

Spider®

THEME

In this magazine, readers will learn, through fun (and sometimes spooky) stories, poems, and articles, about the tools authors and illustrators use to build an understanding for their readers. This issue includes examples of tools such as descriptive language, exaggeration, pictures, and much more.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do authors and illustrators use various tools to help readers better understand their subjects?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fantasy story.
- Students will learn how word choice shapes meaning or tone.
- Students will write letters.
- Students will read and analyze a folktale.
- Students will recognize the genre, key elements, and characteristics of literary texts.
- Students will compare texts.
- Students will read and analyze a tall tale.
- Students will recognize the key elements and characteristics of literary texts.
- Students will write narratives.



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.

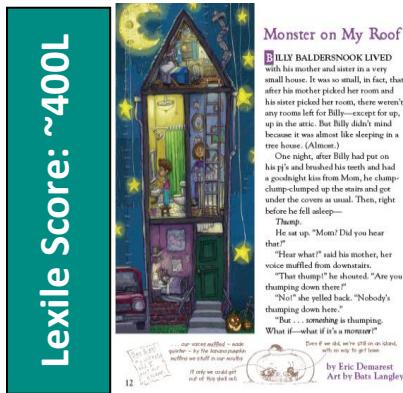
SELECTIONS

- **Monster on my Roof**
Fantasy, ~400L
- **Song Dingbo and the Hungry Ghost**
Chinese Folktale, ~390L
- **The Gummiwolf**
Tall Tale, ~220L

Monster on My Roof

pp. 12–17, Fantasy

Billy, a boy, is on his bed, trying to get to sleep. Glug, a monster, is on the roof. Each spends a night of fear as he hears the other's scary noises. Use this story to teach about elements of fantasy stories.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do authors and illustrators use various tools to help readers better understand their subjects?

Study the picture of Billy's house on page 12. Locate Billy's bedroom in the attic. Explain that Billy is going to be spooked by noises in the night. Read what his mother says to him on 13. "Even if there was a monster, I'm sure he was as scared of you as you were of him." Discuss what she means by this.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

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

1. He understood her feelings and _____ her that everything would be ok.
2. They heard _____ voices across the hall.
3. We used a _____ to see into the dark closet.
4. The paintings were _____ for cracks and mistakes.

READ & DISCUSS

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

1. Why was Billy's room in the attic?
2. What would you recommend Billy do when he heard the first *thump*?
3. Why does Billy think the noise is a monster?
4. What do you think the spotlight is that the monster is waving around?
5. What do Billy and Glug say and do that show they are similar?

SKILL FOCUS: Identify Onomatopoeia

INSTRUCT: Ask students what sound thunder makes, what sound a dog makes, and what sound a horn makes. Explain that words that mimic sounds are called onomatopoeia. Read aloud the first two pages of the story and ask students if they notice any examples of onomatopoeia. Write the words on the board: *thump*, *clump*. Read different parts of the story and ask students to find the examples of onomatopoeia. Ask what is making this noise and the words to the list. Have students think of other onomatopoeia words, add these words to the list.

ASSESS: Distribute the *Sound Word Story* worksheet to students. Have students choose three examples of onomatopoeia from the list and use them to write a story that includes the sounds and shows what made the sounds. Students can draw a picture to show what made the sound. If needed, use a sentence frame to help students write about the sound: _____ went the _____ when _____.

EXTEND

Writing: Pretend you think there is a monster in your room. Write it a letter trying to convince it that it would be happier living somewhere else.

