Literature Textbooks Available for Grades 3–8
sunflower

Mosdos Press

Literature

Opal

daisy
Opal Student Edition, Teacher’s Annotated Edition, and Student Companion Workbook are now the first level/the first step in the Mosdos elementary school series. Opal provides 3rd grade students literature and language arts education that is welcoming, often fun, sometimes intriguing, and academically excellent. Opal also gives students the skills to make a smooth progression to our 4th grade book, Ruby.

The two book set that comprises the Opal curriculum is aligned with Common Core Reading Standards. Units 1 - 3 are in part one and units 4 - 6 are in part two. Opal is only sold as a two book set.
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Our Mission
Mosdos Press presents world-class literature for middle school and high school: classic and contemporary works that are broadly representative, intellectually challenging, and morally framed. Our curriculum is rigorous and engaging, and thoughtfully explores family values and ethics. Mosdos Press is dedicated to excellence in the teaching of literature, writing, vocabulary, and language arts. Our Literature Anthology Series meets the most stringent academic standards, without compromising our children spiritually or psychologically.

Our Promise
Mosdos Press is the right choice for educators and families dismayed by contemporary values and concerned with the impact of secular studies. Our selections have enduring literary worth. Our curriculum teaches intellectual probing, analysis, a respect for language, and the weighing of ethics and values.

Mosdos Press’ literature anthologies are currently being used in countless public, private, and religious schools across the United States and Canada. With the introduction of our books, all these institutions have experienced positive changes in the tone of their classrooms. Schools moving towards the current “Values based” education trend need look no further than our series, for we promise to impart only traditional, wholesome values in our books. Teachers find that our curriculum-rich Teacher’s Editions, replete with ideas for creative assignments, community service projects, and valuable background information, make teaching with our series a pleasure.

The Mosdos Press Learning Experience
Our textbooks have order and clarity. The pages are never visually overwhelming. We do not bombard children. Every selection is accessible: We take the student step by step, so that no child will throw up a barrier and think, “I cannot learn.” Our workbook is literate, funny, and visually delightful! This workbook will enable your children to take tests successfully.

Mosdos Press Teacher’s Editions are so detailed, so well-organized, and so innovative, teachers can use these books as their primary resource. These books will stand you in good stead for creating lesson plans for model lessons, or for bringing something extra to your students.

Mosdos Press is a superior secular literature anthology series that does not compromise values
The Mosdos Press Learning Experience

Our textbooks have order and clarity. The pages are never visually overwhelming. We teach a progression of language arts skills that build, one on the other. These lessons are specifically geared towards the 3rd grader. Opal includes works by, Myron Uhlberg, Ann Cameron, Berniece Freschet, and Russell H. Erickson. The book is replete with short stories, a complete chapter book, drama, poetry, and nonfiction. Opal has a wonderful selection of poetry—more than 15 poems follow prose selections with which they are thematically linked. These are just for the pleasure of reading. Opal poets include Emily Dickinson, Jack Prelutsky, and Langston Huges. Finally, Opal presents a unique Mosdos feature: Jill's Journal, a first-person narrative presumably written at the time of the prose selection. Third graders will enter the setting of the literary work, as if they were present in that time and place.

10 digit ISBN 0-9858078-3-0 (2 book set)

Teacher’s Annotated Edition

Once again, our Teacher’s Edition is printed in two volumes with spiral binding and soft cover for easy use. The Opal Teacher’s Edition is extraordinarily helpful for teachers—new, old, and home school. Each prose work begins with a Selection Summary and Getting Started. The Guiding the Reading questions and literary components are an invaluable teaching tool. With our Teacher’s Annotated Edition, you are never on your own. Although the material is somewhat simplified for the 3rd grade, you will find exactly what you need here. See p. xx for details.

