

Cricket®

THEME

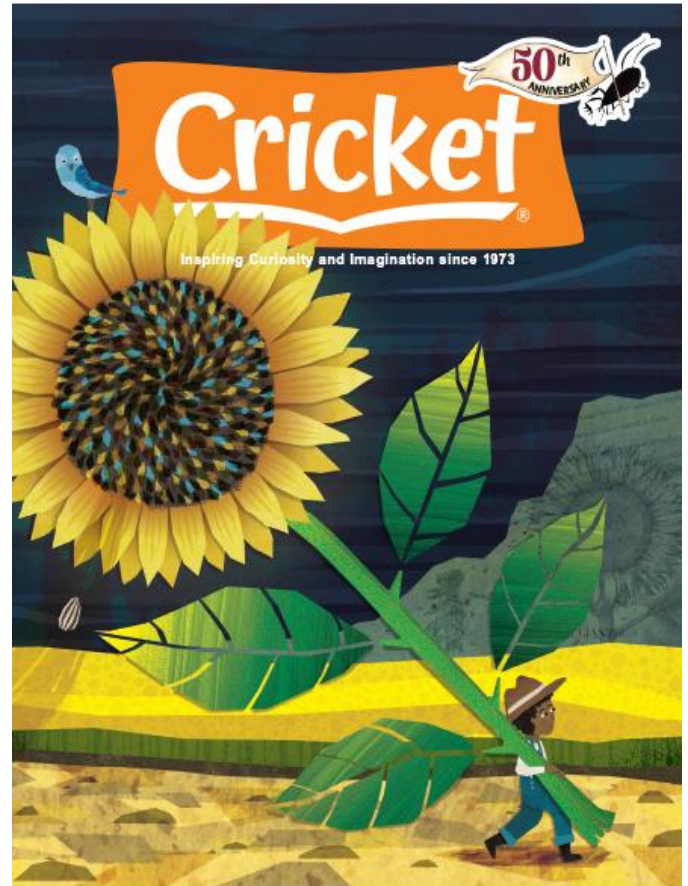
Explore France in the 11th century, Holland in the 15th century, and the American west in the 1800s using the historical fiction stories, lessons, and activities in this month's *Cricket* Teacher Guide.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What can readers learn from historical fiction?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze short stories.
- Students will analyze characters' perspectives.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will write narratives to develop imagined experiences and events.
- Students will create history-based comic strips.
- Students will compare and contrast texts in different forms.
- Students will prepare for and participate in oral storytelling.



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

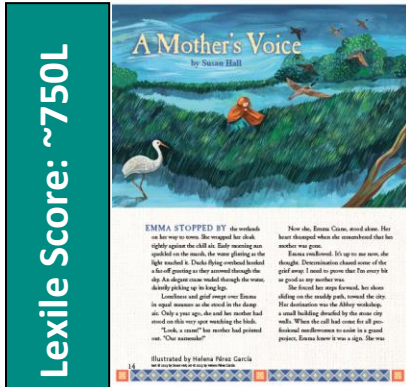
- **A Mother's Voice**
Historical Fiction, ~750L
- **The Explorer, Part One**
Historical Fiction, ~860L
- **Elixir of the Incas**
Historical Fiction, ~860L

Cricket® Teacher Guide: May/June 2023

A Mother's Voice

pp. 14–19, Historical Fiction

Help students analyze perspectives, using this story about a girl living in 11th-century France who gets a job embroidering a famous tapestry.



RESOURCES

- Analyze Characters' Perspectives

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze characters' perspectives.
- Students create history-based comic strips.

KEY VOCABULARY

- namesake (p. 14)** someone or something that has the same name as another person or thing
- needlewoman (p. 14)** a woman who has sewing skills and sews for a living; a seamstress
- embroiderer (p. 15)** a person who makes decorative designs on fabric using a needle and thread
- noble (p. 17)** belonging to the highest social class

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What can readers learn from historical fiction?

Invite students to share historical fiction novels and stories they have read. Discuss the settings in students' examples and how setting is important in the stories. Also discuss what students have learned about the past from reading historical fiction stories. Finally, tell students to note setting details as they read this story.

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.

- Long ago, dukes and duchesses were examples of ____ people.
- Althea is the ____ of a great tennis player—Althea Neale Gibson.
- The ____ sewed an image of a mushroom onto my jeans.
- The duchess hired a ____ to mend and make clothing for her family.

