

Cricket

THEME

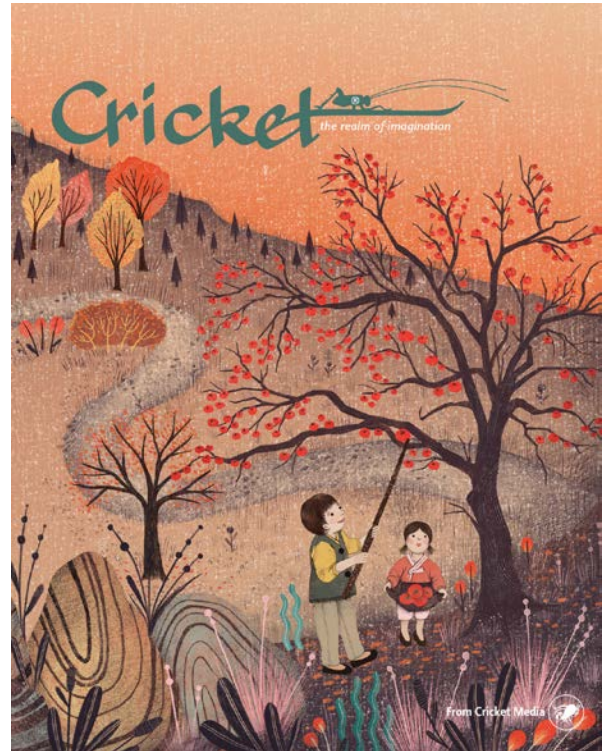
Kermit the Frog once said, “It’s nice to be important, but it’s important to be nice.” The stories in this issue of *Cricket* reflect this sentiment and convey the importance of kindness in different ways. Work with your students to explore large and small acts of kindness and why they matter.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

Why are acts of kindness important?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas interact.
- Students will analyze historical sources.
- Students will understand relationships among historical events or developments.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.



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

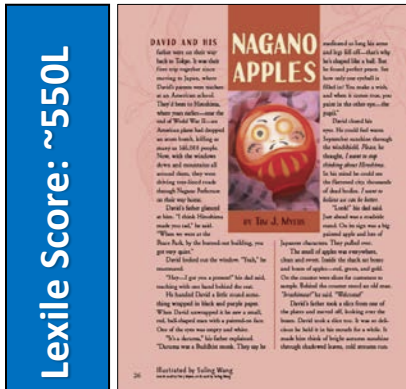
- **Nagano Apples**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~550L
- **Food from the Skies**
Historical Fiction, ~1050L
- **The Holding-On Night**
Historical Fiction, ~750L

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Nagano Apples

pp. 26–26, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Review flashback, setting, and character using this story about a boy who visits present-day Japan. Join him on his journey as he learns about Japan’s past through a visit to Hiroshima and a conversation with a WWII veteran.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why are acts of kindness important?

Ask students to share times when they have been the recipient or the presenter of an unexpected act of kindness. Discuss how these acts made students feel. Explain that this story is about an act of kindness at a terrible time. Use library or internet sources to briefly build background on the 1945 US bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Ask students what these words have in common. Explain that they are compound adjectives—adjectives made up of two words connected by a hyphen. Have student pairs use their knowledge of the individual words to write definitions of the compound adjectives. Invite students to share definitions and then read aloud the definitions on this page. Remind students to look for these and other compound adjectives as they read.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What do you learn about Nagasaki in the story?
2. What does David wish for in this story?
3. How does his wish come true?
4. What do the American soldier’s actions show about him?
5. In what ways does David seem mature or wise?
6. Explain two ways that apples are important in this story.

SKILL FOCUS: Flashback, Characters, and Setting

INSTRUCT: Review flashback with students. (A flashback is a part of a story that interrupts the chronological order of events to jump back in time and present a scene or conversation from the past.) Ask volunteers to identify where the flashback in “Nagano Apples” begins and ends. (“I was a soldier in the war . . . I never did see that soldier again.”) Have students work in pairs to create a T-chart with the headings “Main Story” and “Flashback.” Tell partners to use the chart to note setting details in the main part of the story and in the flashback.

ASSESS: Have partners work together to write an answer to this question: How does each setting affect the lives of the characters who live there? Have partners share their responses with the class.

EXTEND

Social Studies Have students find a newspaper article/editorial from August 1945 about the bombing of Hiroshima or Nagasaki. Tell students to read the article and write a summary to present to the class. After each student has presented, discuss how the articles connect to the story.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas interact.
- Students will analyze historical sources.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **tree-lined** (p. 26) having trees on both sides
- **burned-out** (p. 26) having the insides burned out by fire
- **ball-shaped** (p. 26) having the shape of a ball, spherical

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Food from the Skies

pp. 31–37, Historical Fiction

Use this story set in Berlin just after WWII to help students understand how setting influences plot and characters.



