# Cricket®

THEME

In this issue of *Cricket*, students will read about all kinds of spooky situations and encounter a variety of creepy characters. Explore how different authors can scare us silly, using the texts, lessons, and activities in this Teacher Guide.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What makes a story scary?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read closely to make logical inferences from a text.
- Students will recognize the genre and key elements of literary texts.
- Students will interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- Students will analyze cultural characteristics.
- Students will conduct research to answer questions about hibernation.
- Students will conduct research to answer questions about bogs.
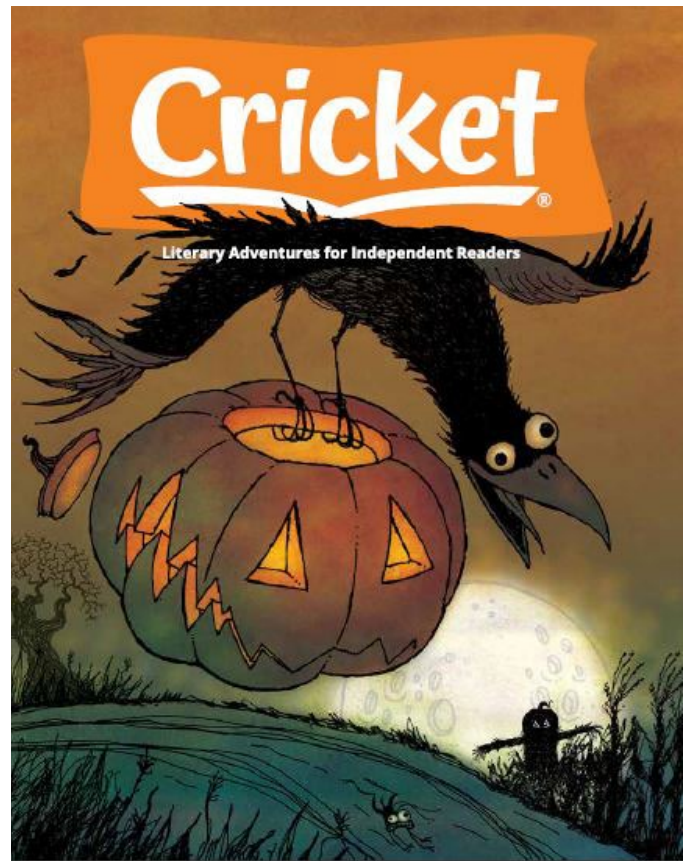
In addition to supplemental materials focused on core English Language Arts skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.
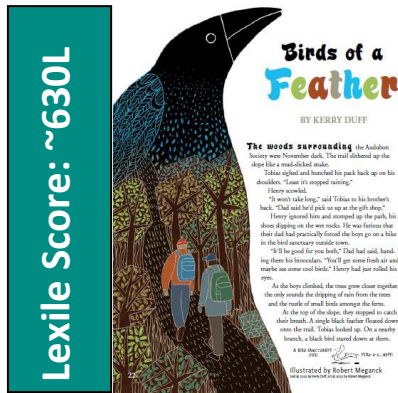
SELECTIONS

• Birds of a Feather
Horror Fiction, ~630L
• The Long Night
Science Fiction, ~890L
• The Buried Moon
Folktale, ~990L

Birds of a Feather

pp. 22–24, Horror Fiction

Use this story about two brothers taking a hike in the woods to teach students how to identify and analyze foreshadowing.

Lexile Score: ~630L

RESOURCES

- Identify Foreshadowing

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a horror story.
- Students will read closely to make logical inferences from a text.
- Students will analyze cultural characteristics.

KEY VOCABULARY

- *unnerved* **(p. 23)** made to feel afraid or upset and unable to think clearly
- *spiteful* **(p. 23)** having or showing a desire to harm, anger, or defeat someone
- *beady* **(p. 23)** used to describe eyes that are small, round, and shiny and that usually suggest a bad quality, such as greed or dishonesty

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a story scary?