READ & DISCUSS

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

- Emma describes Mistress Boyer as having “the beady eyes of a crow whose worm has been stolen.” What does this quote reveal about Emma’s attitude toward Mistress Boyer?
- Which characters in the story have power? Explain.
- Why do you think Mistress Boyer makes Emma redo the stripe?
- What is Mistress Boyer’s connection to Emma’s mother?
- Having a voice means having the power to influence or make a decision about something. How does Emma show she has a voice?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Characters' Perspectives

INSTRUCT: Explain that a story character’s perspective is the character’s attitude toward the world around him or her. Remind students that this story is set in the 11th century. Have students work in small groups to note details about the setting of this story—not just the time and place, but also the attitudes, behaviors, and customs that are part of the story’s time period. Then ask students to share their ideas with the class. Note ideas on the board. If the role of women is not on the list, bring this up for discussion. Finally, tell students they will analyze the perspectives of several characters in the story.

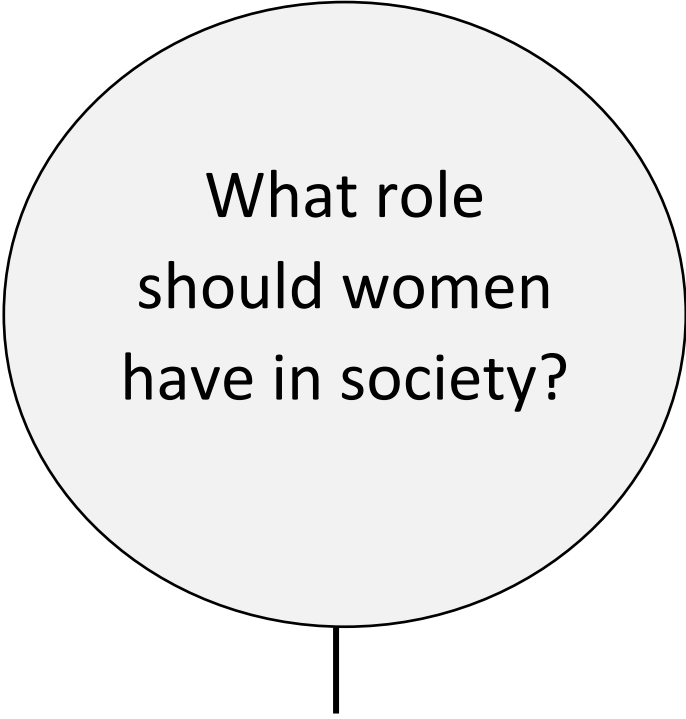
ASSESS: Distribute the *Analyze Characters' Perspectives* worksheet. Have students work independently to complete it and then share their responses in small groups.

EXTEND

Social Studies/Art: If possible, show students a short film titled “The Animated Bayeux Tapestry” (available on the internet). Discuss similarities between the tapestry and modern comics/graphic stories. Point out that both are visual narratives that tell a story in pictures. Have students choose a historical event and use words and pictures to create a comic that conveys the events.

Analyze Characters' Perspectives

How would each character listed below answer the question? Support your answer with story details. Write your answers in the chart.



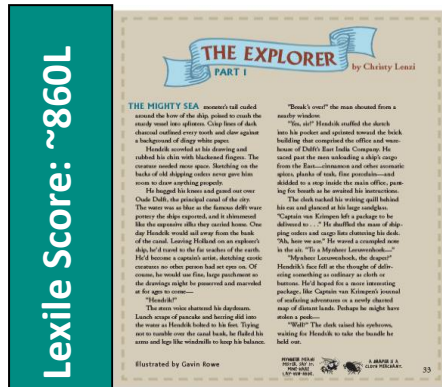
What role
should women
have in society?

Emma	Mistress Boyer	Alice or the lord

The Explorer, Part One

pp. 32–36, Historical Fiction

Use this story about a young boy who meets the inventor of the telescope to help students analyze setting in historical fiction.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What can readers learn from historical fiction?

Invite students to imagine they are writing a historical fiction story about a young person living in the 1600s. Have students work in small groups to brainstorm how this character might dress, spend free time, travel from home to school, what kind of house he or she might live in, and what he or she might do in school and eat for lunch. Have groups give their character a name and share details about him or her with the class. Then tell students to pay attention to details about characters and setting in this story.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and definitions and read them aloud. 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 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. At what point is it clear that the story is historical fiction?
2. What is Hendrik's ambition?
3. Why does Hendrik think it's odd that a draper wants a specimen?
4. Describe Mynheer Leeuwenhoek's strongest personality traits.
5. What creates conflict in the story?
6. Make a prediction about what might happen next in the story.

