



The Day the Colors Took a Break

The Focused Reading Series by Lessons with Mr. B

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Instructor Guide

The Focused Reading Series

Band B (Grades 2-3)

Estimated time: 12-25 min

Standards Alignment

RL.2.1, RL.2.3, RL.2.10, RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.10, RF.2.4, RF.3.4, W.2.3, W.3.3, L.2.4, L.3.4

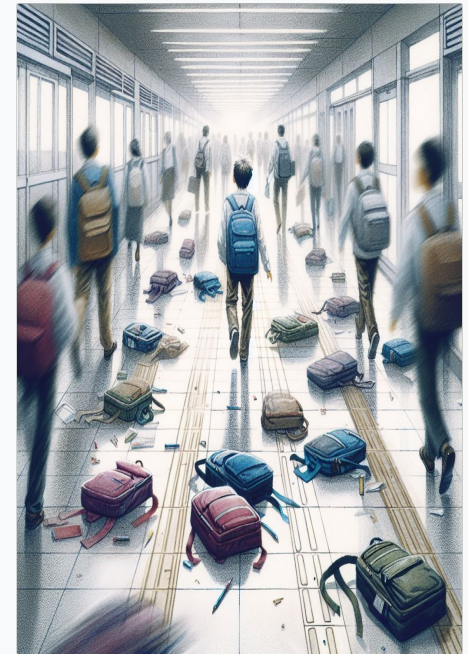
What This Builds

- Reading stamina and comprehension
- Evidence based thinking
- Structured short writing
- Vocabulary in context

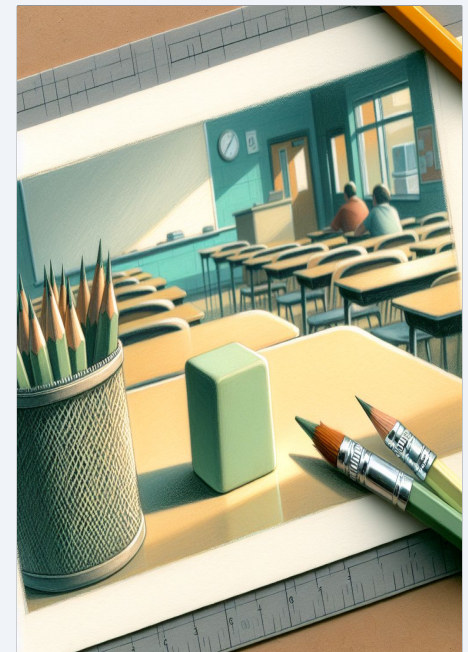
How to Run and Monitor

- Read independently or aloud, then complete the worksheet
- Students should use details from the text for every answer
- Use the answer key to check evidence and accuracy quickly
- Watch for clearer evidence use and stronger writing over time

Sera noticed it first during the loudest part of the morning. The hallway was full of fast footsteps, dropped backpacks, and voices stacking on top of each other. When she looked down at the bulletin board, the bright red paper apple in the corner was not red anymore. It was still an apple shape, still pinned in place, but it had turned the color of plain cardboard. Sera blinked once, then twice. The apple stayed dull. Something important had stepped away.



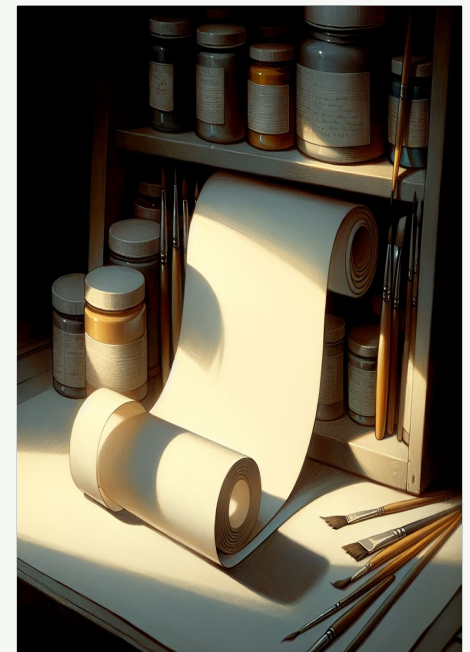
In her classroom, the change spread quietly. The yellow sun on the calendar faded until it matched the beige wall. The blue marker cap on the whiteboard looked like a gray pebble. Sera opened her pencil case. The green eraser was now the same pale shade as the desk. Around her, students talked and tapped and shuffled. No one seemed to notice. Sera did not shout. She sat still and watched, because patterns often explained themselves if she gave them time.



