

# Cricket

## THEME

This guide supplements three texts on the subject of birds from this issue of *Cricket* that were written by three different authors in three different genres. Explore the different ways that these authors write about birds.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do different authors write about a topic?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will assess how point of view shapes the content and style of a text.
- Students will interpret words and phrases.
- Students will analyze how individuals develop over the course of a text.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.
- Students will analyze perspectives.
- Students will ask and answer questions.



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

- **The Finch**  
Fantasy, ~850L
- **The Eagle**  
Poem, N/A
- **Papa G'Ho: One Grumpy Great Horned Owl**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~950L

## The Finch

pp. 5–10, Fantasy

Teach students about characters' perspectives by using this engaging story about three finches that escape from their cage.



## 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 obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **listlessly** (p. 5) in a way that lacks energy or spirit
- **methodically** (p. 5) in a way that is very careful and organized
- **audacious** (p. 6) very confident and daring
- **indignantly** (p. 6) angrily
- **maniacal** (p. 6) uncontrollable or frantic
- **insufferable** (p. 6) very bad or unpleasant

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do different authors write about a topic?

Ask students to identify bird characters in stories, movies, and TV shows (for example, Harry Potter's pet owl, Hedwig; Mockingjay from *The Hunger Games*; Woodstock from *Peanuts* comics). List the characters and where they come from on the board. Discuss whether the birds are main characters or sidekicks and whether they are realistic or human-like. Brainstorm a list of things that only fictional birds can do. Then tell students to think about how the birds in this story are presented.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and review the definitions. Divide the class into six groups. Assign one word to each group. Then have each group write one context sentence for their word, leaving a blank where the word should be. Display sentences and have students complete them. Then remind students to look for these words as they read.

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Describe the personalities of Nimbus, Zephyr, and Luna.
2. How would this story be different if Nimbus hadn't learned to read?
3. What role do humans play in this story?
4. On page 8, find two expressions the narrator uses to explain that Nimbus suddenly understood something.
5. How is being safe and comfortable different from being happy?

## SKILL FOCUS: Compare Characters' Perspectives

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that a character's perspective is his or her attitude toward characters, events, or ideas in a story. Point out that story characters may have very different perspectives. Explain that students can learn about a character's perspective by paying attention to their words, thoughts, and actions. Have students reread page 6 to find details that show each bird's perspective on how to behave. Next, have students work in pairs to identify another event or idea that the characters react differently to. Have them describe each character's reaction and discuss responses as a class.

**ASSESS:** Have students imagine this story is the first chapter in a novel. Have students write the second chapter incorporating the characters' perspectives in their chapter. Review their work for understanding.

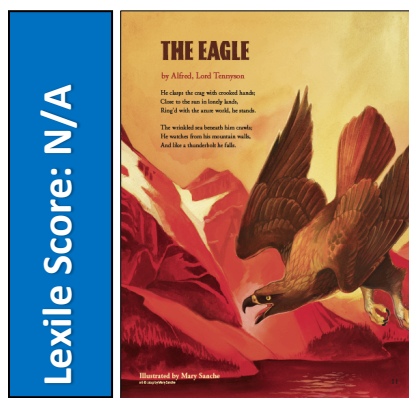
## EXTEND

**Science** Have students do some research on zebra finches to find a specific topic that interests them. Then have them conduct more research to learn about their topic and create a comic strip to convey what they learn. Tell students their finches may be realistic or fictional, but their comic strips should convey factual information.

## The Eagle

### p. 11, Poem

Use this poem about an eagle to help students analyze imagery, personification, and simile.



## RESOURCES

- Imagery and Figurative Language Worksheet

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a poem.
- Students will interpret words and phrases.
- Students will analyze perspectives.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **crag** (p. 11) a high and very steep area of rock on a mountain; a cliff
- **ring'd** (p. 11) formed a circle around
- **azure** (p. 11) the blue color of the sky

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do different authors write about a topic?

Discuss with students the similarities and differences between poetry, fiction, and nonfiction in terms of form, content, language, and author's purpose. Ask how a poem about birds might be different than an article or a short story on the same topic. Then tell students to think about how the eagle in this poem is portrayed.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Point out the 'd in the word *ring'd* and explain that this is an old-fashioned method of writing a past-tense verb. Challenge pairs of students to write a three-line poem about an eagle using the vocabulary words. Invite students to share their poems. Then remind them to look for the words as they read.

