

# Cricket®

## THEME

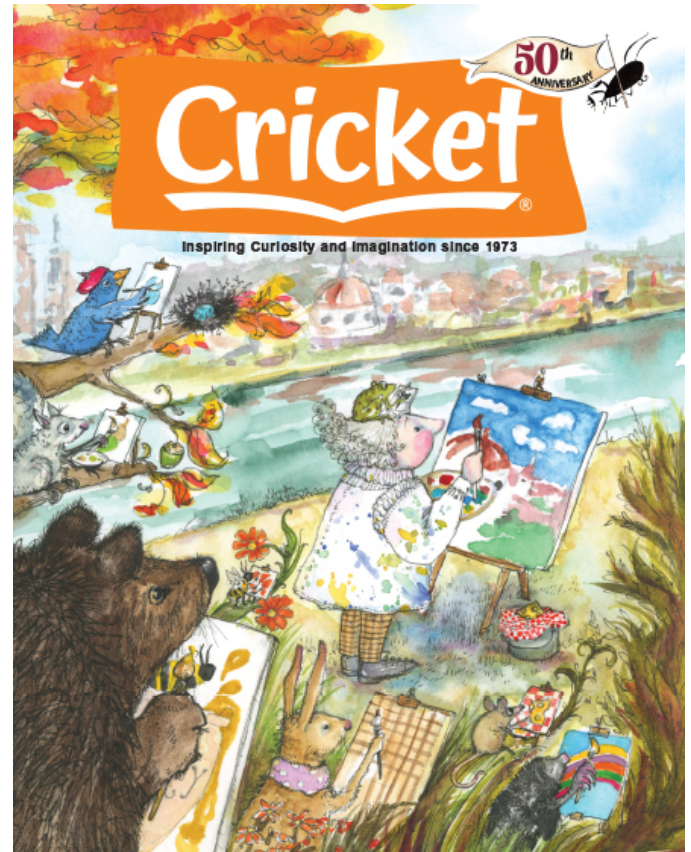
*Dauntless, thoughtful, awkward, selfless, and diligent* are descriptions that might come up in conversations about the characters and real people in this issue of *Cricket*. Use the texts covered in this teacher guide to explore different aspects of texts and the way authors reveal the personalities of characters and real people.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do authors reveal characters' personalities?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short biography, short story, and a tale.
- Students will recognize the genre, key elements, and characteristics of texts.
- Students will analyze how a point of view shapes the content of a text.
- Students will identify themes.
- Students will create and deliver multimedia presentations.
- Students will adapt a short story into a play.
- Students will conduct short research reports.



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.

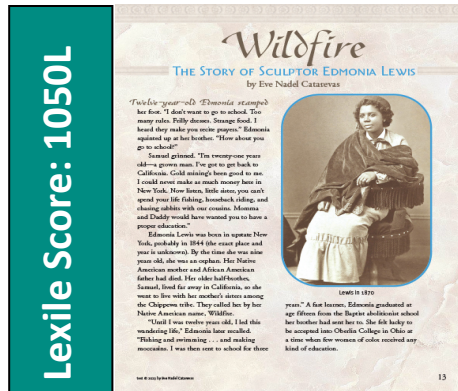
## SELECTIONS

- **Wildfire**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~1050L
- **Delayed Reactions**  
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~630L
- **The Invisible Red String**  
Tale, ~1020L

## Wildfire

pp. 13–17, Biography

Readers will learn about Edmonia Lewis, “the first sculptor of African American and Native American descent to achieve international recognition.” This article will help students practice analyzing a biography.



## RESOURCES

- Analyze Biography

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short biography.
- Students will recognize the genre, key elements, and characteristics of literary texts.
- Students will create and deliver multimedia presentations.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- abolitionist** (p. 13) a person who wants to stop or abolish slavery
- destiny** (p. 14) the things that someone will experience in the future
- grandeur** (p. 14) a great and impressive quality
- apprentice** (p. 14) a person who learns a job or skill by working for a fixed period of time for someone who is very good at that job or skill

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors reveal characters' personalities?

