

# Spider®

## THEME

Navigating life's problems is an experience shared by humans of all ages, as well as many story characters. Use the texts covered by this Teacher Guide to discuss problem-solving and take a closer look at three examples of how people and characters tackle problems.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do people and characters tackle problems?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will integrate and evaluate content.
- Students will analyze the structure of texts.
- Students determine theme.
- Students will analyze the structure and function of living things.
- Students will ask and answer questions.
- Students will analyze places, including their physical, cultural, and environmental characteristics.



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

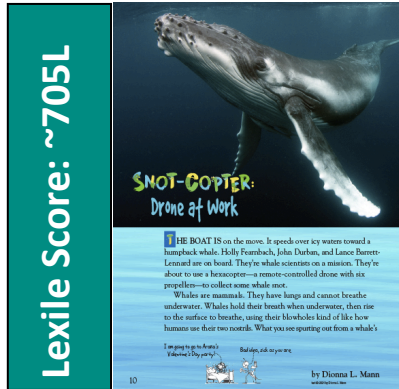
- **Snot-Copter: Drone at Work**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~880L
- **Soured on Pickles**  
Contemporary Realistic Pickles, ~560L
- **The Stolen Smell**  
Folktale, ~610L

# Spider® Teacher Guide: February 2021

## Snot-Copter: Drone at Work

pp. 10–15, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about a special drone that helps scientists learn about whales to review text features.



## RESOURCES

- **Text Features Chart**

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will integrate and evaluate content.
- Students will analyze the structure and function of living things.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **track** (p. 11) to follow an animal by looking for its prints and other signs that show where it has gone
- **position** (p. 13) to put something or someone in a situation or arrangement
- **hover** (p. 13) to float in the air without moving in any direction

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do people and characters tackle problems?

Ask students to name and describe different types of scientists, such as chemists, biologists, and oceanographers. Explain that scientists are problem-solvers who try to improve the world and our understanding of it. Discuss ways that scientists have solved problems and helped us understand our world. Then explain that the next article tells about scientists who use a special drone to help them learn and solve problems.

## 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. I was able to track the tiger by following its footsteps in the mud.
2. Please position the chairs in a semi-circle.
3. I watched a hummingbird hover above a flower and then dart away.

## READ & DISCUSS

As a prereading activity, have students look at the photographs and captions in the article and predict what the article will be about. After students read the story, use these questions to prompt discussion:

1. What is the whale scientists' mission?
2. What happens when a whale exhales?
3. Why is a hexacopter "a perfect tool for collecting whale snot"?
4. How does the hexacopter collect the whale snot?
5. How might using the hexacopter be challenging?
6. What do scientists learn from the whale snot?
7. How can this help them solve problems?

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Text Features

**INSTRUCT:** Distribute the *Text Features Chart*. Remind students that authors use text features to highlight information in and add important information to a text. This information helps readers understand the ideas in a text. Invite volunteers to explain how a particular text feature helped them understand something in "Snot-Copter: Drone at Work."

**ASSESS:** Have students work in small groups to study all the text features in the article. Each group member should point to and identify a text feature, read or describe it, and explain how it connects to and expands information in the article.

## EXTEND

**Science** Use books, articles, and the internet to introduce students to biomimicry: when people use nature to help them solve problems. Point out that hovering drones were inspired by hummingbirds. Have students learn more about a scientific innovation that was inspired by nature and create a presentation to share with the class.

## Text Features

The chart below lists text features found in "Snot-Copter: Drones at Work." It also explains how these features can help you understand a text. If you cannot find a feature listed below in the article, cross it out on the organizer.

Text Features	How Text Features Help Readers
<b>Title:</b> the name of a text	The title tells the topic or main idea of a text. Titles are often written to be catchy and interesting.
<b>Headings:</b> titles of sections within a text	Headings help readers identify and understand the main idea in a section of text.
<b>Photographs:</b> camera-made pictures	Photographs help readers visualize and understand important ideas, real people, and real objects discussed in a text.
<b>Insets:</b> smaller photographs shown next to larger photos	Insets help readers see more detail in a photograph.
<b>Captions:</b> text under a photograph or picture	Captions explain what a photograph or illustration shows.
<b>word definitions</b> (from buggy characters)	Word definitions help readers understand important words in a text.

# Spider® Teacher Guide: February 2021

## Soured on Pickles

pp. 18–22, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Teach students to recognize stages of plot by using this story about a cat that sheds and the girl who loves her.



