapless :: polite : \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapters 1-3 [constraint and heedless]

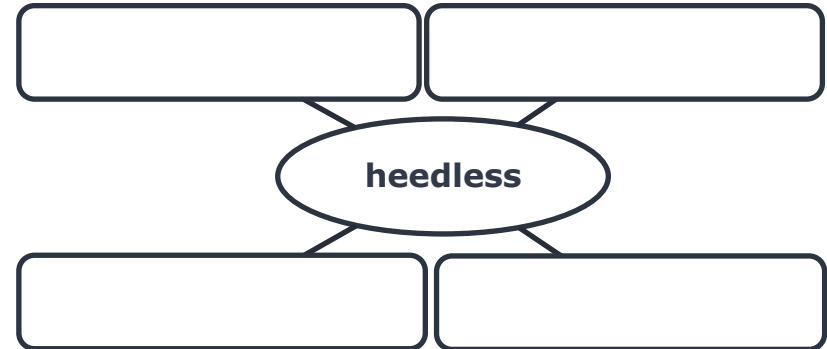
1. Circle six words in the box that are synonyms of **constraint**.

liberty	restraint	openness
freedom	restriction	boundary
limitation	flexibility	confinement
choice	independence	control



2. Fill in the word web with synonyms for **heedless**.

without regard	watchful	cautious	unaware
on the lookout	careful	oblivious	thoughtless



Is **constraint(s)** used correctly in the following sentences?

True or False

3. \_\_\_\_\_ He had to work under many **constraints**, such as lack of time and resources.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ She was very **constraint** and shy around new people.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ He broke free from the **constraints** of his family and moved to another city.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ She used a **constraint** to measure the length of the table.



## Review

1. Add vowels to the nonsense words to create vocabulary words.

prnncmnt	pronouncement
cnvlsc	convalesce
trcs	atrocious
tqtt	etiquette
mdcr	mediocre
vrly	overlay

Use the vocabulary words you just created to complete these sentences.

2. His performance was **mediocre**, not bad but not good either. The king made a(n) **pronouncement** that he would abdicate the throne and leave the country.
3. She used a(n) **overlay** to add some text and stickers to her photo.
4. She learned the **etiquette** of the tea ceremony from her grandmother.
5. She had to **convalesce** for several weeks after she broke her leg in a skiing accident.
6. He received a(n) **atrocious** grade on his math test because he didn't study at all.



7. Complete the analogies with a vocabulary word.

shadow : silhouette :: cream : **dollop**  
 winter : balmy :: peaceful : **skirmish**  
 cover : overlay :: announcement : **pronouncement**  
 recover : convalesce :: chat : **jabber**  
 brave : intrepid :: terrible : **atrocious**  
 middle-of-the-road : mediocre :: defeat : **trounce**  
 limit : constraint :: ignore : **heedless**  
 mountain : prominence :: drag : **slog**  
 problem : hitch :: distracting : **diverting**  
 unlucky : hapless :: polite : **etiquette**

## Chapters 1-3 [constraint and heedless]

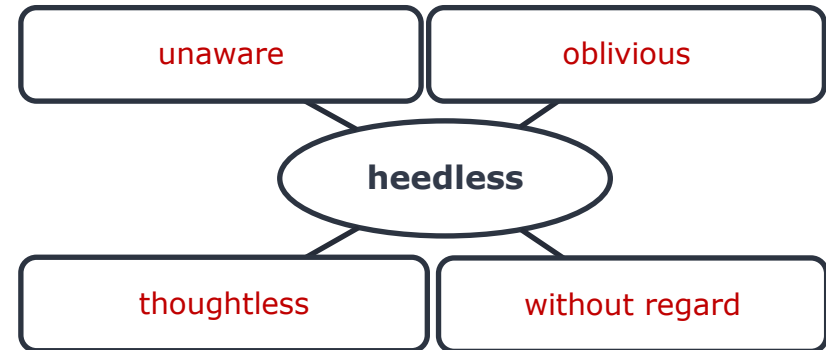
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choice	independence	control



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without regard	watchful	cautious	unaware
on the lookout	careful	oblivious	thoughtless



Is **constraint(s)** used correctly in the following sentences?

