

Cricket

THEME

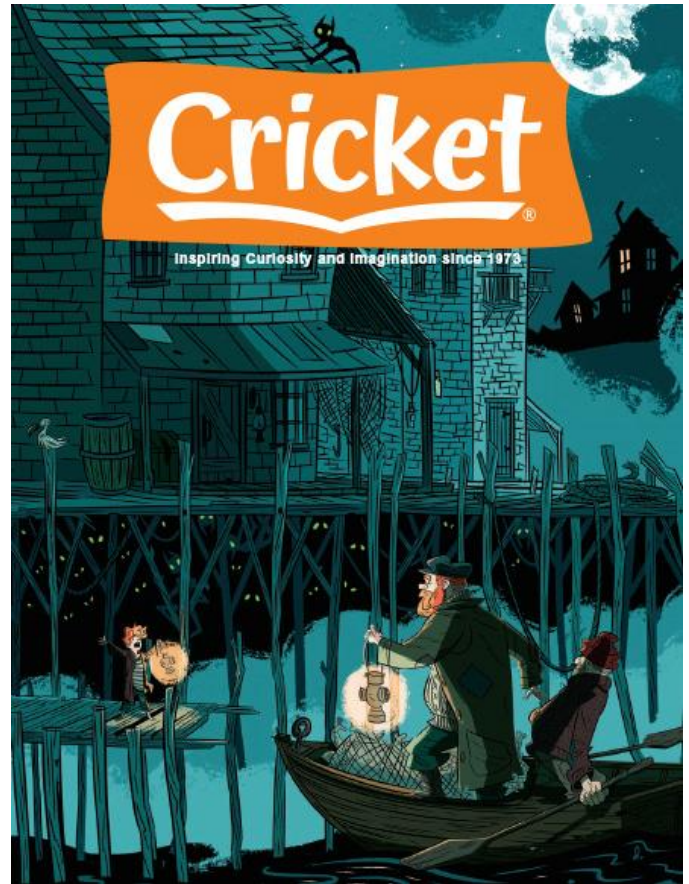
This issue of Cricket Magazine provides short stories and activities that show how relationships are beneficial to, not only physically but emotionally. Use these imaginative and creative lessons to think about how a real or mystical pet may help you.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

Why are relationships important?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fictional story.
- Students will summarize key supporting details and ideas for a story plot map.
- Students will conduct a short research project to determine what farm goods different countries produce.
- Students will read and analyze an informational text.
- Students will use descriptive adjectives to compare and contrast a cat purring with a piano playing.
- Students will conduct a short research project on animals purring.
- Students will read and analyze a fantasy fictional story.
- Students will plot out parts of a story to help them create a short skit.
- Students will use the text to write a narrative and draw them finding an imaginary animal.



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.

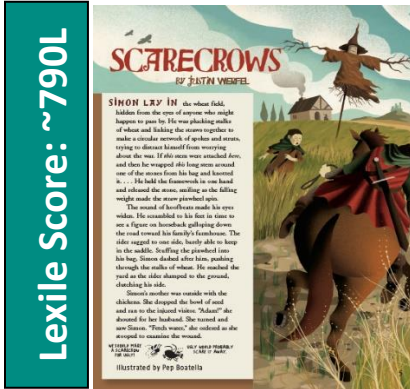
SELECTIONS

- **Scarecrows**
Fiction, ~790L
- **A Purr-fect Way to Build Up Bones**
Informational Text, ~990L
- **Animal Magnet**
Fantasy Fiction, ~610L

Scarecrows

pp. 5–11, Fiction

This is a creative story about how a brave young boy came up with a clever idea to use scarecrows to protect his village from an enemy army.



RESOURCES

Simon Saves the Day: Story Plot Map

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fictional story.
- Students will summarize key supporting details and ideas for a story plot map.
- Students will conduct a short research project to determine what farm goods different countries produce.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **scarecrow (p. 5)** an object made to look like a human figure, set up to frighten birds away from crops
- **harvest (p. 6)** the act of gathering a crop
- **guardsman (p. 8)** a member of a military group

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why are relationships important?