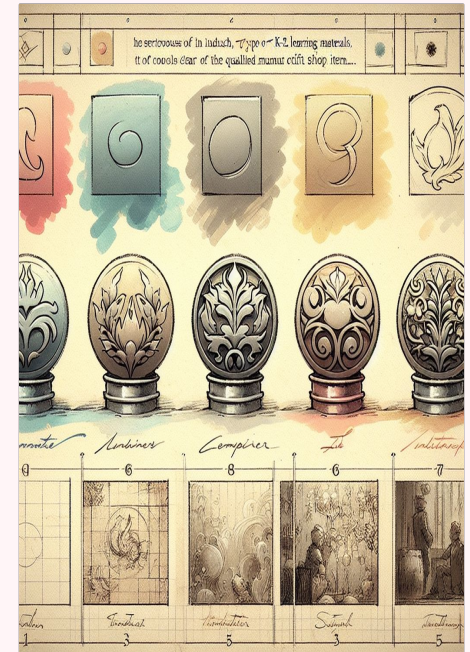
At recess, Sera tested what she saw. She held up a small purple sticker she had saved for later. In the shade of the slide, it was barely different from the sticker paper beneath it. She walked into sunlight. Still dull. She turned it over. Nothing changed. Near the fence, a poster flapped in the wind. Its bright letters were now washed out, like old newsprint. Sera felt a strange tug in her chest. It was not fear exactly. It was the feeling you get when a room suddenly goes too quiet.



Back inside, Sera found a clue that did not feel random. On the art shelf sat a row of paint jars. Each jar had a simple symbol on the lid. A circle, a square, a triangle, a star. The jars looked empty, but Sera knew they were not. When she tilted one, she heard the soft sound of liquid inside. She set it down carefully. Next to the jars, someone had left a thin strip of paper, folded into thirds. Sera unfolded it.



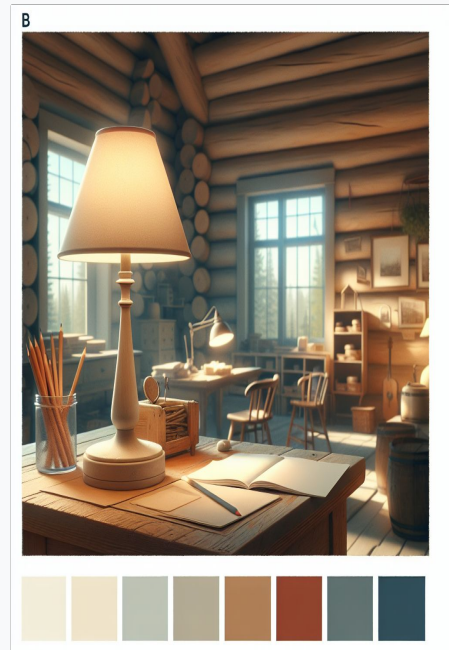
Four symbols were printed across the top, matching the lids. Beneath them were words written in tidy handwriting: We leave when there is too much. Too many sounds. Too many asks. Too many eyes. We return when we are invited the calm way. Sera reread the lines slowly. The message did not say the colors were gone forever. It said they had taken a break. That sounded like something living would do.



