

Spider®

THEME

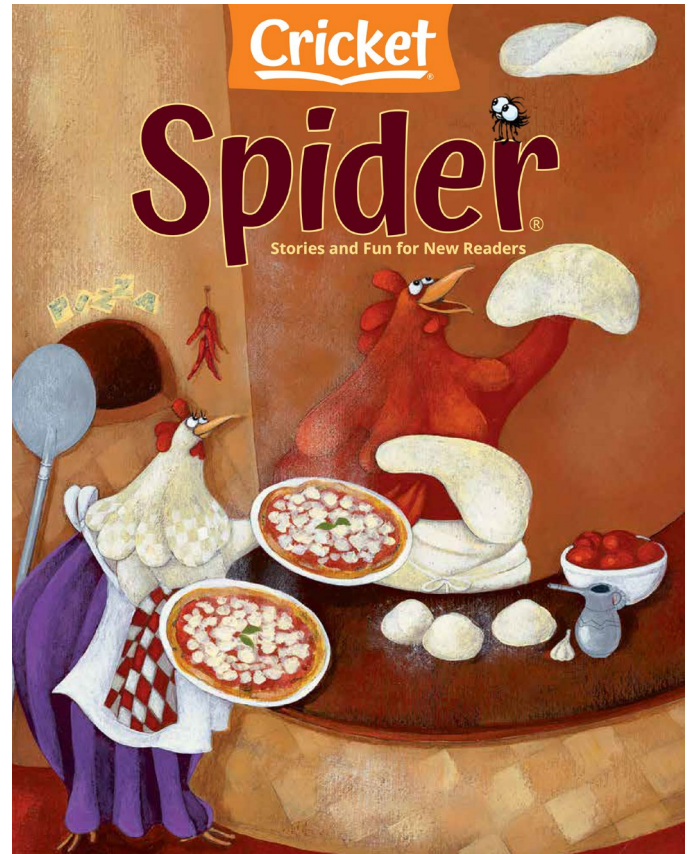
The texts covered by this Teacher Guide focus on food in distinct ways—from a monstrous blob of blue dough to the history of pretzels, and the importance of fasting during the observance of Ramadan. Use the stories and articles to teach language arts lessons and engage students in a variety of creative activities.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do different authors write about food?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will write narratives to develop imagined events.
- Students will summarize key supporting details and ideas.
- Students will determine central ideas or themes.
- Students will conduct experiments and draw conclusions.
- Students will conduct short research projects.
- Students will analyze the cultural characteristics of places.



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

- **Doodlebug & Dandelion**
Fantasy, ~630L
- **The Twisted History of the Pretzel**
Expository Nonfiction, ~980L
- **Ramadan Cake**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~630L

Spider® Teacher Guide: April 2022

Doodlebug & Dandelion

pp. 4–8, Fantasy

Use this story about what happens when a garage sale bread machine is put to use to inspire students to write their own garage sale stories.



RESOURCES

- Garage Sale Story

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will write narratives to develop imagined events.
- Students will conduct experiments and draw conclusions.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **find (p. 4)** something interesting or valuable that has been found or discovered
- **contraption (p. 5)** a piece of equipment or machinery that is unusual or strange
- **ferocious (p. 6)** very fierce or violent

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do different authors write about food?

Bring food magazines, cook books, restaurant reviews, and chefs' memoirs for students to look through. Then discuss the authors' purposes in writing the different texts. Point out that authors can write about food in many ways for a variety of reasons. Then tell students to think about how food is important in "Doodlebug & Dandelion."

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the 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 the story.

1. In the attic, we found a _____ with lots of knobs and lights on it.
2. That cute tiger cub will grow up into a _____ beast.
3. The rare baseball card I bought at the garage sale was a great _____.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What are the characters talking about at the beginning of the story?
2. How do the friends change the bread recipe?
3. What words does the author use to make the dough seem alive?
4. How does the author make the story funny?
5. What message or moral about garage sales does this story contain?

SKILL FOCUS: Write a Garage Sale Story

INSTRUCT: Discuss the items the characters buy at the garage sale and which are most important in the story. Have students turn and talk to answer these questions: Which item causes a problem? What is the problem? Which item helps solve the problem? How does it do this? Bring the class together to discuss responses to these questions. Help students understand that the garage sale items are central to the story. Then tell students they will be writing their own garage sale stories, which may be funny, scary, serious, or mysterious. Distribute the *Garage Sale Story* handout. Have students work in pairs to choose two items from the list. Explain that one item should cause a problem and the other item should help solve the problem. Tell pairs to brainstorm problem-and-solution ideas for their garage sale items.

