

# Cricket

## THEME

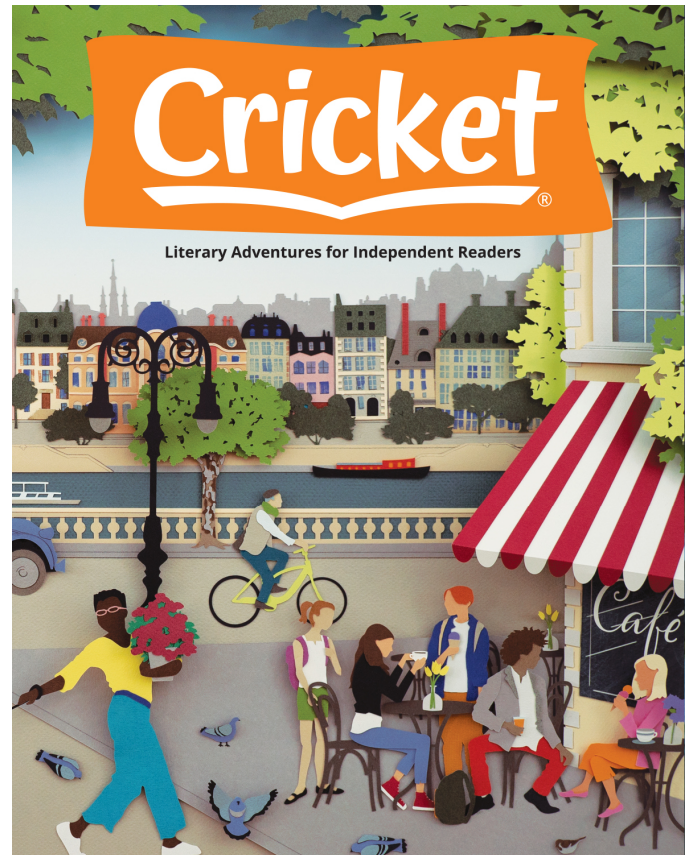
The characters and people in these texts take risks for a variety of reasons: to explore new worlds, to save a life, to connect with tradition, and to heal the sick. Explore ideas about risk-taking with your students.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

Why do people take risks?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- Students will determine themes.
- Students will analyze how individuals develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will write narratives to develop a real experience or event.
- Students will analyze cultural characteristics of places.
- Students will conduct a short research project.



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

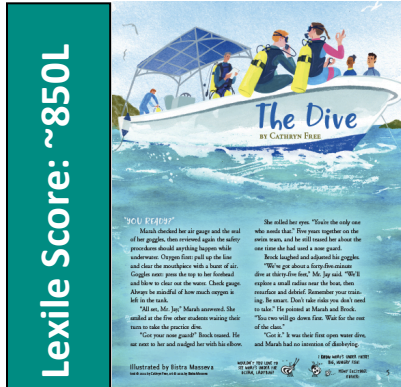
- **The Dive**  
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~850L
- **Building Castles**  
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~620L
- **The Gardener's Son**  
Narrative Nonfiction, ~990L

# Cricket® Teacher Guide: May/June 2021

## The Dive

pp. 5–10, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Use this story about two young divers who get into trouble during a dive to teach students how authors create suspense.



## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- Students will write narratives to develop a real experience or event.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **mindful** (p. 5) aware of something that may be important
- **descent** (p. 6) the act or process of going from a higher to a lower place or level
- **loom** (p. 7) to appear in an impressively large or great form
- **fierce** (p. 7) very harsh or powerful

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why do people take risks?

Explain that taking risks means doing things that may be dangerous. Then show students a photo of skydivers in the air. Have students work in pairs to brainstorm the risks shown in this photo and discuss what kind of person takes a risk like this. Invite students to share their ideas. Then tell students to notice the risks that characters take in this story.

## 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. Please be \_\_\_\_ of how much noise you make in the library.
2. At noon, the hikers began their \_\_\_\_ from the mountain peak.
3. A \_\_\_\_ wind blew down the old oak tree in our yard.
4. Tall buildings \_\_\_\_ over the streets of New York City.

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What makes diving a risky activity?
2. Give an example of Marah being mindful during the dive.
3. Identify two of Marah's character traits.
4. What caused Brock to become trapped underwater?
5. If you were Brock, would you go on another dive?
6. Personification is writing that describes an inanimate object acting like a person, for example, "Sunshine danced off the water." Find two other examples of personification in the story.

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Suspense and Climax

**INSTRUCT** Remind students that suspense is the feeling of excitement and tension a reader feels when he or she wonders what will happen next in a story. Ask students to describe moments of suspense in books and movies they have enjoyed. Then have students work in pairs to highlight the first suspenseful moment in "The Dive" and record the details that create the suspense. Ask students to discuss what they wondered about as they read this part. Invite students to share ideas.

**ASSESS:** Have pairs highlight two other moments of suspense in the story and follow the procedure above to analyze them. Then have pairs identify the moment of greatest suspense in the story. Bring the class together to share their ideas and opinions.

