

Cricket®

THEME

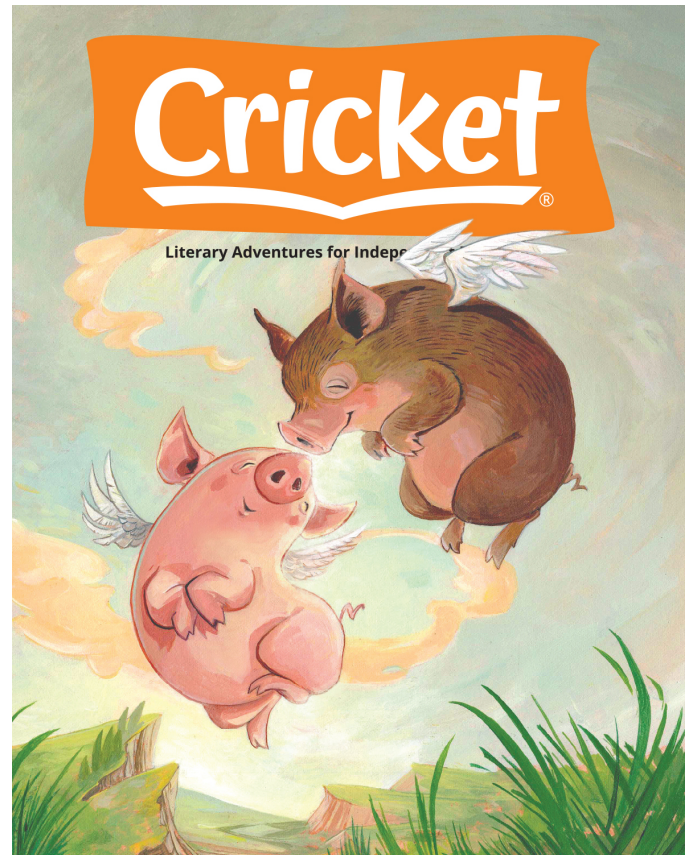
This month's issue of CRICKET magazine will allow students to explore decisions and consequences in literature and in life. The innovative lessons and activities in this guide will help readers identify the effects of actions and relationships and how they evolve.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do character choices influence a story?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will make logical inferences.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will conduct interviews.
- Students will analyze contemporary and historical perspectives.
- Students will write narratives to develop real experiences.



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

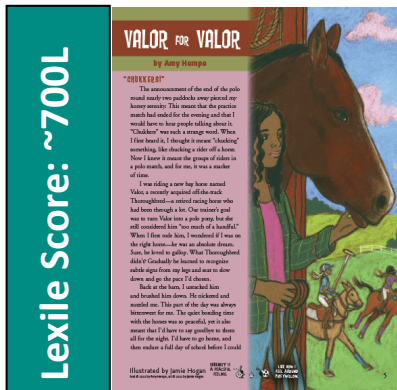
- **Valor for Valor**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~700L
- **The Girl Who Sculpted Lincoln**
Expository Nonfiction, ~980L
- **White Mice**
Historical Fiction, ~940L

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Valor for Valor

pp. 5–10, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Give students practice in making inferences using this story about a girl who struggles in relationships with people but feels at home when she is with her horse.



RESOURCES

- **Making Inferences**

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will make logical inferences.
- Students will conduct interviews.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **endure** (p. 5) to deal with something unpleasant
- **tension** (p. 6) a feeling of nervousness
- **defensive** (p. 7) behaving in a way that shows that you feel people are criticizing you
- **attitude** (p. 7) a way of thinking that affects a person's behavior
- **passive** (p. 8) used to describe someone who allows things to happen or who accepts what other people do or decide without trying to change anything

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do character choices influence a story?