## 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. Write a very short summary of the poem.
3. What do you notice about the structure of the poem?
4. Do you notice any rhymes or repeated sounds?
5. What does the speaker mean by saying the hands are "crooked"?
6. What do you think the eagle is looking for or at?
7. What is the eagle doing in the last line?

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze a Poem

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that poets use different techniques to help readers visualize the ideas in a poem. Display the sentences below one at a time and have students identify each as an example of imagery, personification, or simile. Discuss the sense each example of imagery appeals to, the human quality in the example of personification, and the two things compared in the simile.

1. We rode our bikes down the narrow dirt road. (*imagery*)
2. The road stretched out before us like a long ribbon. (*simile*)
3. The great oak trees stretched their arms across the road. (*personification*)
4. The moist odor of freshly mown grass filled the air. (*imagery*)

**ASSESS:** Distribute the *Imagery and Figurative Language* worksheet and go over instructions. Have students work in pairs to complete the worksheet and then discuss their responses as a class.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Explain that throughout time, humans around the world have been captivated by eagles. Have students research eagles in history, religion, folklore, and myths and present two examples from different regions in the world. Discuss the eagles' traits in each example.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Analyze Imagery and Figurative Language** Use highlighters of different colors to mark all the examples of imagery, personification, and simile in the poem. Make notes next to the poem to answer the questions in the chart.

Literary Elements	Definitions	Questions
<b>imagery</b>	description that appeals to a reader's five senses: sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell	What senses does the imagery appeal to?
<b>personification</b>	description that gives human qualities to an idea, object, or animal	What human qualities does the personification highlight?
<b>simile</b>	a comparison of two things using the word <i>like</i>	What two things are compared in the simile?

### The Eagle

by Alfred Lord Tennyson

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;  
He watches from his mountain walls,  
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

### Discussion Questions

1. What did you visualize as you read this poem? How did the imagery and figurative language help you visualize?
2. What is the speaker's tone, or attitude, toward the eagle? Which details helped you understand the tone?

## Papa G'Ho: One Grumpy Great Horned Owl

### pp. 13–17, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about an owl that serves as a surrogate parent to orphaned owlets to help students recognize and use elaboration.



## RESOURCES

- Elaboration Worksheet

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will analyze how individuals develop over the course of a text.
- Students will ask and answer questions.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **down** (p. 13) small and very soft feathers
- **imprint** (p. 14) to recognize another animal as a parent
- **aerodynamic noise** (p. 15) sound created by the flow of air around an object
- **paternal** (p. 16) of or related to a father
- **instinct** (p. 16) behavior that is not learned

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do different authors write about a topic?

Display these two sentences: *I learned a lot about owls from my father. My father taught me a lot about owls, including how to identify them by their calls and what time of day to look for them.* Have students discuss which is more interesting and why. Point out that nonfiction authors use different techniques to make their writing clear and interesting. Tell students to notice the techniques that the author of this article used.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Have students work in pairs to write two specific predictions about the content of the article, based on the title and the vocabulary words. Have students share their predictions and explain how the words and title helped them. Remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the article.

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What makes Papa G'Ho a perfect surrogate for baby owls?
2. What might happen to a baby owl if it imprinted on a human?
3. Why wasn't Papa G'Ho released back into the wild?
4. Find three examples of how the author describes the fluffiness of baby owls.
5. Why did people think Papa G'Ho was female? How did they learn he was male?

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Textual Elaboration

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that the details and information a writer uses to develop a key idea is called elaboration. Authors use different elaboration techniques to make their ideas clearer, stronger, and more interesting. Read aloud the first paragraph on page 13. Ask students to explain how the writer made this introduction interesting and to describe their first impression of Papa G'Ho. Next, distribute the *Elaboration* worksheet and go over the information in the chart. Have students work in pairs to complete the worksheet. After students have finished, discuss responses as a class.

**ASSESS:** Display this prompt: *Write an essay describing a special person in your life. Use elaboration and dialogue. Include sound devices if appropriate.* Have students share their writing with the class.

## EXTEND

**Science** Have students learn more about imprinting. Help them brainstorm a list of questions using the five Ws and H. Instruct students to choose a question to research, and encourage them to share what they learn.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Analyze Elaboration** Find examples of elaboration in the article. Record them in the chart below.

Types of Elaboration	Example from Article (cite page number and first sentence)	What the Elaboration Helped Me Understand
<b>Sensory details:</b> Details that help show how something looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels		
<b>Examples:</b> Things that are mentioned to help explain an idea		
<b>Anecdotes</b> Very short and amusing or interesting stories that help explain something		