

# Cricket

## THEME

Use the selections covered in this Teacher Guide to explore the different ways that authors write about, discuss, and convey time in their writing.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do authors use time in their writing?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze the structure of texts.
- Students will interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- Students will determine theme.
- Students will write narratives.
- Students will research and report on animal behavior.
- Students will obtain information and compare stories.
- Students will use maps.



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

- **Katie and Gulliver**  
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, 750L
- **Now**  
Poem, N/A
- **A Driftwood's Tale**  
Fantasy, 750L

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## Katie and Gulliver

### pp. 5–9, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Use this story about a girl and the seagull that watches out for her to review the technique of “flashback” with students.



## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze the structure of texts.
- Students will research and report on animal behavior.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **wavelets** (p. 5) small waves
- **ferry** (p. 5) a boat that is used to carry people and things for a short distance between two places
- **dunked** (p. 6) dipped something quickly into a liquid, such as water
- **kelp** (p. 6) a type of seaweed
- **bailed** (p. 7) removed water from a boat

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors use time in their writing?

Point out that books and movies often go back and forth in time—from present to past and back to present, for example—to give readers and viewers information about characters and events. Invite students to share examples. Then show a clip from *Up, Ratatouille*, or another movie that shows a flashback (available on the internet). Discuss how students know when the story changes from present to past and back again. Discuss why a movie might go back in time.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Then challenge small groups of students to write a very short story using all of the vocabulary words correctly. Give groups five minutes to write. Then have groups share their stories. Remind students to look for these words as they read “Katie and Gulliver.”

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. How is this summer different from other summers?
2. Why was Gulliver important to Katie and her family?
3. Identify two words or phrases that appeal to the sense of sound.
4. Reread the first paragraph on page 9. What is the mood or feeling in this paragraph?
5. What do you think happened to Gulliver?
6. What is the author’s message, or theme, in this story?

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Flashback

**INSTRUCT:** Remind students that a flashback is a technique that authors use in stories to jump back in time and present a scene or conversation from the past. Explain that authors often use signal words and phrases to show when a flashback begins and ends. Read aloud this section on page 6: “Ernest had given Gulliver . . . keep her balance on a moving dock.” Ask volunteers to point out where the flashback begins and ends and to read aloud the signal words and phrases. Discuss what students learn about the characters from the flashback.

**ASSESS:** Working in pairs, have students use sticky notes to identify other examples of flashback and signal words on pages 6–7. Tell them to discuss and note what they learn about characters from the flashbacks. Then bring the class together to discuss how the characters change.

## EXTEND

**Science** Have students conduct research to learn more about gull behavior and communication. Suggest students create a multimedia presentation to share what they learn.

## Now

### p. 33, Free Verse

Give students practice in close reading by using this poem about experiencing moments in time to discuss the “now.”



## RESOURCES

- Close Reading Organizer

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a poem.
- Students will interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- Students will determine theme.
- Students will obtain information and compare stories.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **velvety** (p. 33) soft and smooth
- **once in a blue moon** (p. 33) an expression that means “rarely” or “not very often”
- **gecko** (p. 33) a small tropical lizard

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors use time in their writing?

Point out that even though students are sitting in the classroom starting an activity, their thoughts may be elsewhere. For example, they may be thinking about lunch, another class, or an after-school activity. Explain that sometimes it is difficult to focus on what we are doing in the moment. Display the sentence starters below. Model how to complete them. Then have students copy and complete them. Invite students to share their sentences. Then explain that the poem “Now” explores how people feel in different moments in time.

I wish I were somewhere else when \_\_\_\_\_. I’m looking forward to \_\_\_\_\_. My mind is focused on what I’m doing when \_\_\_\_\_.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. For each word, have students write a sentence that uses it correctly. Have students share their sentences with a partner. Remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the poem.

## READ & DISCUSS

Have students listen closely as you read the poem aloud. Then have them work in pairs to take turns reading the poem to each other. Use the following questions to discuss the poem:

1. What images and ideas in the poem stood out to you?
2. What kinds of experiences are described in the first stanza?
3. What do the words “stretches long” mean in this stanza?
4. How do you think the speaker feels in the second stanza?
5. What word or words are repeated in the poem?

