



Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills 8th Edition

Benchmark

Grade 4

Student Materials

Beginning of Year

The Raft

The girl crouched barefoot on the moving raft. The boy stood silent and pushed it along in the slow current with a long bamboo pole.

Mountains rose on all sides. The mountains were green close by, blue far off.

Monkeys howled in the trees. Mist rose in soft waves from the river. The boy wiped drops of rain from his face with a sleeve of his white linen shirt. His hair was soaked, and so was the shirt.

He leaned on the bamboo pole with all of his strength. Whenever he pushed, he let out a grunt. And each time he pushed, the boat surged forward on the river. There was no other sound but the howling of monkeys, and rain pattering quietly on the dark river.

The girl meantime crouched in silence, peering off into the jungle. She was shivering. She pulled the colorful shawl tighter over her bony shoulders. Her dark earlobes were beaded with rainwater.

The boy did not know where he was pushing this raft to on the dark, misted river in a deep jungle under the cold and incessant rain.

The girl had an idea of where they might end up together, if only the boy was strong and patient enough to keep on pushing the raft, but she didn't speak even a word about it.