This story begins with a boy harvesting his farm. When you think of the word *harvest*, what season do you think of? What colors or animals come to mind? What things are put on a farm to scare birds away? Ask students to think about it and draw a picture of the upcoming season. Explain that relationships are important, including relationships with friends, family, school, animals, etc. Now, tell students that this story is about a young farmer and how his relationship with his village helped him think of a brave idea.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display vocabulary and definitions. Ask students to create their own sentences using these terms, then share with the class.

READ & DISCUSS

Read the article as a class and ask students to partner up to discuss the following questions. When finished, discuss responses as a class.

1. Who came to Simon's family's farm by horseback?
2. How close was Hugh's army when the rider appeared at Simon's farm?
3. What major event in the story caused fear or uncertainty with the people of the castle?
4. What was Simon's idea about how to protect the castle?
5. What happened with Hugh's army after Lord Henry used Simon's idea?

SKILL FOCUS: Story Plot Map

INSTRUCT: With a partner, think about the events that occurred in the story. How did the story start? What rising event took place? What was the climax of the story? What was the falling action that helped save the castle? How did the story end? Use the graphic organizer, *Simon Saves the Day*, to fill in the details from the story.

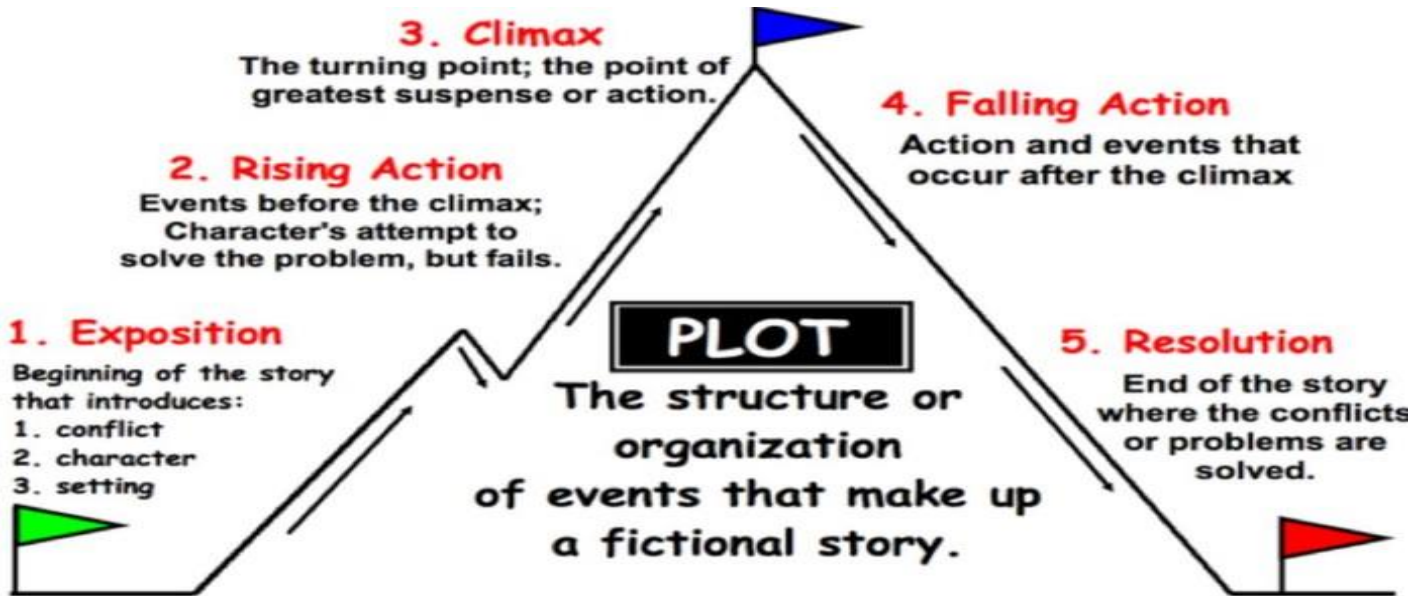
ASSESS: Circulate around the classroom to help students. When finished, discuss the results as a class and collect for an assessment.