RESOURCES

Sound Word Story

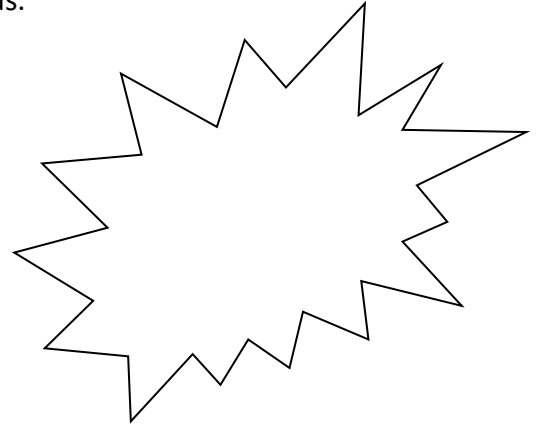
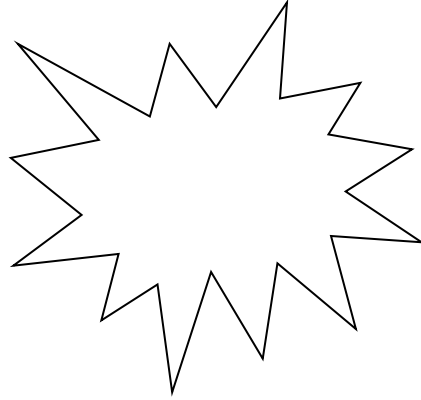
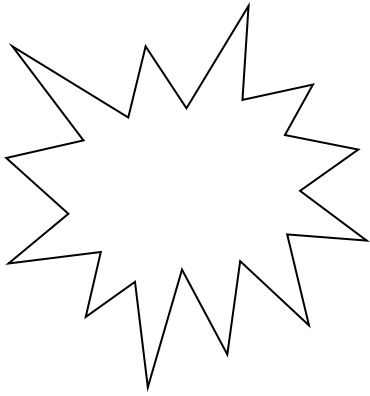
OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fantasy story.
- Students will learn how word choice shapes meaning or tone.
- Students will write letters.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **muffled (p. 12)** made quieter by using a covering of some sort
- **reassured (p. 13)** made to feel less afraid
- **inspected (p. 13)** looked at closely
- **spotlight (p. 15)** light that shines a narrow strong beam of light on a small area

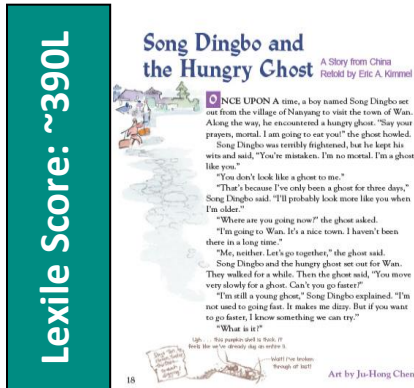
Sound Word Story: Choose three onomatopoeia words. Write the words in the speech bubbles. Use these words to write a story making sure to show what made the sounds.



Song Dingbo and the Hungry Ghost

pp. 18–21, Chinese Folktale

Folktales come from different cultures and use rich details to convey their message. Use this story about a boy that is threatened by a hungry ghost to teach about folktales.



RESOURCES

Analyze Folktales

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a folktale.
- Students will recognize the genre, key elements, and characteristics of literary texts.
- Students will compare texts.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **encountered** (p. 18) came upon face to face
- **frightened** (p. 18) filled with fear
- **mortal** (p. 18) a human being
- **bargain** (p. 21) something bought or offered for sale at a good price

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do authors and illustrators use various tools to help readers better understand their subjects?

Tell the students they will be reading a Chinese folktale, “Song Dingbo and the Hungry Ghost.” Ask them to predict what happens in the tale, based on the title and what they know about folktales. Finally, tell students to notice the conflict, or tricky situation, in this folktale and what they learn about the main character from the way she responds to the situation.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Then have students work in pairs to write sentences that use the words correctly. Have partners share their sentences with other pairs. Then remind 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. What reasons does Song Dingbo give to convince the ghost not to eat him?
2. Why did the ghost decide to turn himself into a horse?
3. How would you describe Song Dingbo’s attitude throughout this story?
4. How do the illustrations support Song Dingbo’s attitude?