Point out to students that they make choices every day—both big and small ones—that have consequences. Display this quote from French author Albert Camus: "Life is a sum of all our choices." Discuss the meaning of this quote (Your life is the result of all the choices you make.) Ask students how much they agree or disagree with this quote. Then explain that the character in this story makes a choice that affects her life in an important way.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Ask volunteers to explain the meanings of familiar words. Acknowledge correct meanings and then read the definitions aloud. Have students work in pairs to group together related words and then share their groups with the class. Remind students to look for these words as they read the story.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Gabi says, "People had a way of setting me off." What does she mean? What does this tell you about her?
2. Why do you think Gabi dismisses Josie's compliment?
3. How would you describe Josie?
4. Why did Gabi get suspended?
5. What choices does Gabi make in the story?
6. How do Gabi's choices affect her life and the lives of others?
7. What life lessons can readers learn from the choices Gabi makes?

SKILL FOCUS: Making Inferences about Characters

INSTRUCT: Remind students that when they read stories, they make inferences about characters. In other words, they combine story details with what they already know from their own experiences to figure out why characters act, think, and feel the way they do. Point out that Gabi, the first-person narrator of the story, doesn't tell readers exactly why she acts and thinks the way she does, but she gives enough information for readers to make inferences about her. Have students read the first two paragraphs and work with a partner to make an inference about Gabi based on clues in the text. Have students share their ideas.

ASSESS: Distribute the *Making Inferences* worksheet and have students work in pairs to complete it. Then invite students to share their ideas.

EXTEND

Speaking and Listening Have students interview an adult about a choice he or she has made and its effects. Explain that the choice could relate to a career, a place to live, or just about anything. Have students confirm that they have a subject to interview. Make sure they tell the subject ahead of time what the topic of the interview will be. Have students record their interviews. Then have them create and record an introduction to the interview that identifies the subject and gives some background on him or her. Invite students to play their completed interviews for the class.

Making Inferences

Use the chart below to record inferences about the characters in "Valor for Valor." Use the words the narrator says and what you already know to make inferences. Record this information in the chart.

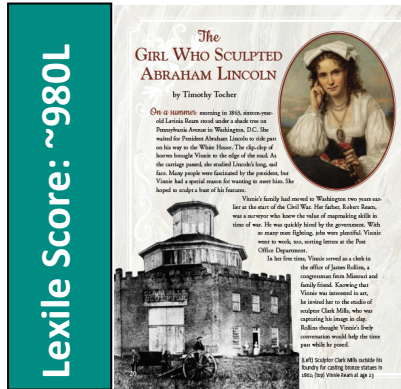
What the Narrator Says	My Own Knowledge	My Inference about the Character

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The Girl Who Sculpted Lincoln

pp. 20–25, Expository Nonfiction

Analyze the elements of biography using this article about American sculptor Lavinia Ream (1847–1914).



RESOURCES

- **Summary Planner**
- **Summary Cube**

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a biography.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will analyze contemporary and historical perspectives.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **sitting** (p. 21) a period of time when a person poses for a portrait or photograph
- **unveil** (p. 22) to remove a cover from something so that people can see it
- **commission** (p. 22) to order or request someone to make or do something
- **depict** (p. 23) to show someone or something in a picture, painting, sculpture, or photograph

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do character choices influence a story?

Remind students that just as character choices influence a story, real people's choices affect their lives. Ask students to identify people whose choices they admire. You might suggest Gandhi, Helen Keller, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Bill Gates, Greta Thunberg, Colin Kaepernick, or Malala. Discuss the consequences of their choices.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Read the vocabulary words and 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.

1. Tonight, the artist will _____ his new sculpture at the gallery.
2. My grandfather agreed to do a _____ so I could paint his portrait.
3. The post office mural _____ the first inhabitants of our town.
4. The president will _____ an artist to paint her portrait.

READ & DISCUSS

After students read the article, discuss these questions:

1. How were Vinnie and Abraham Lincoln similar?
2. Why did Lincoln change his mind about sitting for Vinnie?
3. How did making the bust of Lincoln change Vinnie's life?
4. Why did so many people doubt Vinnie's abilities?
5. How was Vinnie's style of sculpture different from other artists of her time?
6. What choices did Vinnie make in life? Describe the consequences.
7. What advice might Vinnie give to young people today?

