

# Cricket

## THEME

This issue of Cricket Magazine explores the importance of not judging something or someone before you know the truth. Use the mini-lessons to ignite discussions and to help readers to see other perspectives.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

Why is it important to reserve judgment?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fictional story.
- Students will learn how change can occur with determination.
- Students will identify a cause-and-effect relationship.
- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will develop connections to the text.
- Students will analyze a sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- Students will learn that things may not always be what they seem.
- Students will summarize key supporting details and ideas from the text.
- Students will create narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.



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.

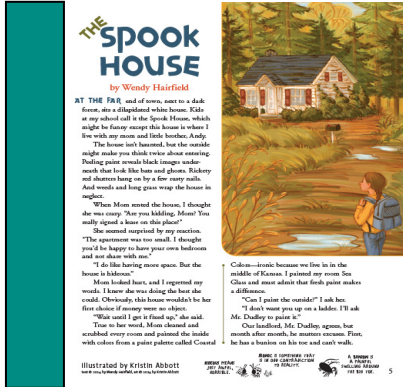
## SELECTIONS

- **The Spook House**  
Realistic Fiction
- **There Goes the Neighborhood**  
Fantasy Fiction
- **The Tortoise Bride**  
Fantasy Fiction

## The Spook House

pp. 5–10, Realistic Fiction

This fictional story recounts a house's transformation from scary to beautiful. It discusses how judgments can be altered when change occurs.



## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why is it important to reserve judgment?

This story tells a tale of a house known as the “Spook House.” Show students pictures of scary houses on the internet and discuss what makes them scary. Create a word web on the board, placing the words *Spook House* in the center. Give the class five minutes to add words and ideas to the web, reading each contribution aloud. Discuss how descriptive words can change your thoughts on how we judge things before knowing what is inside.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the definitions on the board. Tell students they will create sentences using the words provided. Then, to ensure an understanding, have students play charades by acting out their definitions to see if they understood the terms. Ask for volunteers.

## READ & DISCUSS

Ask students to read the article independently and then answer the following questions as a class.

1. Why was the house known as the Spook House?
2. What did the landlord (Mr. Dudley) say when Mom would call to fix the house?
3. Who painted the Spook House and how was he paid for doing it?
4. Why do you think Justine never invited Sarah back to her house for a visit? Who became her new friend?
5. What was the Spook House called after it changed?

## SKILL FOCUS: Cause and Effect

**INSTRUCT:** Tell students that this story shows cause-and-effect. In the beginning of the story, the house was known as the Spook House but by the end, it was known as a Coastal Villa. Discuss what cause-and-effect is. When something occurs, it can cause something else to occur. This can include examples such as: a chair breaks because you jump on it; you got a bad grade because you didn't study; you ate spoiled food and now you have a tummy ache, etc. Distribute the *House of Spook* graphic organizer to show how the Spook House was changed into the Coastal Villa. Ask students to color the two houses to show the Spook House versus the Coastal Villa and write sentences as to what the cause-and-effect was in the story of Spook House.

**ASSESS:** Invite volunteers to share their pictures and sentences. Collect and assess.

## EXTEND

**Writing:** Ask students to think of other cause-and-effect relationships. Draw a T-chart on the board and label the columns CAUSE and EFFECT. Ask them to create a list of four things that happened (causes) and the effects that resulted. Have volunteers share their experiences.

## RESOURCES

Cause-and-Effect: House of Spook

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fictional story.
- Students will learn how change can occur with determination.
- Students will identify a cause-and-effect relationship.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **dilapidated (p. 5)** fallen into partial ruin, especially through neglect or misuse
- **excuses (pp. 5–6)** expressions of regret for failure to do something
- **humiliating (p. 8)** extremely destructive to one's self-respect or dignity
- **amazing (p. 9)** causing astonishment, great wonder, or surprise

## House of Spook

**Cause-and-Effect:** Color the two pictures of the houses. Don't forget to make the Spook House scary. The first one should show the Spook House and the second one should show the Coastal Villa. Then, write a few sentences that describe the cause-and-effect relationship of how the Spook House changed to the Coastal Villa. Be sure to include the event that helped change the Spook House to the Coastal Villa.

Spook House



Coastal Villa



Why did the Spook House change to the Coastal Villa? What was the event that helped make this change?

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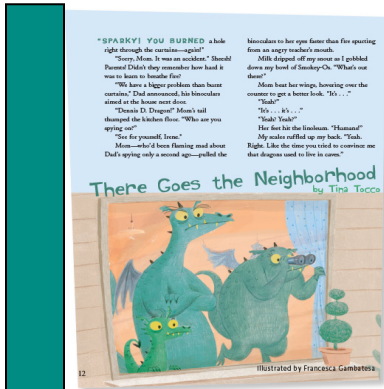
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## There Goes the Neighborhood

pp. 12–15, Fantasy Fiction

This tale depicts the fantastical story of dragons living in a suburban neighborhood who view humans as nasty creatures. However, once a little dragon encounters a human, he realizes that they're not so different.



## RESOURCES

Sequence of Events: Here Comes the Humans

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- The students will develop connections to the text.
- Students will analyze a sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **binoculars** (p. 12) a handheld optical instrument composed of two telescopes and a focusing device that provides enlarged images of distant objects
- **outnumbered** (p. 13) exceeded in number
- **moats** (p. 15) deep, wide trenches around a fortified place (such as a castle) that are usually filled with water

<http://www.cricketmedia.com/teacher-guides>

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why is it important to reserve judgment?

