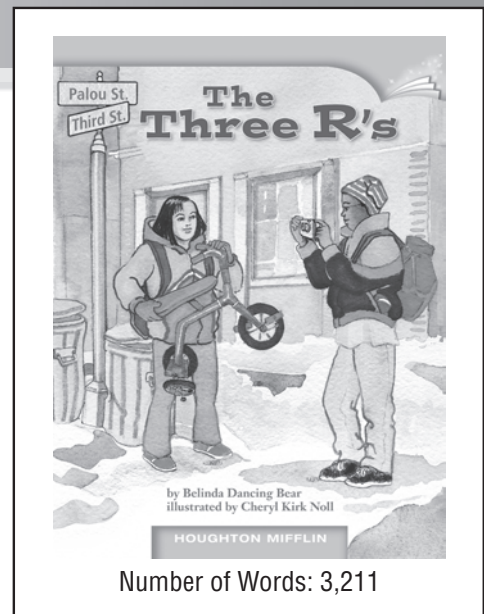# *The Three R's*

by Belinda Dancing Bear

Fountas-Pinnell Level U
Realistic Fiction

Selection Summary

A group of students is having trouble working together on a project that will help the community. The deadline for presenting the project is drawing near, but the group doesn't have an idea. As group members follow their individual interests, they come up with a great idea that will use their talents and help the community at the same time.

Number of Words: 3,211

Characteristics of the Text

Genre	• Realistic fiction
Text Structure	• Third-person narrative
	• The action takes place over a few weeks.
	• Details help reader identify the main character
Content	• Community service
	• Working in a group
	• Protecting the environment
Themes and Ideas	• Everyone has a special talent to share with others.
	• Helping out your community is important.
	• An old idea can become new and exciting with a change of perspective.
Language and Literary Features	• Idiomatic expressions: *chew us out, suit yourself*
	• Realistic dialogue
Sentence Complexity	• A mixture of simple and complex sentences
	• Exclamations
	• Questions
Vocabulary	• Many terms related to caring for the environment
Words	• Many multisyllable words: *confidence, illustrator, inventory, stationery*
Illustrations	• Lively drawings illustrate the characters and setting of the story
Book and Print Features	• Seventeen pages of text, some with illustrations
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The Three R's by Belinda Dancing Bear

Build Background

Help students use their knowledge of environmental issues to visualize the story. Build interest by asking questions such as the following: *Have you seen people throw away things that are still useful? How do you think this affects your community and the environment?* Read the title and author and talk about the cover illustration. Tell students that this story is realistic fiction, so the characters will act like real people in the real world.

Introduce the Text

Guide students through the text, noting important ideas, and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so they can read the text successfully. Here are some suggestions:

Pages 2–3: Explain that this is a story about a group of friends who must work together on a class project that involves community service. Have students locate the word **hoodlums** on page 3 and read the sentence.
Suggested language: *What are hoodlums? What kinds of things do they do that affect their community?*

Page 9: Explain to students that one of the characters in the story created his own **blog** and **uploaded** a picture to it. Invite students to share their experiences with writing and reading blogs. *What do people write about in blogs? Why do they sometimes add pictures to a blog?*

Page 11: Direct students' attention to the illustration. *One of the story's characters is writing a science fiction story about this real creature in this picture. In what kind of environment does it live, and what do you think it might have to do with the students' project?*

Page 14: Have students read the words in upper case: "Junk for One—Treasure for Another." Have students guess the meanings of this slogan. **Ask:** *Have you ever found something abandoned or thrown away that you thought was great? What did you find, and what did you do with your "treasure"?*

Now turn back to the beginning of the story and read to find out whether the students manage to get their class project organized.

Expand Your Vocabulary

barracudas – fish with long, narrow bodies and many sharp teeth, p. 10

blog – an online journal, p. 9

hoodlums – young people who are violent or commit crimes, p. 3

landfill – a large area where garbage is buried, p. 14

slogan – a phrase used by a group to express a goal or belief, p. 14

uploaded – sent information to a computer, p. 14

Read

Have students read silently while you listen to individual students read aloud. Support their understanding of the text as needed.

Remind students to use the Monitor/Clarify Strategy ✔ **TARGET STRATEGY** to notice what isn't making sense, and to find ways to figure out the parts that are confusing.

Discuss and Revisit the Text

Personal Response

Invite students to share their personal responses to the story.
Suggested language: *Have you ever done something to help in your community? Compare what you did to what the students in the story are doing.*

Ways of Thinking

As you discuss the text, help students understand these points:

Thinking Within the Text	Thinking Beyond the Text	Thinking About the Text
• A group of students try to think of a community service project to complete an assignment for school. • They have trouble coming up with an idea that they are all excited about. • An accidental discovery of a discarded tricycle sparks their imaginations and leads to a great project idea.	• Brilliant ideas are sometimes hiding in plain sight. • Protecting and caring for the environment is everyone's responsibility. • Effective teamwork takes advantage of the strengths and talents of its members.	• The illustration of the Web site helps the reader to visualize the students' project. • The illustrations support the text by providing clues to the characters' feelings as well as representations of their work. • The dialogue uses idiomatic expressions that are realistic for the age group.

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Choices for Further Support

• **Fluency** Invite students to choose a passage from the text to read aloud. Suggest that they read a couple of pages as if they were acting in a play. Remind them to imitate the students' conversations using the tone, pitch, and volume that they think would be used by the students in the story.

• **Comprehension** Based on your observations of the students' reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind students to go back to the text to support their ideas.

