

## Threads & Themes Grade 6, Unit 4, Investigation 2 Summative Assessment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

### PASSAGE 1

#### *When the Sun Went Dark*

(1) In first period, they handed out glasses: cardboard frames with black plastic lenses that looked more like business cards than eyewear. Ms. Pereira said to keep them safe in the paper sleeve until we stepped outside, said not to peek through any camera lens, any window, any puddle, any hand-cupped hole towards the sky. DO NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES look through any lens but the one we had been given. She said it twice, the way teachers say things when they know no one is listening.

(2) I slid my glasses into my hoodie pocket and waited out the hour. The hallway smelled like cafeteria pizza and floor cleaner. An eighth grader said the world was going to end. None of the teachers corrected her. We laughed anyway, but it was an approval laugh, the kind that keeps something funny alive a little longer, encourages someone else to keep the joke running.

(3) The parking lot was too bright at first. Cars gave off heat from their hoods, and the asphalt smelled like it might melt the bottom of our shoes. We arranged ourselves in a loose half-circle, each of us looking up through our shielded eyes. Nothing. Mr. Kellerman had brought a shoebox with a pinhole punched through the lid so he could aim it at the pinpoint of light as it grew smaller on its side—science, he said, in its simplest form. A few of the seventh graders pretended to yawn. I did not yawn.

(4) For a long time nothing happened. Then, through our glasses, we could see a bite taken out at the edge of the sun, a dark notch where before there had been a complete circle. The light around us thinned. It was not the way dusk thins, when the trees become silhouettes against a pink and purple sky. It was as if someone had draped a thin, mysterious veil over the world.

(5) I had read the stories all summer. A dragon in China, swallowing the sun until the people beat drums and pots to scare it back. A trickster in the Americas, stealing the light into a basket. The sun-goddess Amaterasu closing herself into a cave because her brother had hurt her, and the world going dark until the other gods devised a way to lure her out with music and a mirror. I had liked these stories, but they had stayed inside the book, neat as pressed flowers.

(6) Now the asphalt was covered in small curved shapes of light. Through the leaves of the sycamore at the edge of the lot, the sun was projecting in hundreds of white smiles on the black ground. I crouched and touched one. A mockingbird in the sycamore stopped its song. The temperature dropped as if someone had turned off the lights. Mr. Kellerman said to put on our glasses. To look! LOOK NOW!

(7) The sun had become a ring. A thin bracelet of light, a wedding band, a coin with the face punched out. I held my breath, the way I held it at the top of a roller coaster or right before jumping off the high dive board. I understood, for the space of forty-five seconds, why a person would beat a drum at the sky, honor the sun with stories and ceremonies, fear a time that it might not return.

(8) And then a sliver. The sycamore smiled its hundred smiles again. Then the temperature remembered what season it was and the mockingbird recommenced its song, all as if nothing had happened. We put our glasses back into our hoodies and walked, slowly, back toward the building.

(9) In sixth period I wrote in my notebook. Not a list of facts, not a paragraph. I wrote down the word "crescent," and under it, the word "life," and under that, the shape of a small unfinished circle: a ring with a gap in its side, a basket that could hold all the secrets of the universe.

## ITEMS — PASSAGE 1

### Item 1

Read this sentence from paragraph (5) of "When the Sun Went Dark."

I had liked these stories, but they had stayed inside the book, neat as pressed flowers.

**What does the phrase "neat as pressed flowers" MOST suggest about how the speaker felt about the eclipse stories before the eclipse?**

- A) The stories had grown dry and fragile with age.
- B) The stories had been beautiful but distant from real life.
- C) The stories seemed small and unimportant compared to real events.
- D) The stories were organized clearly and easy for the speaker to understand.

### Item 2

**How does paragraph 7 MOST contribute to the plot?**

- A) It slows the action by pausing to list several metaphors that describe the sun's shape during the eclipse.
- B) It explains how the eclipse changes the appearance of the sun and sky at its most dramatic moment.
- C) It moves the speaker from knowing the eclipse stories to understanding why people wrote them.
- D) It shows the speaker reacting with fear and uncertainty as the eclipse reaches its darkest moment.

### Item 3

Use “When the Sun Went Dark” to answer the question.

**How do the events of the eclipse change the speaker over the course of the passage?**

- A) The speaker moves from reading eclipse stories to realizing how strange the eclipse makes the sycamore tree look.
- B) The speaker moves from carefully following the teacher’s instructions to ignoring them as the eclipse becomes more exciting.
- C) The speaker moves from observing the eclipse as a science activity to noticing how it affects the world around them.
- D) The speaker moves from waiting without much reaction to becoming fully focused and aware of the moment as it unfolds.

