

Threads & Themes Grade 8, Unit 4, Investigation 2 Summative Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

PASSAGE 1

“The Wings of Icarus”

(1) The Greeks tell of a master craftsman named Daedalus, whose hands could shape stone, bronze, and even cunning machines that no one else could imagine. King Minos of Crete had once welcomed Daedalus to his court, but after a quarrel that the storytellers do not always agree on, the king had Daedalus and his young son, Icarus, locked inside a great stone labyrinth at the edge of the sea. The labyrinth had been built by Daedalus himself, and it was so well made that even its maker could not easily find his way out.

(2) For many days, father and son lived inside the high walls. They could see the sky but not the sea below. They could hear the gulls but not the boats. Daedalus watched the birds come and go between the walls, and over time, an idea began to form.

(3) He gathered every feather the gulls dropped within the maze. He collected wax from the candles the king’s guards left at the entrance. He worked at the feathers and the wax for many quiet weeks, and at last he had built two pairs of wings: one for himself and one for Icarus. The wings were beautiful, but they were also risky because they were held together with nothing stronger than wax.

(4) When the wings were finished, Daedalus called Icarus to him and laid the smaller pair across the boy’s shoulders. “Listen carefully,” he said, “for I will say this only once, and you must remember it. We will fly out of this place over the sea. You will follow me. You will not fly too low, because the spray of the waves will soak the feathers and weigh you down. You will not fly too high, because the heat of the sun will melt the wax that holds the wings together. Stay in the middle path. Do you understand?”

(5) Icarus said that he understood, for he had been a child inside walls for too long, and the wings already trembled at his shoulders as if they wanted to be in the air.

(6) They climbed to the highest part of the labyrinth, and Daedalus stepped off into the wind. For a moment Icarus stood frozen, watching his father lift and bank against the morning light. Then he too stepped off, and the wind caught him, and the world fell away beneath his feet.

(7) For a while, Icarus followed exactly as he had been told. He kept his father’s path, and he watched the cliffs and small islands move below him. He felt the salt rise from the waves and the warmth come down from the sky, and he felt himself perfectly between them, and the labyrinth grew small in the distance behind him.

(8) But after a time, the air above seemed to call to him, and he found that he wanted, more than anything, to know how high it was possible to go. He climbed a little, and nothing happened, so he climbed higher until he felt the warmth grow on the back of his neck. Then he climbed higher still.

(9) The sun did not melt the wax all at once. The first feather slipped quietly from the wing without his noticing, and then a second slipped, and then a third. By the time Icarus heard the sound of wax giving way at his back, the wings had begun to come apart, and the air no longer held him.

(10) Down to the earth he began to fall, plummeting to the sea below. Daedalus searched the water for hours, but the only thing he ever found was a few scattered feathers floating on the surface, a long way from the place where Icarus had begun to fall.

(11) Daedalus flew on alone until he came at last to a strange shore, where he laid down the wings he had made for himself. He never flew again. The Greeks afterward gave the part of the sea where the boy fell the name Icarian, after Icarus, and they have taught his story to their own children, and their children’s children, for as long as anyone can remember.

ITEMS — PASSAGE 1

Item 1

Read this excerpt from paragraph 1 of “The Wings of Icarus.”

. . . the king had Daedalus and his young son Icarus locked inside a great stone labyrinth at the edge of the sea.

Which detail from “The Wings of Icarus” BEST helps the reader determine the meaning of labyrinth?

- A) the detail that the structure was built so well that even its maker could not easily find his way out
- B) the detail that Daedalus had once been welcomed at the king’s court
- C) the detail that Daedalus was a master craftsman whose hands could shape stone and bronze
- D) the detail that the structure was built at the edge of the sea

Item 2

Read paragraph 4 from “The Wings of Icarus.”

When the wings were finished, Daedalus called Icarus to him and laid the smaller pair across the boy’s shoulders. “Listen carefully,” he said, “for I will say this only once, and you must remember it. We will fly out of this place over the sea. You will follow me. You will not fly too low, because the spray of the waves will soak the feathers and weigh you

down. You will not fly too high, because the heat of the sun will melt the wax that holds the wings together. Stay in the middle path. Do you understand?"

What is the role of the two “You will not” sentences in this paragraph?

