

Cricket

THEME

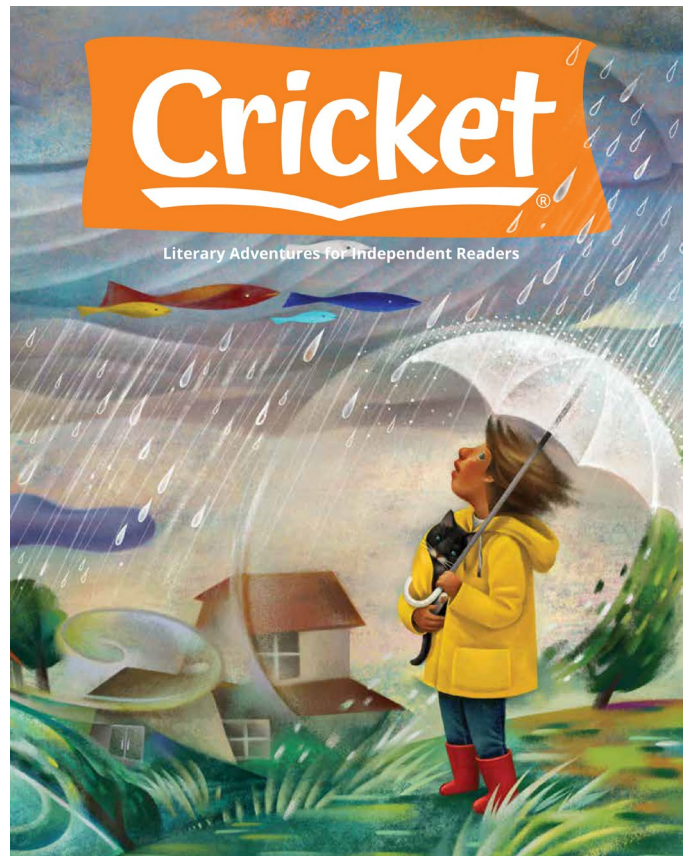
The selections in this issue of Cricket will transport your students to a variety of interesting places, including stinky mudflats, a moonlit garden, and 1890s America. Help your students explore the influence of setting in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry using the lessons and activities in this teacher guide.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do different authors establish setting?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will analyze how specific word choices shape meaning.
- Students will interpret words and phrases.
- Students will analyze the structure of texts.
- Students will analyze how an author's style and tone affect meaning.
- Students will research an ecosystem.
- Students will write narratives to develop real experiences and events.
- Students will write informative texts.



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

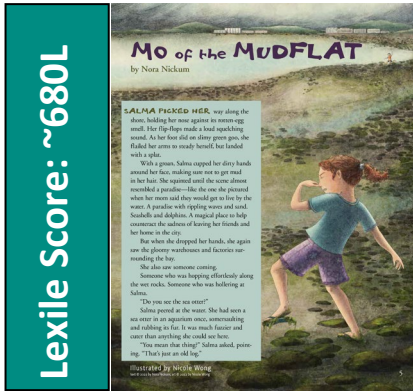
- **Mo of the Mudflat**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~680L
- **Quiet Night**
Poem, N/A
- **The Wind in His Mustache**
Narrative Nonfiction, ~800L

Cricket® Teacher Guide: May/June 2022

Mo of the Mudflat

pp. 5–8, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Use this story about a girl who moves from the city to a town by the sea to help students analyze how setting affects characters and plot.



RESOURCES

- Setting, Character, and Plot

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will research an ecosystem.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **mudflat (p. 5)** an area of muddy land left uncovered at low tide
- **flailed (p. 5)** moved or swung your arms or legs in a wild and uncontrolled way
- **resembled (p. 5)** looked like or acted like someone or something else

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do different authors establish setting?

Work with students to brainstorm memorable settings of favorite books and movies. These might include Wonderland from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and Middle Earth from *The Hobbit*. Have students work in pairs to share their settings and explain why they are memorable. Then tell them to note the setting in this story and think about how it affects the characters and plot.

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. After rolling in wet mud, my dog _____ a wild monster.
2. Lily looked for little crabs hiding in holes along the _____.
3. I _____ my arms around my head to keep the mosquitoes away.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What does Salma notice on her first walk along the shore?
2. How does she feel about her new home town?
3. What is Salma's first reaction to Mudflat Mo?
4. Why do you think Salma goes back to the shore on the second day?
5. What do Mo and Salma have in common?
6. Which details show that Salma begins to enjoy exploring the shore?
7. What is one theme or message of this story?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Setting, Character, and Plot

INSTRUCT: Use the box below to review the three different aspects of setting. Then have students work in pairs to underline setting details in the story. Discuss which aspects of setting the details represent.

<p>Time: year, season; time of day, historic era; past, present, future, etc.</p> <p>Place: city, country, or planet; desert or farm; indoors or outdoors, buildings, etc.</p> <p>Social Environment: beliefs, customs, values, manners, attitudes, prejudices, etc.</p>

Next, point out that setting can influence a story in different ways. It may bring characters together who might not otherwise meet or create challenges and opportunities for story characters. Discuss how setting influences characters and events in "Mo of the Mudflat."

ASSESS: Distribute the *Setting, Character, and Plot* worksheet. Have students complete the activities and compare responses with a partner.

EXTEND

Science Explain that a mudflat is an ecosystem or area where living and nonliving things depend on each other. Have student groups research a mudflat ecosystem and create an informative poster showing the ecosystem's plants and animals and at least one of its food chains.

Setting, Character, and Plot

Find examples of each aspect of setting in the story. Describe how each example influences the story's characters or plot.

