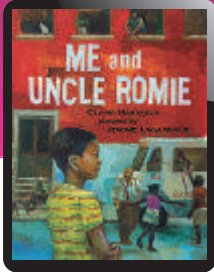


Vocabulary in Context

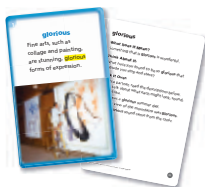
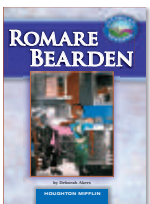


✓ TARGET VOCABULARY

glorious
studio
model
concerned
smeared
ruined
yanked
streak
schedule
feast

Vocabulary
Reader

Context
Cards



1 glorious

Fine arts, such as collage and painting, are stunning, **glorious** forms of expression.



2 studio

A **studio** is an artist's workshop. Painters paint and potters make pots there.



3 model

As they design a building, architects may create a small, **model** version.



4 concerned

This photographer is **concerned**, or worried, that the penguin will move.



- ▶ Study each **Context Card**.
- ▶ Use context clues to determine the meanings of these words.

5 **smear**

Paint may be lightly dabbed or thickly **smear**ed onto a surface.



6 **ruin**

This handmade pot was perfect at first, but then it collapsed and became **ruin**ed.



7 **yank**

This girl must have accidentally **yank**ed, or pulled, the base from the vase.



8 **streak**

In this lively artwork, some colors seem to **streak** across the painting.



9 **schedule**

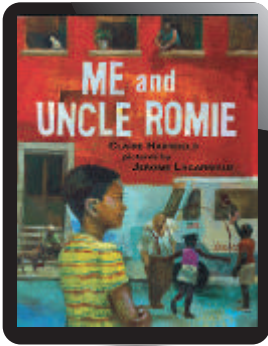
Some artists stick to a regular **schedule**, or timetable, as they work.



10 **feast**

A photographer took a picture of this delicious **feast** full of food.





Read and Comprehend



✓ TARGET SKILL

Understanding Characters As you read “Me and Uncle Romie,” look for text evidence that helps you understand what the main **characters** are like. Pay attention to what they think, how they act, and what they say. Also, think about how you might react in a similar situation. To describe a character, use a graphic organizer to list text evidence of the character’s **thoughts, actions, and words.**

Thoughts	Actions	Words

✓ TARGET STRATEGY

Visualize To **visualize**, use details from the text to form a picture in your mind. As you read “Me and Uncle Romie,” use details in the text to help you picture the characters, the places they go, and the things they do. Visualizing characters, settings, and events can help you better understand the story.



PREVIEW THE TOPIC

Visual Arts

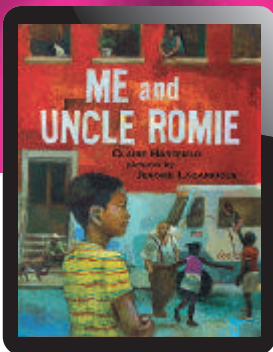
Visual arts, such as paintings, collage, and sculpture, appeal mostly to our sense of sight. A collage combines many different materials in a single image. A collage may include paint, bits of cloth, photographs, ticket stubs, and anything else the artist wishes to use.

In “Me and Uncle Romie,” the character of Uncle Romie is based on a well-known visual artist named Romare Bearden. His work portrays African American culture in the United States, especially in the American South and in Harlem, a neighborhood in New York City.



Lesson 8

ANCHOR TEXT



✓ TARGET SKILL

Understanding Characters

Look for details to understand the characters.

✓ GENRE

Realistic fiction has characters and events that are like people and events in real life. As you read, look for:

- ▶ realistic characters and events
- ▶ characters who have feelings and actions just like real people
- ▶ details that help the reader picture the setting



RL.4.2 determine theme from details/summarize; **RL.4.3** describe a character, setting, or event, drawing on details; **RL.4.6** compare and contrast the point of view from which stories are narrated; **RL.4.10** read and comprehend literature

MEET THE AUTHOR

CLAIRE HARTFIELD

Claire Hartfield was born in Chicago. Her personal mission is to foster a better world for children, and she works diligently to make schools fairer and more equal for everyone. Today she pursues this goal as a lawyer. But for many years, as a dance teacher, she guided students to express themselves through movement. She became interested in the painter and collagist Romare Bearden because of his ability to tell stories with his art. In this story, the character of Uncle Romie is based on Bearden.

MEET THE ILLUSTRATOR

JEROME LAGARRIGUE



Born in Paris, France, Jerome Lagarrigue was inspired at a remarkably young age to express his ideas and emotions through creative

art. He has won multiple awards and critical praise for his illustrations in children's books like *Freedom Summer*. In addition to his well-known work as an illustrator, Lagarrigue spends much of his time as a painter. He has even exhibited oil paintings in Italy. Look closely at the illustrations in "Me and Uncle Romie" to find the various printed materials Lagarrigue used to create unique collages that mimic the style of artist Romare Bearden.



ME and UNCLE ROMIE

by **CLAIRE HARTFIELD**

illustrated by **JEROME LAGARRIGUE**

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do an artist's experiences affect his or her art?