SKILL FOCUS: Summarize a Biography

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that they will create a summary of "The Girl Who Sculpted Lincoln." Discuss the kinds of details students think should be included in the summary. Then distribute the *Summary Planner* worksheet to students and go over the directions.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to review the article and take notes in their planning sheets. Then distribute the *Summary Cube* sheet to students. Have them use their planner worksheet to create their cubes. Display cubes by attaching a string to each and hanging them from a wall or a dowl. Allow students time to read the cubes.

EXTEND

Social Studies Ask students to analyze a local public monument or a well-known monument located elsewhere. Have them use these questions to think and write about the monument: What does the monument depict—a real person, such as Abraham Lincoln, or an idea, such as liberty? What event(s) led to the creation of the monument? What feelings was the monument meant to inspire when it was made? Does it still inspire these feelings or does it now inspire other feelings? Invite students to share their ideas with the class.

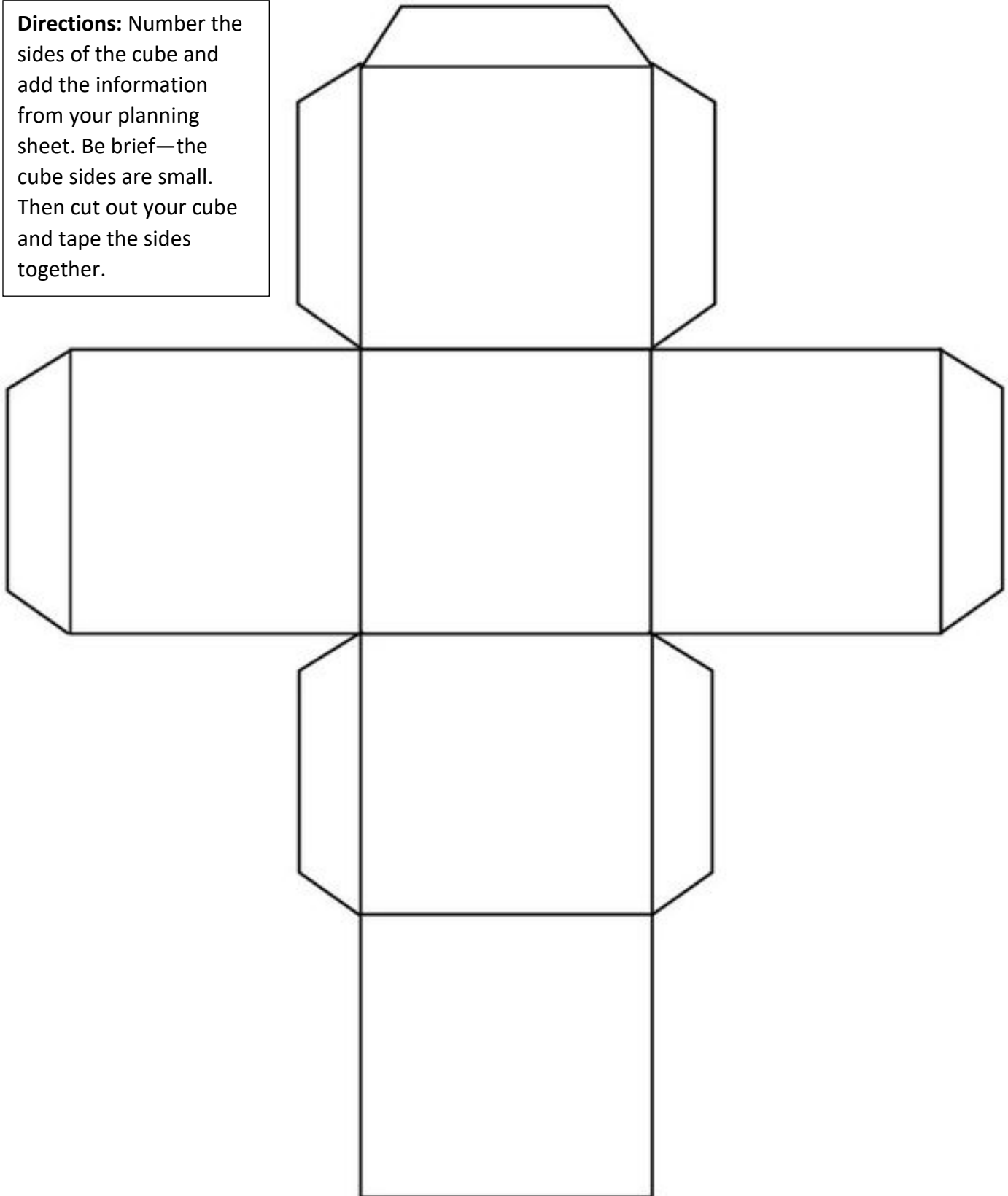
Summary Planner

Use this planning sheet to gather information about Vinnie Ream. Later on, you will transfer this information to your Summary Cube.

Cube side 1: Identify the person's name, birth and death dates, and birthplace.	
Cube side 2: Add personal background information about the person.	
Cube side 3: Describe challenges and obstacles the person faced.	
Cube side 4: Explain reasons why the person should be remembered.	
Cube side 5: Identify 3-5 personality traits.	
Cube side 6: Draw a picture of the person.	

Summary Planner

Directions: Number the sides of the cube and add the information from your planning sheet. Be brief—the cube sides are small. Then cut out your cube and tape the sides together.



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White Mice

pp. 33–36,

Use this amusing story about a young boy who gets on the wrong train to help students recognize how character decisions affect plot.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will write narratives to develop real experiences.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **entrusted** (p. 33) gave someone the responsibility of doing something or of caring for someone or something
- **predicament** (p. 34) a difficult or unpleasant situation