- A) They explain why Icarus is being given the wings to wear.
- B) They state specific limits that Icarus must follow.
- C) They describe what Daedalus thinks will happen to Icarus.
- D) They show that Daedalus mistrusts Icarus.

Item 3

Read this excerpt from paragraph 5 of “The Wings of Icarus.”

. . . the wings already trembled at his shoulders as if they wanted to be in the air.

What does the word trembled MOST suggest about the wings?

- A) The wings are starting to fall off.
- B) The wings are too heavy for Icarus to carry.
- C) The wings seem alive with a will of their own.
- D) The wings will be difficult to control.

Item 4

Read this sentence from paragraph 6 of “The Wings of Icarus.”

For a moment Icarus stood frozen, watching his father lift and bank against the morning light.

Now read this dictionary entry.

bank

1. the side of a river or lake.
2. a place where money is kept and lent.
3. to depend on or count on someone or something.
4. to tilt or roll an aircraft or bird to one side while turning.

Which definition matches the meaning of bank as it is used in the passage?

- A) definition 1
- B) definition 2
- C) definition 3
- D) definition 4

Item 5

Read this excerpt from paragraph 8 of “The Wings of Icarus.”

But after a time, the air above seemed to call to him . . .

Which word, if it replaced call in the sentence, would change the meaning the LEAST?

- A) beckon
- B) command
- C) scream
- D) interrupt

Item 6

What does the reader understand about Icarus’s situation in paragraph 8 that Icarus does NOT?

- A) His father is far ahead of him in the air.
- B) Flying higher will have negative consequences.
- C) The wings have already begun to fail at his back.
- D) He is flying above the deep sea.

Item 7

Read this sentence from paragraph 10 of “The Wings of Icarus.”

Down to the earth he began to fall, plummeting to the sea below.

What does the word plummeting MOST suggest about Icarus’s fall?

- A) He is falling slowly and gracefully.
- B) He is falling on purpose.
- C) He is falling rapidly and out of control.
- D) He is falling toward a soft surface.

Item 8

Which sentence BEST summarizes “The Wings of Icarus”?

- A) Daedalus and Icarus are trapped in a labyrinth, and Daedalus invents wings to escape, but Icarus dies because his father fails to warn him about the dangers.
- B) King Minos imprisons Daedalus and Icarus to punish them, but Daedalus uses his skill as a craftsman to build wings that allow them to fly to safety.
- C) Icarus disobeys his father’s warning by flying too high, and the wings are melted by the sun, which causes him to fall and drown.
- D) Daedalus builds wings of feathers and wax to escape his imprisonment and warns his son about the limits of the wings, but Icarus flies too high, the wax melts, and he falls into the sea.

Item 9

Which statement BEST describes a theme developed in “The Wings of Icarus”?

- A) A desire for freedom must be balanced with thoughtfulness.
- B) A child's love of adventure can teach a parent to take greater risks.
- C) People who defy rules find that their freedom brings long-term happiness.
- D) A life of confinement is better than a life of risk.

PASSAGE 2

“The Damaged Reel”

- (1) Manny is the lead trainer at the Riverside Community Archive, and the first thing he does with every new intern is play them a damaged tape.
- (2) The tape is a quarter-inch reel that lives in a clear plastic case at the front of the training-room cabinet. The label on the case has Manny's handwriting on it, written the summer he was fourteen.
- (3) That summer, the archive had taken Manny on as part of a youth internship program, and he spent his first two weeks dusting boxes and learning how to handle paper without damaging it. In the third week, the archive's senior archivist, Ms. Vega, brought him into the listening room and laid a reel-to-reel master tape on the table between them.
- (4) The tape was nearly fifty years old, and it contained interviews with eight residents of the Riverside neighborhood: workers, teachers, and shop owners who had helped found the community center after a fire destroyed the old one. Several of the speakers had since died, and one of them, Mr. Calderón, had no surviving family in the area anymore, so the tape was the only recording of his voice that was known to exist.
- (5) “We are going to digitize this,” Ms. Vega said, “but not yet. The acetate coating on this reel is starting to loosen. If we run it on the wrong machine or with the wrong tension, the coating will lift, and we will lose the content. We will do it tomorrow morning, together, on the small machine in the back. Until then, do not touch the reel. Do not put it on the playback head.”
- (6) Manny said that he understood, and Ms. Vega left for the day at five.
- (7) Manny stayed late, the way he often did, and he walked into the listening room a little before nine, where the reel was still on the table in its case. He had been thinking about Mr. Calderón all night, and about the youth internship program, and about how good it would feel to walk in tomorrow morning with the digital file already finished. He thought he could be careful, that he had watched Ms. Vega run the other machines many times, and that he understood what to do.
- (8) He set the reel on the machine he knew, threaded the tape, and started the playback. For thirty seconds, Mr. Calderón's voice filled the room, slow and careful, telling the story of how he had left his hometown and traveled north to find work. Then there was a small sound at the playback head, like a dry leaf underfoot. Manny did not stop the machine quickly enough. By the