Aspect of Setting	Example from Story	Influence on Character or Plot
Place		
Time		
Social Environment		

Discuss: Which aspect of setting is most important in this story? Explain your thinking.

Quiet Night

p. 9, Poem

Use this poem about night in a vegetable garden to teach students how to look closely at a poet's choices.



RESOURCES

- Poem Analysis

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze the structure of a poem.
- Students will analyze how specific word choices shape meaning.
- Students will interpret words and phrases.
- Students will write narratives to develop real experiences and events.

KEY VOCABULARY

- patch (p. 9)** a small area of land where a particular fruit or vegetable grows
- night crawlers (p. 9)** earthworms

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do different authors establish setting?

Discuss whether poems can have setting—a time and place where action happens. Then tell students to listen for details about place and time as you read aloud a poem set in a particular place, such as one of the poems from Cynthia Rylant's book *Soda Jerk*. Read the poem several times, pausing to allow students to point out setting details. Then tell students to look at details that reveal setting in "Quiet Night."

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

Have students listen closely as you read the poem aloud. Then have students work in pairs to take turns reading the poem to each other. Use the following questions to discuss the poem:

- What words or ideas stood out to you in the poem?
- Why do you think the poet used the term "night crawlers" instead of the word *worms*?
- What objects and living things are included in the poem?
- What feelings do you detect in the poem?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze a Poem

INSTRUCT: Explain that everything in a poem—every word, sound, and line break—is the result of choices made by the poet. When students read a poem, they should ask themselves why the poet made these choices—what effect is he or she trying to achieve? Tell students they will be analyzing "Quiet Night" by looking closely at some of the elements in it and discussing them in groups. Distribute the *Poem Analysis* worksheet and go over the definitions of *imagery* and *form*. Have students find an example of imagery in the poem.

ASSESS: Have students work in small groups to discuss the poem using the prompts and questions on the *Poem Analysis* worksheet.

EXTEND

Write Point out that many poets have written poems about night time. Share several night-time poems with students, such as "Flying at Night" by Ted Kooser, "Let Evening Come" by Jane Kenyon, or "Window" by Carl Sandburg. Then tell students to write their own poems about night time. Explain that poems might be written about a real experience or memory, or something made up. Encourage students to use imagery and interesting, specific words in their poems.

Poem Analysis

Thinking about these elements will help you analyze the poem.

- **Imagery:** words and phrases that appeal to a reader's five senses.
- The **form** of a poem is the way the words are laid out on the page and the way lines are broken.

Use these questions to help you think about and discuss the poem.

Questions about content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the poem about? 2. What is the speaker describing? 3. Who do you think the speaker is?
Questions about structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Are the lines long or short? 5. What effect does this have on the way you read and hear the lines?
Questions about imagery	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. What images has the poet created? 7. What senses do they appeal to? 8. What pictures did these images create in your mind?
Questions about sound devices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Do you hear any sound patterns in the poem?
Questions about word choice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. What words seem interesting, unusual, or important? Why?
Questions about meaning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. What overall mood, or feeling, does this poem convey? 12. Does the mood change in the poem or stay the same?
Questions to help you evaluate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. What is your opinion of this poem and the way it's written?

The Wind in His Mustache

pp. 10–14, Narrative Nonfiction

Teach students to analyze tone using this humorous article about George T. Loher, who in 1895 rode his bicycle from coast to coast.



RESOURCES

- Analyze Tone

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a narrative nonfiction selection.
- Students will analyze how an author's style and tone affect meaning.
- Students will write informative texts.

KEY VOCABULARY

- contraption (p. 10)** a piece of equipment or machinery that is unusual or strange
- new-fangled (p. 10)** recently invented and hard to understand
- adorned (p. 10)** decorated as if with ornaments
- steed (p. 11)** a horse that a person rides
- improvised (p. 12)** made or created something by using whatever is available

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do different authors establish setting?

Point out that this selection is a nonfiction account of a long-distance bicycle trip made over 100 years ago. Have students brainstorm challenges the rider might have faced, based on the fact that the trip happened so long ago. Prompt students by asking them to think about how bicycles and roads might have been different back then. Then tell students to look for details in the article that show the setting.

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 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 article.

READ & DISCUSS

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

- What motivates George to ride his bike to New York City?
- Do you think George was well prepared for his trip? Explain.
- What challenges did George face as a result of the way bicycles and roads were built in the 1890s?
- Why did people begin to look at George funny?
- Why do you think the author repeats this description: "the wind in his mustache and the world flying past. Ah, the romance!"?
- How would you describe George's personality and character?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Tone

INSTRUCT: Explain that the tone of a piece of writing is the attitude a writer takes toward the subject. A writer's tone can often be described in one or two words, such as *light-hearted*, *sarcastic*, *serious*, or *sentimental*. Point out that students can identify tone by paying attention to the words and phrases the writer uses, the writer's imagery and description and use of literary devices, such as characterization. Distribute the *Analyze Tone* worksheet to students. Then have students work in pairs to reread the story, noticing significant words, imagery and description, and examples of characterization. Tell students to take notes on the worksheet. Invite them to share some of the notes they made.

ASSESS: Have students work in small groups to review the notes they made and identify the tone of the article. Bring the class together to discuss and compare ideas.

EXTEND

Social Studies Have students use the internet, nonfiction books, and other sources to find information about one of the following: history of bicycles, George Loher, historical events in 1895. Have students use their research to write a report that gives information about their topic.

Analyze Tone

As you read “The Wind in His Mustache,” take notes in the chart below. Then use your notes to identify tone.

Element of Tone	Details from the Article
Significant Words	
Imagery and Description	
Characterization	
Other Details	

What tone do these details create? _____