SKILL FOCUS: Elements of Folktales

INSTRUCT: Explain that folktales are simple stories that have been passed down by word of mouth from one generation to the next. Characters in folktales may be humans or animals. Invite students to name familiar folktales. Then discuss what students know about the characters, setting, and events in folktales and note responses on the board. Next, distribute a copy of the *Analyze Folktales* worksheet to each student. Go over the different elements and ask students to think of examples from familiar folktales.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to complete the *Analyze Folktales* worksheet using details from “Song Dingbo and the Hungry Ghost.”

EXTEND

Compare Stories: Have students read another folktale from China and compare the characters, setting, and events to those in “Song Dingbo and the Hungry Ghost.” Encourage students to create a comic strip or cartoon version of the folktale they choose to read and share it with the class.

Analyze Folktales

Fill in the chart below with details from “Song Dingbo and the Hungry Ghost.”

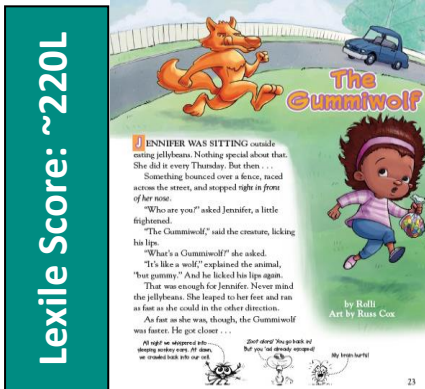
1. Animal characters have human qualities.	
2. Characters are clearly good or bad.	
3. The setting is briefly described.	
4. The story is full of action.	
5. Things happen in threes.	
6. The story teaches a lesson about the wrong and right ways to behave.	

Spider® Teacher Guide: October 2024

The Gummiwolf

pp. 23–26, Tall Tale

An author can combine realism and exaggeration to craft an engaging story. Use this story about a girl that is frightened when she is approached by the Gummiwolf to teach students about tall tales.



RESOURCES

Tall Tale Elements

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a tall tale.
- Students will recognize the key elements and characteristics of literary texts.
- Students will write narratives.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **bumper** (p. 23) the heavy bar on the front and back of a vehicle
- **conductor** (p. 24) the person on a train or bus who collects payment
- **caboose** (p. 24) a car, usually at the rear of a train, for the train crew and railroad workers
- **relief** (p. 25) the feeling of not having the pain or worry that you had before

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do authors and illustrators use various tools to help readers better understand their subjects?

Discuss the characteristics of a tall tale (realism, outrageous exaggeration). Have the students turn to a partner and give an example of an ordinary task, such as running to the store, and turn it into an outrageous exaggeration. Ask some students to share with the class.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and definitions and read them aloud. Have students work in groups of three to write sentences using these words, with each group member taking on 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. When Jennifer gets in the taxi, she shouts, “Step on it!” What does she mean by this?
2. How does the author use exaggeration to help tell this story? Give examples from the text.
3. How do the illustrations help you understand the story?
4. What is Jennifer’s perception of the Gummiwolf at the beginning of the story?
5. How does Jennifer’s perception change by the end of the story?

SKILL FOCUS: Elements of a Tall Tale

INSTRUCT: Tell students that “The Gummiwolf” is an example of a tall tale. Explain that a tall tale is a story that uses humor and exaggeration to tell about impossible events. Display the *Tall Tale Elements* worksheet and go over the different elements. Pause to ask students to identify examples of the different elements.

ASSESS: Distribute a copy of the *Tall Tale Elements* worksheet to each student. Have students work in pairs to find examples of the tall tale elements in “The Gummiwolf.”

EXTEND

Writing: Put students in groups of four. Give them this task: Reread the section of the story from when Jennifer gets in the taxi until she leaves the taxi. Pretend a police officer stops the taxi for speeding. Write a 4-person dialogue between the officer, the taxi driver, Jennifer, and the Gummiwolf. How will they explain their behavior?

Tall Tale Elements

Find at least one example of each tall tale element in “The Gummiwolf.”

The author uses exaggeration.	The plot is impossible.
The main character is larger than life.	Problems are solved in funny ways.