



## THEME

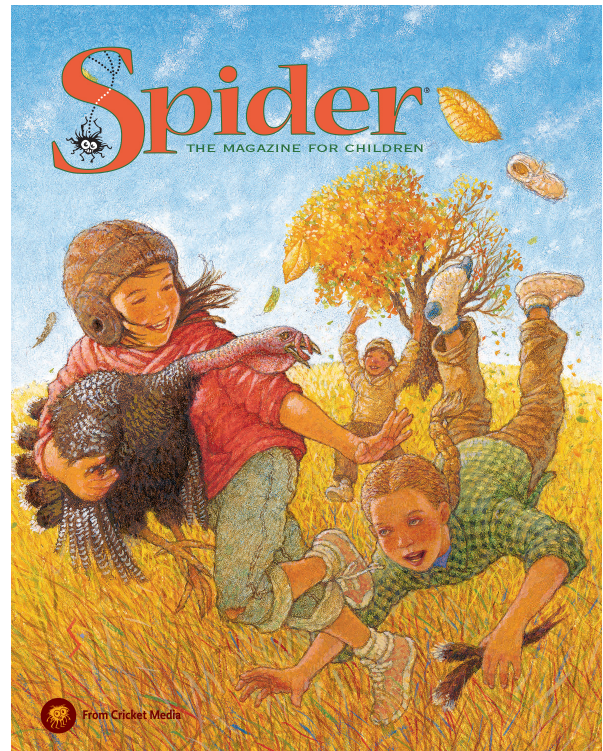
This issue of *Spider* contains stories about many different winter celebrations. Compare family traditions and create lively discussion using these stories to learn about a variety of practices and observances.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do families celebrate winter holidays?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will make logical inferences.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will analyze historical figures.
- Students will analyze cultural characteristics.
- Students will write narratives.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core English Language Arts skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

## SELECTIONS

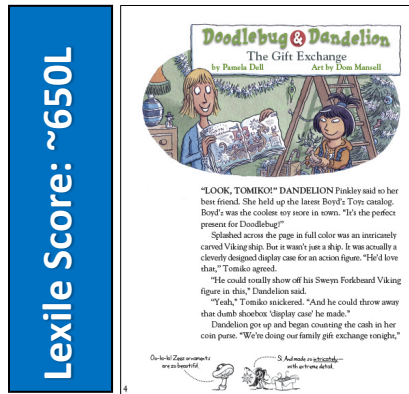
- **Doodlebug & Dandelion**  
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~650L
- **For the First Night of Kwanzaa**  
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~650L
- **The Mouse Café**  
Fantasy, ~550L

# Spider® Teacher Guide: November/December 2018

## Doodlebug & Dandelion

### pp. 4–8, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Use this amusing reproduction of O. Henry's famous short story "The Gift of the Magi" to teach students how to make inferences.



## RESOURCES

- Make Inferences Worksheet

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will make logical inferences.
- Students will analyze historical figures.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **glumly** (p. 5) doing something in a sad way
- **prancing** (p. 5) walking or moving in a lively and proud way
- **hesitate** (p. 5) stop briefly before you do something, especially because you are nervous or unsure about what to do
- **puzzling** (p. 8) confusing

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do families celebrate winter holidays?

Ask students to name the holidays and family celebrations when they give or receive gifts. Discuss the kinds of gifts students are excited to give and receive. Invite volunteers to describe the best gift they ever gave someone and the best gift they've ever received. Tell students that "Doodlebug & Dandelion" is about a brother and sister who exchange gifts, and then begin reading.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words. Read the terms and their definitions aloud. Next, have students work in small groups to take turns using gestures, facial expressions, or actions to show the meaning of the words while other group members try to guess the word.

## READ & DISCUSS

After students have read the story, use the questions below to prompt discussion:

1. What objects do Doodlebug and Dandelion each treasure or want badly?
2. What gifts do they give each other?
3. How does each character get the money to buy a gift?
4. What do Doodlebug and Dandelion's actions tell you about them and their relationship?
5. What is the theme or message of this story?

## SKILL FOCUS: Make Inferences

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that authors don't always tell readers exactly what a character is thinking and feeling. Instead, authors give clues that help readers to make inferences, or logical guesses, about a character's thoughts and feelings. Explain that readers can make inferences by combining story information and their own knowledge and experiences. Distribute the *Make Inferences* worksheet to all students. Work with students to make the first inference and state reasons to support it. Next, have students work in pairs to make an inference about the second story excerpt. Discuss responses.

**ASSESS:** Have partners work together to answer the final question on the worksheet. Discuss responses as a class.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Remind students that Doodlebug owns a Sweyn Forkbeard Viking figure. Explain the Sweyn Forkbeard was a real person. Have students research this Danish king. Display a chart in the classroom with the heading "Facts about Forkbeard." Have students add interesting facts to the chart as they discover them.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Make Inferences

An **inference** is a logical guess that you make using details in a text and what you already know from your own experiences. In the chart below, make inferences about Dandelion's feelings. Also write the reasons why you made each inference.

**Story Information:** "Dandelion hesitated outside the shop." (p. 5)

My Inference	My Reasons
I think Dandelion feels . . .	I think this because . . .

**Story Information:** "Minutes later Mademoiselle lowered her scissors and spun Dandelion around to face the mirror. Dandelion gasped. She looked like a lamb with a crew cut. Now even Doodlebug had more hair than she did." (p. 6)

My Inference	My Reasons
I think Dandelion feels . . .	I think this because . . .