time he pulled the reel, ninety seconds of the recording had been wiped clean: The brown coating that held Mr. Calderón’s voice had come off in flakes onto the read head.

(9) He stayed in the room for what felt like hours, holding the reel, trying to decide what to do.

(10) The next morning, he was waiting at the door before Ms. Vega arrived, and he told her, step-by-step, what he had done, certain that she was going to fire him.

(11) She did not. She listened until he was finished. Then she sat down with the reel and ran it through the small machine in the back, very slowly, and she let him hear the gap where Mr. Calderón’s voice had been. Ninety seconds of empty tape. After that she said, “Tell me what you learned.”

(12) Manny told her, and she wrote down what he said. That afternoon, the two of them labeled the damaged reel and added it to the archive’s training collection—not in the main holdings but in a separate section that the archive used to teach new staff. The label said, in Manny’s handwriting, “Mr. Calderón. 90 seconds lost, July of the year I was fourteen. Lesson: Do not act alone with what is fragile.”

(13) That summer ended, and Manny went back to school, then to college, then to library work, and then, eventually, back to the Riverside Community Archive, where he is now the lead trainer. He plays the damaged reel for every new intern, and he waits, every time, for the silence at the place where Mr. Calderón’s voice used to be. He always tells them, at the end, what Ms. Vega had said to him: Tell me what you learned.

ITEMS — PASSAGE 2

Item 10

What is the role of paragraph 5 in “The Damaged Reel”?

- A) It introduces Ms. Vega’s character to the reader.
- B) It states the specific rule that Manny will later break.
- C) It explains why the tape is valuable to the archive.
- D) It suggests the problem of the tape is too difficult to solve.

Item 11

What does paragraph 7 of “The Damaged Reel” reveal about Manny’s choice?

- A) His confidence is built more on observation than actual training.
- B) He believes Ms. Vega is being unfair by asking him to wait.
- C) He has a hard time thinking beyond the present moment.
- D) He knows he is making a mistake but cannot stop himself.

Item 12

Read this sentence from paragraph 8 of “The Damaged Reel.”

Then there was a small sound at the playback head, like a dry leaf underfoot.

What does the phrase “like a dry leaf underfoot” suggest?

- A) The tape is turning brown.
- B) The tape is falling to the ground.
- C) The tape is ruined beyond repair.
- D) The tape is making a quiet crunching noise.

Item 13

Read this sentence from paragraph 8 of “The Damaged Reel.”

By the time he pulled the reel, ninety seconds of the recording had been wiped clean: The brown coating that held Mr. Calderón’s voice had come off in flakes onto the read head.

Which statement BEST captures the meaning of the phrase wiped clean?

- A) The recording is temporarily gone, but it can be carefully recovered later.
- B) The recording is partly damaged but mostly understandable to a careful listener.
- C) The recording is fully erased, and it cannot be restored.
- D) The recording has been replaced with a new recording that the archive will use instead.

Item 14

An archivist is writing a note about the damaged reel. Read these two sentences being considered for the note.

1. *The recording was damaged by a young intern.*
2. *A young intern damaged the recording.*

Which statement BEST describes the difference between the two sentences?

- A) Sentence 1 uses passive voice and shifts attention from the intern to the recording.
- B) Sentence 1 uses active voice and emphasizes the intern as the actor.
- C) Sentence 2 uses passive voice and shifts attention to the recording.
- D) Sentence 2 uses active voice and emphasizes the role of the recording rather than the intern.

Item 15

A student is summarizing Daedalus’s instructions from paragraph 4 of “The Wings of Icarus” for a research paper, and she wants to use ellipses to shorten the quotation while keeping its meaning. Read this excerpt from Daedalus’s instructions.