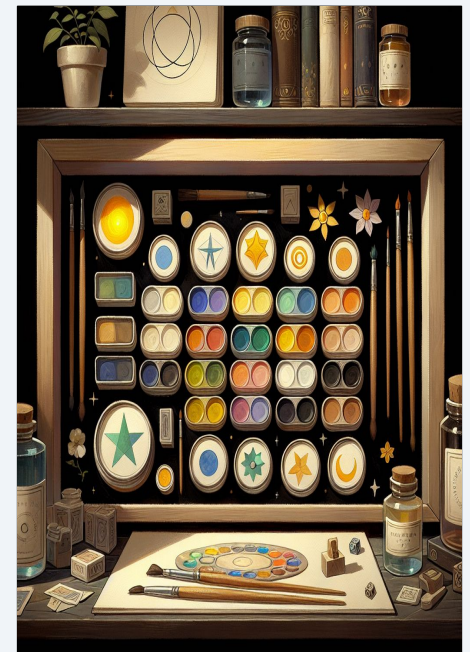
Sera did not tell the whole class. She did not want the room to explode with questions. She looked for a quiet place, minimal and safe, the kind of space that felt like a pause. At the back of the library was a corner with one small table, one lamp, and a plain mat on the floor. A sign above it read Quiet Zone. Sera sat at the table and placed the paper in front of her. She studied the symbols again. Invite the calm way. That sounded like a rule.



Sera made the rule smaller so she could hold it. She whispered it to herself as if it were a secret: One thing at a time. She looked around the Quiet Zone. Nothing here asked her to rush. The lamp did not flicker. The chair did not squeak. The air smelled faintly like paper and clean wood. Sera took a slow breath in, then out. She waited, not as a game, but as a way of being careful.



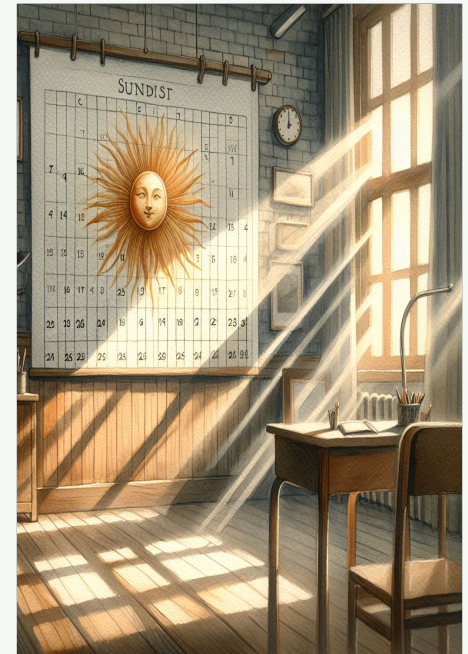
A tiny change happened first, like a blink. The triangle on one paint lid sharpened from gray into a soft blue. It was not loud. It did not flash. It simply returned as if it had been listening. Sera kept her hands still. The circle on the next lid warmed into a gentle yellow. Then the star shifted into a clean green. Sera did not grab the jars or shake them. She kept her rule. One thing at a time. Invite the calm way. The colors were not hiding. They were answering.



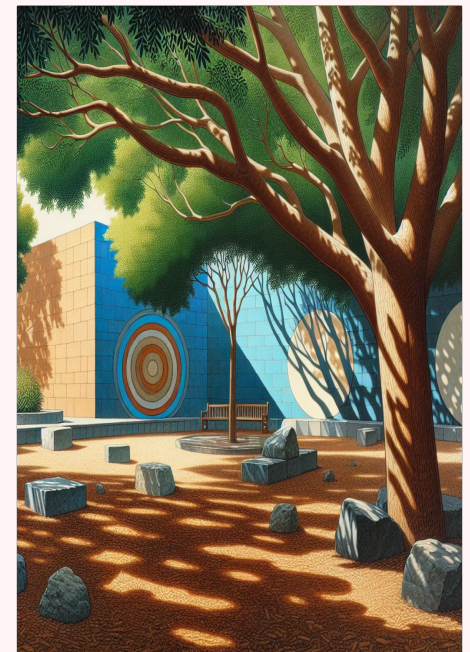
Sera carried the message back to her day without carrying it like a lecture. In the classroom, she started with her own desk. She moved her books into one neat stack. She closed her pencil case softly instead of snapping it. When she needed a ruler, she reached once and took it, instead of digging through everything. Then she raised her hand to speak, even though she could have called out. It felt strange at first, like walking slower than everyone else. But it also felt steady.