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The Opal student workbook has been formatted for 3rd sensibilities. The layout and graphics are visually appealing, with sufficient space between lines and exercises for the younger student writer. Opal has vocabulary exercises in the form of word games and puzzles. With Opal, students see that language is fun. In addition to two vocabulary activities for each prose selection, the workbook includes language arts skills activities, writing activities, and a graphic organizer. The six workbook pages accompanying each selection assist the 3rd grader in developing analytical and writing skills. The Opal workbook has been developed with our hallmark wit, humor, and creativity.

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Test Masters

The Opal test master CD has a test for each prose selection, including essay questions, unit tests, and vocabulary tests. These user-friendly CD masters offer the educator an excellent teacher tool. The test masters can be used as an independent assignment or review or as a student test before progressing to the next lesson.

10 digit ISBN 0-9801670-6-X
13 digit ISBN 978-0-9801670-6-1
Lesson in Literature... 
TREASURE OF THE ANDES

WHAT IS A STORY?
- A story is about something that happens at a certain time in a certain place.
- What happens in the story is called the plot.
- The people or animals in the story are called the characters.
- The time and place in which the events happen are called the setting.

THINK ABOUT IT!
1. How do the boys discover the silver urn?
2. Who are the five characters in the story?
3. Where does the story take place? Name the country the boys live in, and the mountains and the lake that are near their farm.

Carlos sat on the wooden box that his father had placed near the vegetable garden. "Carlos," his papa had said, "you are such a good boy. You work so hard. Sit down sometimes!"

Carlos was nine. He smiled, remembering his father's words. He liked taking care of the potatoes, corn, and barley. He would grow up to be a farmer or fisherman just like his mama and papa.

Carlos lived in the Andes Mountains near Lake Titicaca in Bolivia. Bolivia is in South America. Carlos knew his parents were different from other farmers. They read many books. They knew many things about the world. In fact, they had named him after a famous Bolivian artist.

Oh, to be a painter of pictures! Oh, to be a weaver of brightly colored cloth! Mama made beautiful cloth. But she didn't have much time to weave. She had to take care of the farm and his brothers and baby sister.

Lesson's in Literature
The Opal pre-curriculum for each selection begins with Lesson in Literature, which presents the literary component or language arts skill that will be focused on in that selection. Each Lesson in Literature has three sections. The first section defines the literary
“Carlos! How are you?” It was his friend, Tomie, calling. “Want to search for buried treasure?”

“Sure,” Carlos shouted back. Their favorite game was hunting for treasure. They had always heard stories that something valuable was buried in the Andes. They imagined finding treasure and being heroes. Then they could both go to art school. They would be famous artists! They had talked about this many times.

“You know, Tomie, I’ve been thinking. The legend says the treasure is where the earth is like a mirror or a sheet of glass. Well, Lake Titicaca is so calm. It really looks like a sheet of glass!”

They headed for the lake with their llama, Isabella. She wore her bright pink collar and ear tassels. Their spades were set in the pack that she wore.

Carlos and Tomie were near the edge of the lake. Suddenly, Carlos tripped on a rock and fell. “Are you all right?” cried Tomie.

“My hands are scraped, but I’m okay. It was just a big rock!”

“Hey, wait,” Tomie exclaimed, as he helped his friend to his feet. “Look at that!” he said. “That’s no rock. See, it’s shiny—just the way the lake is shiny.” They set to digging with their spades, excited. But Carlos worried.

What if it were nothing special? Then there would be no art school.

Little by little they uncovered an old and heavy silver urn. “It’s just like what we saw at the museum in the city,” Tomie said. They attached the urn to Isabella’s pack with rope. They wanted to get home quickly, but Isabella had a heavy load.

Soon they saw their mamas working in the field. The boys untied the urn. Together, they held it up for their mamas to see.

“Look!” the boys exclaimed. “We found the treasure of the Andes!”

At first their mothers laughed. “Are you certain it belongs to no one else?”

“Mama,” Carlos cried. “How could something so old belong to someone else?”

The two women looked at each other. “Do you know what this means for our families?” Tomie’s mama said to the boys.