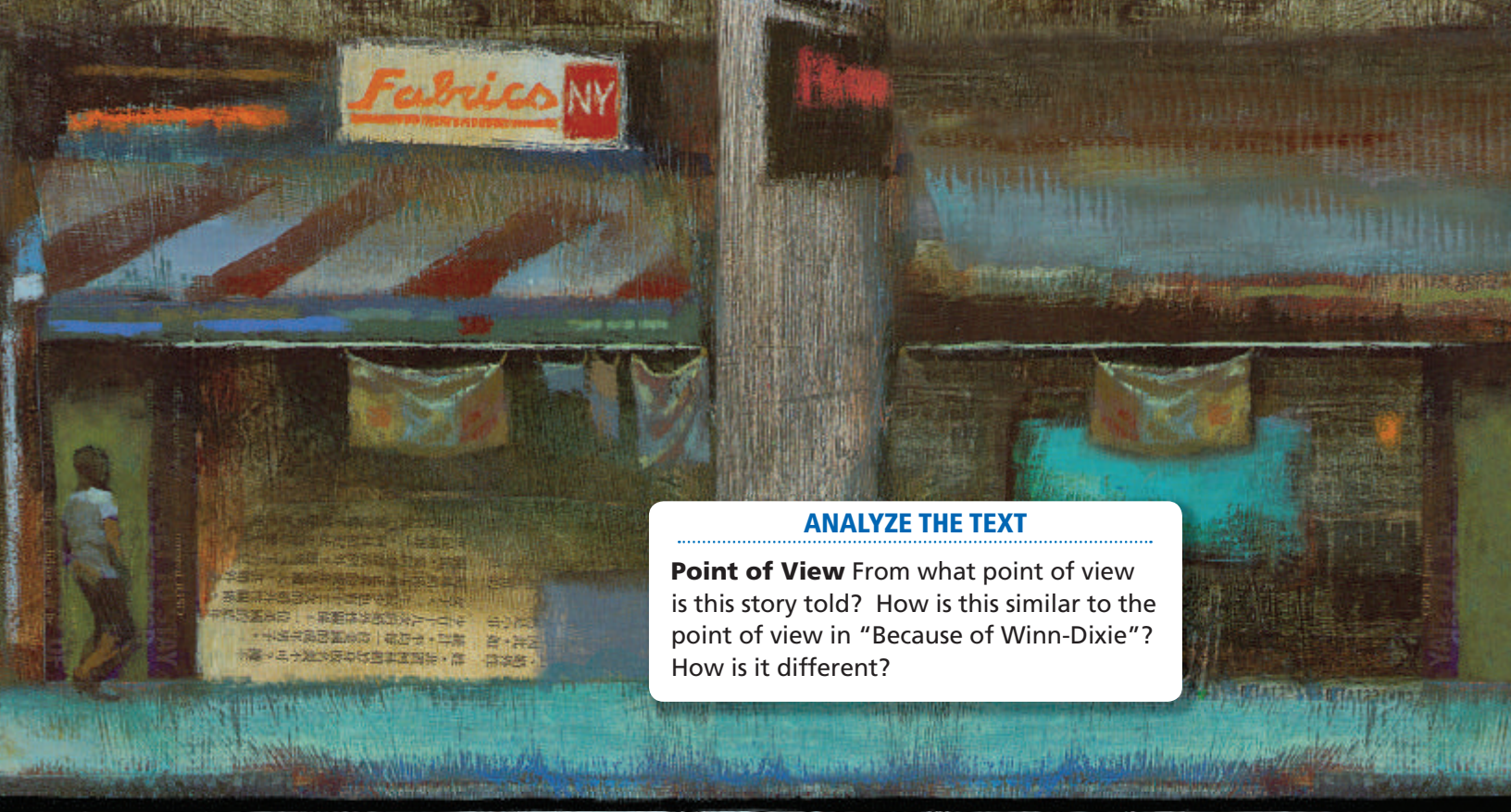


James waits nervously on a passenger train bound for New York City to visit his Aunt Nanette and Uncle Romie. He's never met them before, and he's a little **concerned**. James has left behind his home in North Carolina, and though he misses his friend B. J., his dad, and his mom (who will soon have twin babies), James hopes he will have fun on this summer vacation, especially since his birthday is coming up.

Then I saw it . . . New York City. Buildings stretching up to the sky. So close together. Not like North Carolina at all.

"Penn Station! Watch your step," the conductor said, helping me down to the platform. I did like Daddy said and found a spot for myself close to the train. Swarms of people rushed by. Soon I heard a silvery voice call my name. This had to be Aunt Nanette. I turned and saw her big smile reaching out to welcome me.

She took my hand and guided me through the rushing crowds onto an underground train called the subway. "This will take us right home," she explained.



ANALYZE THE TEXT

Point of View From what point of view is this story told? How is this similar to the point of view in "Because of Winn-Dixie"? How is it different?

Home was like nothing I'd ever seen before. No regular houses anywhere. Just big buildings and stores of all kinds—in the windows I saw paints, fabrics, radios, and TVs.

We turned into the corner building and climbed the stairs to the apartment—five whole flights up. *Whew!* I tried to catch my breath while Aunt Nanette flicked on the lights.

"Uncle Romie's out talking to some people about his big art show that's coming up. He'll be home soon," Aunt Nanette said. She set some milk and a plate of cookies for me on the table. "Your uncle's working very hard, so we won't see much of him for a while. His workroom—we call it his **studio**—is in the front of our apartment. That's where he keeps all the things he needs to make his art."