## RESOURCES

- **Stages of Plot**

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze the structure of texts.
- Students will ask and answer questions.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **sour (p. 18)** a feeling of anger or unhappiness
- **sop (p. 18)** to soak up liquid
- **subsided (p. 20)** became less strong or intense

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do people and characters tackle problems?

Remind students that most stories tell about a problem that the characters face and how they solve the problem. Discuss favorite book and movie characters, the problems they face, and how they solve those problems. Then tell students to think about the problems in this story and how they are solved.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and definitions and read them aloud. 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.

1. I used a piece of bread to \_\_\_\_\_ up the delicious gravy on my plate.
2. After a while, the pouring rain \_\_\_\_\_ and soon the sun came out.
3. His \_\_\_\_\_ expression revealed that he was unhappy with the meal.

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. To exaggerate is to describe something as greater or worse than it really is. Find an example of Jordan exaggerating about the cat hair.
2. What made Pickles run away?
3. What problem is solved when Pickles leaves?
4. What new problem arises when Pickles leaves?
5. Why is Jordan interested in the *Cat-O-Matic 5000 Brushing System*?
6. How does Jordan's attitude toward cat hair change?

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Stages of Plot

**INSTRUCT:** Remind students that the series of events in a story is called the plot. Continue by reminding them that the events in a story focus on a character's problem and how the problem is solved. Work with students to create a list of the important events in this story. Have students work in pairs to decide if anything is missing from the list or if any events could be combined. Then distribute the *Stages of Plot* worksheet to all students and go over the different plot stages. Have students complete the conflict section. Then have pairs discuss which events to include in the Rising Action box. Discuss ideas as a class.

**ASSESS:** Have students work in pairs to continue to fill out the plot diagram. Reassemble the class together to review responses.

