

Cricket

THEME

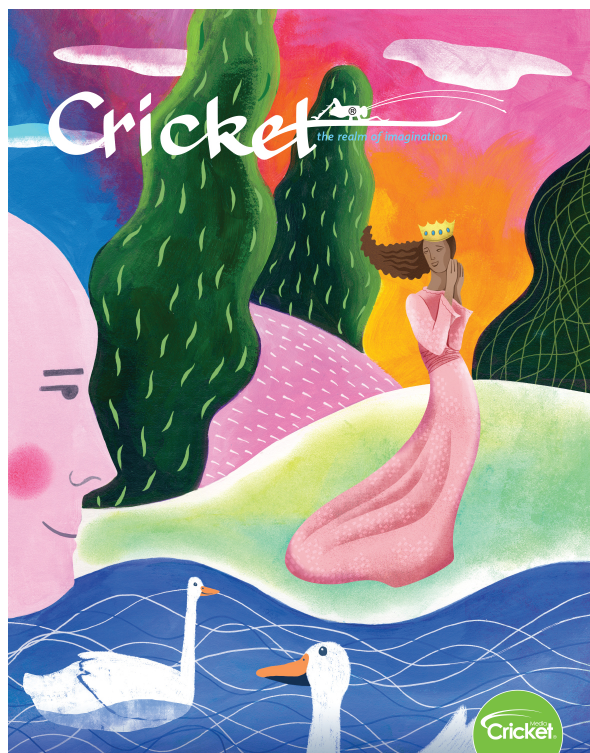
The characters in these stories face challenging situations and make decisions that show who they are.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What makes a decision difficult?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze how individuals develop and interact over the course of a story.
- Students will assess how point of view shapes the content and style of a text.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.
- Students will write narratives to develop imaginary events.
- Students will understand relationships among historical events or developments.



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

- **Rahim's Pangolin**
Realistic Fiction, ~650L
- **Pond Water**
Fairy Tale, ~950L
- **Hidden Heritage**
Historical Fiction, ~750L

Rahim's Pangolin

pp. 12–17, Realistic Fiction

Use this story about two boys looking for a pangolin in Bangladesh to help students compare characters.



RESOURCES

- Comparing Characters Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals develop and interact over the course of a story.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.

KEY VOCABULARY

- pangolin (p. 12)** a scaly mammal, similar to an anteater, that is found in Asia and Africa
- monsoon (p. 12)** the summer rainy season in southern Asia
- brazen (p. 15)** bold, unafraid
- poachers (p. 16)** people who hunt or fish illegally
- specimens (p. 16)** plants or animals used for scientific study

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a decision difficult?

Create a T-chart on the board with the headings “Easy” and “Difficult.” Record students’ examples of easy and difficult decisions they’ve made in the past week. Discuss what makes decisions difficult. Invite volunteers to describe in more detail a difficult decision they’ve made and the factors that they considered when they made it. Explain that this story is about a difficult decision a character must make.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Have students work in small groups to write a very short story—serious or humorous—that correctly incorporates all the vocabulary words. Give students three minutes to write. Then have them share their stories with the class. Remind students to look for these words as they read.

READ & DISCUSS

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

- Why do Rahim and his grandfather want to find a pangolin?
- Describe the sights and sounds of the park.
- Compare the way the two boys feel in the park.
- On page 13, Rahim thinks, “I know what the traders will do with the pangolin if we find one. I wish . . .” What will the traders do with the pangolin? What do you think Rahim wishes? Finish his sentence.
- Compare the way the two boys react when they see the pangolin.
- Why is Dadu proud of Rahim?
- Do you think Dadu and Rahim agree or disagree about what it means to be a man? Explain.

SKILL FOCUS: Compare Characters

INSTRUCT: Tell students that they can analyze story characters by comparing the characters’ experiences and characteristics. Distribute a copy of the *Comparing Characters* worksheet to students and have students work in pairs to complete it. Bring the class together to share and discuss responses.

ASSESS: Display this prompt and have students write a short response: Compare and contrast Rahim and Aslam. How are the boys similar and different? Use the information in your *Comparing Characters* worksheet to support your ideas.

EXTEND

Science Tell students to learn more about pangolins by researching World Pangolin Day, which falls on the third Saturday in February. Have students create posters, design T-shirts, give presentations or come up with another activity to educate others about the pangolins’ situation.

