

# Cricket

## THEME

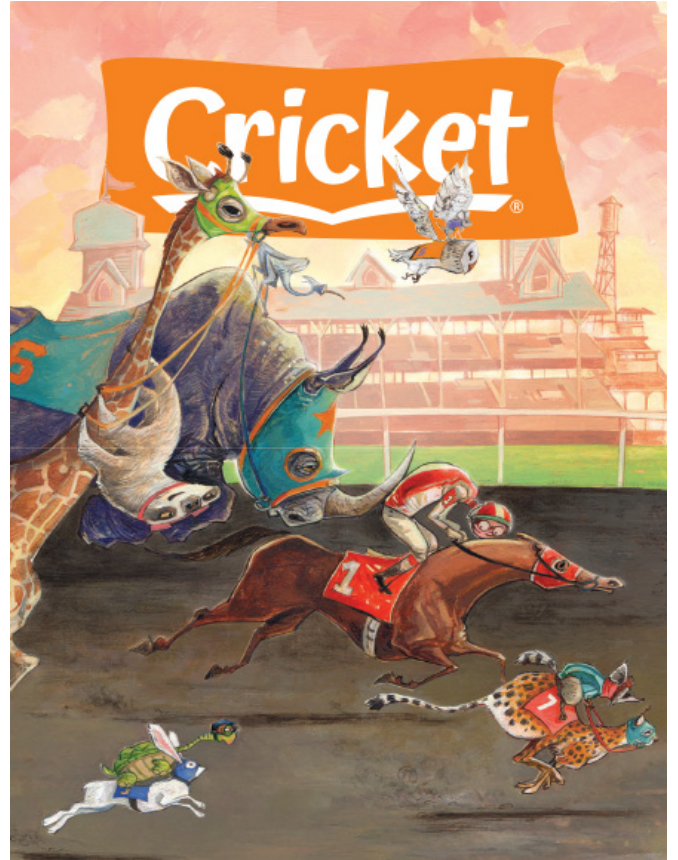
This issue of Cricket Magazine provides short stories and activities that make you think about different ways that environments affect characters.

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do environments shape character traits and actions?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will explain a character's responses to setting.
- Students will analyze the conflict in a text.
- Students will explain character traits.
- Students will identify setting details in a text.
- Students will analyze the impacts of environments in a text.
- Students will choose an environment and create a new animal adapted to live in it.
- Students will read and analyze a fantasy story.
- Students will explain how a fantasy setting affects characters.
- Students will analyze the setting of a story.



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.

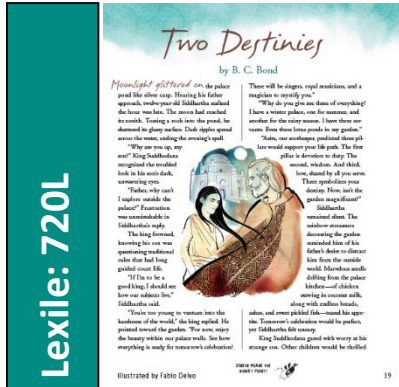
## SELECTIONS

- **Two Destinies**  
Historical Fiction, 720L
- **The Wild Ponies of Assateague Island**  
Nonfiction, 1090L
- **The Last Kirin, part 1**  
Fantasy Fiction, 780L

## Two Destinies

pp. 19–52, Historical Fiction

This is a historical fiction story about a prince who has everything, but wants to understand the common people.



## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do environments shape character traits and actions?

Think about the area where you live. What are stores, schools, and homes like? Are there many trees around or tightly packed buildings? Ask the class to share details about where they live and how this affects people’s thoughts and actions. For example, people might think and act differently if they can walk to a grocery store nearby rather than take a long car ride. Now, tell students that the story “Two Destinies” is about a prince whose comfortable life in the palace disturbs him.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary along with definitions. Ask students to fill in the blanks with the correct terms.

1. The \_\_\_ of the mountain was thousands of feet above sea level.
2. During the \_\_\_, the people plowed all day long.
3. The movie star often gave \_\_\_ because she had many resources to share.

## RESOURCES

Choosing a Path

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will explain a character’s responses to setting.
- Students will analyze the conflict in a text.
- Students will explain character traits.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **zenith (p. 19)** the highest point
- **plowing ceremony (p. 20)** a celebration in many Asian countries that marks the start of the rice growing season
- **alms (p. 21)** something given to help the poor, like food or money

## READ & DISCUSS

Read the story independently and then discuss the questions as a class.

1. What is the palace like?
2. Why is Siddhartha dissatisfied with living in the palace?
3. Why does Siddhartha’s father want him to stay in the palace?
4. Which of the two destinies do you think Siddhartha chooses?

## SKILL FOCUS: Setting Shapes Character

**INSTRUCT:** Remind students that this story is about a prince who has a privileged palace life, but is drawn to the poor and suffering. Ask them if they have ever felt their path in life to be different from the expectations placed on them. Did the people around them understand their feelings and choices? While students are thinking about your question, distribute the *Choosing a Path* organizer. They may review the story for key details.

**ASSESS:** Discuss responses and review different ways students have dealt with navigating their path in life. Have the students consider this to help them with the Extend activity.

## EXTEND

**Debate** Have students conduct a class-wide debate about whether Siddhartha should choose to be a king or a sage. As a king, he could have everything he wanted and the power to help the poor. As a sage, he could live among the poor to truly understand them. Assign students to both sides and allow time for groups to come up with strong reasons. Then have students present their arguments.

