

Spider®

THEME

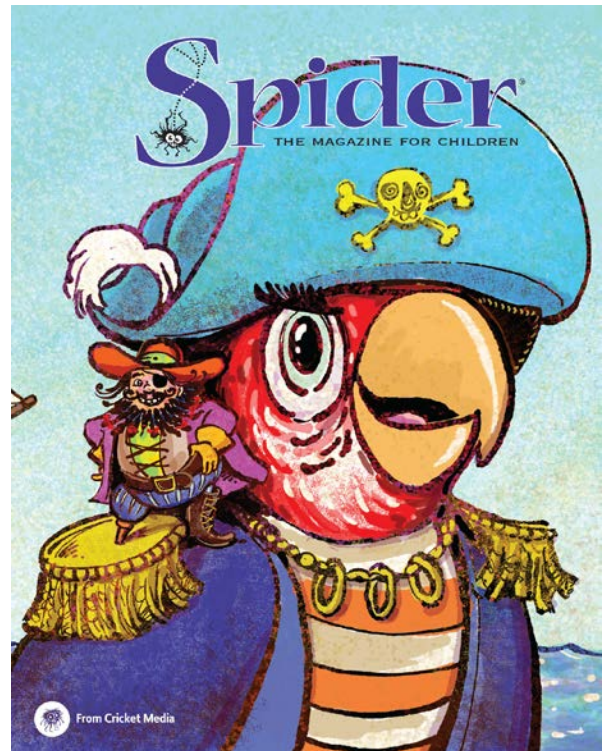
Everybody needs a little help sometimes, for example, when preparing for a test, when a sea monster is about to attack, or when your space ship runs out of fuel. Have fun reading about the unusual situations in these stories and thinking about how the characters get by with a little help from their friends.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

When do you need a little help from your friends?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will determine themes and analyze their development.
- Students will plan and carry out investigations.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.



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.

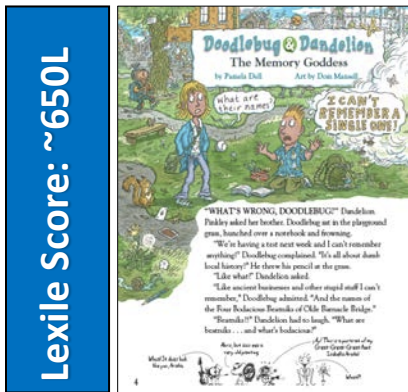
SELECTIONS

- **Doodlebug & Dandelion**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~650L
- **The Pirates and the Peacock**
Fantasy, ~650L
- **Pasta for Astronar**
Science Fiction, ~650L

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Doodlebug & Dandelion pp. 23–26, Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Give students practice in mapping story events using this story about how Doodlebug learns to remember information.



RESOURCES

- Story Map Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will plan and carry out investigations.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **furiously** (p. 5) in a way that is very fast
- **demonstration** (p. 5) an act of showing someone how something is used or done
- **desperate** (p. 5) having little or no hope
- **dazzled** (p. 6) amazed and overwhelmed
- **memorize** (p. 6) to learn something so well that you are able to remember it perfectly

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: When do you need a little help from your friends?

Ask students to talk about ways they can help and support friends with schoolwork. Discuss what students might do if they didn't know how to help a friend—who would they suggest the friend talk to? Explain that in the next story, Doodlebug has a problem he needs help with.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Have students work in groups to create sentences that use these words and then make a prediction about what will happen in the story. Invite students to share their sentences and predictions. Remind the class to look for these words as they read, and review their predictions after they read.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Why is Doodlebug desperate at the beginning of the story?
2. Tell three things you learn about Maravilla's personality.
3. What is an action story? How does it help people remember?
4. What answer do you think Doodlebug gave to Maravilla? Why was this the best wrong answer he'd ever had?
5. Did Maravilla's demonstration work for Doodlebug? Explain.

SKILL FOCUS: Mapping a Story

INSTRUCT: Remind students that most stories are made up of a series of events that tell about a problem and how it is solved. Invite students to describe the problem in a familiar movie or book. Next, ask students to tell the important steps characters took to solve the problem. List and number these on the board, using the words *first*, *next*, and *finally* where appropriate. Help students identify the problem (The farmer got sick and couldn't thresh the wheat) and solution (The pixies thresh the wheat). Discuss the pixies' problem in the next part of the story.

ASSESS: Distribute a copy of the *Story Map* worksheet to each student. Have students work in pairs or groups to complete it.

EXTEND

Science Have students work in small groups to experiment with action stories and memory. Have each group member gather four or five objects. Then have them take turns giving the other members 15 seconds to memorize the objects by creating action stories. Have groups share their stories and report on the results of their experiments.