Point out that the way students decorate their bedrooms can reveal information about their personalities. Posters, trophies, stuffed animals, mementos, and other items show what students enjoy. Have student groups share ways their bedrooms express their personalities. Ask students to think of ways an author of biography might reveal a subject's personality. Then tell students to notice how the author of this biographical essay reveals the personality of Edmonia Lewis.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

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

## READ & DISCUSS

After students read the article, discuss these questions:

- What impressed you most about Edmonia Lewis?
- What does Lewis mean when she says she led a “wandering life”?
- Why was Oberlin a challenging experience for Lewis?
- How was Lewis's strength of character challenged over her lifetime?
- What did Rome offer Lewis that the United States did not?
- What ideas did Lewis convey in her sculptures?

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Biography

**INSTRUCT:** Remind students that a biography is a form of nonfiction in which the author communicates ideas about another person's life. Explain that in addition to facts, biographers often include quotes and anecdotes, or brief accounts of interesting incidents, to illustrate points about their subject. Have students work in pairs to discuss what the quote in the first paragraph reveals about Edmonia Lewis. Discuss as a class. Next, have partners find an example of an anecdote in the text and discuss what point the anecdote illustrates. Then distribute the *Analyze Biography* worksheet and review the directions.

**ASSESS:** Have students work in pairs to complete the worksheet. Bring the class together to share their ideas.

## EXTEND

**Art:** Have pairs of students do a web search to choose a contemporary African American artist to research, or assign an artist to each pair. Then have them create a short slide show about the artist that includes information about where the artist works, the media he or she uses, the subjects of the artist's works, and an image of a piece by the artist. After students present their slide shows, have pairs compare the piece by the artist they reported on with another artist's piece and discuss how the works are similar and different.

## Analyze Biography

Find two anecdotes and two quotes in “Wildfire,” and explain what they reveal about Edmonia Lewis. Identify the anecdotes by noting page numbers and jotting down the first and last few words.

Anecdote, page _____	Anecdote, page _____
Quote, page _____	Quote, page _____

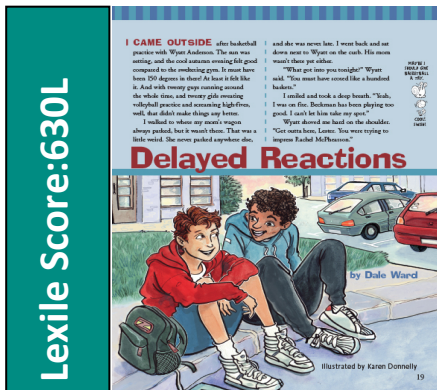
**Edmonia  
Lewis**

# Cricket® Teacher Guide: February 2023

## Delayed Reactions

pp. 19–24, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Use this story about a boy waiting for his mother to pick him up after basketball practice to help students analyze first-person point of view.



## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how a point of view shapes the content of a text.
- Students will adapt a short story into a play.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **sweltering** (p. 19) very hot
- **impress** (p. 19) to cause someone to feel admiration or interest
- **dispersed** (p. 20) moved in different directions
- **sleek** (p. 21) straight and smooth in design or shape

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors reveal characters' personalities?

Brainstorm a list of memorable characters in familiar movies and stories. Discuss the characters' personalities and how readers and viewers learn about them—is it something the characters do, say, or want? Tell students to note what they learn about the characters as they read “Delayed Reactions.”

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Then challenge small groups of students to write a very short story or scene using all of the vocabulary words correctly. Give groups five minutes to write. Then have groups share their stories. Remind 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. What does Wyatt tease Lester about?
2. Does Wyatt tease Lester in a friendly or mean way? Explain.
3. How do Lester's feelings about waiting for his mother change over the course of the story? What does this reveal about him?
4. What do Rachel's actions reveal about her?
5. Do you think Rachel and Lester like each other? Explain.

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze First-Person Point of View

**INSTRUCT:** Review first-person point of view stories with students:

- The story is told by one of the characters and uses pronouns such as *I*, *me*.
- The narrator takes part in the events he or she describes.
- The narrator can reveal a lot about his or her thoughts and feelings but not very much about other characters' thoughts and feelings.