"Doesn't he just paint?" I asked.

"Uncle Romie is a collage artist," Aunt Nanette explained. "He uses paints, yes. But also photographs, newspapers, cloth. He cuts and pastes them onto a board to make his paintings."

“That sounds kinda easy,” I said.

Aunt Nanette laughed.

“Well, there’s a little more to it than that, James. When you see the paintings, you’ll understand. Come, let’s get you to bed.”

Lying in the dark, I heard heavy footsteps in the hall. A giant stared at me from the doorway. “Hello there, James.” Uncle Romie’s voice was deep and loud, like thunder.

“Thanks for the pepper jelly,” he boomed. “You have a good sleep, now.” Then he disappeared down the hall.

The next morning the door to Uncle Romie’s studio was closed. But Aunt Nanette had plans for both of us. “Today we’re going to a neighborhood called Harlem,” she said. “It’s where Uncle Romie lived as a boy.”

Harlem was full of people walking, working, shopping, eating. Some were watching the goings-on from fire escapes. Others were sitting out on stoops greeting folks who passed by—just like the people back home calling out hellos from their front porches. Most everybody seemed to know Aunt Nanette. A lot of them asked after Uncle Romie too.

We bought peaches at the market, then stopped to visit awhile. I watched some kids playing stickball. “Go on, get in that game,” Aunt Nanette said, gently pushing me over to join them. When I was all hot and sweaty, we cooled off with double chocolate scoops from the ice cream man. Later we shared some barbecue on a rooftop way up high. I felt like I was on top of the world.

As the days went by, Aunt Nanette took me all over the city—we rode a ferry boat to the Statue of Liberty . . . zoomed 102 floors up at the Empire State Building . . . window-shopped the fancy stores on Fifth Avenue . . . gobbled hot dogs in Central Park.

But it was Harlem that I liked best. I played stickball with the kids again . . . and on a really hot day a whole bunch of us ran through the icy cold water that sprayed out hard from the fire hydrant. In the evenings Aunt Nanette and I sat outside listening to the street musicians playing their saxophone songs.

On rainy days I wrote postcards and helped out around the apartment. I told Aunt Nanette about the things I liked to do back home—about baseball games, train-watching, my birthday. She told me about the special Caribbean lemon and mango cake she was going to make.



My uncle Romie stayed hidden away in his studio. But I wasn't worried anymore. Aunt Nanette would make my birthday special.

4 . . . 3 . . . 2 . . . 1 . . . My birthday was almost here!

And then Aunt Nanette got a phone call.

"An old aunt has died, James. I have to go away for her funeral. But don't you worry. Uncle Romie will spend your birthday with you. It'll be just fine."

That night Aunt Nanette kissed me good-bye. I knew it would not be fine at all. Uncle Romie didn't know about cakes or baseball games or anything except his dumb old paintings. My birthday was **ruined**.

When the sky turned black, I tucked myself into bed. I missed Mama and Daddy so much. I listened to the birds on the rooftop—their songs continued into the night.

The next morning everything was quiet. I crept out of bed and into the hall. For the first time the door to Uncle Romie's studio stood wide open. What a **glorious** mess! There were paints and scraps all over the floor, and around the edges were huge paintings with all sorts of pieces pasted together.

I saw saxophones, birds, fire escapes, and brown faces. *It's Harlem*, I thought. *The people, the music, the rooftops, and the stoops*. Looking at Uncle Romie's paintings, I could *feel* Harlem—its beat and bounce.

ANALYZE THE TEXT

Understanding Characters How does James's opinion of Uncle Romie change throughout the story? What thoughts and words does James use that show his change of opinion?





Then there was one that was different. Smaller houses, flowers, and trains. “That’s home!” I shouted.

“Yep,” Uncle Romie said, smiling, from the doorway. “That’s the Carolina I remember.”

“Mama says you visited your grandparents there most every summer when you were a kid,” I said.

“I sure did, James. *Mmm*. Now that’s the place for pepper jelly. **Smear**ed thick on biscuits. And when Grandma wasn’t looking . . . I’d sneak some on a spoon.”

“Daddy and I do that too!” I told him.

We laughed together, then walked to the kitchen for a breakfast **feast**—eggs, bacon, grits, and biscuits.

“James, you’ve got me remembering the pepper jelly lady. People used to line up down the block to buy her preserves.”

“Could you put someone like that in one of your paintings?” I asked.

“I guess I could.” Uncle Romie nodded. “Yes, that’s a memory just right for sharing. What a good idea, James. Now let’s get this birthday going!”

He brought out two presents from home. I tore into the packages while he got down the pepper jelly and two huge spoons. Mama and Daddy had picked out just what I wanted—a special case for my baseball cards, and a **model** train for me to build.

“Pretty cool,” said Uncle Romie. “I used to watch the trains down in North Carolina, you know.”

How funny to picture big Uncle Romie lying on his belly!

“B. J. and me, we have contests to see who can hear the trains first.”

“Hey, I did that too. You know, it’s a funny thing, James. People live in all sorts of different places and families. But the things we care about are pretty much the same. Like favorite foods, special songs, games, stories . . . and like birthdays.” Uncle Romie held up two tickets to a baseball game!