Name _____

Story Map

Use the organizer to record information about “Doodlebug & Dandelion.”

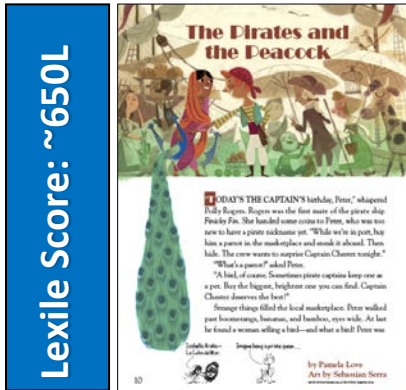
Characters	Setting
What is Doodlebug’s problem?	
How does Doodlebug try to solve the problem? List the events. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	
How is Doodlebug’s problem solved?	

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The Pirates and the Peacock

pp. 10–14, Fantasy

Use this story about a peacock on a pirate ship to give students practice in identifying the theme of a story.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: When do you need a little help from your friends?

Invite students to share times when a friend has helped them or they have helped a friend. Discuss how students felt in these situations. Then discuss times when they were trying to be helpful but something went wrong. Tell students to look for ways characters are helpful in this story—successfully and unsuccessfully so.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Next, have students work in pairs to decide how the word meanings are connected. Then have them use the following frame to create a label for the words based on how they are connected: *Words You Can Use to Talk About* _____. Invite students to share their labels. Have students look for these words as they read the story.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will determine themes and analyze their development.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **first mate (p. 10)** an officer who ranks just below a ship's captain and takes over for the captain when necessary
- **port (p. 10)** a town or city where ships stop to load and unload cargo
- **crew (p. 10)** the group of people who operate a ship
- **deck (p. 11)** a flat surface that forms the main outside floor of a boat or ship
- **wheel (p. 12)** steering wheel

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. How would you describe Peter, based on his actions and reactions in the story?
2. Explain how three events in this story are linked by cause and effect.
3. How do the captain's feelings about Peter change in the story?
4. How might the story end if Peter had found a parrot instead of a peacock?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Theme

INSTRUCT: Remind students that the theme of a story is a message about life that an author wants to share with readers. Explain that students can figure out themes by thinking about details and events in a story, such as characters' problems and how they react to them and solve them.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to determine themes for this story. Ask volunteers to share their themes with the class.

EXTEND

Science Have students conduct research to learn about peacocks—habitat and distribution, diet, anatomy and feathers, habits and behavior, and the importance of peacocks in different cultures. Suggest that students work individually or in pairs to create colorful posters showing what they have learned about this amazing bird. Students can present their posters or display them in the classroom.

Pasta for Astronar

pp. 16–17, Science Fiction

This is an amusing story about a space alien who needs to borrow some pasta from two brothers who are home alone. Use this text to give students practice in identifying character traits.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: When do you need a little help from your friends?

Invite students to name movies or books in which humans and nonhumans—animals, ghosts, space aliens—help each other. Instruct students to read on to find out how the two brothers in this story help another character who has run out of gas.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Explain that these are words that have more than one meaning. Have students work in pairs to look up each word in a dictionary and use the context of the word in the selection to find the correct definition. Invite groups to share definitions they recorded. Then read the correct definitions aloud.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. What makes the beginning of this story suspenseful?
2. Find three story details that show how the boys feel when they first meet Astronar.
3. Compare the boys' ideas about space monsters to what Astronar is really like.
4. Why does Kyle think it's funny that a spaceship uses pasta for fuel?
5. Read the question at the end of the story. What else might Kyle ask?

RESOURCES

- Character Traits Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how characters develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **sharp** (p. 17) loud, short, and sudden
- **atmosphere** (p. 19) the whole mass of air that surrounds the Earth
- **punch** (p. 19) to press or push something with a short, quick movement
- **flimsy** (p. 21) easily broken or torn

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Character

INSTRUCT: Remind students that they learn about story characters from the details and information the author includes in a story. Ask students to name words they would use to describe Astronar. Record students' responses on the board. If necessary, encourage students to skim the story to help them come up with adjectives to describe him. Next, work with students to choose the four or five strongest descriptions of Astronar.

ASSESS: Distribute the *Character Traits* worksheet to all students. Have students copy the traits in the left column. Then have them find details about Astronar from the story that show these traits and add these in the right column. Invite students to share their work with the class.

EXTEND

Science Explain that although pasta probably could not be used to fuel a space ship, scientists continue to develop alternatives to fossil fuels, such as plant-based biofuels. Have students conduct research to learn more about this topic and report what they learn to the class.