**Item 4**

Use “When the Sun Went Dark” to answer the question.

**How does the first-person narration MOST shape the reader’s experience of the eclipse?**

- A) It limits the reader to the speaker’s point of view, so the eclipse is understood only as the speaker experiences it.
- B) It gives the reader direct access to the speaker’s thoughts and feelings, helping show how the eclipse affects them.
- C) It shows the eclipse mainly through what the speaker notices around them, such as changes in light, temperature, and sound.
- D) It focuses on the speaker describing what the eclipse looks like rather than the teacher explaining the scientific reasons behind it.

**Item 5**

Use “When the Sun Went Dark” to answer the question.

**Which statement BEST expresses a theme of “When the Sun Went Dark”?**

- A) Witnessing a rare event can give new meaning to stories a person already knew.
- B) People often understand natural events better through direct observation.
- C) Scientific explanations describe natural events, but stories make them more fun.
- D) Reading about an experience can help prepare you to experience it in real life.

**Item 6**

Read this sentence from paragraph 4 of “When the Sun Went Dark.”

It was as if someone had draped a thin, mysterious veil over the world.

**Using your knowledge of the suffix -ous, what does the word mysterious MOST likely mean in this sentence?**

- A) the inability to understand something clearly

- B) the act of understanding something unknown
- C) having the quality of something not understood
- D) causing someone to understand something unknown

#### Item 7

Imagine a director creates a scene based on paragraph 7 of “When the Sun Went Dark.” The director removes the narrator’s inner thoughts and instead uses dramatic music, a close-up of the ring-shaped sun, and quick cuts between students reacting.

**How would this adaptation MOST likely change the audience’s understanding of the moment?**

- A) It would make the scene slower and more reflective by emphasizing the narrator’s thoughts through visuals.
- B) It would make the scene more accurate because film can show details that the narrator cannot describe.
- C) It would make the scene clearer by focusing only on what the eclipse looks like instead of what it means to the narrator.
- D) It would make the scene feel more exciting to watch, but make it harder to understand what the narrator is thinking.

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## PASSAGE 2

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### *The Wolves and the Sun*

(1) In the old north, long before the land was called Scandinavia and long before the first wooden churches rose above the ancient pine forests, the people told a story about the sun. In this story, the sun was not merely a distant thing burning above them; she was a woman. Her name was Sól, and she drove a blazing chariot across the sky from morning until evening. But before Sól was the sun, she was a daughter. Her father, Mundilfari, had two children so radiant and so fair that he named them after the great lights of the heavens: the girl he called Sun, and the boy he called Moon. It was a father's pride, and the gods did not forgive it, for in the old stories, pride was a doorway the gods walked through uninvited.

(2) The gods seized the children and placed them in the heavens. The brother, Máni, they sent along the silvery path of the moon, where he measured out its phases, full and thin and new. To Sól, they gave a chariot drawn by two powerful horses, one called Early-Waker and one called All-Strong, and beneath the shoulders of each horse, they fastened bellows that blew iron-cold wind so that the animals would not burn beneath the weight of their own terrible fire.

(3) But the gods did not send Sól and her horses alone. They sent a wolf after them.

(4) His name was Sköll, and his hunger was older than the world itself. Each morning, as Sól's chariot rose above the eastern horizon, Sköll began his tireless pursuit. He did not slow. He did not stop. His paws made no sound upon the clouds, as silent as snow falling upon snow. And Sól,

always feeling him close behind her, drove her horses faster. This was why the sun crossed the sky so swiftly, the ancient people said, and why she did not linger at noon, did not wait for the slow walkers upon the earth to catch up, did not rest until her weary horses had carried her beyond the wolf's sight. She was being chased.

(5) There was a second wolf, too, a brother to the first. His name was Hati, and he ran ahead of the moon, hoping to seize him as he ascended each night. So the moon also hurried across the heavens, though his flight was quieter and his pace more patient than Sól's.

(6) On certain days, the ancient people said, the wolves drew very close. Then the sun would seem to flicker, and a shadow would cross the earth, and the animals would grow silent, and the mothers would look up at the sky with worry in their eyes. These were the days when Sköll almost caught Sól. But always, just in time, the sun would urge her chariot forward, the wolf would fall back a little, and the day would remember how to be day again.