It turns out Uncle Romie knows all about baseball—he was even a star pitcher in college. We got our mitts and set off for the game.

Way up in the bleachers, we shared a bag of peanuts, cracking the shells with our teeth and keeping our mitts ready in case a home run ball came our way. That didn’t happen—but we sure had fun.



Aunt Nanette came home that night. She lit the candles and we all shared my Caribbean birthday cake.

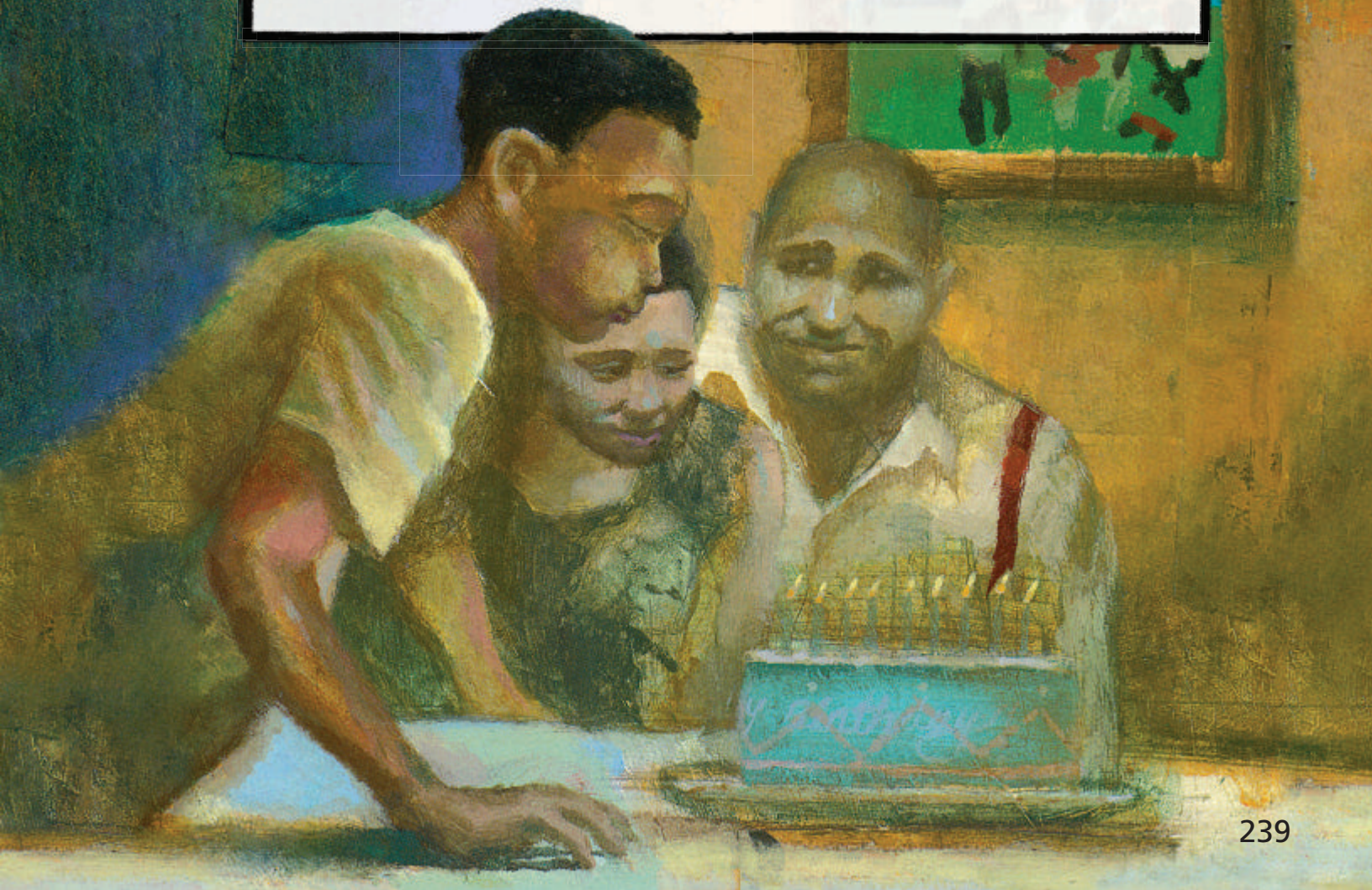
After that, Uncle Romie had to work a lot again. But at the end of each day he let me sit with him in his studio and talk. Daddy was right. Uncle Romie is a good man.

The day of the big art show finally came. I watched the people laughing and talking, walking slowly around the room from painting to painting. I walked around myself, listening to their conversations.

"Remember our first train ride from Chicago to New York?" one lady asked her husband.

"That guitar-playing man reminds me of my uncle Joe," said another.

All these strangers talking to each other about their families and friends and special times, and all because of how my uncle Romie's paintings reminded them of these things.



Later that night Daddy called. I had a brand-new brother and sister. Daddy said they were both bald and made a lot of noise. But he sounded happy and said how they all missed me.

This time Aunt Nanette and Uncle Romie took me to the train station.

"Here's a late birthday present for you, James," Uncle Romie said, holding out a package. "Open it on the train, why don't you. It'll help pass the time on the long ride home."





I waved out the window to Uncle Romie and Aunt Nanette until I couldn't see them anymore. Then I ripped off the wrappings!