## EXTEND

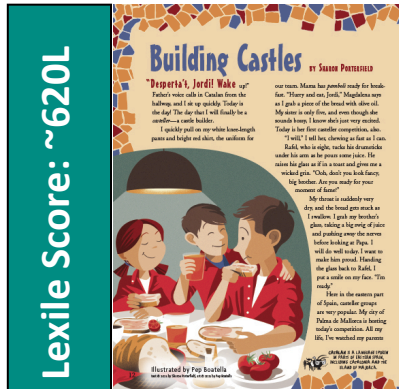
**Writing** Have students write a narrative essay about an important experience or risk that they have taken in their lives. Tell students to describe the experience or risk, why it happened, and how it affected them. Encourage students to include interesting details and to create suspense when possible. Invite students to share their work.

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## Building Castles

pp. 12–16, Contemporary Realistic  
Fiction

Use this story about a boy who participates in the Catalan tradition of building human towers to give students practice in identifying theme.



## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will determine themes.
- Students will analyze cultural characteristics of places.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **tier (p. 14)** a row or layer of things that is above another row or layer
- **nimbly (p. 14)** move in a way that is quick, easy, and light
- **faith (p. 14)** strong belief or trust in someone or something

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why do people take risks?

Tell students that people take risks all the time. Some people play dangerous sports, others take risks to reach a goal, such as being the first person to fly around the world alone in a hot air balloon. Some people, such as astronauts, take risks to discover something new. Have students work in pairs to brainstorm different risk-takers. Then reconvene to discuss ideas and evaluate whether the risks they identified seem worth taking. Finally, tell students to think about whether the risks in this story are worth taking.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and definitions and read them aloud. Have students work in groups of three to write sentences using these words, with each group member taking on a different word. Then tell 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. Why is being a casteller important to Jordi?
2. How does Jordi feel on the morning of the competition?
3. What advice does Tomeu give Jordi?
4. Why do you think having focus and faith is important for castellers?
5. Why is teamwork important for castellers?
6. Jordi says the crowd of people on the ground is “a kaleidoscope of colors.” What did you visualize when you read this description?

## SKILL FOCUS: Identify Theme

**INSTRUCT:** Point out that authors sometimes repeat ideas in a story in order to emphasize them or to show they are important. Discuss ideas that are repeated in this story. Help students recognize that the importance of having faith and focus is repeated. Have students review the story to highlight places where these ideas are mentioned. Then remind students that a theme is a message about life or human nature that an author wants to share with readers. Explain that themes are based on the ideas and details in a story.

**ASSESS:** Have students work in pairs to develop one or two theme statements for this story based on ideas about faith and focus. Pairs should write their themes and note the story details that show them.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Have students conduct research to learn more about the history of castells and their political and cultural importance in Spain. Then have students create a presentation using words and images to share what they learn.

# Cricket® Teacher Guide: May/June 2021

## The Gardener's Son

pp. 28–33, Narrative Nonfiction

Teach students to analyze characterization using this narrative about Dr. Edward Jenner, who developed the smallpox vaccine, and James Phipps, the first person to receive this vaccine.



## RESOURCES

- Characterization Worksheet

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will conduct a short research project.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **cultivated** (p. 28) grew and cared for plants
- **immune** (p. 29) not capable of being affected by a disease
- **strode** (p. 30) walked with very long steps

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why do people take risks?

Point out that doctors and scientists throughout history have taken risks to learn how to treat diseases and help people recover from illness. Explain that this story is about a doctor who developed a vaccination for smallpox disease. Discuss the potential benefits and risks of getting a vaccine. Finally, tell students to consider their ideas as they read.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. For each word, have students write a sentence that uses it correctly. Have students share their sentences with a partner. Then remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the article.

## READ & DISCUSS

After students read the article, use the questions to prompt discussion.

1. Where and when do the events take place?
2. What dilemma is Dr. Jenner trying to solve?
3. Why don't milkmaids get smallpox?
4. Do you think people enjoy working for Dr. Jenner?
5. What is the difference between vaccinating and variolating?
6. Some people believe Dr. Jenner was wrong to give James an experimental vaccination. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
7. Connect details in the text to events happening in the world today.

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Characterization

**INSTRUCT:** Remind students that the way a writer creates a character's personality is called characterization. Explain that there are different methods of characterization. Often, a character's personality is revealed through his or her own words, thoughts, feelings, as well as the actions and the words, thoughts, and reactions of other characters. Have students reread page 28. Then have them turn and talk with a partner to identify what they learn about the different characters. Discuss responses as a class. Then distribute the *Characterization* worksheet to all students and discuss which characterization methods are used on page 28.

**ASSESS:** Divide the class into four groups and assign one character to each group: James, Father, Dr. Jenner, Sarah. Have each group work together to complete the worksheet for its assigned character. Then have groups present their work to the class.

## EXTEND

**Science** Have students conduct research to learn about the history of vaccines, the scientists who created important vaccines, and the controversies that surrounded these vaccines. Have students create a timeline to show their research.

## Characterization

As you read “The Gardener’s Son,” notice how the author uses the techniques below to develop the characters’ personalities. Note examples of each technique in the chart.

The person’s own words and actions	Words and actions of other characters
The person’s own thoughts and feelings	Thoughts and feelings of other characters