



THEME

Use the texts, lessons, and activities covered in this teacher guide to help your students think about relationships between humans and animals and how all creatures can learn to share the planet.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How can humans and animals live in harmony?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will determine central ideas or themes of a text.
- Students will cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions.
- Students will plan and carry out investigations.
- Students will analyze perspectives.
- 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

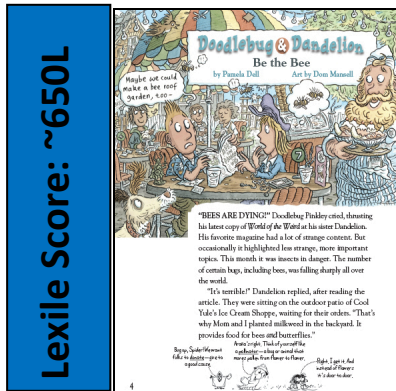
- **Doodlebug and Dandelion**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~750L
- **The Day the Dogs Disappeared**
Folktales, ~650L
- **Wild Neighbors**
Expository Nonfiction, ~850L

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Doodlebug and Dandelion

pp. 4–8, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Give your students practice analyzing story characters by enjoying this story about a fundraising event established to help bees.



RESOURCES

- Analyze Characters

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will plan and carry out investigations.

KEY VOCABULARY

- attract (p. 5)** to cause someone or something to go to a place
- alert (p. 5)** to make someone aware of something
- prevent (p. 5)** to stop something from happening
- improve (p. 5)** to make something better

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How can humans and animals live in harmony?

Point out that humans and animals share the planet. Help students understand that when people and wild animals are in harmony with each other, they live together without hurting each other. Discuss ways that animals (wild, domesticated, pets, zoo) and humans live in harmony. Then ask students to think of ways that humans make life difficult for wild animals. Tell students they will learn more about this in the story.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Then display the sentences below and have students use the vocabulary words to complete them. Finally, remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the story.

- To _____ our neighborhood, we made a garden in the empty lot.
- If you want to _____ ants, put some sugar on the ground.
- A garden fence will _____ rabbits from eating your plants.
- At the zoo, signs _____ people not to feed the animals.

READ & DISCUSS

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

- What problem do characters learn about at the story's beginning?
- How do they plan to solve the problem?
- How does Yule help solve the problem?
- What makes Mrs. Noodleknocker decide to wear the bee costume?
- How do humans and animals in the story live in harmony?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Characters

INSTRUCT: Remind students that they can learn a story character's traits or qualities by paying attention to the following types of story details:

- the narrator's statements about the character
- the character's own words, thoughts, feelings, and actions
- the words, thoughts, feelings, and action of other characters

Have students work in pairs to identify a character from a familiar story, one of the character's traits, and the story details that reveal the trait. Invite pairs to take turns sharing their information with the class.

ASSESS: Distribute the *Analyze Characters* worksheet to all students and have them work independently to complete it. Invite volunteers to share their ideas with the class.

EXTEND

Science Help students create a pollinator garden. This could be as simple as a container garden. Have students research the best plants for the garden and list materials and steps to follow. After the garden is planted, have students observe and learn about the visiting pollinators.

Name _____

Analyze Character

For each trait in the chart, identify a character from the story that shows it. In the last column, note details from the story that helped you connect the character and the trait.

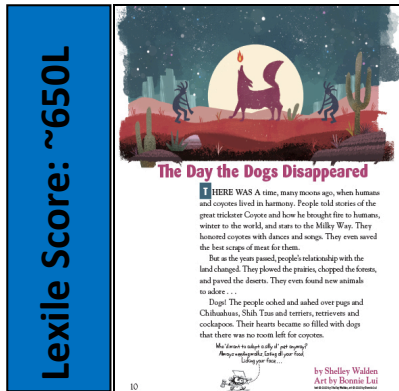
Trait	Story Character Who Shows This Trait	Details from the Story That Connect the Character and the Trait
irritable		
agreeable		
enthusiastic		

Discuss: Sometimes a character's traits change. He or she might be shy at the beginning of the story and outgoing at the end. Did any characters in this story change? If so, explain how and why.

The Day the Dogs Disappeared

pp. 10–15, Fable

Use this fable about dogs and coyotes to teach students to identify and compare themes.



