

# Cricket

## THEME

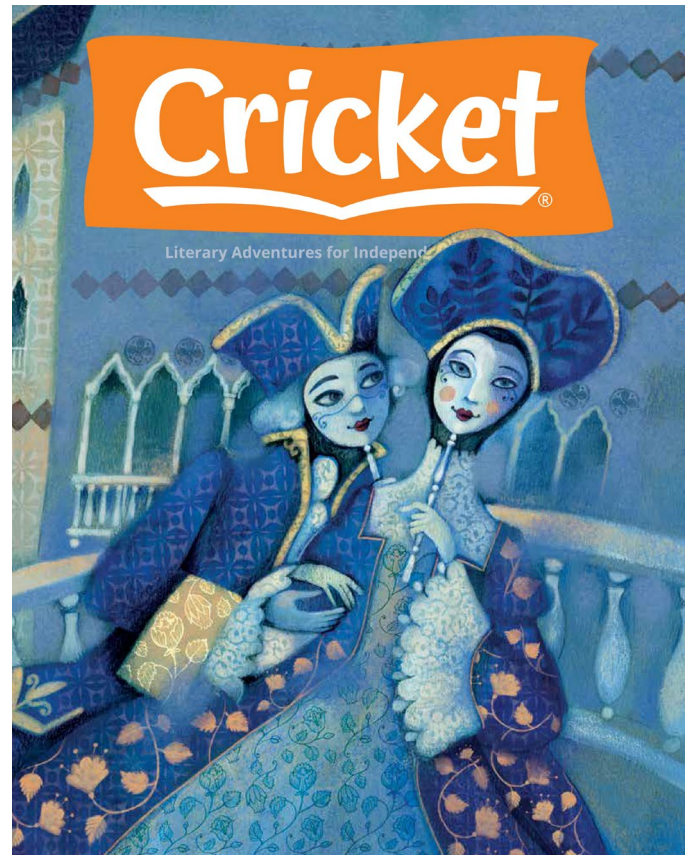
The three selections covered by this Teacher Guide portray life in medieval and post-medieval Italy between the 1200s and the 1600s. Use the texts, lessons, and activities to help students explore the way different authors bring historical characters, settings, and events to life.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do authors recreate the past?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will determine central ideas and supporting details in a text.
- Students will analyze the movement of people, goods, and ideas.
- Students will write informative/explanatory texts.
- Students will conduct short research projects.



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.

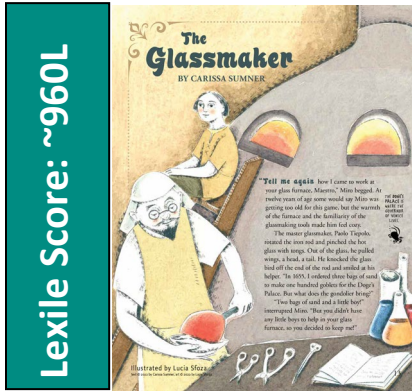
## SELECTIONS

- **The Glassmaker**  
Historical Fiction, ~960L
- **Giotto: Medieval Artist with Attitude**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~1100L
- **Marco**  
Historical Fiction, ~960L

## The Glassmaker

pp. 13–18, Historical Fiction

Use this story about a glassmaker's apprentice in Venice to teach students about historical fiction.



## RESOURCES

- Elements of Historical Fiction

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a historical fiction story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will analyze the movement of people, goods, and ideas.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **goblet (p. 13)** a drinking glass with a round bowl on top of a stem attached to a flat base
- **gondolier (p. 13)** a person who operates a long narrow boat used on the canals of Venice
- **aloof (p. 14)** not friendly or open
- **scrutiny (p. 16)** the act of carefully examining something, especially in a critical way
- **askew (p. 17)** at an angle, not straight

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors recreate the past?

Display these two sentences: *Amy sat down at her typewriter and began to write. Robert got in his car and drove to the movie theater.* Ask students to identify a detail in the first sentence that shows the action is taking place in the past (typewriter). Have students suggest how the detail could be changed to make the action happen in the present. Then have students work in pairs to revise details in the second sentence to make the action take place 200 years in the past. Invite students to share their revisions. Finally, tell students to look for details in this story that show the story takes place long ago.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and definitions and read them aloud. Have students work in groups of five to write sentences using these words, with each group member assigned a different word. Have groups review their sentences and confirm that the words are used correctly. Invite students to share their sentences. 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. How did Miro become part of Paolo Tiepolo's family?
2. Why do you think Paolo's wife is not welcoming to Miro?
3. What does Bartolo mean when he says he "knows how to use friendship outside Venice to my advantage"?
4. What do Bartolo's actions reveal about him?
5. How does Bartolo make Paolo distrust Miro?
6. What is the climax, or most exciting moment, of this story?

## SKILL FOCUS: Elements of Historical Fiction

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that historical fiction contains a mix of facts and made-up details that allow readers to imagine what it was like to live during a time in the past. Tell students that this story is set over 300 years ago. Invite students to identify factual information and made-up details that helped them imagine the setting. Then ask volunteers to share something they learned about the time period from the story.

**ASSESS:** Distribute a copy of the *Elements of Historical Fiction* worksheet to each student and have students work in pairs to complete it. Then have students share their responses with the class.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Have students learn the basic history of glassmaking by reading a general encyclopedia article. Then have them work in groups or pairs to create different sections of an illustrated timeline about the history of glassmaking. Assign each group one of the cultures or time periods described in the encyclopedia article. Then have them create their timelines. Display the completed timelines in the classroom.

## Elements of Historical Fiction

Fill in the chart with story details that illustrate the different elements of historical fiction.