Name _____

Compare Characters

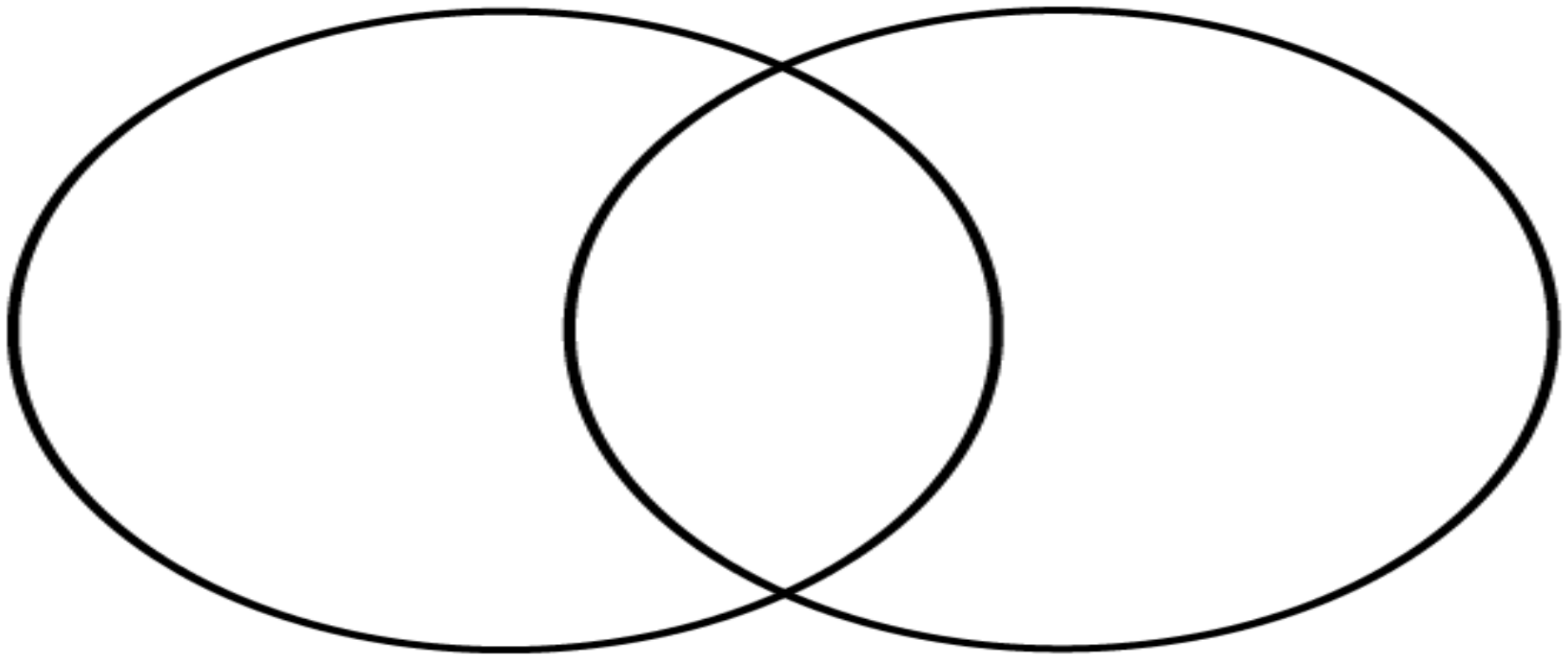
Use the Venn diagram to compare Rahim and Aslam. How are these characters similar? How are they different? Think about:

- the way they look
- their words and actions
- their reactions to the park
- their feelings about trapping the pangolin
- the things they feel confident about
- what they might be when they grow up
- how they feel at the end of the night

Rahim

Both

Aslam

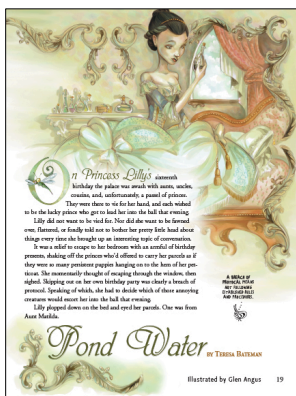


Pond Water

pp. 19–23, Fairy Tale

Use this humorous modern fairy tale to help students think about characters' perspectives.

Lexile Score: ~950L



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will assess how point of view shapes the content and style of a text.
- Students will write narratives to develop imaginary events.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **fawned (p. 19)** gave a person special attention in order to get the person's approval
- **flattered (p. 19)** complimented someone insincerely
- **odoriferous (p. 20)** having an unpleasant smell
- **reek (p. 20)** have a strong and unpleasant smell
- **defiant (p. 22)** refusing to obey someone or something
- **sternly (p. 22)** in a way that shows disapproval or criticism

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a decision difficult?