Carlos’ mama nodded. “We have not told either of you how Tomie’s little sister needs medicine, or how little food we have had to get by on. We save the food for the children.”

“Thank you so much,” Tomie’s mama said quietly. “You are both heroes.”
INTO . . . The Jar of Tassai

Tassai was a Pueblo Indian girl whose family lived and farmed near the desert. Like many children, Tassai had a secret. Slowly and carefully, in a secret place, Tassai was making a jar from clay. She had discovered the clay near the desert. Tassai dreamed of the day when she would surprise everyone with the beauty of the jar. Just as that day arrived, something happened! Her precious jar was endangered, but so was something even more precious. Tassai had to choose between the two in a split second. As you read The Jar of Tassai, ask yourself what choice you would have made.

Blueprint for Reading

The student is introduced to each selection in two ways. The first, Into the Selection encourages the young readers to think analytically about the selection they are about to read. What drives the author? The action? The characters?

The second, Eyes on links the literary component introduced in the Lesson in literature to the selection at hand. The student is asked to think about how the literary component is expressed in the story. In addition, strategies for implementing the selection’s focus skill are suggested.
The Jar of Tassai

Grace Moon

Tassai lived on the top of a mesa that looked far out over the Painted Desert. The air was as clear as thin ice. It even made the faraway mountains and blue hills look nearer than they really were. Tassai was a Pueblo Indian girl. She was as brown as a nut that has dried in the sun, and she liked to lie on the edge of the mesa. She would look over the desert and dream long dreams.

But Tassai did not often have time for dreams. There was too much work for her to do. Tassai worked with her mother in the little fields at the foot of the mesa. It was hard work, and it had magic in it. It had the magic of watching green things spring up out of the ground when only brown earth had been there before.

...
The Secret

Emily Dickinson

We have a secret, just we three,
The robin, and I, and the sweet cherry-tree;
The bird told the tree, and the tree told me,
And nobody knows it but just us three.

But of course the robin knows it best,
Because he built the — I shan’t tell the rest;
And laid the four little — something in it —
I’m afraid I shall tell it every minute.

But if the tree and the robin don’t peep,
I’ll try my best the secret to keep;
Though I know when the little birds fly about
Then the whole secret will be out.

About the Poem

Fun to read poems follow most prose selections. Linked thematically with the selection they follow, these easily understandable poems give third graders poetry reading practice and the opportunity to experience the delight of this genre.
First Impressions is the basis for classroom discussion. With the exception of the Quick Review, all of the exercises call for more than a recollection of facts. Specifically, the Focus questions require that students think about the theme. This prepares them for the first exercise in Creating & Writing: to write a short paragraph or two related to the theme or to compose creative work that is linked thematically with the selection. The second Creating & Writing activity is always a non-writing imaginative or artistic assignment.

Quick Review
1. What work did Tassai do secretly?
2. What did Tassai hope to do with her jar?
3. Why did Tassai leave the feast and run home?
4. How did Tassai's jar get broken?

Focus
5. At the end of the story, Tassai felt very happy, even though her jar was broken. Why did she feel this way?
6. Every story has a plot, characters, a setting, and a theme, or main idea. Copy the chart below onto a piece of paper and fill in the empty boxes.

| List three characters | 1. |
| List two settings | 2. |
| List two important things that happen in the story | 3. |

Creating and Writing
7. In the story, the Governor gave Tassai a prize for doing a good deed. What do you think it was? Imagine that you are the Governor, and write a letter to Tassai that describes the prize and thanks her for her brave deed.
8. Tassai loved making her jar. At home, find an empty jar. Clean it well and decorate it. Fill it with something you like, such as candy or small pieces of a game.

Post Curriculum
Studying the Selection is the curriculum that follows each selection. Even for 3rd graders, this means a close look at the selection with lots of opportunity for application. Based on Bloom's Taxonomy of Knowledge (comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) the exercises include First Impressions, Quick Review, Focus, and Creating & Writing.
**Vocabulary Exercise One** allows students to apply their new words immediately! The sentences in the exercise may tell a prose story, create a poem, or teach a lesson about language—and the student tells the story by filling in the correct word. This is the Mosdos Press method of literate learning with a smile.