## Choosing a Path

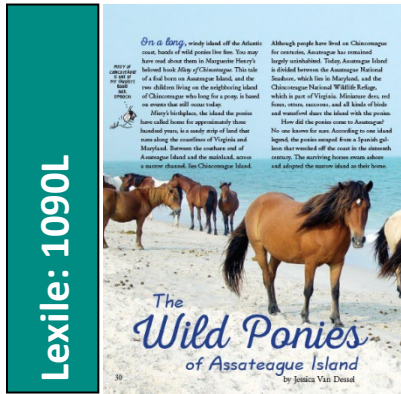
**Setting Shapes Character:** Read each setting detail from the story. Then, explain how it shaped Siddhartha's character traits and decisions.

Setting Detail	How does this shape the path Siddhartha chooses?
<p>Siddhartha has been given three of everything, including palaces, servants, and ponds. His father doesn't let him see the outside world.</p>	
<p>The palace is throwing a party the next day, but the village is having a plowing ceremony.</p>	
<p>Siddhartha's horse, Kanthaka, is in a stable inside of the palace, but he's sick. Siddhartha spends the night inside of the stable.</p>	

## The Wild Ponies of Assateague Island

pp. 30–35, Nonfiction

This article is about a group of ponies who have unique traits because of their environment. This passage demonstrates the effect that environments can have on people and animals.



### OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify setting details in a text.
- Students will analyze the impacts of environments in a text.
- Students will choose an environment and create a new animal adapted to live in it.

### KEY VOCABULARY

- **feral** (p. 31) in a wild state
- **withers** (p. 32) the highest part of a horse's back, near its neck
- **piebald** (p. 32) an animal with patches of different colors on their coats

### ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do environments shape character traits and actions?

Tell students that the title of this text is “The Wild Ponies of Assateague Island” and it explains unique traits that a certain group of ponies has because of their environment. Then, play a game where students draw or write down animal traits that can be affected by the environment (for example, having thick fur for living in the cold). Give students two minutes to write or draw their ideas. Once the game is finished, let them know that this text explains unique traits that Assateague ponies have because of their environment.

### INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary and definitions. Discuss as a class. Then, ask students to create their own sentences using the terms. When finished, have them switch with their neighbors to see if the terms were used accurately.

### READ & DISCUSS

Read the text independently and then discuss the questions as a class.

1. How did the ponies get to the island?
2. What makes them different from other horses?
3. What are the ponies' lives like?
4. What do people do to help the ponies?

### SKILL FOCUS: Text Features

**INSTRUCT:** Text features such as photos and captions can help readers better understand details of a text. Tell students that the text explains the special traits the Assateague ponies have, but the photos help readers visualize them. Ask students to look at the photos and captions, and write the text details that these features help explain.

**ASSESS:** Discuss responses as a class. Have students consider these unique traits to further help them with the Extend activity.

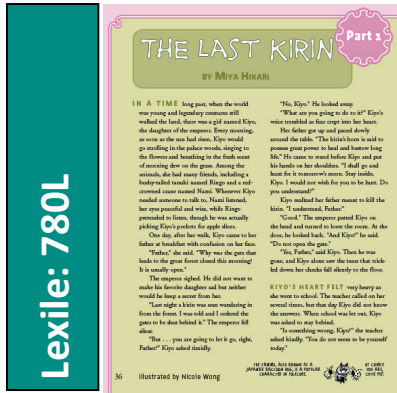
### EXTEND

**Biology** Have students draw a new animal whose traits are unique because of its environment. They should choose one type of environment, such as an ocean or a desert, and imagine what kind of animal could live there if no people or predators were around. When complete, have students share their drawings with their classmates. If time permits, ask for volunteers to share their drawings with the class.

## The Last Kirin, part 1

pp. 36–43, Fantasy

Teach students how to analyze a setting using this fantasy story about a Japanese princess who helps a legendary creature.



## RESOURCES

Fantasy World Elements

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fantasy story.
- Students will explain how a fantasy setting affects characters.
- Students will analyze the setting of a story.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **raucous (p. 37)** noisy and rowdy
- **translucent (p. 38)** allowing some light to pass through
- **refracted (p. 38)** light rays scatter and sparkle, like when they pass through a diamond
- **fervently (p. 39)** enthusiastically
- **transgression (p. 41)** an offense or error

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do environments shape character traits and actions?

Discuss the different setting elements in stories that shape characters and events. Explain that fantasy stories have interesting magical elements that impact a character's personality and choices. Ask students to describe stories they've read where a magical element played a big role in the character's story. Then, tell them to think about real-life examples of settings affecting people's actions. What is the connection between the places we live and what we do every day? Explain to students that "The Last Kirin, part 1" is about a princess who helps a magical creature.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and ask volunteers to explain the meanings of familiar words. Acknowledge correct meanings and then read the definitions aloud. Next, have students work in pairs to use each word in a sentence. Invite pairs to share their sentences.

## READ & DISCUSS

After students have read the text, use the questions below to prompt discussion:

1. What is a Kirin?
2. Why is Kiyo worried about the Kirin?
3. How does Kiyo help the Kirin?
4. What magic does Kiyo experience because of the Kirin?
5. How do the magical elements of the story impact Kiyo's personality and choices?

## SKILL FOCUS: Setting Details

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that setting details often tell us the genre of a story. Understanding these details helps readers answer the question, "What kind of story is this?" Work with students to find and describe fantasy world elements in "The Last Kirin, part 1." Distribute the Fantasy World organizer. Ask volunteers to name two or three setting details from the story. Then, ask them to identify which details show that this is a fantasy story.

**ASSESS:** Have students complete the rest of the organizer while working in pairs. Have them discuss the role the setting plays in story events. Finally, invite pairs to share their responses.

## EXTEND

**Science** In the story, the Kirin is the last of its kind. Have students conduct research to learn about an endangered animal. Encourage students to use words and visuals to present information to the class.

## Fantasy World Elements

**Setting Details:** Use this graphic organizer to identify setting details in the story. Circle or star the details that tell you it's a fantasy story.