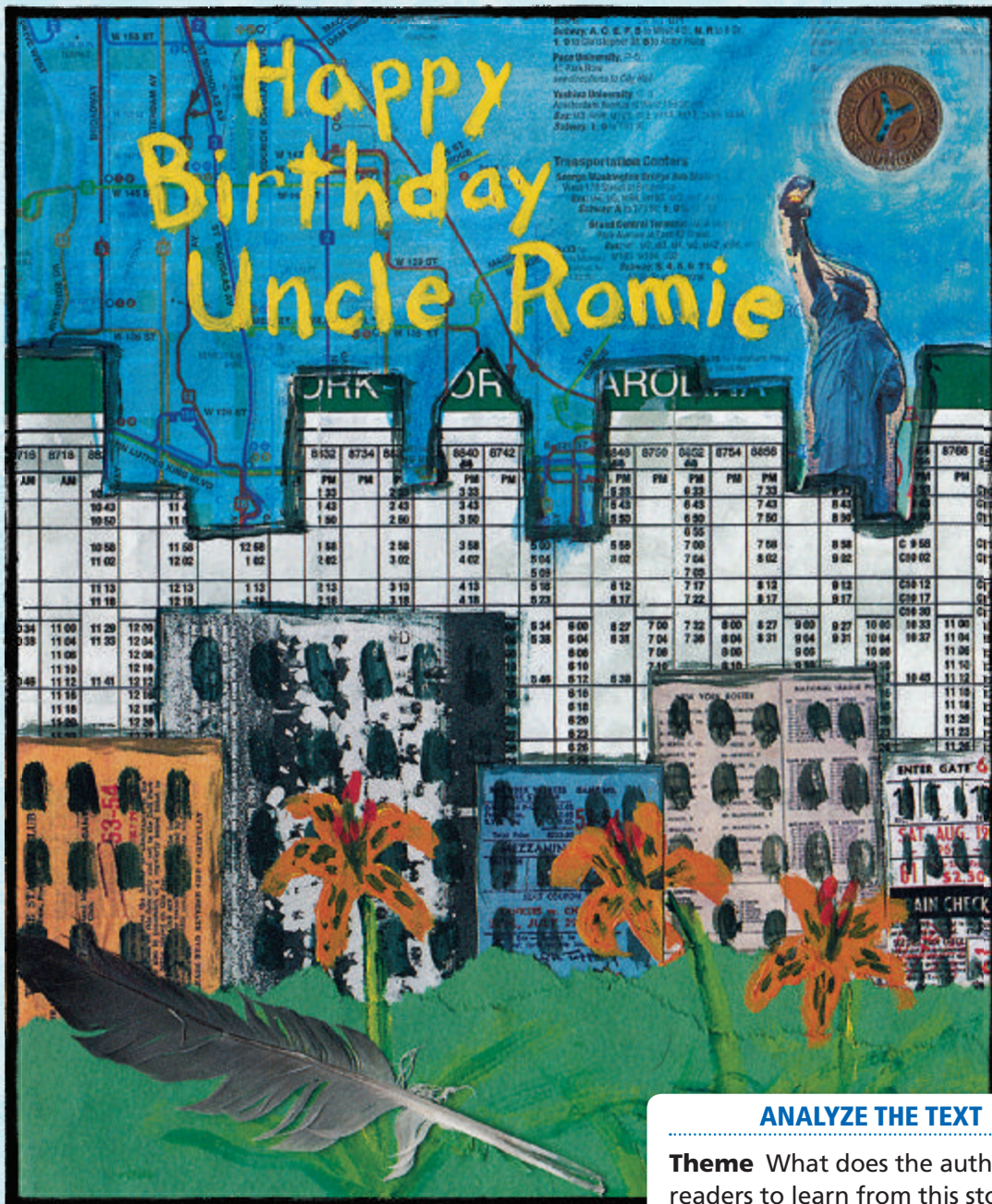
And there was my summer in New York. Bright sky in one corner, city lights at night in another. Tall buildings. Baseball ticket stubs. The label from the pepper jelly jar. And trains. One going toward the skyscrapers. Another going away.

Back home, I lay in the soft North Carolina grass. It was the first of September, almost Uncle Romie's birthday. I watched the birds **streak** across the sky.

Rooftop birds, I thought. *Back home from their summer in New York, just like me.* Watching them, I could still feel the city's beat inside my head.

A feather drifted down from the sky. In the garden tiger lilies bent in the wind. *Uncle Romie's favorite flowers.* I yanked off a few blossoms. And then I was off on a treasure hunt, collecting things that reminded me of Uncle Romie.

I painted and pasted them together on a big piece of cardboard. Right in the middle I put the train schedule. And at the top I wrote:



ANALYZE THE TEXT

Theme What does the author want readers to learn from this story? How does what happens to James help you understand this message?

AUTHOR'S NOTE

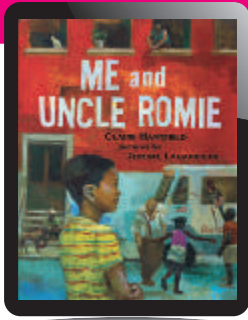
This story, which is fictional, was inspired by the storytelling quality of Romare Bearden's art and has incorporated many of the basic facts of his life.