(7) Someday, the poets said, the wolf would finally catch her. It would happen at the ending of the world itself: Sköll would close his jaws around Sól's chariot, and the light would be extinguished from the sky, and the stars themselves would fall into the sea. The Norse called that ending Ragnarök, and they did not pretend it would not come. They said only that until it came, the sun would keep running.

(8) And the people who told this story, farmers and fishermen and mothers watching from the doorway of a wooden house, would lift their eyes to the pale winter sky and feel, underneath the quiet of the morning, the light and the heat of a daughter in a chariot who keeps running until the day she stops.

*Adapted by Newsela from Snorri Sturluson's Prose Edda (c. 1220), Gylfaginning 11–12, drawing on the English translation by Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur (1916).*

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## ITEMS — PASSAGE 2

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### Item 8

**How does paragraph 1 MOST contribute to the structure of the passage?**

- A) It introduces the cultural importance of the sun and moon, helping readers understand why they matter to the people in the story.
- B) It introduces Mundilfari's pride and the naming of his children, setting up the events that lead to their punishment.
- C) It introduces the name Sól and Máni, showing readers that were always meant to represent the sun and moon.
- D) It introduces Sól and Máni as unusually bright and beautiful, emphasizing how special they are.

### Item 9

Which quote from the text is the best example of rising action?

- A) "They sent a wolf after them."
- B) "These were the days when Sköll almost caught Sól."
- C) "The gods seized the children and placed them in the heavens."
- D) "The Norse called that ending Ragnarök, and they did not pretend it would not come."

**Item 10**

How do the author's word choices and descriptions in paragraph 4 develop the mood and reveal Sól's situation?

- A) The words create a mysterious mood, suggesting that Sköll's power is ancient and not fully understood.
- B) The words create a serious and determined mood, emphasizing that both Sköll and Sól are playing important roles.
- C) The words create a tense and urgent mood, showing that Sól is in constant danger and must keep moving to survive.
- D) The words create a gloomy and hopeless mood, suggesting that Sól has already accepted that she cannot escape Sköll.

**Item 11**

In paragraph 4, why does the author describe Sköll's chase as a "tireless pursuit" and Sól's horses as "weary"?

- A) "Tireless pursuit" suggests the wolf is determined, while "weary" shows the horses are struggling, highlighting the danger and urgency of the chase.
- B) "Tireless pursuit" suggests the wolf is slowly continuing his chase, while "weary" shows that the horses are stronger and more powerful.
- C) "Tireless pursuit" suggests the wolf moves steadily, while "weary" shows the horses are slowing down, creating a calmer pace in the chase.
- D) "Tireless pursuit" suggests the wolf is powerful, while "weary" shows the horses are experienced, suggesting the chase is under control.

**Item 12**

Read this sentence from paragraph 3 of "The Wolves and the Sun."

This was why the sun crossed the sky so swiftly, the ancient people said, and why she did not linger at noon, did not wait for the slow walkers upon the earth to catch up.

What does the word **linger** MOST likely mean in this sentence?

- A) shine brightly
- B) stay in one place
- C) travel quickly

D) sink low in the sky

**Item 13**

**How does the narrator MOST shape the reader’s understanding of the story?**

- A) by focusing mainly on Sól’s actions and thoughts, making the story feel like her personal experience
- B) by refusing to take a position on the story’s truth, encouraging readers to doubt the events
- C) by describing the events in a distant, factual way, making the story seem like an objective account
- D) by presenting the people’s beliefs in the events, making the story seem like a cultural explanation

**Item 14**

**Sort each statement into the correct category based on whether it belongs in an objective summary of “The Wolves and the Sun.”**

**Category 1: Belongs in an Objective Summary**

**Category 2: Does Not Belong in an Objective Summary**

- A) In a Norse myth, Sól and her brother Máni are placed in the sky by the gods.
- B) Sól’s journey is frightening and dangerous.
- C) The wolves’ pursuit explains the movement of the moon and the sun.
- D) Sól and Máni are chased by wolves as they travel across the sky.
- E) The gods are cruel for forcing Sól into her role.
- F) This Norse myth is an interesting story about how people explained the world.

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## ITEMS — BOTH LITERARY PASSAGES

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**Item 15**

Use both passages to answer the question.

**How do “When the Sun Went Dark” and “The Wolves and the Sun” MOST differ in the way they approach explaining an eclipse?**

- A) “When the Sun Went Dark” shows a modern speaker reflecting on older stories to find personal meaning, while “The Wolves and the Sun” retells one traditional myth to explain the event.
- B) “When the Sun Went Dark” focuses on describing the eclipse as it happens, while “The Wolves and the Sun” tells a story that explains why the eclipse occurs.