We will fly out of this place over the sea. You will follow me. You will not fly too low, because the spray of the waves will soak the feathers and weigh you down. You will not

*fly too high, because the heat of the sun will melt the wax that holds the wings together.
Stay in the middle path.*

Which use of an ellipsis BEST shortens Daedalus’s instructions while preserving the meaning?

- A) “We will fly . . . over the sea . . . too low . . . too high . . . Stay in the middle path.”
- B) “We will fly out of this place over the sea . . . You will not fly too low . . . You will not fly too high . . . Stay in the middle path.”
- C) “. . . You will follow . . . spray . . . soak the feathers . . . heat of the sun . . . melt the wax . . .”
- D) “. . . You will not fly too low . . . heat of the sun . . .”

Item 16

Which sentence accurately summarizes a key part of “The Damaged Reel”?

- A) Ms. Vega punishes Manny for his mistake by making him write about what he has done.
- B) Manny damages an old reel-to-reel tape because he is frustrated with Ms. Vega for underestimating him.
- C) Mr. Calderón’s voice is restored to the recording when Ms. Vega plays the tape on a more appropriate machine.
- D) Manny damages a tape but then helps preserve it as a teaching tool for future archivists.

Item 17

Which statement BEST describes a theme developed in “The Damaged Reel”?

- A) Some responsibilities are too large for second chances.
- B) It is important to give young people the freedom to make choices.
- C) It is possible to use a mistake in a positive way.
- D) Actions that harm others should have serious consequences.

Item 18

Which detail from “The Damaged Reel” BEST supports the answer to the previous question?

- A) “. . . he spent his first two weeks dusting boxes and learning how to handle paper without damaging it.” (paragraph 3)
- B) “Until then, do not touch the reel. Do not put it on the playback head.” (paragraph 5)
- C) “She did not. She listened until he was finished.” (paragraph 11)
- D) “He plays the damaged reel for every new intern, and he waits, every time, for the silence at the place where Mr. Calderón’s voice used to be.” (paragraph 13)

ITEMS — BOTH PASSAGES

Item 19

Select the **TWO** statements that **BEST** describe how “The Damaged Reel” draws on “The Wings of Icarus.”

- A) The two passages take place in a similar time period.
- B) Both passages include a specific warning given to a younger person.
- C) Both passages focus on a craftsman who has created something new.
- D) Both passages preserve the story of the younger person’s actions as a cautionary lesson.
- E) Both passages explore relationships between family members.

Item 20

What is the **MOST IMPORTANT** way “The Damaged Reel” renders a key element of “The Wings of Icarus” in a new way?

- A) by moving the action from the open sky to an archive
- B) by turning the error in judgement into a teaching opportunity
- C) by replacing a warning given before an act with one given afterward
- D) by including additional characters in the story

ITEMS — MEDIA LITERACY

Item 21

Read this scenario.

A student is writing a research paper about how oral-history archives preserve community memory. The student finds four sources:

- Source 1: A blog post written last year by a high school student about her interest in archiving.
- Source 2: A 2023 report from the National Endowment for the Humanities, titled “Funding Community-Based Oral History Projects,” with a stable URL on [neh.gov](#).
- Source 3: A short article on a personal website, titled “Community Memory: The Importance of Preservation,” with no author named and no publication date.
- Source 4: A website for a writer promoting a service helping people record their personal histories that lists the options offered along with their prices

Which source is **MOST** useful for the student’s research question, and why?

- A) Source 1, because it is written by a student about archiving
- B) Source 2, because it is a recent report from an established government agency
- C) Source 3, because it has a strong title and is freely available on the internet
- D) Source 4, because it is created by someone who works in this field

Item 22

Read this scenario.

A student found a useful quote in an article on a community history website. He wants to include the quote in his research paper, and he wants another reader to be able to find the original article later if they want to check his work.

What is the BEST way for the student to cite the quote?

- A) List the keywords he used to search for the article.
- B) Write down the title of the website and the day he found it.
- C) Copy the first paragraph of the article into his paper.
- D) Include the author, title, source name, publication date, and article's stable URL or archive name.

SPELLING

Item 23

Write the spelling word you heard:

Item 24

Write the spelling word you heard:

Item 25

Write the spelling word you heard:

Item 26

Write the spelling word you heard:
