

Spider®

THEME

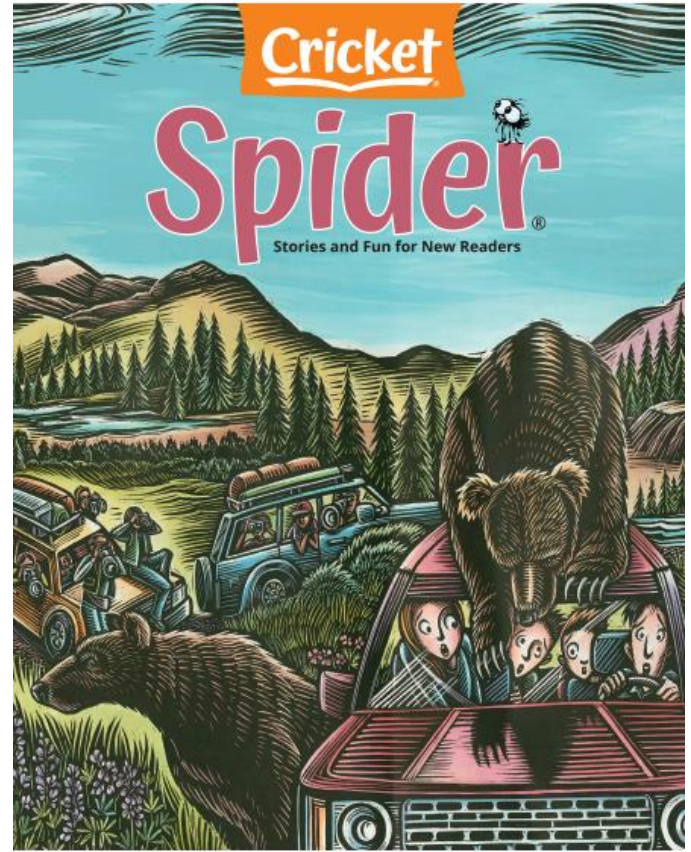
Explore city and country communities using the selections in this month's issue of *Spider*. Use the teacher guide to help you teach language arts lessons and engage students in a variety of learning activities.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What makes a community?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a poem and short story.
- Students will recognize the key elements and characteristics of literary texts.
- Students will analyze how two texts address similar themes or topics.
- Students will read closely to make inferences from a text.
- Students will determine themes of a text.
- Students will write informative texts.
- Students will conduct short research projects.
- Students will write arguments.



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

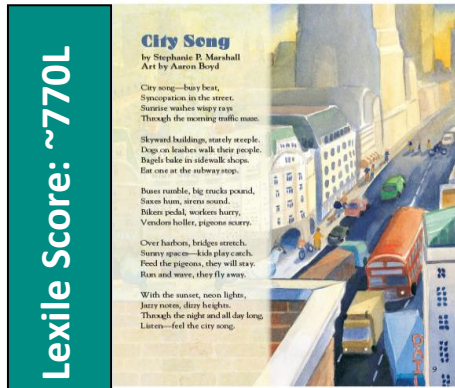
- **City Song / Way Up in a High-Rise**
Poems, ~770L
- **Free Ride**
Contemporary Realistic Fiction, ~640L
- **A Tired Tire**
Fantasy, ~540L

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City Song

p. 9, Poem

Use this poem about city sights and sounds to give students an opportunity to look closely and compare poems.



RESOURCES

- Analyze a Poem

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a poem.
- Students will recognize the key elements and characteristics of literary texts.
- Students will analyze how two texts address similar themes.
- Students will write informative texts.

KEY VOCABULARY

- syncopation** (p. 9) different musical rhythms played together
- stately** (p. 9) serious and formal in appearance
- vendors** (p. 9) people who sell things on the street

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a community?

Point out that a community is a place where people live together. Communities can be different sizes and can exist in different places. Some communities are in cities, and some are in the country or in the suburbs. Some communities are busy and full of activity while some communities are quieter. Have students turn and talk to identify and describe the community where they live. Invite students to share ideas. Then tell students they are going to read a poem about a city community.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Then display the cloze sentences below and have students use the vocabulary words to complete them.

- At the farmers market, many _____ were selling fresh corn.
- The jazz musicians' _____ gave the tune an unusual rhythm.
- The White House in Washington, D.C. is a _____ building.