C) “When the Sun Went Dark” presents several different cultural stories as possible explanations, while “The Wolves and the Sun” presents only one version of events as the explanation.

D) “When the Sun Went Dark” explains the eclipse through detailed scientific ideas, while “The Wolves and the Sun” explains it through imagination and storytelling.

#### Item 16

Use the endings of both passages to answer the question.

**Select the TWO statements that MOST accurately describe how the ENDINGS of “When the Sun Went Dark” and “The Wolves and the Sun” treat the sun’s return or disappearance.**

A) “When the Sun Went Dark” ends by focusing on how quickly the eclipse passes, while “The Wolves and the Sun” ends by focusing on how often eclipses happen.

B) “When the Sun Went Dark” ends with things returning to normal, while “The Wolves and the Sun” ends with a chase that will continue to an eventual ending.

C) The endings of both stories show that the sun has returned to its normal state, suggesting that the dangers have completely passed for all the characters.

D) “When the Sun Went Dark” ends with the narrator losing interest in the eclipse, while “The Wolves and the Sun” ends with people thinking about the sun.

E) “When the Sun Went Dark” ends with the sun’s return, while “The Wolves and the Sun” ends by predicting a future time in which the sun does not return.

#### Item 17

Use “When the Sun Went Dark” and “The Wolves and the Sun” to answer the question.

**Select the TWO statements that are supported by BOTH literary passages.**

A) Different cultures have told stories to explain what happens during an eclipse.

B) Eclipses create strange lighting and make it get colder before the sun returns.

C) People should use special glasses when they lift their eyes to look at an eclipse.

D) Some eclipse stories have been written down and preserved over many centuries.

E) Beating drums is the one way ancient people have responded to an eclipse.

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## ITEMS — MEDIA LITERACY

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#### Item 18

A student is researching how different cultures have explained eclipses and finds three sources:

1. A 2024 magazine article by a named author, published in a well-known student magazine, that lists its sources at the end

2. A 2019 blog post titled “Crazy Sun Facts,” written by an anonymous user, with colorful diagrams showing how eclipses work
3. A 1922 book written by a well-known scholar titled *Myths and Legends of China*
4. A 2025 social media post by an unknown user that shares eclipse facts but does not list sources

**Which source should the student select as the MOST credible to quote in a class research paper, and why?**

- A) Source 1, because it names an author and lists the sources it draws from
- B) Source 2, because it provides useful diagrams showing how eclipses work
- C) Source 3, because older sources are always more trustworthy than newer ones
- D) Source 4, because it was written more recently than the other sources

**Item 19**

A student is writing a report about eclipse stories and wants to include two sentences from a magazine article they found online.

**What should the student do to use the quoted sentences ethically and legally?**

- A) revise the sentences to change a few words so that credit to the original source is not required
- B) summarize the sentences in the report and say that it came from an article on the internet
- C) copy the sentences as a quotation and cite the author, article title, and publication
- D) paraphrase both sentences in the student’s own words and publish it under the student’s name

**Item 20**

A student is researching traditional stories from several cultures for a class report. The school librarian tells the student that when sharing stories from other cultures, researchers should credit the communities the stories come from and use respectful translations.

**Why is the librarian’s advice MOST important for the student’s research?**

- A) It ensures the student is following school rules about using outside sources.
- B) It guarantees that the student’s research will be published online with correct sources.
- C) It allows the student to present the stories in a way that makes them more interesting.
- D) It helps the student honor the communities whose knowledge they are using.

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## ITEMS — LANGUAGE EDITING

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**Item 21**

Read the sentence.

It was exciting to watch, but they told us not to look at it without them.

**Which revision BEST corrects the vague pronouns to make the sentence clearer?**

- A) It was exciting to watch, but the teachers told us not to look at it without them.
- B) The eclipse was exciting to watch, but they told us not to look at it without the special glasses.
- C) It was exciting to watch, but the teachers told us not to look at it without the special glasses.
- D) The eclipse was exciting to watch, but the teachers told us not to look at the sun without the special glasses.

## SPELLING

### Item 22

Write the spelling word you heard:

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### Item 23

Write the spelling word you heard:

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### Item 24

Write the spelling word you heard:

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### Item 25

Write the spelling word you heard:

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### Item 26

Write the spelling word you heard:

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