Ask students to identify the narrator of “Delayed Reactions.” (Lester) Then have students work in groups to reread the story and underline sections where they learn about Lester, including his thoughts and feelings. Have students jot down what they learn next to the sections and share ideas with the class.

**ASSESS:** Have students reread the scene on page 22 that begins “Suddenly Rachel stopped and was looking at me” and ends “It was either heating up again outside, or I just blushed big time.” Then have them work in pairs to rewrite the scene from different perspectives—Rachel's perspective and the father's perspective. Invite pairs to share their scenes with the class.

## EXTEND

**Writing:** Have pairs or groups of students adapt a scene from the story into a short play. Students should assign roles and highlight the dialogue they will read. They should also make notes about facial expressions and body movements they will need to incorporate to convey emotions, actions, and the setting. Students can gather simple props. After students have rehearsed, have them present their play to the class.

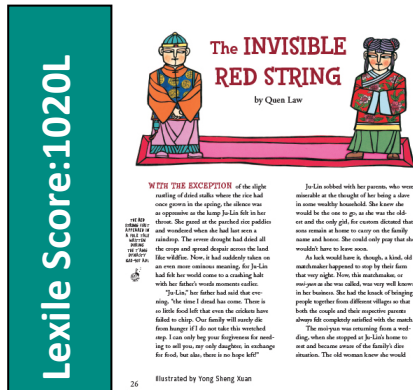


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## The Invisible Red String

pp. 26–30, Tale

Use this tale about a girl who becomes an apprentice to a matchmaker to give students practice in identifying theme.



## RESOURCES

- Analyze Theme

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a tale.
- Students will identify themes.
- Students will conduct short research reports.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- ominous** (p. 26) suggesting that something bad is going to happen in the future
- admonished** (p. 27) told or urged someone to do something
- bountiful** (p. 27) giving or providing many desired things
- meticulously** (p. 28) done in a way that shows attention to detail

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do authors reveal characters' personalities?

Explain that an author can reveal characters' personalities by showing how they respond to challenges. Read aloud the fable "The Crow and the Pitcher" (Aesop, available online). Discuss what students learn about the crow from its actions. Tell students to notice how the main character in "The Invisible Red String" responds to challenges.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Ask volunteers to explain the meanings of familiar words. Acknowledge correct meanings and read the definitions aloud. Next, have students work in groups of four to write sentences using these words, with each group member responsible for a different word. Have groups review the sentences and confirm that the words are used correctly. Invite students to share their sentences. Remind students to look for these words as they read.

## READ & DISCUSS

Have students pause after reading the first full paragraph on page 30, which begins, "Well, I can hardly pay you..." Ask them to write a prediction about what will happen when Ju-Lin meets the matron's son. After students finish reading the story, discuss these questions:

- Why is Ju-Lin's father forced to sell his daughter?
- What is the mood in the first three paragraphs? How does it change in the fourth paragraph?
- How has the moi-yun broken with tradition in her life?
- How closely did your prediction match the story?
- What do you learn about Ju-Lin from the way she faces challenges?

## SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Theme

**INSTRUCT:** Review theme (the message or lesson about life that an author wants to share with readers). Give examples of literary theme statements, such as "Trust in yourself is as important as trust in others" and "People should embrace change." Continue by explaining that students can determine themes by thinking about characters and events in a story. Point out that this story, like many, has more than one theme. Brainstorm with students a list of important characters, events, and details in the story. Have students work in pairs to determine one theme for the story, based on the events and details listed.

**ASSESS:** Distribute the *Analyze Theme* worksheet. Have students work in pairs to complete it. Then discuss responses as a class.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Explain that many familiar objects, such as kites, toothbrushes, and paper money, were invented in ancient China. Have students work in pairs to research and report on an invention (assigned or chosen) that ancient China contributed to the world. Students should prepare a short oral presentation that includes images.

## Analyze Theme

Use story details to respond to the prompts about theme in the boxes below.

1. Explain how the author develops this theme: *A situation that begins in sadness can end in happiness.*

2. Identify a theme in the story about the idea of ignoring or upholding tradition. Explain how the author develops the theme.