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 and ideas stood out to you in the poem?
- What is this poem about?
- What ideas about a city do you find in the poem?
- What do you notice about the way the poem looks on the page? How many stanzas does it have?
- What do you like about this poem? What do you dislike?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze a Poem

INSTRUCT: Explain that poems contain special elements that create sounds, rhythms, images, and ideas for readers to explore. Distribute the *Analyze a Poem* worksheet to students and go over the poetry elements in the table at the top of the page. Have students work in pairs or small groups to complete the first question on the page. Invite students to share their responses. Then have groups/pairs continue to discuss and answer the questions on the worksheet.

ASSESS: Have students turn to the poem on page 16, "Way Up in a High-Rise." Read the poem aloud and have students take turns reading the poem to a partner. Use some or all of the questions from the Read & Discuss section to discuss the poem. Then have groups/pairs compare this poem to "City Song" and discuss similarities and differences they notice in terms of how the poems look and sound and how they describe cities.

EXTEND

Social Studies: Discuss community with students and the different communities they are part of (family, school, neighborhood). Have students identify their five favorite places in their neighborhood or city community and create a brochure with words and images that show each place and describe what makes it special.

Analyze a Poem

Element	Definition	Example
Alliteration	The repeating of consonant sounds at the beginning of words	The s ea is s wirling over the s ilvery s and.
Rhyme	The repetition of the same syllable sound at the ends of words	"First, I saw the white bear, then I saw the black . Then, I saw the camel with a hump upon his back ."
Rhythm	A regular, repeated pattern of beats	"I <u>breathed</u> a <u>song</u> <u>into</u> the <u>air</u> , It <u>fell</u> to <u>earth</u> , I <u>knew</u> not <u>where</u> "
Onomatopoeia	Words that describe and imitate sounds	"Oh, the bells, bells, bells! How they clang , and clash , and roar !"
Imagery	Description that appeals to the reader's five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, touch	Leaves crackled under my boots as I walked through the woods.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

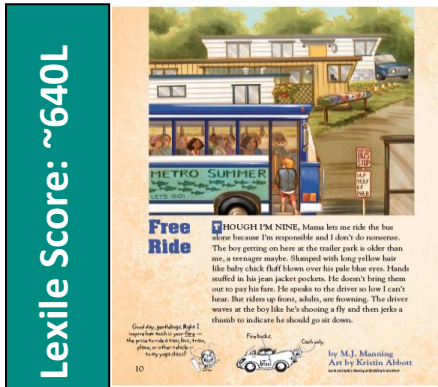
1. Highlight the beginning sounds that are repeated in the first line of the poem. Highlight another line that contains alliteration. Why do you think the poet used alliteration?
2. Highlight part of the poem and describe the picture it helps you imagine. What words helped create this mental picture? On the back of this page, draw what you imagine.
3. Using two colors of highlighters, highlight the pairs of lines that rhyme in the first stanza. Is this rhyme pattern repeated throughout the poem?
4. Read the poem aloud while a partner claps the rhythm. Is the rhythm lively or slow? How does it connect to the ideas about the city in the poem?
5. Sometimes poems have a setting. At what time of day does this poem begin? When does it end?
6. Highlight two examples of onomatopoeia. What sounds do the words imitate?
7. Highlight an example of imagery that appeals to one of your senses. Which sense does it appeal to?
8. Highlight an image that shows the busyness of city life. What does the image describe?
9. What is the "city song" in the title?

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Free Ride

pp. 10–15, Contemporary
Realistic Fiction

Give students practice in making inferences about characters using this story about riders on a bus.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will read closely to make inferences from a text.
- Students will conduct short research projects.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **scowl** (p. 11) to look at someone or something in a way that shows anger or disapproval
- **glares** (p. 12) looks directly at someone in an angry way
- **astonishingly** (p. 14) surprisingly

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a community?

Explain to students that transportation is an important factor in a community. Point out that some communities have public transportation, such as buses, trains, and subways. Discuss why public transportation is important and the types of public transportation that are available in your area. Invite students to share their experiences riding public transportation. Then tell students to notice how the bus is an important part of “Free Ride.”

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Then display the cloze sentences below and have students use the vocabulary words to complete them.