Ask students why it is important to not judge. Have them think of a time where they thought one thing about a person or a situation and then were surprised by a different outcome. What made the outcome different than what you thought? Share these experiences with the class and discuss why we shouldn't judge. Remind students that we are all different and it is important to accept differences.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Discuss the different definitions with the class. Ask the students if the sentences below have used the words correctly. If not, ask them to create a sentence using the key word properly. When finished, ask them to illustrate each key vocabulary word.

- All of the castles on the hill were surrounded by moats.
- When Kate wanted to analyze the worm up close, she used binoculars.
- The large team was outnumbered by a smaller team.

## READ & DISCUSS

Read the article as a class and discuss the following questions. Again, remind students why it is important not to judge.

1. Who was Dad spying on? Why?
2. What other creatures lived on the dragon's street?
3. Who did Fire Breather (Sparky) meet? What did Sparky expect when they met?
4. Was G.G.'s family what the dragons expected? What changed their opinions of them?
5. How did the story end?

## SKILL FOCUS: Sequencing Events

**INSTRUCT:** Sequencing of events helps students understand and relate to the beginning, middle, and ending of a story. Use *Here Comes the Humans* graphic organizer to put the events from the story in order. Then, have students write an alternate ending based on the dragon's judgments in the beginning. Students may work in pairs.

**ASSESS:** After the students are finished, collect and assess the worksheets.

## EXTEND

**Writing:** This article discusses how one can judge before knowing the facts. To teach students that we shouldn't judge, ask them to write their name on a piece of paper and exchange it with their other classmates. Have everyone write a nice note about the student who is listed on the paper. Exchange and repeat. Allow an allotted amount of time to do this. Then, have students share their classmates' responses.

## Here Comes the Humans

**Sequence of Events** Refer to the text to put the events from the story in the correct order. In Part II, write an alternate ending based on the tone in the beginning of the story.

**PART 1:** Label the statements below 1–5, putting the events in the proper order.

\_\_\_\_\_ “Dennis D. Dragon! Who are you spying on?”

\_\_\_\_\_ “Oh! Sorry! I didn’t mean to sneak up on you.” She shoved her face next to mine. “What’s your name?”

\_\_\_\_\_ “Hate dragons? No way! In Chinese culture dragons are friendly and brave. They protect us.”

\_\_\_\_\_ “Humans? On Blaze Street? I couldn’t imagine it.”

\_\_\_\_\_ “We’re having a barbecue tonight! Bring your parents! My family would love to meet you!”



**PART II:** The story ended with an invitation to a barbecue. Write an alternate ending based on the characters’ judgments from the beginning of the story.

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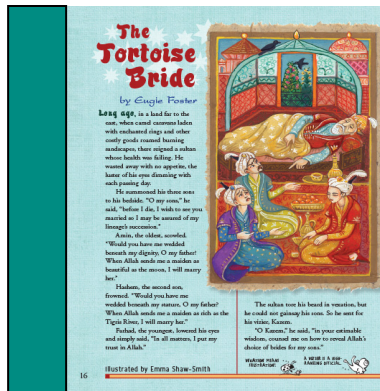
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## The Tortoise Bride

pp. 16-22, Fantasy Fiction

The Tortoise Bride paints a picture of a young prince who by chance becomes engaged to a tortoise. The story reminds us that things are not always as they appear. This is a prime example of beauty from within.



## RESOURCES

Elements of a Story: To Be a Tortoise or Not to Be

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn that things may not always be what they seem.
- Students will summarize key supporting details and ideas from the text.
- Students will create narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **lineage** (p. 16) a group of individuals tracing descent from a common ancestor
- **rickety** (p. 17) lacking stability or firmness
- **seclusion** (p. 19) a state of being removed or separate; isolation

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why is it important to reserve judgment?

In this story, the sultan is distraught about having a tortoise marry one of his sons. Give the class one truth and two lies about yourself. Then take a vote on what they think is the truth and the lies. Ask how they came to that conclusion. Finally, tell the students the truth and discuss how judgments can fail us. If there is time, allow other students to share their one truth and two lies, then discuss.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Discuss the different definitions and have students fill in the blank using the correct vocabulary term. Discuss the answers. (seclusion, lineage, rickety)

1. The dog will be placed in \_\_\_\_ until it is checked for rabies.
2. Her \_\_\_\_ can be traced back to the British Royal family.
3. The old \_\_\_\_ bus broke down, making the class late for school.

## READ & DISCUSS

Read the article as a class and discuss the following questions. Again, remind students why things may not always be what they seem.

1. What did Kazem have the king's sons do in order to find a bride?
2. How many times did the third son shoot an arrow? Why did the sultan think it was a mistake?
3. What happened when Farhad tried to shoot the arrow a second time?
4. What did the brides have to do for the ceremonial feast? What would happen if the sultan didn't like what they presented?
5. What did the tortoise bride ask the sultan for as a wedding gift?

## SKILL FOCUS: Elements of a Story

**INSTRUCT:** Identifying the elements of a story helps the reader understand the main idea and locate key information and supporting details. Describe each component on the *Elements of a Story* graphic organizer and have the students work in groups of four to fill it in. Let students know that this task will help them in creating their skit when they role-play in the following EXTEND activity.

**ASSESS:** Help students identify each element as they are working on their organizer. Discuss the topics of each prior to them preparing for their skits.

## EXTEND

**Role-Playing:** Put students in groups of eight and then ask them to use the story of the tortoise bride to follow or to recreate their own skit of the story. They can use the *Elements of a Story* organizer as a guide. Give the students an allotted amount of time to meet and create. Ask the groups to perform their skits in front of the class. Remind students to be kind and not to judge.

## To Be a Tortoise or Not to Be

**Elements of a Story:** The elements of a story help us identify key facts within the text. Note the key components listed below. Fill in the elements on the chart and then use this information to help with your skits.