RESOURCES

- Identify Theme

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a folktale.
- Students will determine central ideas or themes of a text.
- Students will analyze perspectives.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **adore** (p. 10) to love something or someone very much
- **pesky** (p. 11) annoying
- **convince** (p. 11) to persuade someone to do something
- **weasel** (p. 10) to get something by being clever or sneaky

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How can humans and animals live in harmony?

Discuss with students the differences in how humans relate to wild animals and how they relate to pets/domesticated animals. Ask students to describe humans' different expectations of wild and domesticated animals and pets. Ask if humans can live in harmony with wild animals in the same way they live in harmony with pets.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the following context sentences and underline the vocabulary words. Have students work in pairs to predict the meaning of each vocabulary word based on the context. Then reveal the definitions and have students check their predictions. Finally, remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the story.

1. Ice cream is my favorite treat—I adore it.
2. I wish those pesky mosquitoes would stop buzzing around my ears.
3. I will convince my dog to come inside by offering him a treat.
4. I tried to weasel out of doing dishes by claiming it wasn't my turn.

READ & DISCUSS

After students read the story, use the questions below for discussion.

1. How did people treat coyotes long ago? How did this change?
2. Why did the coyotes want to switch places with the dogs?
3. What happened when the coyotes tried to live like dogs?
4. What happened when the dogs tried to behave like coyotes?
5. In what ways were the coyotes different from the dogs?

SKILL FOCUS: Identify Theme

INSTRUCT: Remind students that most stories focus on a problem characters face and how the characters solve the problem. Tell students they are going to write about the problem and solution in "The Day the Dogs Disappeared" to help them determine its themes. Distribute the *Identify Theme* worksheet and have students work in pairs to complete the chart. Discuss responses. Then remind students that the theme of a story is often a lesson that the characters learn.

ASSESS: Have partners finish the last section of the worksheet and then share themes with the class. Extend this lesson by having students read similar tales and compare their themes with those in "The Day the Dogs Disappeared." (Suggestions from Aesop: "The Wolf and the House Dog," "The Crow and the Peacock")

EXTEND

Social Studies Have students conduct research to learn how dogs are viewed in different cultures. Tell students to find out how and why dogs are viewed in certain ways. Instruct students to create a short report, poster, or presentation to share what they learn.

Name _____

Identify Theme

Use the organizer below to record information about the problem in “The Day the Dogs Disappeared” and how it is solved. Use this information to help you identify the themes, or lessons, in the story.

Who are the characters in the story?	
What do the characters want to do?	
What problem do the characters face?	
How do the characters solve the problem?	
How does the story end?	

Identify Themes What themes, or lessons, does this story teach? Write the themes on another page. Describe the story events and details that show each theme.

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Wild Neighbors

pp. 16–20, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about wild coyotes living in the city of Chicago to give students practice in drawing conclusions and asking and answering questions.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions.
- Students will write narratives.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **predator (p. 16)** an animal that lives by killing and eating other animals
- **survive (p. 16)** to stay alive
- **territory (p. 18)** an area that an animal or group of animals uses and defends

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How can humans and animals live in harmony?

Ask students to name wild animals that they have seen in their town, city, or neighborhood. Then ask students why wild animals such as raccoons, coyotes, and deer might live in cities instead of in the wild. Pose the following question: Can humans and wild animals live in harmony in a city? Have students revisit this question after they read the article.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

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

READ & DISCUSS

After students have read the story, discuss these questions:

1. Why did scientists doubt coyotes could live in Chicago?
2. How do you think a GPS collar helps scientists track animals?
3. What did scientists learn from observing Coyote 748?
4. Why did Coyote 748 begin attacking dogs?
5. How can coyotes in the city be a benefit to humans?
6. Can humans and coyotes live in harmony in a city?

SKILL FOCUS: Ask and Answer Questions

INSTRUCT: Read aloud the first paragraph of the article, emphasizing the phrase “lots of questions.” Ask students to share questions people living in Chicago might have asked when they began seeing coyotes in their city. Display these questions and have pairs find information in the article that answers them.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to use details in the article to create four or five specific questions that scientists might have asked about coyotes living in cities. Have students record their questions. Then have them swap questions with another pair and use information from the article to answer them.

EXTEND

Language Arts Have students write a story from the point of view of a wild animal that lives in the city. Have students conduct research to learn how the animal lives in the wild and how it adjusts to living in the city. Remind students to use the first-person point of view and to show the animal’s thoughts and feelings about living in the city. Ask volunteers to share their stories with the class.