1. Uncle Pete’s cucumber milkshakes were _____ delicious.
2. My cat is not friendly and seems to _____ at me when I try to pet her.
3. My neighbor _____ at people who pick his flowers without asking.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Where does most of the story take place?
2. How would you describe Bree, the narrator of the story?
3. Bree describes a woman’s voice as “sharp as a needle.” What do you think she means? Find two other descriptions of voices in the story.
4. Compare how Bree and the other riders talk about “trailer park people.”
5. Why do you think the people on the bus are angry?
6. How does the bus driver change in the story?

SKILL FOCUS: Making Character Inferences

INSTRUCT: Explain that authors don’t always tell readers exactly what a character is thinking and feeling. Instead, authors give clues that help readers make inferences, or logical guesses, about a character’s thoughts and feelings. Read aloud the first paragraph of the story. Then discuss how the teenage boy and the bus driver feel. Have students turn and talk to a partner to identify the details they used to infer the feelings. Discuss students’ ideas.

ASSESS: Have students write each of these words on separate sticky notes: *kind*, *disapproving*, *embarrassed*, *empathetic*. Make sure students understand the words. Then have them reread the story, highlight places where characters show these feelings, and add the sticky notes to the pages. Discuss students’ ideas as a class.

EXTEND

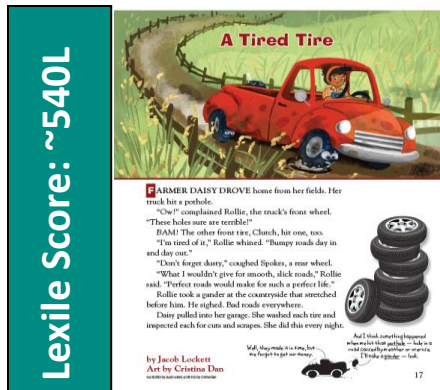
Social Studies: Point out that scientists are looking for alternatives to fossil fuel use in transportation. Have students conduct research to learn about current forms of sustainable transportation in their region and new and emerging forms of sustainable transportation. Have students create short presentations to share with the class.

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A Tired Tire

pp. 17–22, Fantasy

Give students practice in identifying theme using this story about a truck tire from the country that wants to live in the city.



RESOURCES

- Analyzing a Theme

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will determine themes of a text.
- Students will write arguments.

KEY VOCABULARY

- shindig** (p. 18) a big party
- hunker down** (p. 19) stay in a place for a period of time

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes a community?

On the board, write the expression “The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.” Discuss with students why someone who lives in a city might think living in the country would be better. Then discuss why someone who lives in the country might think city living would be better. Tell students to look for an example of “the grass is always greener” thinking in this story.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Point out that these words are examples of dialect, or words and expressions spoken by people living in a particular region. Have students work in pairs to write sentences using these words. Then invite pairs to share their sentences. Remind students to look for these words, and other examples of dialect, as they read the story.

READ & DISCUSS

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

- What are the names of the four tires?
- The story includes many humorous expressions that use car words and tire words. For example, “*inflating with curiosity*” and “*revving with something to say*.” Highlight other examples in the story.
- Why does Rollie want to move to the city?
- How does Farmer Daisy react when Rollie decides to stay in the city? Did her reaction surprise you?
- Why does Rollie change his mind about living in the city?

SKILL FOCUS: Identify Theme

INSTRUCT: Explain that the theme of a story is a message about life that an author wants to share with readers. Give examples of common literary themes: “don’t give up on your dreams,” “actions speak louder than words.” Point out that themes often sound like good advice. Continue by explaining that themes are not always stated but can be identified by thinking about information and events in a story, including characters’ problems and how they react to them, important decisions characters make, ways characters change and grow, lessons characters learn. Discuss possible themes of popular books and movies.

ASSESS: Distribute *Analyzing a Theme* worksheet and have students work in pairs to complete it. After discussing the story, read a short version of “The Country Mouse and the City Mouse” to students and have them compare it to “A Tired Tire.” Do the stories share a theme?

EXTEND

Social Studies: Have students work in pairs to discuss three things they love about their school or town community and three things they would like to improve. Have groups choose one idea and write an editorial that explains the need for the change and supports the argument with evidence.

Analyzing a Theme

Fill in the chart with information from “A Tired Tire.” Then use the information to help you determine a theme of this story.

1. What challenges does Rollie face?
2. How does Rollie react to these challenges?
3. What important decisions does Rollie make?
4. In what ways does Rollie grow or change?
5. What lessons does Rollie learn?

The theme of this story is

On the back of this sheet, list the details from the story that help show this theme.