ASSESS: Have partners plan their stories, choosing characters, setting, problem, and solution. Then have them draft their stories, revise, and make final versions. Finally, have pairs read their stories to the class.

EXTEND

Science Explain that yeast is a common bread ingredient that makes dough expand. Work with students to investigate yeast fermentation using yeast, sugar, warm water, empty plastic bottles, and balloons. Add sugar, yeast, and warm water to the bottle and shake. Place a balloon over the top of the bottle. Over a few hours, the balloon should begin to blow up. Find examples of this experiment on the internet.

Garage Sale Story

fake Christmas tree	bird cage	high-heeled sneakers	24-slice toaster	waffle maker	comic books from the 1950s	record player and a bunch of old records	2 guitars and a banjo	cuckoo clock	bagpipes
3 fishing rods	typewriter	microphone and stand	tricycle	fake fur coat	tuxedo	plastic crown	top hat	cowboy boots	snorkel
scuba goggles	beachball	old-fashioned telephone	ballgown	boardgames and puzzles	lawnmower	leaf blower	giant picture frame	rocking chair	exercise bicycle
baby bottles	fish aquarium	3 jars of paint and a paintbrush	painting of a camel	hair dryer	neckties	silver tiara	suitcase	skateboard	scooter
blender	large bed sheets	canoe paddles	a bag of feathers	candelabra	camping tent	rain poncho	diamond ring	jar of seashells	crutches
6 flashlights	electric fan	old, scary-looking dolls	football helmet	boards and sheets of plywood	old eyeglasses	treadmill	fake human skeleton	blow-up boat	life preservers

The Twisted History of the Pretzel

pp. 20–23, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about the history of the pretzel to give students practice in summarizing.



RESOURCES

- Summarizing (two pages)

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze an informational article.
- Students will summarize key supporting details and ideas.
- Students will conduct short research projects.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **vendor (p. 20)** a person who sells things, especially on the street
- **distinctive (p. 22)** appealing or interesting because of an unusual quality or characteristic
- **yanked (p. 20)** suddenly pulled something in a quick way

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do different authors write about food?

Invite students to share their favorite snack foods. Then ask students what they think snack foods were like when their parents and grandparents were kids. Use the internet to look at examples of snacks from the past. Then tell students this article is about the history of a very common snack.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Then have students work in pairs to write sentences that use the words correctly. Have partners share their sentences with other pairs. Then remind students to look for these words as they read the article.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Where might the pretzel have been invented?
2. Why do you think historians aren't sure of the origin of the pretzel?
3. What does the article tell you about the shape of a pretzel?
4. How did pretzel bakers stop a war in Austria?
5. How did a mistake change the pretzel?
6. How will you celebrate National Pretzel Day?

SKILL FOCUS: Summarize a Text/Create a Timeline

INSTRUCT: Remind students that summarizing a nonfiction text means using your own words to write a condensed version of the key ideas in the text. Distribute the *Summarizing* worksheet to all students. Point out that it shows the main part of the magazine article broken up into short sections. Use the following sequence (based on Frey, Fischer, Hernandez/GIST summary) to guide students through some or all of the sections in the article: 1. Read the section aloud. 2. Discuss the key ideas with students. 3. Have students highlight key ideas. 4. Work with students to write a summary of the key ideas. 5. Have students write their summary in the box at the end of the section.

ASSESS: Have students work in small groups to summarize the remaining sections. Then have them use their section summaries to create a timeline of the history of the pretzel. Timeline entries should include a heading with the date, an illustration, and the summary of the section. You could extend the activity by having students conduct research to find two more events in the history of the pretzel to add to their timelines.

EXTEND

Social Studies Explain that many foods and dishes have interesting histories, including potato chips, chocolate chip cookies, hoppin' John, ice cream, and pizza. Have students choose a food or dish and conduct research to learn about its history. Have students present this history as a timeline, comic strip, written or digital report, poster, etc.