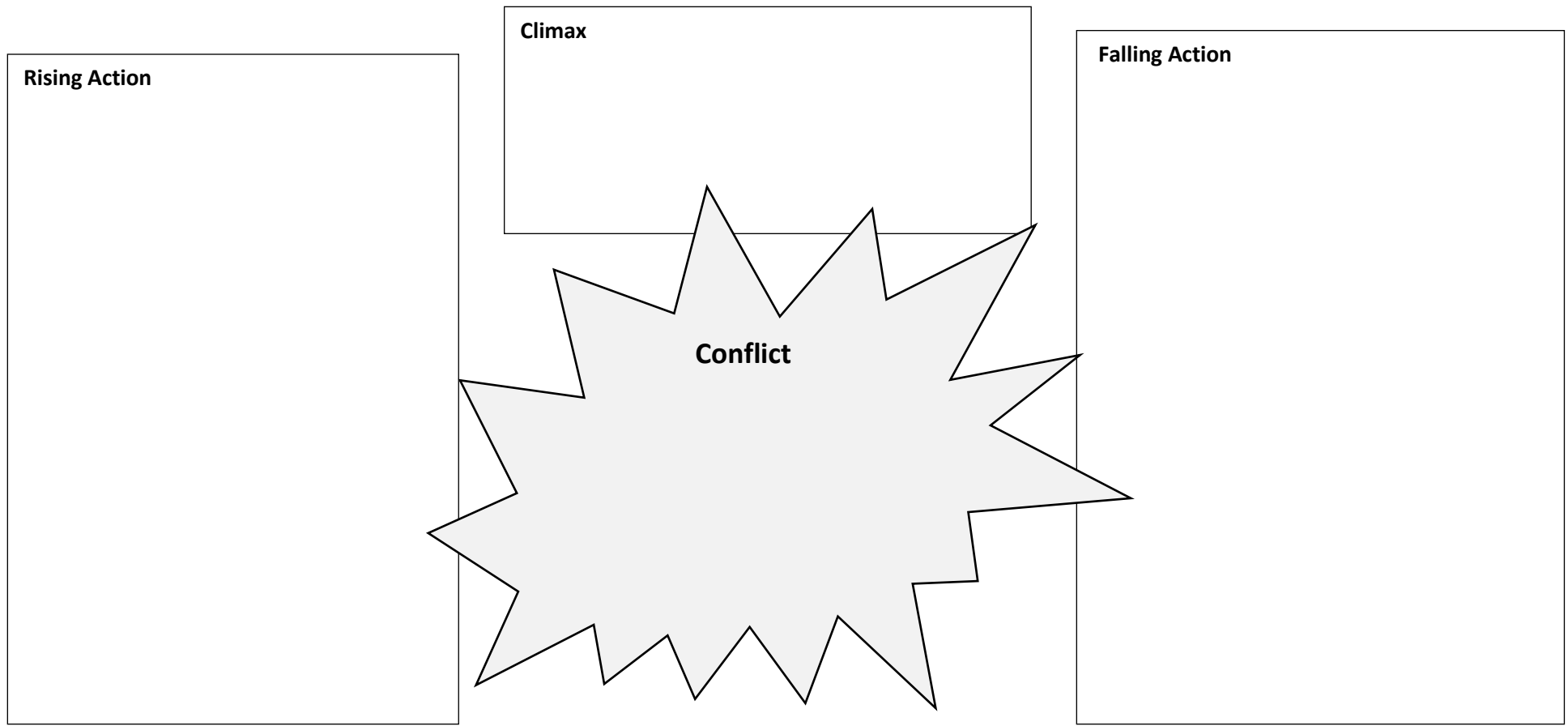
## EXTEND

**Science** Explain to students that scientific study usually begins with a question. Help students brainstorm a list of questions about cats, dogs, and other pets. Examples: Why do cats and dogs shed? Why do cats purr? Why do dogs howl? Have students choose a question to research and answer. Invite students to share their questions and answers.

## Stages of Plot

In the chart below, note events from “Soured on Pickles” to outline the story’s plot.

- **Conflict:** the problem a character faces in a story
- **Rising Action:** story events make the conflict more complicated
- **Climax:** the main character makes an important choice or takes an action and the outcome of the conflict is clear
- **Resolution:** the final events at the end of the story tie up loose ends





# Spider® Teacher Guide: February 2021

## The Stolen Smell

pp. 27–31, Folktale

Have students determine one or more themes for this Peruvian folktale.



## RESOURCES

- **Theme Worksheet**

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a folktale.
- Students will determine theme.
- Students will analyze places, including their physical, cultural, and environmental characteristics.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **worn (p. 27)** heavily used and no longer in good condition
- **prepared (p. 29)** made yourself ready for something that you will be doing
- **proclaimed (p. 31)** declared or announced something

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do people and characters tackle problems?

Create a three-column chart with these headings: Tales / Problems / Solutions. Brainstorm a brief list of familiar folktales to add to the first column of the chart. Discuss the problems faced in the tales and how characters tackle these problems. Add this information to the chart. Discuss whether the problems and solutions are realistic or fantastic. Then tell students to decide whether the problem and solution in this tale is realistic or fantastic.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and definitions and read them aloud. Post the sentences below and have students use the vocabulary words to complete them. Instruct students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the story.

1. My jeans are so \_\_\_\_\_ that they have holes in both knees.
2. "Today, we are taking a family hike," my mother \_\_\_\_\_.
3. I \_\_\_\_\_ for the science test by studying ahead of time.

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What do you learn about Pepe's life and personality in the first paragraph?
2. How does the Baker show he is selfish and stingy?
3. How are the Baker and the Instrument Maker different?
4. Why does the Instrument Maker believe Pepe's heart is true?
5. How did Pepe solve his problem? Was this solution fair?
6. What do you think the Judge was going to say on p. 30 before he was interrupted by the Baker? ("But I . . .")

## SKILL FOCUS: Theme of a Folktale

**INSTRUCT:** Tell students that they are going to analyze and write about the story to help them determine its themes. Then explain that in a folktale, the theme is often a lesson about right and wrong behavior. Continue by explaining that in folktales, bad behavior is often punished and good behavior is rewarded. Distribute the *Theme Worksheet*. Have students work in pairs to complete the first part of the worksheet. Discuss responses. Then have pairs answer the questions in the second part of the worksheet.

**ASSESS:** Have partners finish the third section of the worksheet by writing theme statements. Then bring the class together to discuss themes and the story details that reveal them.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Display a map of the world and locate South America. Point out Peru, the setting for the folktale. Students will work in groups to research a South American country and create an informative poster. Tell students to include: a map, the flag, climate, culture & fun facts.

## Identify Theme

**Part A:** Answer the questions in the boxes below.

<b>Who is rewarded in the tale?</b>	<b>What are the traits of this character?</b>	<b>How is the character rewarded?</b>

**Part B:** Answer the questions in the boxes below.

<b>Who is punished in the tale?</b>	<b>What are the traits of this character?</b>	<b>How is the character punished?</b>

**Part C:** What lessons does the story teach? Write two different themes by finishing each statement in the boxes below.

<b>People should not ...</b>	<b>People should ...</b>