True or False

3.   I   He had to work under many **constraints**, such as lack of time and resources.
4.   F   She was very **constraint** and shy around new people.
5.   I   He broke free from the **constraints** of his family and moved to another city.
6.   F   She used a **constraint** to measure the length of the table.

# Loser ~ Chapters 1-3

<p>1. Write S for simile and M for metaphor.</p> <p>_____ He's part of the scenery, like the parked cars.</p> <p>_____ ... his arms out like a swan diver...</p> <p>_____ Sooner or later the let-loose sidewalk pups will cross the streets.</p> <p>_____ He stomps up and down on the sidewalk as if it's a puddle.</p>	<p>2. Why does the narrator not know Zinkoff's name for a long time?</p> <p>11. Zinkoff never talks to anyone.</p> <p>12. Zinkoff is new to the neighborhood.</p> <p>13. The narrator is not interested in making friends.</p> <p>14. Zinkoff is part of the background, not standing out.</p>
<p>3. Why do you think the author uses the second-person point of view in Chapter 1?</p> <p>a. to create a mysterious atmosphere in the story</p> <p>b. to make the reader feel like they are a part of the narrator's experiences</p> <p>c. to emphasize Zinkoff's perspective on growing up</p> <p>d. to distance the reader from the events in the narrative</p>	<p>4. What theme is explored in Chapter 2 "The Bright Wide World"?</p> <p>a. friendship</p> <p>b. freedom and exploration</p> <p>c. competition</p> <p>d. loneliness</p>
<p>5. What is the cause of the kids racing against each other in Chapter 3?</p> <p>a. Zinkoff challenges them.</p> <p>b. They are bored.</p> <p>c. They want to impress their parents.</p> <p>d. Racing is a natural instinct.</p>	<p>6. How would you describe the mood when the kids race against each other in the alleys?</p> <p>a. sad and lonely</p> <p>b. exciting and competitive</p> <p>c. calm and peaceful</p> <p>d. frustrating and boring</p>
<p>7. Number these events in the correct sequence.</p> <p>_____ Everything becomes a race for the boys, from hitting a telephone pole with a stone to eating cupcakes.</p> <p>_____ Zinkoff experiences freedom for the first time as he races against a white car.</p> <p>_____ The kids start racing against each other as they explore the world.</p> <p>_____ The narrator talks about growing up with a kid named Zinkoff without really noticing him.</p>	<p>8. Match sentence halves.</p> <p>_____ Zinkoff is a) and separating described as someone from each other who seems to have more fun than others</p> <p>_____ Racing b) by the bright wide becomes a way of world in front of proving themselves him.</p> <p>_____ Zinkoff is so c) but is not really thrilled noticed by them.</p> <p>_____ The boys d) and constantly find discover the joy of new ways to winning compete.</p>

# Constructed Response - Responding to Text

Answer the questions.

## Character Analysis

Describe Zinkoff's personality based on his actions and reactions in Chapter 2 when he experiences the bright wide world for the first time. How does his behavior reflect his feelings?

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Theme Exploration

Identify a theme introduced in Chapter 2, "The Bright Wide World." Provide examples from the text that support this theme and explain why the theme is significant in the story.

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Inference and Prediction

Explain why Zinkoff finds so much joy in running and exploring the bright wide world. Then, predict how this newfound freedom might impact his interactions with others in future chapters.

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Cause and Effect

What motivates the kids to race, and how does this activity affect their relationships?

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**RL.5.1** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RL.6.1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