Romare Bearden was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, on September 2, 1911. He spent his early childhood in Charlotte and even after he moved north spent many summers there. When he was still a child, his family moved to Harlem in New York City. This was during the 1920s, a period called the Harlem Renaissance, when many famous African American writers, musicians, and artists lived and worked in Harlem. Bearden often sat out on the stoop of his apartment building, listening to music, getting to know his neighbors, and taking in the scene. In 1954, Bearden married Nanette Rohan, whose family is from the Caribbean island of St. Martin.

As Bearden grew to be a young man, he chose painting to express the African American experience as he knew it. He experimented with many different ways of painting, finally deciding that collage was the best form for expressing his ideas. Many of his paintings are on exhibit in museums and galleries across the United States. His work has also appeared in several children's books. In 1987 Romare Bearden was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Ronald Reagan.

Bearden died on March 12, 1988.

Dig Deeper



How to Analyze the Text

Use these pages to learn about Understanding Characters, Theme, and Point of View. Then read “Me and Uncle Romie” again to apply what you learned.

Understanding Characters

“Me and Uncle Romie” is a **realistic fiction** story about a boy named James who visits his aunt and uncle in New York City. What the three **characters** do and what they learn is what makes the story interesting for readers. The author shows what the characters are like by describing what they think, what they do, and what they say.

Reread pages 236–237. Notice what James thinks, does, and says on the morning of his birthday. What can you tell about James, based on these details?

Thoughts	Actions	Words



RL.4.1 refer to details and examples when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences; **RL.4.2** determine theme from details/summarize; **RL.4.3** describe a character, setting, or event, drawing on details; **RL.4.6** compare and contrast the point of view from which stories are narrated



Theme

The **theme** of a story is the main message about life the author wants readers to understand. You can figure out a story's theme by thinking about what happens in the story and what the characters learn. How does James feel about Uncle Romie at first? How do his feelings change throughout the story, and why? Using **events** and **details** from the text can help you figure out the theme the author wants to share.



Point of View

Authors tell stories from different **points of view**. When a story is told from the **first-person point of view**, the **narrator** is part of the story. Readers know what the narrator thinks but learn about other characters through what the characters say and do. When a story is told from the **third-person point of view**, the narrator is outside of the story. Readers learn what all the characters think, say, and do.



Your Turn



RETURN TO THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION



Review the selection with a partner to prepare to discuss this question: *How do an artist's experiences affect his or her art?* Review key ideas with a partner. As you discuss the question, make sure you understand your partner's comments before you add your own comments.



Classroom Conversation

Continue your discussion of "Me and Uncle Romie" by explaining your answers with text evidence:

- 1 What causes James to change his opinion of New York City and begin to feel at home there?
- 2 Why does James begin to feel more comfortable with Uncle Romie?
- 3 What do you think is the most important thing James learns?

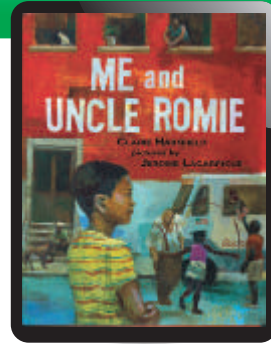
MAKE CONNECTIONS

Match It Up With a partner, review the illustrations in "Me and Uncle Romie." How do the illustrations connect to the words of the text? How do they show the characters and settings? Choose one illustration and find the matching description in the text. What is the effect of this illustration on the reader?



WRITE ABOUT READING

Response In the story, Uncle Romie gives James a special birthday gift: a picture collage to remind him of his summer in New York City. If Uncle Romie created a collage for you, what memories would you like the picture to show? Write a description of the collage you would like Uncle Romie to create.



Writing Tip

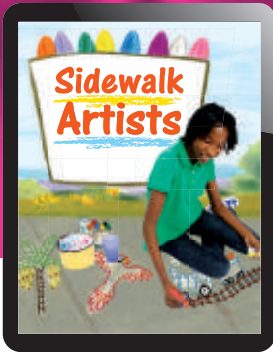
Use vivid adjectives and specific nouns in your description. Be sure to use verb tenses correctly.



RL.4.7 make connections between the text and a visual or oral presentation of it; **W.4.10** write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames; **SL.4.1c** pose and respond to questions and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to others' remarks; **SL.4.1d** review key ideas expressed and explain own ideas and understanding; **L.4.3a** choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely

Lesson 8

READERS' THEATER



✓ GENRE

Readers' theater is a text that has been formatted for readers to read aloud.

✓ TEXT FOCUS

Directions A text may include a set of instructions telling how to do something, often instructing the reader to follow a series of steps. Review the steps presented in the text to create sidewalk art.