• **Phonics/Word Work** Provide practice as needed with words and word parts, using examples from the text. Point out the word *discarded* in the first sentence of page 14. Remind students that the prefix *dis-* means *away*. Explain that the root word *card*, comes from the Latin word *charte*, which means "a leaf of paper or a tablet." Recognizing prefixes and roots can help a reader decode unfamiliar words.

Writing about Reading

Critical Thinking

Have students complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 16.9.

Responding

Have students complete the activities at the back of the book, using their Reader's Notebook. Use the instruction below as needed to reinforce or extend understanding of the comprehension skill.

Target Comprehension Skill

Author's Purpose ✔ TARGET SKILL Remind students that they can use text details to figure out the author's viewpoint and reasons for writing. Model how to add details to the Graphic Organizer, using a "Think Aloud" like the one below:

> **Think Aloud**
>
> *In the book, Toni wishes that her friends would take their project seriously. This detail about what the main character wants is connected to the author's purpose. Write it in the Graphic Organizer. What else does Toni care about? Write that she cares about the environment.*

Practice the Skill

Have students share an example of another story where they can find details to support the author's purpose.

Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students write a response to the prompt on page 6. Remind them that when they think beyond the text, they use their personal knowledge to reach new understanding.

Assessment Prompts

- Choose one word that best describes how Toni feels about her friends at the beginning of the story. Use examples from the story to support your thinking.
- What themes in the story help you figure out the author's purpose?
- How is the theme of Lee's science fiction story connected to the students' community service project?

English Language Development

Reading Support Make sure the text matches the student's reading level. Language and content should be accessible with regular teaching support.

Cognates The story includes several cognates that may help students recognize an English word. Explain the English word and its Spanish equivalent: incredibly (*increíblemente*), mental (*mental*), and exceptional (*excepcional*).

Oral Language Development

Check student comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches your students' English proficiency. **Speaker 1** is the teacher, **Speaker 2** is the student.

Beginning/Early Intermediate	Intermediate	Early Advanced/ Advanced
Speaker 1: What did the students have to complete for school? **Speaker 2:** a community project **Speaker 1:** Who worked together in a group? **Speaker 2:** Carmen, Marcus, Lee, and Toni	**Speaker 1:** Why was Carmen frustrated with her group at first? **Speaker 2:** Her group was not interested in working on the project. **Speaker 1:** At the end of the story, what type of project did the group do for the community? **Speaker 2:** They created a Web site for the community where people could find and share reusable items.	**Speaker 1:** In what way did the group's project help the community? **Speaker 2:** The group's Web site helped people in the community find things that they could use that other people had thrown away. Reusing these things would be better for the environment than throwing them into landfills.

Responding

✓ **TARGET SKILL** **Author's Purpose** What is Belinda Dancing Bear's purpose in writing *The Three R's*? Copy and complete the chart below. Add the author's purpose as well as details from the story that support it.

Detail Toni wishes that her friends would take their community service project seriously.	Detail ?	Detail ?

Purpose	?

Write About It

Text to Self Think about a community service project you have participated in. Write a letter to a friend, telling about the project and your role in it.

19

Name _____ Date _____

Critical Thinking

The Three R's
Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions. Possible responses shown.

1. **Think within the text** What suggestion for their community service project does Toni initially come up with?
   recycling

2. **Think within the text** What are the three R's in the students' website motto?
   Reclaim! Repair! Reuse!

3. **Think beyond the text** Why was the group's project a success in the end?
   Every member of the group could do something that would help.

4. **Think about the text** What do you think is the author's attitude about individual contributions to a team?
   Teams work well when each individual can contribute his or her particular strength.

Making Connections Think of everything you threw away yesterday. Choose one of the items and write about a creative way in which that item could have been reused.

Write your answer in your Reader's Notebook.

11
Grade 5, Unit 4: What's Your Story?

The Three R's

Thinking Beyond the Text

Think about the question below. Then write your answer in two or three paragraphs.

Remember that when you think beyond the text, you use your personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

At the beginning of the story, Toni is the only one in her group who seems to want to work on the project. She is frustrated with her friends. Do you understand how she feels? How can working in a group be both rewarding and challenging? How do different personalities and different interests affect the group? Support your ideas with examples from the story.

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Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions.

1. **Think within the text**   What suggestion for their community service project does Toni initially come up with?

   _____

   _____

2. **Think within the text**   What are the three R's in the students' Web site motto?

   _____

   _____

3. **Think beyond the text**   Why was the group's project a success in the end?

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. **Think about the text**   What do you think is the author's attitude about individual contributions to a team?

   _____

   _____

   _____

Making Connections   Think of everything you threw away yesterday. Choose one of the items and write about a creative way in which that item could have been reused.

Write your answer in your Reader's Notebook.

The Three R's • LEVEL U

page	Selection Text	Errors	Self-Corrections
12	In just two weeks, the community service project would be due, and Toni's group had not even decided what to do yet. *It's time I make a decision for the group,* Toni thought. *There's no time left to keep trying to motivate these guys.* So Toni went back to her original idea and told her friends her plan. "Listen. We're going to have to do our project on recycling. We can call it 'Reawaken to Recycling.' I know the title is lame, but if we get this thing done, we can probably get a decent grade." Then she explained that they could make posters.		
	Comments:	**Accuracy Rate** (# words read correctly/104 × 100) _____ %	**Total Self-Corrections** _____

Behavior	Code	Error
Read word correctly	✔ cat	0
Repeated word, sentence, or phrase	® cat	0
Omission	‾cat	1

Behavior	Code	Error
Substitution	cut cat	1
Self-corrects	cut sc cat	0
Insertion	the ∧cat	1
Word told	① cat	1