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Historical Setting

INSTRUCT: Point out that the setting is the most important story element in historical fiction because the author is writing about a particular time and place in history. The author's setting must be accurate, and it must influence characters and plot in realistic ways. For example, a story that takes place in the 1600s will not have cars or airplanes, so characters will have to travel on foot or by horse or boat. In addition, some scientific advances and discoveries will not be realized yet, and this will also affect the plot and characters. Have students work in pairs to highlight details used to describe the setting, characters, and events in "The Explorer" that help show the time period of the story.

ASSESS: Have students work in small groups to discuss five ways the plot or characters are influenced by the time period in which they live.

EXTEND

Comparing Literature: Provide students with copies of the poem "The Microscope" by Maxine Kumin, which tells the story of Mynheer Leeuwenhoek. Have students work in pairs to note similarities and differences between the story and the poem. Then challenge students to write a poem about an inventor and his or her invention.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Students will compare and contrast texts in different forms.

KEY VOCABULARY

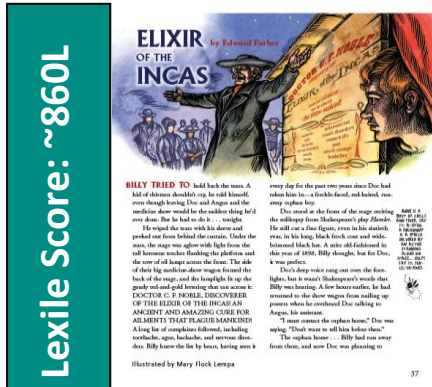
- **herring** (p. 33) a fish that lives in the northern Atlantic Ocean and is often eaten as food
- **sandglass** (p. 33) a device for measuring time, with sand running from the top half of a glass container into the bottom half through a narrow middle part; an hourglass
- **gunnysack** (p. 34) a large bag made of rough, heavy cloth
- **hog-backed** (p. 36) having a curved shape

Cricket® Teacher Guide: May/June 2023

Elixir of the Incas

pp. 37–44, Historical Fiction

Have students write journal entries from the point of view of the main character in this story about an orphan boy who is part of a traveling medicine show.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What can readers learn from historical fiction?

Write the term “traveling medicine show” on the board. Invite students to share what they know about this topic. Then brainstorm with students a list of questions (5Ws + H) about traveling medicine shows. Have students work in pairs to use computers to conduct rapid research on traveling medicine shows and answer the questions. Give students a set amount of time to do their research. Then bring the class together to share the answers they found. Tell students to see how many of the questions they came up with are answered by this story.

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. Remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the story.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Why does Billy decide to run away from Doc?
2. How did Billy end up with Doc and the medicine show?
3. What is Billy’s role in the medicine show?
4. How does Doc trick people into buying the elixir?
5. What is the climax, or the moment of greatest tension in the story?
6. How might the story have ended if Doc did not have a heart attack?
7. Do you think Doc is a good person? Support your opinion.

SKILL FOCUS: Write Journal Entries

INSTRUCT: Have students choose two key events from the story and write diary entries about them from Billy’s point of view. Share the following criteria for the entries:

- | |
|--|
| 1. For each entry, include details about setting. |
| 2. Write in the first-person and describe events as if you were Billy. |
| 3. Use language that represents the time in which Billy lived. |
| 4. Include background details about weather, other people, food, etc. |
| 5. Include Billy’s feelings, thoughts, and reactions. |
| 6. Write at least one paragraph for each entry. |

ASSESS: Have students highlight details in the story to use in their entries and then write the entries. Invite students to share their work.

EXTEND

Speaking and Listening: Perform a live telling of “Elixir of the Incas” using your voice and gestures to engage listeners. Choose an exciting section from the story and practice using your voice and your body and facial expressions to convey the characters and the feeling of the scene.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will write narratives to develop imagined experiences and events.
- Students will prepare for and participate in oral storytelling.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **elixir** (p. 37) a magical liquid that can cure illness or extend life
- **heckler** (p. 40) a person who interrupts a speaker or performer by shouting annoying or rude comments or questions
- **discord** (p. 42) an unpleasant combination of musical notes
- **scalawag** (p. 44) a usually young person who causes trouble