

# Spider®

## THEME

Many life lessons are learned in this issue of Spider. Characters learn lessons about being honest and how to not give up. Use the stories in this teacher guide to reinforce language arts skills and engage students in a variety of learning activities.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

What does it mean to be honest?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a folktale.
- Students will determine central ideas or themes.
- Students will write narratives to reflect real or imagined experiences.
- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will recognize the genre, key elements, and characteristics of literary texts.
- Students will analyze places, including their physical, cultural, and environmental characteristics.



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.

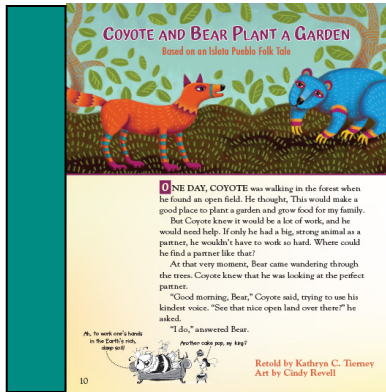
## SELECTIONS

- **Coyote and Bear Plant a Garden**  
Folktale
- **Planet Pumpkin**  
Contemporary Realistic Fiction
- **Shi's Special Seed**  
Folktale

## Coyote and Bear Plant a Garden

pp. 10–14, Folktale

This folktale tells the story of a coyote’s attempt to outsmart his friend, Bear. Use this story to teach students how to identify theme.



## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** What does it mean to be honest?

Ask students if playing deceiving tricks on others is something we should do. Draw a T-chart on the board. On one side write *honest*, on the other side write *dishonest*. Have students copy the chart. Put students in pairs and have them work together to come up with examples from books or movies to complete the columns of the chart. Then, tell students that they will read a folktale about a tricky Coyote that learns his lesson.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

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

1. We must \_\_\_\_\_ the apples before they spoil.
2. He hurt his back after he \_\_\_\_\_ the garden for three hours.
3. Full sun encourages a full, \_\_\_\_\_ plant and the best blooms.
4. You can \_\_\_\_\_ the tomatoes on a sunny windowsill.

## RESOURCES

Theme Worksheet

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a folktale.
- Students will determine central ideas or themes.
- Students will write narratives to reflect real-life or imagined experiences.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **ripen (p. 11)** to become ripe and ready to eat
- **hoed (p. 11)** worked on something, like a garden, with a hoe
- **bushy (p. 12)** very thick and full
- **harvest (p. 12)** to gather a crop

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Why did Coyote choose Bear as a partner?
2. Why did Coyote use his “kindest voice” when speaking to Bear about the land?
3. Explain the trick that Coyote played on Bear.
4. Why did Bear volunteer to bring the seeds?
5. Did Coyote’s new plan work?
6. How does the reader know that Bear isn’t falling for Coyote’s tricks?

## SKILL FOCUS: Identify Theme

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that the theme of a story is a message or lesson about life that the author wants the readers to understand. Tell students different examples of common themes found in literature—“treat others how you want to be treated,” and “never give up.” Explain that themes are not always stated directly and must be identified by analyzing the elements in the story: problems the characters face, how characters change, lessons learned. Distribute the *Theme* worksheet. Have students work in pairs to complete it. Discuss the worksheet, as a class, if necessary.

**ASSESS:** Observe and collect the worksheets.

## EXTEND

**Social Emotional Learning:** Have students think about a time when they were not honest, or others were not honest with them. Instruct them to write about this situation and why honesty is important. Remind them of this story and how Coyote thought he was being clever.

**Theme** Fill in the chart with information from “Coyote and Bear Plant a Garden.” Use the information to help you determine the theme of this story.

1. What challenge do Coyote and Bear face with the first crop?

2. How did Coyote and Bear respond to this challenge?

3. What did Coyote and Bear decide to do after this challenge?

4. How did Coyote respond to the new idea?

5. What lesson did Coyote learn?

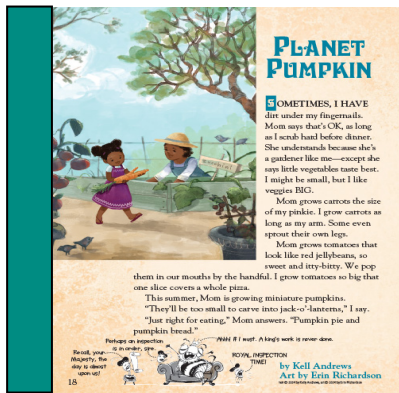
**Identify Theme** The theme of a story may be a lesson that a character learns. What do you think is the theme of “Coyote and Bear Plant a Garden”?

## Planet Pumpkin

pp. 18–22, Contemporary

### Realistic Fiction

To help students identify story sequences, use this short story about a girl who works very hard to achieve a goal only to discover she must hatch a new plan.



## RESOURCES

Story Sequence

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact.
- Students will write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **miniature (p. 18)** very small
- **mulch (p. 19)** a covering of bark, composting, or straw spread around a plant to enrich the soil and inhibit weed growth
- **compost (p. 19)** a decayed mix of plants that is used to improve the soil in a garden
- **shriveled (p. 19)** became dry and wrinkled from heat

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** What does it mean to be honest?

Have the students brainstorm about a time that they had to prepare for a contest or competition. What did they do to prepare? Then have students imagine the possibility of their planning and hard work being ruined. How did they feel when this happened? Would they have changed anything? Invite students to share their thoughts. Then, let students know that this story is about a girl who aims to grow a giant pumpkin for a contest, but things don't go exactly as planned.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud, along with the definitions. Assign each word a number 1–4. Write numbers 1–4 on individual pieces of paper. Pick a number and have students create sentences using the vocabulary word associated with that number. Repeat this process until all words have been reviewed.

## READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Why does Mom grow miniature pumpkins?
2. Why does the main character want to grow the biggest pumpkin ever?
3. Why does she remove the new blossoms?
4. What happened to Planet Pumpkin?
5. What does the main character do when Planet Pumpkin crashes to the ground?

## SKILL FOCUS: Story Sequence

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that most stories contain the basic elements and a series of events that tell the reader about a problem and how it is solved. Explain that when a writer uses *first*, *next*, and *finally* when discussing story sequences helps the reader to identify the order of events. Ask the students about the problem faced in the story. Distribute the *Story Sequence* worksheet. Have students work in pairs to complete it.

**ASSESS:** Reread the first section of the story on page 18. Who are the characters mentioned? Next, ask the students what happens following the first section. Have students retell "Planet Pumpkin" using the elements from the worksheet, being sure to reveal events in the proper order. Encourage them to use the sequence adverbs listed above.

## EXTEND

**Writing:** Ask students what they thought about the story and if it could have a different ending. What if there were no other vegetables to take the place of Planet Pumpkin? What could have happened? Have students write an alternative ending for the story.

**Story Sequence** Fill in the organizer with what happens in “Planet Pumpkin.”

<b>Characters</b>	<b>Setting</b>
<b>Problem?</b>	
<b>What do the characters do to solve problem or conflict?</b>	
<b>How was the problem solved?</b>	

