

Name:

Day One

The Beast

Part 1: Silent read

➔ Can Elisa ride The Beast to a better life? Read silently.

Elisa joins the young people walking along the train tracks. No one speaks. Elisa wears sneakers and a backpack. She has her aunt's phone number sewn into her jeans. She is thirsty, but she saves her water. When it's gone, she'll have only impure water from puddles and streams. She thinks of her mom, back home, and her eyes fill with tears. She wipes them away. She needs to be strong. She is about to ride The Beast.

"The Beast" is the name given to Mexico's cargo trains by the people that ride them to the U.S. border. The trains run at irregular times. Passenger travel is totally illegal. The travelers that ride The Beast come from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. They are running from poverty and gangs. They hope to help their families at home with money they earn over the border.

Their first step is to enter Mexico. There, the travelers jump on cargo trains, pulling themselves aboard while the trains gather speed. Some people slip and have their legs cut off. Elisa has heard of bodies sliced in half by the train's wheels.

Atop the trains, other dangers wait. Criminals prowl. Mexican police hunt the travelers down. Many people are beaten and robbed. The travelers keep their eyes turned north. They focus on the new life that they hope is waiting for them up ahead.

The U.S. border is impossible to cross by train. The travelers hop off on the Mexican side of the border, where coyotes wait to smuggle them onto American soil.



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// one minute

Part 2: First timed read

WPM _____

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Part 3: Comprehension and discussion

What is The Beast?

What are two dangers that Elisa faced riding The Beast?

Day One

The Beast

Part 4: Phrase-cued reading

- Read the passage **out loud** in phrases to your partner.
- Pause at each / mark for a phrase.
- Also pause at each // mark that shows the end of a sentence.

Elisa joins the young people / walking along the train tracks. // No one speaks. // Elisa wears sneakers / and a backpack. // She has her aunt's phone number / sewn into her jeans. // She is thirsty, / but she saves her water. // When it's gone, / she'll have only impure water / from puddles and streams. // She thinks of her mom, / back home, / and her eyes fill with tears. // She wipes them away. // She needs to be strong. // She is about to ride The Beast. //

"The Beast" is the name / given to Mexico's cargo trains / by the people that ride them / to the U.S. border. // The trains run at irregular times. // Passenger travel is totally illegal. // The travelers that ride The Beast / come from El Salvador, / Guatemala, / and Honduras. // They are running from poverty / and gangs. // They hope to help their families at home / with money they earn over the border. //

Their first step is to enter Mexico. // There, / the travelers jump on cargo trains, / pulling themselves aboard / while the trains gather speed. // Some people slip / and have their legs cut off. // Elisa has heard / of bodies sliced in half / by the train's wheels. //

Atop the trains, / other dangers wait. // Criminals prowl. // Mexican police hunt the travelers down. // Many people are beaten and robbed. // The travelers keep their eyes turned north. // They focus on the new life / that they hope is waiting for them / up ahead. //

The U.S. border is impossible to cross / by train. // The travelers hop off / on the Mexican side of the border, / where coyotes wait to smuggle them / onto American soil. //

I read the passage in phrases out loud to my partner.