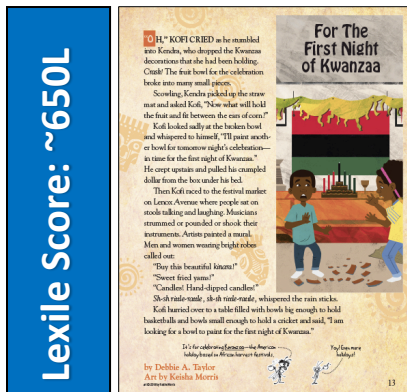
How does Dandelion feel at the end of the story? Write your inference and your reasons on the back of this paper.

# Spider® Teacher Guide: November/December 2018

## For the First Night of Kwanzaa

pp. 13–17, Contemporary Realistic  
Fiction

Use this story about a family celebrating Kwanzaa to teach students how to visualize story information.



## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will analyze cultural characteristics.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **kinara (p. 13)** A special candle holder used during Kwanzaa
- **rain stick (p. 13)** a musical instrument made from a hollow branch that is filled with pebbles and sealed on each end
- **potter (p. 14)** a person who makes pots, bowls, plates, etc. out of clay
- **merchant (p. 15)** the owner or manager of a store
- **savanna (p. 16)** a large flat area of land with grass and very few trees, especially in Africa and South America

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do families celebrate winter holidays?

Briefly explain that Kwanzaa is an African American cultural festival held from December 26 to January 1. Invite students to share what they know about Kwanzaa. Then use a picture book or a website to build background on this celebration. Finally, have students walk through the illustrations and record two predictions about story events. Remind students to check their predictions as they read the story.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Next, have students create a three-column chart with the headings “People,” “Places,” “Things.” Have student write the vocabulary words in the correct columns. Discuss responses.

## READ & DISCUSS

After students have read the story, discuss the predictions they made earlier. Then use the questions below to prompt discussion:

1. Where is Kofi at the beginning of the story?
2. What problem does Kofi face? How does he solve his problem?
3. Who does Kofi talk to at the festival market?
4. Words that imitate sounds are called onomatopoeia. *Sh-sh rattle-rattle* is one example from the story. Find another example.
5. How would you describe Kofi?

## SKILL FOCUS: Visualizing Setting

**INSTRUCT:** Review setting (the time and place in which story events happen). Ask students to identify the two settings in this story (Kofi’s house and the festival market). Tell students that authors use words and details to help readers visualize, or picture in their minds, the setting of a story. Tell students to create pictures in their mind (visualize) as you read aloud the section of text on page 13 that begins “Then Kofi raced to the festival market . . .” and ends with “. . . whispered the rain sticks.” Ask students to share what they visualized. Demonstrate visualizing by quickly drawing the scene you visualized as you read. Point out the story details that helped you visualize. Next, have students sit in small groups to listen as you read aloud the section where Kofi meets the potter, pages 13–14. Have group members discuss what they visualized.

**ASSESS:** Hand out blank paper and markers or color pencils. Have students draw a picture of what they visualized as you read. Have them label their drawings with the story details that helped them visualize.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Have students read books, stories, newspaper articles, or websites to learn more about the celebration of Kwanzaa. Invite students to share what they learn.



# Spider® Teacher Guide: November/December 2018

## The Mouse Café

pp. 23–28, Fantasy

Use this story about a family of mice who have an owl problem during Hanukkah to review story elements.



## RESOURCES

- Story Map Organizer

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will write narratives.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **latkes (p. 23)** pancakes made from shredded potatoes
- **midwinter (p. 23)** the middle of winter
- **sizzled (p. 24)** made a hissing sound
- **jingling (p. 23)** making a light ringing sound

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do families celebrate winter holidays?

Have students share their experiences and knowledge of Hanukkah. Then invite volunteers to describe how a latke tastes and when they eat them. Use a picture book or website to build background as necessary on Hanukkah and latkes.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Ask volunteers to explain the meanings of familiar words. Acknowledge correct meanings and then read the definitions aloud. Next, have students work in pairs to write sentences using these words. Have students gather in small groups to share their sentences.

## READ & DISCUSS

After students have read the story, use the questions below to prompt discussion:

1. At what time of year does this story take place?
2. What are three positive things about the café?
3. What is the owl problem?
4. How does the old mouse fix the owl problem?
5. What does Mama say when people say her latkes are the best in the world? Why does she say this?
6. How would you describe the old mouse?
7. Why do you think the old mouse played music when he fed the owl?

## SKILL FOCUS: Story Elements

**INSTRUCT:** Discuss the main elements of stories with students (character setting, plot, theme). Remind students that most stories consist of a series of events that tell about a problem and how it is solved. Invite students to describe the problem in a story you recently read as a class. Then ask students to tell the important steps that characters took to solve the problem. Next, distribute a copy of the *Story Map* organizer to each student. Review the different sections and explain how to complete it.

**ASSESS:** Have students work in pairs to reread the story and complete the organizer. When all students are finished, draw a large-scale version of the organizer on the board and fill it in as you go over responses. Finally, discuss the themes that students found in the story.

## EXTEND

**Language Arts** Have students choose a favorite holiday and write about how they celebrate the holiday. Tell students to include details about the people, foods, music, dancing, clothing, and activities that are part of the celebration. Suggest students begin or end their story with an explanation of why this holiday is a favorite. Invite students to read their stories to the class.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Story Map

Use the organizer below to record information about “The Mouse Café.”

<b>Characters</b>	<b>Setting</b>
<b>What problem do the characters face?</b>	
<b>How do the characters try to solve the problem? List these events.</b> 1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6.	
<b>How is the problem finally solved?</b>	
<b>What is the theme of the story?</b>	