COMMON CORE **RL.4.5** explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose/refer to their structural elements; **RL.4.10** read and comprehend literature; **RF.4.4a** read on-level text with purpose and understanding

Readers' Theater

Sidewalk Artists

by Sam Rabe

Cast of Characters

Narrator
Ms. Lee

Kayla
Zack

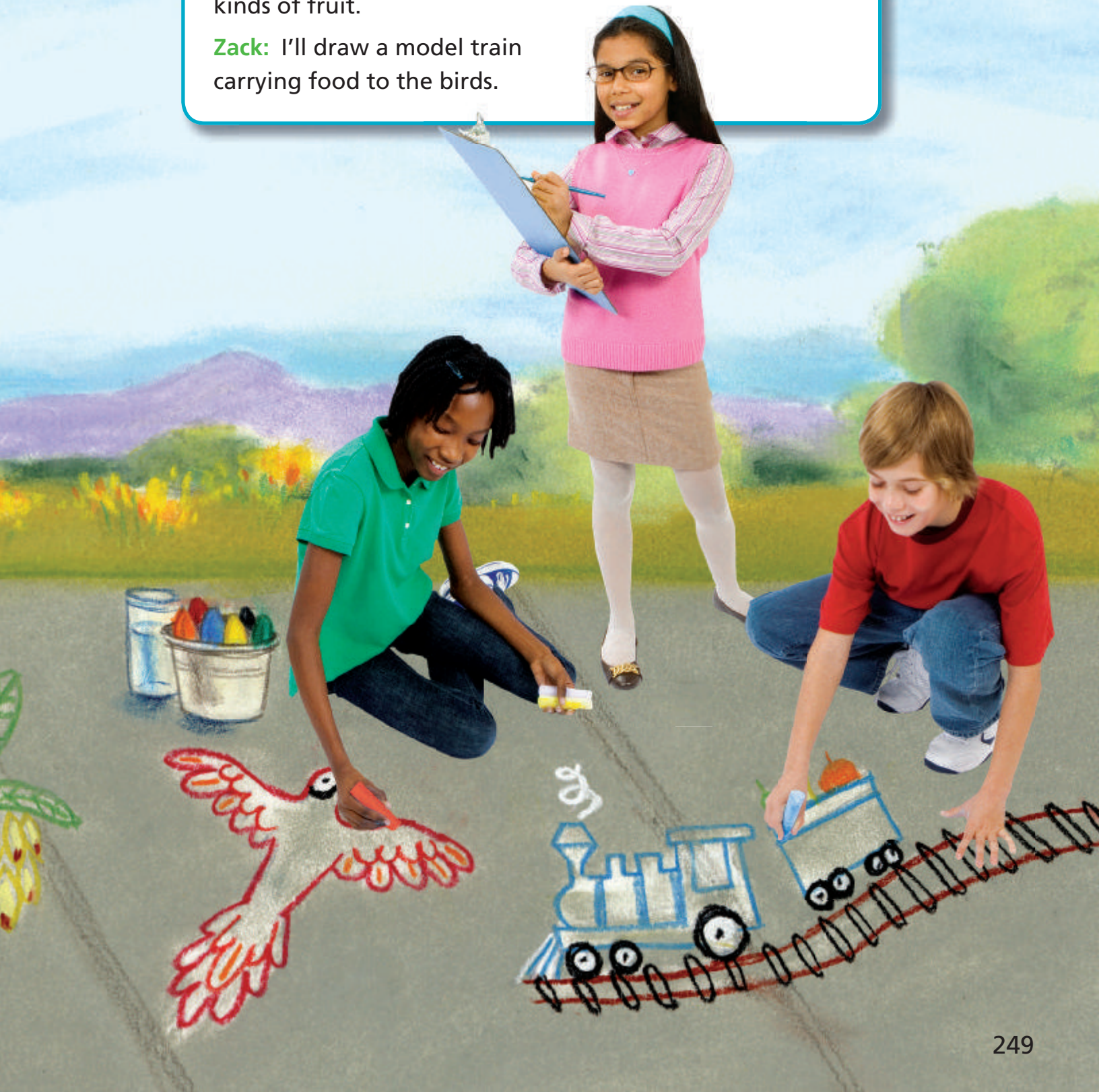
Narrator: On a sunny day in southern Texas, Ms. Lee's students gathered in the school playground.

Ms. Lee: Tomorrow is the day of the sidewalk chalk-art festival. The principal has given us permission to practice our wet-chalk drawing on the playground pavement, which will be our studio. Remember, whenever you want to draw on a sidewalk, always ask an adult in charge for permission before you draw. Now let's review the steps of wet-chalk drawing. What do we do first?

Narrator: As the students told her the steps in order, Ms. Lee wrote them on a large pad of paper. When she finished writing, she yanked the sheet off the pad and displayed the directions so everyone could read them. Then the students chose and soaked their pieces of chalk. Meanwhile, Kayla and Zack planned their drawing.

Kayla: Let's draw a jungle feast. Parrots can be eating all kinds of fruit.

Zack: I'll draw a model train carrying food to the birds.



Narrator: The students removed their pieces of chalk from the water and drew. As Zack drew a sweeping curve of train track, his hand knocked over the jar of water. He and Kayla watched water streak across their drawing.

Zack: Our drawing is ruined!

Kayla: Don't be so concerned! Quick, blend the water and the chalk together! Now let's layer on more chalk and smear it around.

Narrator: Kayla and Zack worked quickly. The smeared colors looked glorious, like rich, thick frosting on a cake.

Ms. Lee: That looks great! That's a neat technique you're using, kids. Are you two interested in taking part in the chalk-art festival tomorrow? The schedule for the festival says that drawing starts at 9:00 A.M.

Kayla and Zack: Sure!