Write the following on the board: “Going Along with Others vs. Making Your Own Decisions.” Ask students to describe the differences between going along with others and making your own decisions. Discuss reasons why making your own decision instead of going along with others is difficult. Then explain that the next story is about a fairy-tale princess who makes her own decisions.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Have students work in pairs to find synonym or near-synonym pairs and discuss what the words in each pair have in common. Then remind students to look for these words as they read.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Why are so many people gathered at the palace?
2. How would you expect a princess in a fairy tale to act? In what ways is Lilly different from what you expect?
3. Why is Lilly outraged when she overhears the princes?
4. Why does Lilly like Robert better than the princes?
5. What do you learn about Aunt Matilda from the gifts she gives Lilly? Does she support Lilly's ideas about how a princess should behave?
6. What advice might Lilly give to other princesses?

SKILL FOCUS: Characters' Perspectives

INSTRUCT: Ask students if they know of other fairy tales about frogs, princes, and princesses. Briefly compare “Pond Water” with the stories students mention. Then explain that characters in a story may have different views, or perspectives, about the same idea or event. Continue by explaining that paying attention to characters' words, thoughts, and actions can help students understand their perspectives. Ask students to compare Lilly's and the princes' views on the birthday ball. Have them point out words and phrases that helped them understand these perspectives. Brainstorm a list of other things in the story that characters see in different ways (for example, perfume, the frog, Robert, important qualities in a princess).

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to choose an item from the list and describe it from two or more characters' perspectives.

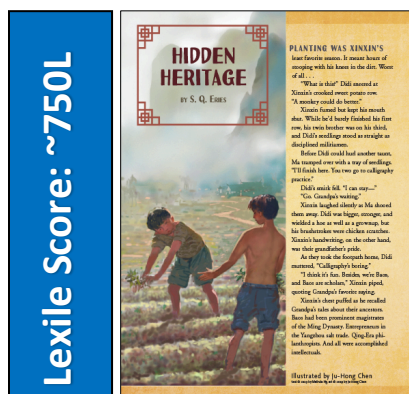
EXTEND

Writing Have students choose a traditional fairy tale and rewrite it from the point of view of one of the characters. Tell students to give the story a “new spin” by showing the characters' thoughts and attitudes.

Hidden Heritage

pp. 32–38, Historical Fiction

Use this story about a family in China during the Cultural Revolution to help students think about characters and plot.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a decision difficult?

Present the following scenario to students: You and your family are moving away for one year because of a parent's job. You are allowed to bring only three special objects with you to remind you of home. What would you bring? Give students one or two minutes to write a response. Then invite students to share their responses and explain the choices that they made. Finally, tell students that this story is about a boy and his family who make a difficult and dangerous choice.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Read aloud the vocabulary words and their definitions. Point out that these words describe roles people can have in a society. Have students work in small groups to sort the roles into these categories: laws, ideas, business/money. Invite groups to share and explain their ideas. Then remind students to look for these words as they read.

RESOURCES

- Characters and Plot Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of relationships between historical events or developments.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **magistrate (p. 32)** a local official who has some of the powers of a judge
- **entrepreneur (p. 32)** a person who starts a business
- **philanthropist (p. 32)** a wealthy person who donates time or money to help others
- **intellectual (p. 32)** a smart person who enjoys thinking about ideas
- **elites (p. 33)** the wealthy and powerful people in a society
- **zealot (p. 35)** a person who feels strongly about something and wants others to agree

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Compare the lives of Xinxin and his family to the lives of their ancestors. Describe similarities and differences.
2. How are Xinxin and Didi similar and different? What roles might they have played if they lived in the time of their ancestors?
3. Why does the Red Guard want to destroy artifacts and monuments?
4. Why was it dangerous to save the scroll from being destroyed?
5. Lanlan explains that the Red Guard is coming because "a neighbor reported on [them]." Why do you think the neighbor would do this?
6. How does the pig help Xinxin and his family?

SKILL FOCUS: Characters and Plot

INSTRUCT: Explain that the decisions made by story characters affect the plot of the story. Remind students that this story focuses on a very important decision: Xinxin and his family decide to save one of the Bao artifacts even though this might be dangerous or even deadly for them. Tell students they are going to think about this decision in "Hidden Heritage" and how it shapes the story. Distribute the *Characters and Plot* worksheet to all students and go over the questions.

ASSESS: Have students work in small groups to discuss the questions thoroughly. Circulate to assess discussions and help as necessary.

EXTEND

Social Studies Have students create a timeline of Chinese history based on the story. Outlines should begin with the Ming Dynasty and end with the Cultural Revolution. Tell students to include notes that describe each item on the timeline and how it influences events in the story.

Name _____

History and Fiction

Discuss the questions with your group to think about the decision made by Xinxin and his family and how it affected the plot. Jot down any notes to help you remember your ideas.

Questions	Notes
What important decision did Xinxin and his family make?	
What factors did the characters have to consider in order to make this decision?	
What were the consequences of this decision?	
Was the decision a good one? Explain.	
How did the decision affect story events?	
How would the story be different if the family had decided <i>not</i> to save the scroll?	