EXTEND

Geography/Research: Did you know that China, the United States, Brazil, and India produce the most agriculture? Have students select a country, then locate that country on a map. Then have them research what agricultural products are harvested from that country. Finally, have students think about what agricultural products they eat and where it is harvested from. Ask if they ever considered the work that went into getting that food to the stores, and how can we protect these farms that feed us.

Simon Saves the Day

Story Plot Map: Use the graph to write a sentence that describes each part of the plot of “Scarecrows.”



1. Exposition: _____

2. Rising Action: _____

3. Climax: _____

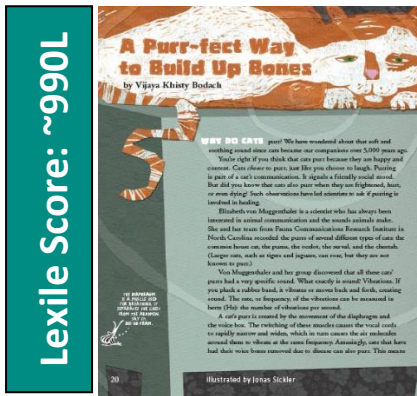
4. Falling Action: _____

5. Resolution: _____

A Purr-fect Way to Build Up Bones

pp. 20–22, Informational Text

This article explores how and why cats purr. Scientists have found that the vibration of a cat's purr may be a type of natural healing mechanism! Maybe this purr-fect purr is why cats have nine lives!



RESOURCES

A Purr-fect Purr: Descriptive Adjectives

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze an informational text.
- Students will use descriptive adjectives to compare and contrast a cat purring with a piano playing.
- Students will conduct a short research project on animals purring.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **frequency (p. 20)** the rate of vibrations per second
- **overtones (p. 21)** higher tones produced at the same time as a basic tone
- **mechanism (p. 22)** a process, technique, or system for achieving a result

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why are relationships important?

Have students imagine a real or imaginary pet cat. Have them think of its name, how it behaves, and ask if it purrs. Then, ask them to describe the feelings they have while being with this cat. Explain that a cat makes a sound known as a *purr*. This is a calming sound that cats make when they are happy and/or hurt, scared, or dying. Have students close their eyes while you play a short audio clip of a cat's purr. After the clip, ask them to open their eyes and describe how they felt. Remind them to think of their relationship with their imaginary or real pet cat while reading this article.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary and definitions. Ask students to complete the sentences below using the vocabulary terms.

1. The car needed a special _____ to work properly.
2. High-pitched noises vibrate at a high _____.
3. The first strike of the bell was a deep note, though as it rang out we heard high _____.

READ & DISCUSS

Read the article and ask students to partner up to discuss the following questions. Have students share their answers when finished.

1. Why do cats purr?
2. Which larger cats are not known to purr?
3. People can hear frequencies from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz. What frequencies can a cat hear?
4. How is the sound of a piano similar to the sound of a cat's purr?
5. What other benefits did scientists find with purring?

SKILL FOCUS: Compare and Contrast

INSTRUCT: After reading, replay the audio clip of a cat purring. Then play an audio clip of a piano. Using the *A Purr-fect Purr* graphic organizer, ask students to write down descriptive adjectives and then use those words to write similarities and differences between the cat's purr and the sound of the piano.

ASSESS: Monitor the class and help when needed. Collect when finished.

EXTEND

Research: Ask students if they know of any other animals that can purr. Ask them to use the internet to research animals, besides cats, that purr. Have them choose one of those animals and draw and write a list of facts about that animal.