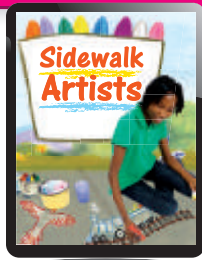
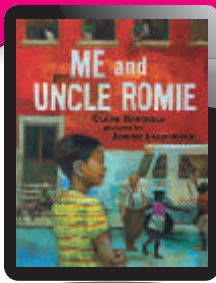
Kayla: Tomorrow we'll spill water on our drawing on purpose.

Zack: Then we'll know just what to do!

Making Wet Chalk Drawings

1. Choose your pieces of chalk, and put them in a jar.
2. Fill the jar with water to cover three quarters of the length of the chalk. Let the chalk soak for a few minutes, but don't let it dissolve.
3. Remove the wet chalk from the jar.
4. Draw!
5. Let your drawing dry.





Compare Texts

TEXT TO TEXT

Compare Points of View “Stormalong” and “Me and Uncle Romie” are told from different points of view. With a partner, discuss the two stories. How are the main characters, Stormalong and James, alike and different? How does the point of view in each story affect what we know about these two characters?



TEXT TO SELF

Write a Description Think of an adult who is important to you. What items would you include in a collage about that person? Write a paragraph describing the collage you would make. Tell how each item reminds you of the person.



TEXT TO WORLD

Biography and Fiction “Me and Uncle Romie” is a fictional story based on a real artist. Read an online biography of the artist Romare Bearden. Then identify the things that were the same in both his real life and in this story. Share your findings with a partner.



RL.4.6 compare and contrast the point of view from which stories are narrated; **W.4.2b** develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples; **W.4.8** recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources/ take notes, categorize information, and provide a list of sources

Grammar



What Are Progressive Forms of Verbs? Verb phrases such as *is talking* and *were listening* tell about actions that happen over a period of time. These verb forms are called **progressive verb tenses**. Progressive verb tenses can tell about actions that happened in the past, are happening in the present, or will happen in the future.

Progressive Verb Tenses

To form the **present progressive**, use the present-tense form of the verb *be* and add *-ing* to the verb:

James and Uncle Romie are eating cake.

To form the **past progressive**, use the past-tense form of the verb *be* and add *-ing* to the verb:

They were watching the ball game.

To form the **future progressive**, use *will be* and add *-ing* to the verb:

Uncle Romie will be showing his work at the art show.

Try This!

Work with a partner to find the progressive-tense verb in each sentence. Tell whether the verb is present progressive, past progressive, or future progressive.

- 1 Aunt Nanette was waiting for James at the train station.
- 2 Uncle Romie is showing James his artwork.
- 3 James will be thinking about Uncle Romie during his art show at school.

Use verb tenses and forms correctly to help readers keep track of when actions take place. Make sure to use the same verb tense or form in each sentence that tells about actions happening at the same time.



Inconsistent Verb Forms

The people **are looking** at the art.
They **walked** from room to room.
They **will talk** about the paintings

Consistent Verb Forms

The people **are looking** at the art.
They **are walking** from room to room.
They **are talking** about the paintings.



Connect Grammar to Writing

As you revise your book report, make sure that all the verb forms and tenses agree. This will help you to clearly communicate your ideas.



W.4.2a introduce a topic and group related information/include formatting, illustrations, and multimedia; **W.4.2e** provide a concluding statement or section; **W.4.9a** apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature; **W.4.10** write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames

Informative Writing

✓ Organization In a **book report**, good writers organize their ideas so that related information is grouped together in a logical way. Begin your book report by stating the topic, including the book’s title. Then summarize the story’s most important events. End with a concluding statement or paragraph that sums up the main point of your report.

Davey drafted a book report about “Me and Uncle Romie.” Then he revised the beginning so that it clearly stated his topic.



Revised Draft

I read the book Me and Uncle Romie by Claire Hartfield and loved the characters.

~~This book~~^{It} is about a boy who visits his aunt and uncle in New York City for the summer. At first, James^{is} worried he won’t have a good time, but his feelings change.

James does lots of fun things with Aunt Nanette, but he doesn’t see much of Uncle Romie. When his aunt has to go out of town, James spends time with his uncle.



Writing Traits Checklist

- ✓ Ideas**
Is my topic clear?
- ✓ Organization**
Did I arrange my ideas in a clear way?
- ✓ Word Choice**
Did I choose words to clearly describe characters and events?
- ✓ Voice**
Did I express my ideas in my own way?
- ✓ Sentence Fluency**
Do my verb tenses agree?
- ✓ Conventions**
Did I use verb forms correctly?

Final Copy

A Book Report on Me and Uncle Romie

by Davey Watson

I read the book Me and Uncle Romie by Claire Hartfield and loved the characters. It is about a boy who visits his aunt and uncle in New York City for the summer. At first, James is worried he won't have a good time, but his feelings change.

James does lots of fun things with Aunt Nanette, but he doesn't see much of Uncle Romie. When his aunt has to go out of town, James spends time with his uncle. They have a great time together, and James learns all about Uncle Romie's amazing art. James says, "Looking at Uncle Romie's paintings, I could feel Harlem—its beat and bounce."

I really liked how the author created interesting, realistic characters and a great story!

Reading as a Writer

Davey summarized the story in his own words. Did you summarize the main events? In his conclusion, Davey told how he felt about the book. Did you sum up your feelings in your conclusion?

I introduced the topic by stating the book's title and the author's name. I included a quotation to explain how James felt about his uncle's art.