## SKILL FOCUS: Close Reading

**INSTRUCT:** Tell students that when they try to understand the meaning of a poem, they need to read the poem several times. Distribute the *Close Reading Organizer* to students and go over the directions. Make sure students understand that their classmates may have different ideas about the poem’s meaning, but no idea is correct/incorrect.

**ASSESS:** Have students work in pairs to complete the activity. Walk around as pairs work to provide help as needed. Finally, have pairs take turns sharing their ideas about the meaning of the poem.

## EXTEND

**Science/Language Arts** Remind students that the poem includes the phrase “once in a blue moon.” Have students conduct research to learn what a blue moon really is and to compare different myths and beliefs about the blue moon. Invite students to share what they learn.

## Close Reading Worksheet

- **First reading:** Highlight two to three words or phrases in each line that stand out to you.
- **Second reading:** Make notes about why these words or phrases seem important.
- **Third reading:** Jot down your feelings, thoughts, and questions about the poem.
- Next to each **stanza**, write what you think it means in your own words.
- Identify the **topic** of the poem. Then decide what the poet is saying about this topic.

### NOW

By Gabi Snyder

*Now* stretches long when . . .  
the dentist drills,  
the bee stings,  
the clock tick, tock, ticks.

Getting to *now* takes forever when . . .  
counting the months to firefly season,  
counting days to Pop's visit,  
counting minutes until velvety dark

when the fireworks pop-boom-BURST  
and the now you've been waiting for is here  
and NOW  
and NOW

and now it's gone and you're onto another now.  
But once in a blue moon, now surprises you  
with something better than the moment  
you were waiting for.

Like an evening gathered around  
the table, laughing and slapping down  
cards while geckos press against  
the window screens, chirping  
a *now* you'll remember forever.

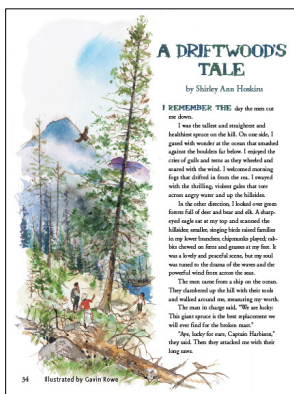
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## A Driftwood's Tale

pp. 35–39, Fantasy

Use this story, told from the perspective of a piece of driftwood, as a model for students' own writing.

Lexile Score: ~750



## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will write narratives.
- Students will use maps.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **severed** (p. 35) cut off
- **hacked** (p. 35) cut something off in a rough way
- **dismal** (p. 36) grim and unhappy
- **anguish** (p. 36) extreme suffering
- **fore** (p. 36) at the front part of a boat, ship, or plane
- **aft** (p. 36) at the back part of a boat, ship, or plane

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors use time in their writing?

Remind students that one element of setting is time. Point out that some stories cover short periods of time, such as a single day, and others cover longer periods of time, such as a lifetime. Invite students to describe books and movies that cover different periods of time. You might bring in several picture books that cover different periods of time and have students determine how much time is covered in each. Then tell students to think about how time is important in this story.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Have students find pairs of words with similar or opposite meanings. Then have them work in pairs to discuss how the words in each pair are connected. Remind students to look for these words as they read.

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Describe the narrator of the story.
2. How does the narrator's form change over the course of the story?
3. In what different ways is the ship used in the story? How does the driftwood feel about these uses?
4. How does the author show the passage of time in the story? Find at least two examples.
5. Is this a sad or a happy tale? Explain.

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Perspective

**INSTRUCT:** Ask students what is surprising about the narrator of the story. Then point out that readers learn about events and characters from the driftwood's perspective. Explain that perspective is a character's or narrator's attitude toward story events and other characters. Tell students to work in pairs to find one example of the narrator's perspective about something in the story. Then brainstorm some objects that would make interesting narrators, such as a sock, a laptop computer, or a tomato. List ideas on the board.

**ASSESS:** Have students choose an object and write a short story in the first person from the object's perspective. Have them create a title for their story. Then invite students to read their stories to the class.

## EXTEND

**Geography** Have students use clues from the story and a world map to trace the routes taken by the *Dolphin*. Remind them that the journey begins on the Oregon coast. Explain that they can use words and phrases, such as "Arctic cap" on page 35 and "a cargo of people" on page 36 to make inferences about routes and locations.