# Loser ~ Chapters 1-3

<p>1. Write S for simile and M for metaphor.  <u>S</u> He's part of the scenery, like the parked cars.  <u>S</u> ... his arms out like a swan diver...  <u>M</u> Sooner or later the let-loose sidewalk pups will cross the streets.  <u>S</u> He stomps up and down on the sidewalk as if it's a puddle.</p>	<p>2. Why does the narrator not know Zinkoff's name for a long time?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zinkoff never talks to anyone.</li> <li>Zinkoff is new to the neighborhood.</li> <li>The narrator is not interested in making friends.</li> <li><b>Zinkoff is part of the background, not standing out.</b></li> </ol>								
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<p>5. What is the cause of the kids racing against each other in Chapter 3?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zinkoff challenges them.</li> <li>They are bored.</li> <li>They want to impress their parents.</li> <li><b>Racing is a natural instinct.</b></li> </ol>	<p>6. How would you describe the mood when the kids race against each other in the alleys?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sad and lonely</li> <li><b>exciting and competitive</b></li> <li>calm and peaceful</li> <li>frustrating and boring</li> </ol>								
<p>7. Number these events in the correct sequence.</p> <p><u>4</u> Everything becomes a race for the boys, from hitting a telephone pole with a stone to eating cupcakes.  <u>2</u> Zinkoff experiences freedom for the first time as he races against a white car.  <u>3</u> The kids start racing against each other as they explore the world.  <u>1</u> The narrator talks about growing up with a kid named Zinkoff without really noticing him.</p>	<p>8. Match sentence halves.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>c</u> Zinkoff is described as someone who seems to have more fun than others</td> <td>a) and separating from each other.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>a</u> Racing becomes a way of proving themselves</td> <td>b) by the bright wide world in front of him.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>b</u> Zinkoff is so thrilled</td> <td>c) but is not really noticed by them.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>d</u> The boys discover the joy of winning</td> <td>d) and constantly find new ways to compete.</td> </tr> </table>	<u>c</u> Zinkoff is described as someone who seems to have more fun than others	a) and separating from each other.	<u>a</u> Racing becomes a way of proving themselves	b) by the bright wide world in front of him.	<u>b</u> Zinkoff is so thrilled	c) but is not really noticed by them.	<u>d</u> The boys discover the joy of winning	d) and constantly find new ways to compete.
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<u>d</u> The boys discover the joy of winning	d) and constantly find new ways to compete.								

# Constructed Response - Responding to Text

Answer the questions.

## Character Analysis

Describe Zinkoff's personality based on his actions and reactions in Chapter 2 when he experiences the bright wide world for the first time. How does his behavior reflect his feelings?

- Zinkoff's personality is depicted as curious, enthusiastic, and full of wonder in Chapter 2. When he experiences the bright wide world for the first time, he is described as "giddy with freedom and speed." His behavior reflects a childlike joy in discovering the world, as he runs heedlessly, feeling the wind in his ears. This suggests Zinkoff is open to new experiences and finds happiness in simple, unstructured moments.

## Theme Exploration

Identify a theme introduced in Chapter 2, "The Bright Wide World." Provide examples from the text that support this theme and explain why the theme is significant in the story.

- The theme of freedom and exploration is introduced in Chapter 2 when Zinkoff enters the bright wide world. Examples include his initial hesitation, followed by the thrill of running without constraints. This significant theme symbolizes the journey of growing up, breaking free from boundaries, and embracing independence.

## Inference and Prediction

Explain why Zinkoff finds so much joy in running and exploring the bright wide world. Then, predict how this newfound freedom might impact his interactions with others in future chapters.

- **Inference:** Zinkoff enjoys running and exploring because it represents his newfound independence and a break from the constraints he experienced as a "home baby." The act of running symbolizes freedom.
- **Prediction:** This newfound freedom might impact Zinkoff's interactions with others in future chapters by making him more confident and willing to engage with peers. It could lead to developing new friendships as he continues to explore and share his experiences with others.

## Cause and Effect

What motivates the kids to race, and how does this activity affect their relationships?

- The cause of the kids racing against each other in Chapter 3 is the instinct to run and compete. The effect transforms their relationships as they focus more on winning and proving themselves.

**RL.5.1** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RL.6.1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

# Addendum

## Constructed Response Questions without Common Core State Standards



### Important Update

Originally 46 states adopted the Common Core State Standards. Many teachers have commented that they love having the standards on pages with constructed response writing prompts for accountability reasons. Now educational trends are changing. Many states have repealed Common Core and adopted their own state standards. To meet the needs of teachers both using and not using Common Core Standards, I have opted to provide the writing questions both with and without standards.

To make creating a printable student packet easier, the comprehension and constructed response questions are both included in this section.