A Purr-fect Purr

Descriptive Adjectives: Listen to the sound of a cat purring. Then, listen to the sound of a piano playing. What words can you use to describe the sounds? How do the sounds make you feel? Use at least three descriptive adjectives to describe each sound and feeling.

	What words describe the sound?	How does the sound make you feel?
Cats purring		
Piano playing		

Using some of your descriptive adjectives, write a short paragraph that compares and contrasts the sound of a cat purring with the sound of a piano playing. Include how the sounds make you feel. Use the sentence frames to help you.

The sound of a cat's purr is _____

_____.

It makes me feel _____

_____.

The sound of a piano can be _____

_____.

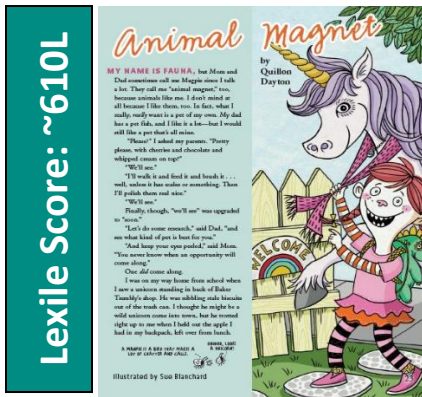
When I hear a piano, I feel _____

_____.

Animal Magnet

pp. 23–29, Fantasy Fiction

This fun story is about a girl who really wants a pet. Animals are attracted to her but unfortunately these imaginary creatures are attached to another owner. Explore how Magpie finally gets her pet.



RESOURCES

Finding a Dragon:
Creating a Skit

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fantasy fictional story.
- Students will plot out parts of a story to help them create a short skit.
- Students will use the text to write a narrative and draw them finding an imaginary animal.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **opportunity (p. 23)** a good chance for advancement or progress
- **manticore (p. 24)** a legendary animal with the head of a man, the body of a lion, and the tail of a dragon or scorpion
- **shortcut (p. 25)** a route more direct than the one ordinarily taken
- **permit (p. 29)** a document that grants permission to do something

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: Why are relationships important?

Ask students: *What is an animal magnet?* What kind of relationship does it mean? Then, ask if anything has ever been drawn to them, or if they consider themselves a “magnet” for anything. Was this relationship real or imaginary? Have students share their fun relationship stories and what happened. Then, explain that they will read a tale about a girl who thinks unique imaginary animals are drawn to her and how she finally got a relationship with dragon as a friend.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary and definitions. Discuss what each term is and ask the class to state example sentences using those terms. Then, have students get creative making their own sentences with the vocabulary.

READ & DISCUSS

Read the article and discuss the following questions.

1. Why is Magpie considered an animal magnet?
2. What animals does Magpie find?
3. When Magpie found a dragon, what steps did she take to try to find the owner?
4. What was needed by the mayor of the town for Magpie to keep the dragon?
5. How long did Magpie wait before her parents let her keep the dragon?

SKILL FOCUS: Creating a Skit

INSTRUCT: While reading “Animal Magnet,” remind students why this is fantasy fiction. Have students get in groups. Tell students that they are going to create their own fantasy story about finding a dragon. Have them use the *Finding a Dragon* organizer to help them detail the setting, characters, and plot of their story. Give them an allotted amount of time to complete the organizer. As time allows, ask volunteers to act out their skit.

ASSESS: Circulate the class and help with ideas to help students plot their skits. Assess their creativity and delivery when they act out their skits.

EXTEND

Art: Ask students what imaginary pets would be exciting and fun to have. Discuss these pets as a class. Ask students to list one imaginary pet on a piece of paper, then fold the paper and put it into a bowl. Each student will pick a paper from the bowl and draw that imaginary pet. Then, ask students to write a short narrative about finding that pet. When finished, ask volunteers to share their stories and drawings.

Finding a Dragon

Creating a Skit: Complete this organizer to guide you in creating a fun skit! Remember to get into character!