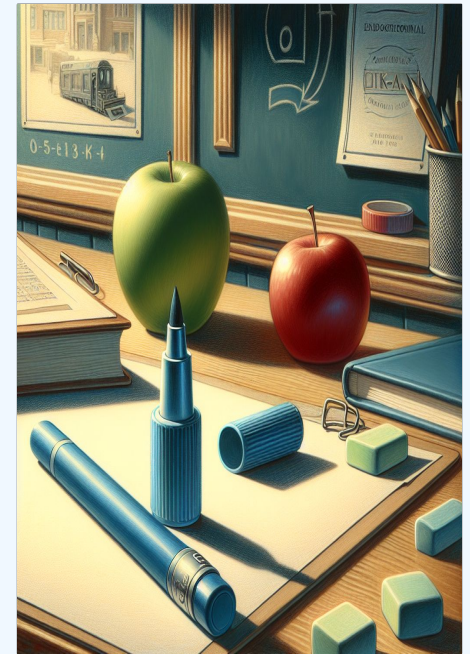
Sera noticed how her steadiness spread. The student next to her lowered his voice while reading. Another student stopped tapping his foot. The room did not become silent, but it became less crowded. The air felt like it had space again. On the calendar, the sun began to glow a little warmer. On the bulletin board, the apple turned faintly red around the edges. The colors were not returning all at once. They were returning the way they had left, one by one.



At recess, Sera tried her rule again. She stood near the mural wall where bright shapes used to look like a celebration. She watched a group of students race past, shouting. The mural stayed dull. Then she stepped a few feet away to a spot under a tree, where the leaves made a soft ceiling. She sat down on the mulch and placed her hands on her knees. She breathed slowly. The circle shape on the mural, far from the noise, brightened into blue. The square warmed into orange. Sera smiled once, small and sure.



By the end of the day, the classroom looked balanced again. The blue marker cap was blue. The green eraser was green. The apple on the board was fully red. Sera did not feel like she had fixed the world. She felt like she had learned how to live in it differently. Before packing up, she folded the strip of paper and slid it behind the paint jars, where the symbols could keep their place. As she walked out, the hallway was still busy, but Sera carried her rule with her. One thing at a time. Invite the calm way. The colors did not need to run anymore.



Student Worksheet

Band B

STUDENT NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

SECTION 1: PROVE IT

Instruction: Use details and direct evidence from the text to support your answers.

1. What evidence shows that the classroom was losing its colors?
2. What evidence explains why the colors disappeared and how they could return?

SECTION 2: WHAT CHANGED

Instruction: Describe how something changed from the beginning to the end of the story.

3. How did the classroom and its colors change from the start to the end of the story?

SECTION 3: THINK DEEPER

Instruction: Explain your thinking using clues from the story.

4. How did Sera's actions affect the other students and the classroom environment?

SECTION 4: QUICK BUILD WRITING

Instruction: Write 2 to 3 complete sentences using clear details from the story.

5. Describe what Sera did to help bring the colors back and how she felt at the end of the day.

Answer Key

Band B

SECTION 1: PROVE IT

1. What evidence shows that the classroom was losing its colors?

- "The bright red paper apple in the corner was not red anymore."
- "The yellow sun on the calendar faded until it matched the beige wall."

2. What evidence explains why the colors disappeared and how they could return?

- "We leave when there is too much. Too many sounds. Too many asks. Too many eyes. We return when we are invited the calm way."

SECTION 2: WHAT CHANGED

3. How did the classroom and its colors change from the start to the end of the story?

- At the beginning, the classroom lost its colors and looked dull, but by the end of the day, the colors returned and the classroom looked balanced again.

ANSWER KEY

SECTION 3: THINK DEEPER

4. How did Sera's actions affect the other students and the classroom environment?

- Sera acted calmly and steadily, which helped other students become calmer too. As everyone became calmer, the colors started to return to the classroom.

SECTION 4: QUICK BUILD WRITING

5. Describe what Sera did to help bring the colors back and how she felt at the end of the day.

- Sera repeated the rule to herself and stayed calm, even when things were noisy. She invited calmness, which helped the colors return. At the end of the day, Sera felt changed and the classroom was colorful again.