Work with students to brainstorm a list of horror stories and movies. Then have students work in small groups to choose a few titles they are familiar with and discuss the techniques used in each work to scare audiences and create suspense. Have groups share their ideas. Instruct students to note what is scary and suspenseful in "Birds of a Feather."

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. Zeb was being _____ when he hid his sister's shoes to make her late for school.
2. The cat watched the mouse with _____ eyes and waited to pounce.
3. I was _____ by the sound of the howling wind and I could not sleep.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What mood is created by the description in the first paragraph?
2. Why are Tobias and Henry hiking in the woods?
3. Which story details show that the boys don't want to hike?
4. At what point does the story become scary? Cite specific details.
5. Why do you think the boys' father forced them to take the hike?
6. Do you think the woman in the gift shop is good or evil? Explain.
7. What happens to Tobias at the end of the story?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Foreshadowing

INSTRUCT: Explain that foreshadowing is a technique that authors and film makers use to hint at events that will happen later in a story. For example, if a character in a book or movie says "I have a bad feeling about this" just before opening a door, you can expect that something dramatic or scary will happen when the door is opened. Point out that foreshadowing can be found in descriptions of setting, in characters' words and actions, and in story events. Read aloud the first page of the story. Have students work in pairs to note details that foreshadow later events in the story. Bring students together to share their ideas.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to complete the *Identify Foreshadowing* worksheet. Then bring the class together to share ideas.

EXTEND

Social Studies Discuss the ideas that the crows in "Birds of a Feather" might symbolize or represent. For example, do they represent good or evil? Then have students conduct research to learn about what crows symbolize in different cultures. Students can create posters or short digital presentations to share what they learn.

Identify Foreshadowing

Reread the story to find words and details that hint at events that occur later. In the chart below, list the details and describe the events they hint at.

| Example of Foreshadowing	Event(s)

Discuss: Foreshadowing often creates a feeling of suspense in a story, making readers eager to know what will happen next. Which events in the story create suspense? What is the story's most suspenseful moment?

The Long Night

pp. 35–41, Science Fiction

Teach students to recognize the elements of science fiction using this story set in a time when most humans have developed an instinct to hibernate.

Lexile Score: ~890L
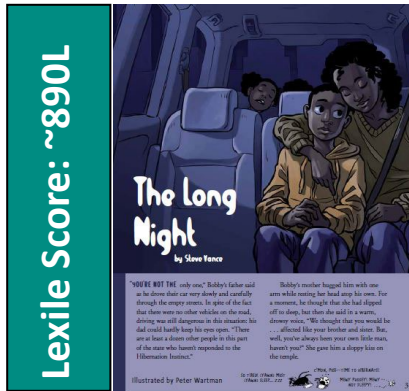
RESOURCES

- Analyze Science Fiction

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a science fiction story.
- Students will recognize the genre and key elements of literary texts.
- Students will conduct research to answer questions about hibernation.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **instinct (p. 35)** a natural tendency to do or feel something
- **punchy (p. 36)** dazed and not able to think or act normally
- **insomniac (p. 36)** a person who is not able to sleep
- **resistant (p. 37)** not affected or harmed by something
- **succumb (p. 37)** to stop trying to resist something

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a story scary?

Work with students to brainstorm a list of science fiction books and movies. Then have students work in small groups to discuss familiar science fiction works and create a list of two or three characteristics of science fiction. Tell students to consider characters, setting, and plot as they create their lists. Then bring the class together to share ideas and discuss ways science fiction is similar to horror fiction. Finally, tell students to look for ways the author of this story creates suspense.

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. Tell students to look for these words as they read the article.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. How is Bobby different from the rest of his family?
2. What predictions have scientists and experts made about the Sleep and its effects on humans?
3. What measures have people taken so they will have food and other resources when they wake up after the long sleep?
4. What do you learn about Bobby from the way he responds to the invasion?
5. What is the Hibernation Instinct?
6. How is the Instinct connected to the operation of the Mighty Empire of the Seven Systems?
7. How would the story be different if Bobby had stayed asleep?
8. In what ways is this story like a horror story?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Science Fiction

INSTRUCT: Review the characteristics of science fiction from the ENGAGE activity. Then distribute the *Science Fiction* worksheet and go over the list of characteristics of science fiction. Compare students' earlier responses to this list. Invite a few volunteers to give examples of these elements from the story or from other science fiction narratives they know.