**Vocabulary Exercise Two** asks for synonyms and antonyms; gives practice with identifying parts of speech; and helps students grasp the fine points of new vocabulary with choose-the-sentence exercises, and exercises asking them to group and categorize words. Exercise Two also offers several strong, clear lessons in word comparisons—the most significant and popular test of vocabulary and analytic ability on standardized tests.
The *More about the Story* workbook page offers young writers a creative writing experience. A story-starter paragraph provides the student with a thoughtful prompt thematically linked to the selection.

**Recognize the Four Elements of a Story**

Every story has four elements: plot, characters, setting, and theme, or main idea. As you can see, each jar in the picture is labeled with one of these elements. Follow the instructions given beneath (above) each jar. When you have written in your answers, decorate the jars.

**Plot**

The plot has several steps to it. Start or complete the phrase that describes each step in the plot.

1. Tassai was secretly
2. The Governor of Pueblo invited
3. ____________
4. Tassai realized she had left her jar at home, so she
5. ____________
6. While Tassai was inside, the little girl suddenly saw
7. When Tassai saw the snake, she
8. By doing this, Tassai had
9. When the Governor heard about this, he

**Characters**

List the four characters in the story.
1. ____________
2. ____________
3. ____________
4. ____________

**Setting**

List the four settings in the story.
1. ____________
2. ____________
3. ____________
4. ____________

**Theme**

Decorate the jar that contains the theme, the main idea of the story.

The main idea is found near the end of the story when the Governor says that prizes were to be given for the most beautiful things brought to the feast. But, he says, deeds can be very beautiful, too. He then gives Tassai a prize for her beautiful deed.

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**Write a Paragraph**

When making an object requires special skill, it is called a *craft*. Tassai was good at making jars, which is the craft of pottery-making. Everyone has worked at some craft, even if they didn’t know it! Have you ever made a lantern? Have you used modeling clay or even play-dough? Then you have worked at a craft. Some other crafts would be embroidery or woodpoint, woodworking, making a model car or airplane, or even decorating a cake. Choose a craft that you enjoy or know something about, and write a paragraph about it. Describe what skill the craft requires, for example, must you be good at drawing? Must you know how to use certain tools? Then tell what materials you need for it, and what the finished product looks like.

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**Student Workbook**

Workbook blurb. Ficipid utaerfe rempore porit et hit oditati blamuscidus, que natem perum ium, volum imus ma sandandi sitas volore dolorum? Accum est et quid quia dolo eumquatus et porem
Selection Summary

The Jar of Tassai is a wonderful short story about a girl and her secret. The story takes place in Bolivia and is about a girl named Tassai. Tassai is a dreamer and she loves the beautiful area in which she lives. One day, she discovers some beautiful clay and decides to make a beautiful jar. However, when she gets home, she discovers that the jar is not in it. She had taken it with her to the area. Every person attending the fair was expected to bring something for the big contest. Tassai would be awarded for her jar.

Getting Started

As you read the first paragraph, think about the story elements. What is the setting? Who are the characters? What is the plot?

Non-story

Name:

1. What work did Tassai do secretly?
2. The characters are:
3. Where does the story take place?
4. The legend says the treasure is where the tree and the robin don't peep. But if the tree and the robin don't peep, then the whole secret will be out.
5. At the end of the story, Tassai felt very happy, even though the treasure was not found.
6. What is a mesa?
7. Answers will vary. Encourage the students to use examples of their own stories to think about this.

About the Poem

The secret

The Jar of Tassai

TEACHER’S EDITION

In the Mosdos Press Literature Anthology Series, the student textbook and companion Teacher’s Annotated Edition are like the two sides of a coin. Each completes the other, for both student and teacher. Mosdos Press Teacher’s Editions have been crafted for both classroom and homeschooling instructors, for both novice
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