# Loser ~ Chapters 1-3

<p>1. Write S for simile and M for metaphor.</p> <p>_____ He's part of the scenery, like the parked cars.</p> <p>_____ ... his arms out like a swan diver...</p> <p>_____ Sooner or later the let-loose sidewalk pups will cross the streets.</p> <p>_____ He stomps up and down on the sidewalk as if it's a puddle.</p>	<p>2. Why does the narrator not know Zinkoff's name for a long time?</p> <p>a. Zinkoff never talks to anyone.</p> <p>b. Zinkoff is new to the neighborhood.</p> <p>c. The narrator is not interested in making friends.</p> <p>d. Zinkoff is part of the background, not standing out.</p>
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# Constructed Response - Responding to Text

Answer the questions.

## Character Analysis

Describe Zinkoff's personality based on his actions and reactions in Chapter 2 when he experiences the bright wide world for the first time. How does his behavior reflect his feelings?

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Theme Exploration

Identify a theme introduced in Chapter 2, "The Bright Wide World." Provide examples from the text that support this theme and explain why the theme is significant in the story.

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Inference and Prediction

Explain why Zinkoff finds so much joy in running and exploring the bright wide world. Then, predict how this newfound freedom might impact his interactions with others in future chapters.

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Cause and Effect

What motivates the kids to race, and how does this activity affect their relationships?

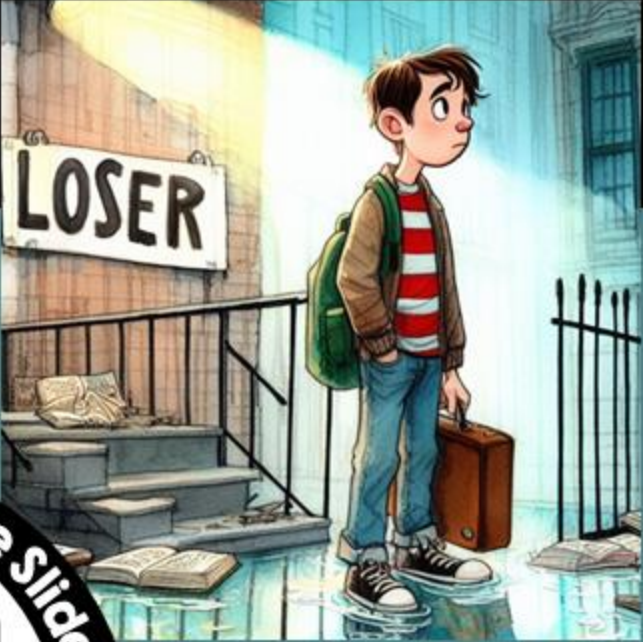
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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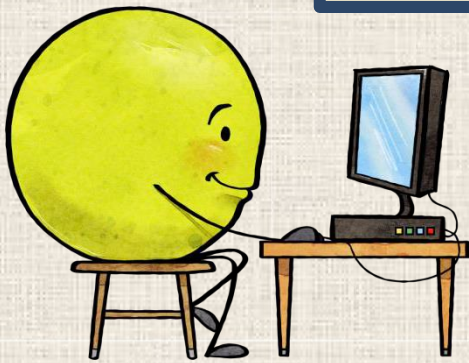
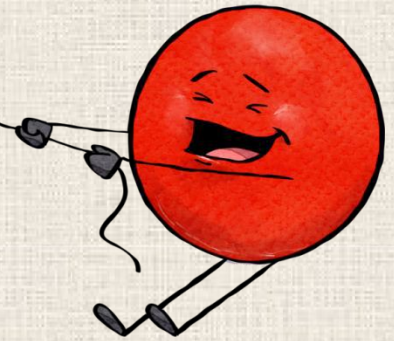
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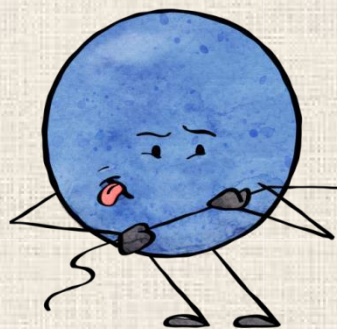


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