ASSESS: Have students work independently to complete the worksheet.

EXTEND

Science: Have students work in groups to research and discuss these questions about hibernation: What is hibernation? What happens to animal bodies during hibernation? How is hibernation a survival technique? Could humans ever hibernate? How might this help people and the planet? Invite groups to share their ideas and answers.

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Analyze Science Fiction

The first column in the table below lists the characteristics of science fiction. Identify examples of these characteristics in "The Long Night" and record them in the second column.

Characteristics of science fiction	Examples found in "The Long Night"
The **setting** is usually in the future—on Earth, another planet, or outer space.	
The **characters** may be a mix of regular people, aliens, robots, and mutant or futuristic beings.	
The **plot** usually incorporates real or imaginary scientific developments and their effects on humans.	

Discuss: Science fiction writers often use futuristic science and technology to send a message about the state of present-day society. Messages might relate to politics or to human actions and their effects. What message about our present-day society do you think this story sends?

The Buried Moon

pp. 42–44, Folktale

Give students practice in recognizing how setting contributes to mood using this eerie folktale set in a bog.

Lexile Score: ~990L
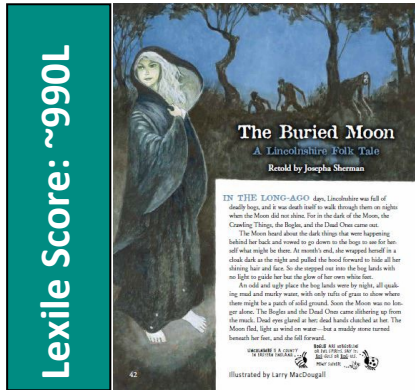
OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a folktale.
- Students will interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- Students will conduct research to answer questions about bogs.

KEY VOCABULARY

- ***bog* (p. 42)** an area of soft, wet land
- ***writhed* (p. 43)** twisted one's body from side to side
- ***warily* (p. 43)** in a way that shows a lack of complete trust in someone or something
- ***hummock* (p. 43)** a very small hill or raised area of land
- ***flinched* (p. 44)** moved suddenly out of fear or pain

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a story scary?

Share something that scares you now or scared you as a child. For example, you might have been afraid to go down to the basement, afraid of the dark, afraid of dogs, etc. Instruct the class to write down three things that scare them. Work with students to combine lists and determine which fears are most common among your students. Discuss any surprising results. Then tell students to note the details that make "The Buried Moon" a scary story.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and definitions. Then challenge pairs of students to write a very short scary story using all of the vocabulary words correctly. Give pairs ten minutes to write. Encourage writers to share their stories aloud. Remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What makes the bog a creepy place?
2. What can you infer about the Moon from her reaction to seeing the man lost in the bog?
3. How do the Crawling Things react to the Moon's light?
4. Why do you think the Moon is the enemy of the Crawling Things?
5. How did life change for people when the Moon was away?
6. How do you think the Moon feels about the humans?
7. What message or warning does this tale contain?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Setting and Mood

INSTRUCT: Remind students that mood is the feeling or atmosphere that an author creates for the reader. Words that can describe mood include *peaceful*, *eerie*, *cheerful*, and *gloomy*. Explain that authors create mood through descriptions of setting and events. Next, read aloud this sentence from page 42: "An odd and ugly place the bog lands were by night, all quaking mud and murky water, with only tufts of grass to show where there might be a patch of solid ground." Have students identify details that help them visualize the setting. Discuss the mood or atmosphere created by these details.

ASSESS: Instruct students to highlight details in the story that help create the story's mood. Next to each highlighted detail, students should note the mood it creates. Have students share their ideas in small groups.

EXTEND

Science Have students conduct research to learn about bogs: What are bogs? Where are they found in the United States and globally? How were they formed? What lives in and around them? Students might want to work in pairs to find answers to these questions. Afterwards, discuss why a bog might be a good setting for a scary story.