Summarizing: “The Twisted History of the Pretzel”

By Marilyn Helmer

Many claim that the pretzel was invented around 610 by an Italian monk who gave them to children as a reward for memorizing their prayers. The name may have come from the Latin word *pretiola*, which means “little reward.” The monk chose the crisscrossed shape because it reminded him of the way children were taught to cross their arms when they prayed. His clever invention was so popular that soon bakers throughout Europe were making the tasty, twisty treats. Others claim the pretzel got its start in France or Germany. **STOP**

Summary:

Pretzels became a symbol of good luck and prosperity. In the 1400s, street vendors sold pretzels door to door. In medieval Germany, townsfolk welcomed shoppers and traders to the famous Frankfort Fair by riding out and offering the *Geleit*-pretzels stuck on their spears. Delivering the soft, doughy treats in this way helped protect the visitors from being robbed by bandits. **STOP**

Summary:

In 1510, an event took place that set the pretzel on the road to fame and glory. Ottoman Turkish armies were marching across Europe, capturing everything in their path. They arrived at the city of Vienna, Austria only to find that it was protected on all sides by a high stone wall. Try as they might, the Ottoman Turkish army could not climb over the wall. So they decided to dig a tunnel beneath it. Working under the cover of darkness, they planned to invade the city at night and catch the Viennese army off guard.

Little did they know, Viennese pretzel bakers were busy at night, too. While baking their treats for the next morning, the bakers heard the suspicious sounds of digging from their cellar bakeries. They quickly sounded the alarm to warn their fellow citizens of the surprise attack. No one was more surprised than the Ottoman Turkish army when they found the Viennese army waiting for them at the other end of the tunnel!

In honor of their quick thinking, the Austrian emperor gave the pretzel bakers their own coat of arms. The pretzel, with its distinctive shape, still appears on the bakers' coat of arms today. **STOP**

Summary:

Legend has it that in the late 1600s, the hard pretzel was introduced in Pennsylvania by accident. A baker's assistant fell asleep on the job. He woke to find that the fire in the oven had gone out. Worried that the batch of pretzels was ruined, he yanked the trays out. His boss was none too pleased—until he tasted a pretzel. Much to his surprise, he found the extra baking time had turned the soft pretzels into a crunchy, delicious treat. **STOP**

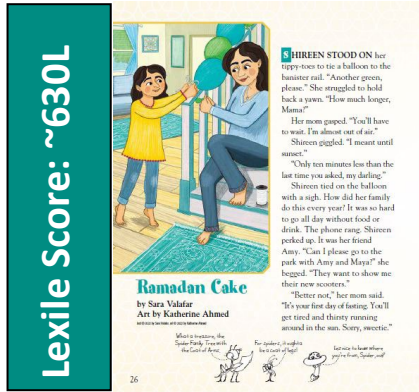
Summary:

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Ramadan Cake

pp. 26–31, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Use this story about a girl and her family observing Ramadan to give students practice in identifying theme.



OBJECTIVES

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

KEY VOCABULARY

- **fasting (p. 26)** eating no food for a period of time
- **doubtful (p. 28)** uncertain or unsure about something
- **compassion (p. 28)** a feeling of wanting to help someone who is sick, hungry, or in trouble

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do different authors write about food?

Explain that every culture has traditions and rituals connected to preparing, serving, and eating food. These traditions include cakes for birthdays and weddings, as well as special foods and treats served during holidays. They also include special food rules, such as eating a vegetarian diet or eating halal or kosher foods. Ask students if their families cook any special meals at holidays. Invite students to share what they eat for different holidays and why they eat these foods.

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. 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. Why is Shireen fasting?
2. What challenges does fasting create for Shireen?
3. Why do you think time moves slowly for Shireen?
4. How might knowing how it feels to be hungry create compassion?
5. How does Shireen's brother support her during the fast?
6. Describe Shireen's characteristics. Would you like to be her friend?
7. Explain how different characters show compassion.

SKILL FOCUS: Identify Theme

INSTRUCT: Explain that the theme of a story is a moral, message, or lesson about life that an author wants to share with readers. Give examples of common literary themes, such as “don't give up on your dreams,” and “one person can make a big difference.” Continue by explaining that usually themes are not stated and that students can figure out themes by thinking about information and events in a story, including characters' problems, how they solve them, and the lessons characters learn. Provide picture books and have students work in pairs to identify themes in the books. Have pairs present their themes and explain the story information that helped them understand the themes.

ASSESS: Instruct partners to work together to identify a theme in “Ramadan Cake” and explain the story details that convey this theme.

EXTEND

Social Studies Assign a different country to each pair of students. Then have pairs conduct research to learn about a special holiday meal in that country. Pairs should create a poster with the country name, the holiday when the meal is served, and a menu for the meal. Students should decorate their posters with images of the foods and celebrations.