- **skulking** (p. 35) keeping out of sight

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do character choices influence a story?

Discuss with students character choices in a familiar novel or movie and the effects of the decisions. Have students work in small groups to discuss how the story would change if the character's choices changed. Point out that the choices characters make drive the story in a particular direction. Tell students to notice decisions characters make in this story.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the following context sentences and underline the vocabulary words. Have students work in pairs to infer the meaning of each vocabulary word based on the sentence context. Then reveal the definitions and have students check their inferences.

1. My parents entrusted me with the job of babysitting my brother.
2. I was in a predicament when I lost my homework assignment.
3. After my puppy chewed my shoe, he spent the afternoon skulking in the backyard.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What is your impression of Uncle Ken?
2. What thoughts probably went through Ruskin's mind when he realized he was on the wrong train?
3. Who are Mr. Ghosh's family members?
4. How does Ruskin get revenge on Uncle Ken?
5. What questions do you have about Mr. Ghosh?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Character Decisions

INSTRUCT: Point out that "White Mice" begins with a decision made by Ruskin's grandmother. Invite volunteers to identify this decision (Granny gives Uncle Ken the job of taking Ruskin to the station and putting him on a train.) Write this decision on the board. Then have students work in pairs to identify decisions made in the middle of the story (Ruskin decides to stay on the train until he gets to Lucknow.) and the end of the story (Ruskin puts the mice in Uncle Ken's bed.). Have students share their ideas and help them recognize the character decisions. Add these two decisions on the board.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to identify a different decision that might have been made at the beginning, middle, and end of the story. For each decision, have them summarize how the story would be different. Invite students to share their work with the class.

EXTEND

Writing Ask students to write their own true stories about a decision that they made and its consequences. Explain that the story may be humorous, serious, or thrilling. Encourage students to use descriptive details to make their stories entertaining.