RESOURCES

- History and Fiction Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will understand relationships among historical events or developments.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **blockade** (p. 31) the act of sealing off an area to stop people or supplies from entering or leaving, especially during a war
- **occupation** (p. 31) a situation in which the military of a foreign government goes into an area or country and takes control of it
- **dictator** (p. 32) a person who rules a country with total authority and often in a cruel or brutal way
- **airlift** (p. 33) an occurrence in which people or things are carried to or from a place by airplanes during an emergency when other methods are not possible

<http://www.cricketmedia.com/classroom/Cricket-magazine>

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why are acts of kindness important?

Ask students to describe the difference between small acts of kindness and large acts of kindness. Discuss how in addition to people, countries can also be kind to each other. Next, use library or internet sources to build background on Germany just after WWII. Tell students to look for small and large acts of kindness in the story.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read the definitions aloud. Have student pairs write each word on a separate slip of paper, place the slips facedown, and mix them up. Then have students take turns choosing two slips and explaining how the two words are connected.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Is the story set before, during, or after WW II? How do you know?
2. Which characters show courage? Describe how they show it.
3. Explain three ways Russia made life difficult for people in Berlin.
4. Why does Gretchen call Berlin a dead city?
5. Explain how the Allies' relationship with Germany changed from a negative one to a positive one.
6. What do you think will happen next in this story?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyzing Characters and Plot

INSTRUCT: Remind students that historical fiction contains facts about a certain time in history and that authors of historical fiction use these events to shape their stories. Ask a few volunteers to identify what they have learned about the postwar period in Germany. Note responses on the board. Then discuss how this information is important in the story—how it affects the characters and/or plot of the story.

ASSESS: Distribute the *History and Fiction* worksheet to pairs or small groups of students and have them work together to complete it. Invite students to share their responses with the class.

EXTEND

History Have students work in groups to learn about the Cold War and create a presentation about it. Presentations could take any form: timeline, newscast, dramatic reenactment, diary entry/letter, etc. All presentations should answer *who, what, when, where, why, and how* about the Cold War. Have groups deliver presentations to the class.

Name _____

History and Fiction

In the first column, note historical events described in the story, such as the Allied bombings and the blockade. In the second column, describe how the characters and/or plot are affected by each event.

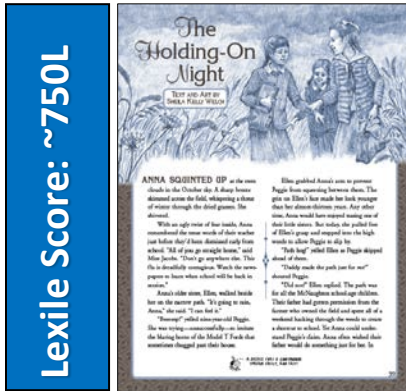
Historical event from the story	How does the event affect the characters and plot?

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The Holding-On Night

pp. 39–44, Historical Fiction

Use this story about a family caught up in the 1918 flu epidemic to teach students about internal and external conflict.



RESOURCES

- Conflict Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **stalking** (p. 40) following an animal or person that you are hunting by moving slowly and quietly
- **inflicted** (p. 40) caused someone to experience or be affected by something unpleasant or harmful
- **apprehension** (p. 41) fear that something bad or unpleasant is going to happen
- **makeshift** (p. 42) used as a usually rough and temporary replacement for something
- **gaunt** (p. 44) very thin, usually because of illness or suffering

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why are acts of kindness important?

Ask students if it is important for family members to be kind to each other and discuss ways that family members can show kindness to each other. Read aloud the author's note at the end of the story to build background on the 1918 flu pandemic. Invite students to share what they know about this period in history. Tell them to note how the family behaves in the story.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them and the definitions aloud. Have students work in groups to write sentences that use these words and show their meanings. Invite groups to share their sentences by reading them aloud without the vocabulary words to another group. Other groups should guess which words belong in the sentences.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Identify three story details that show the story is historical fiction.
2. What does Anna want from her father that he can't always give?
3. What image does the author create by describing the flu as something deadly that is stalking the country?
4. What effects did the 1918 flu have on many people and families living at that time?
5. Do you agree that it was selfish and childish of Anna to let her father hold her even though she felt better? Explain.

SKILL FOCUS: Internal and External Conflict

INSTRUCT: Remind students that the plot of a story tells about a problem faced by the main character and sometimes other characters. Then explain that there are two types of conflicts. An **external conflict** is a struggle between a character and an outside force, such as another character, a force of nature (such as a storm), or a difficult situation (such as poverty). An **internal conflict** takes place in the mind of a character and occurs when the character must make a difficult choice or fight himself or herself to do the right thing.

Ask students to identify conflicts in familiar movies, books, and games and discuss whether they are internal or external.

ASSESS: Have students work independently to complete the *Conflict* worksheet. Then have them compare responses with a partner.

EXTEND

Science Have students work in pairs or groups to identify the factors that allowed the flu to spread across the world. Instruct them to create an annotated world map to show how the flu moved around the world.

Name _____

External and Internal Conflicts

Use the chart below to record internal and external conflicts in the story.

External Conflicts	Internal Conflicts