<p>The <b>setting</b> is an authentic period in history in a real historical place.</p>	
<p>The main character is involved in a <b>conflict</b> that is realistic for the time and place of the setting.</p>	
<p>The <b>plot</b> is based on real and made-up events.</p>	
<p><b>Characters</b> behave, relate, and dress in ways that are realistic for the time period.</p>	
<p>The characters' <b>dialogue</b> reflects the knowledge and attitudes of the people living in that time and place.</p>	

## Giotto: Medieval Artist with an Attitude

pp. 20–24, Biography

Use this biographical article about Giotto, the great Italian Renaissance painter, to give students practice in identifying main idea and details.



## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a biographical article.
- Students will determine central ideas and supporting details in a text.
- Students will write informative/explanatory texts.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **flourished (p. 21)** was very successful
- **innovative (p. 22)** introducing or using new ideas or methods
- **consecration (p. 24)** the act of officially making something such as a place or building holy through a special religious ceremony

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors recreate the past?

Point out that authors of biography include information about the historical period a person lived in so that readers can better understand what the person experienced or overcame. Ask students to share biography books or movies they have enjoyed. Then tell them to note the details about life in Renaissance Italy that influenced the artist presented in this biography.

## 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. Many people took part in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the new cathedral.
2. My mother doesn't always approve of my \_\_\_\_\_ fashion sense.
3. My cousin \_\_\_\_\_ in her new job and was very happy.

## READ & DISCUSS

After students read the article, use these prompts for discussion:

1. How would you describe Giotto's personality and attitude?
2. How do you think the life of a painter today is different from the life of a medieval painter?
3. In what ways did Giotto radically change the art world of his time?
4. Use context clues in the last paragraph to write a definition for the term "Renaissance man."

## SKILL FOCUS: Main Idea and Details

**INSTRUCT:** Remind students that in nonfiction writing, they can determine an author's key points by identifying the main idea of individual paragraphs. Point out that the main idea may be stated in the beginning, middle, or end of a paragraph, or it may be unstated. In the latter case, students must use details in the paragraph to figure out the main idea. Have students reread the second paragraph on page 21 ("The life of a medieval artist..."). Next, have them work in pairs to identify the main idea of the paragraph and write it on a sticky note. Then have them underline the supporting details. Finally, discuss whether the main idea is stated or unstated and review the details students underlined.

**ASSESS:** Instruct pairs to repeat this process for three other paragraphs in the article. Then have students meet in groups to discuss how the details support each main idea.

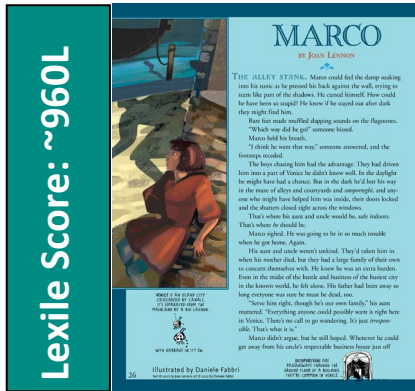
## EXTEND

**Language Arts** Have students use details in the article to create a comic strip that conveys an incident from Giotto's life. Suggestions include having students base their strips on Giotto drawing a fly on Cimabue's painting, Giotto drawing pictures of sheep and being discovered by Cimabue, or Giotto's reaction to having to copy another painter's work. Tell students to use words and pictures to convey Giotto's personality.

## Marco

pp. 26–30, Historical Fiction

Use this fictionalized biography of Marco Polo to help your students recognize the stages of plot.



## RESOURCES

- Stages of Plot

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a historical fiction story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will conduct short research projects.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **burden (p. 26)** someone or something that is very difficult to accept, do, or deal with
- **respectable (p. 26)** considered to be good, correct, or acceptable
- **pursuer (p. 28)** one who follows and tries to catch or capture someone or something
- **propelled (p. 28)** pushed forward

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors recreate the past?

Explain that the story “Marco” is a fictionalized biography of Marco Polo, a famous explorer from Venice, Italy, who traveled from Europe to Asia between 1271 and 1295. Give pairs of students five minutes to search the internet for details about Marco Polo’s childhood. Invite students to share what they find. Then explain that very little is known about Polo’s childhood. Discuss how the author of “Marco” was able to write about Marco Polo’s childhood when so little is known about it.

## 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 story.

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What situation is Marco in at the beginning of the story?  
Why is Marco living with his aunt and uncle?
2. Compare the way Marco’s father and his aunt feel about travel. Find a quote from each that shows how they feel.
3. What does the story reveal about life in Venice long ago?
4. Describe a detail from the story that the author probably made up.
5. How does Marco end up on a garbage barge?
6. Do you think Marco was unhappy as a boy?
7. If you were writing a report on Marco Polo, would this story be a reliable source of information to use? Explain.

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze the Stages of Plot

**INSTRUCT:** Remind students that the series of events in a story is called the plot and that the plot usually centers around a problem faced by the main character. Distribute the *Stages of Plot* worksheet to all students and go over the different plot stages. Recreate the diagram on the board and discuss and record the plot events in a familiar story or movie. Have students work in pairs to identify the conflict in the story and how it is resolved. Invite volunteers to share their ideas.

**ASSESS:** Have students work in pairs to fill out the plot diagram using details from “Marco.”

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Have students work in groups or pairs to research the travels of Marco Polo and present their findings in the form of a short story, several diary entries, a video, a poem, or a drama.

## Stages of Plot

In the chart below, note events and details from “Marco” to describe the story’s plot.

- **Exposition:** Characters, setting, and problem are introduced.
- **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.
- **Falling Action:** The conflict is resolved.
- **Resolution:** The final events at the end of the story tie up loose ends.

1. Exposition	
2. Rising Action	
3. Climax	
4. Falling Action	
5. Resolution	