

# Ladybug®

## THEME

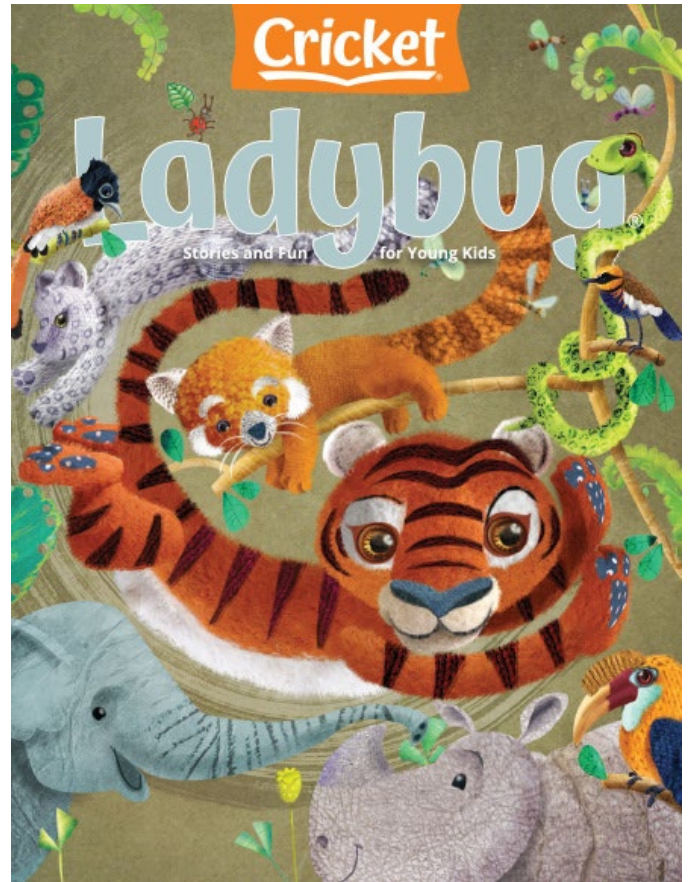
Spring is in the air in this issue of Ladybug. Characters are thinking about animals coming out of hibernation, enjoying picnics, and playing on the playground. Use the lessons and activities in this guide to help children explore, experiment, and enjoy all things “spring.”

## CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do you know it’s spring?

## TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze short stories.
- Students will integrate and evaluate content.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information
- Students will analyze the structure of texts.
- Students will plan and carry out investigations.
- Students will analyze how individuals develop over the course of a text.



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

- **Max and Kate**  
Realistic Fiction, 580L
- **The Picnic**  
Fantasy, 410L
- **Xander and the Slide**  
Realistic Fiction, 460L

# Ladybug® Teacher Guide: March/April 2025

## Max and Kate

pp. 3–7, Realistic Fiction

Max, Kate, and Charlie are thinking about animals in springtime. Use this story to help students find information about characters, settings, and events in illustrations.

Lexile: 580L



## RESOURCES

- Illustrations Worksheet

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will integrate and evaluate content.
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **frog (p. 5)** a small jumping animal that spends most of its time in water and has webbed feet
- **insect (p. 5)** a small animal that has six legs; a bug
- **bear (p. 5)** a big animal with thick hair and sharp claws

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do you know it's spring?

Discuss some familiar signs of spring, such as warmer weather, buds on trees, early flowers, and busy birds and bees. Ask the children if they have noticed any signs of spring where they live, or if it still looks like winter. Explain that spring is also the time when some animals wake up after sleeping all winter. Discuss hibernation and invite a child to share what they know. Then explain that this story tells about spring.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Invite the children to share what they know about these words. Then read the definitions aloud. Have them find pictures of the words in the story. Remind the children to look for these words as they read the story.

## READ & DISCUSS

Have students listen carefully as you read the story aloud. Then reread the story, pausing to discuss these questions:

1. Why are animals waking up?
2. How does Max feel?
3. What kind of book is Kate looking at?
4. Who is growling in the story?
5. How is Charlie like a bear? How is he different?

## SKILL FOCUS: Identify Story Details in Illustrations

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that illustrations help readers learn about characters, settings, and events in a story. Next, tell the children that you are going to discuss an illustration in the story. Display page 3 and read the text aloud. Have the children turn to a partner and talk about what the illustration shows. Remind them to do the following:

- Look at characters' expressions to learn how they feel.
- Notice what characters are doing.
- Look for clues that show the place, time, and season.

Distribute the *Illustrations* worksheet. Discuss what the children noticed in the illustration and note it in the organizer.

**ASSESS:** Read aloud and display pages 6–7. Have children work in pairs to discuss the illustration and add details to their worksheets. Circulate and offer help as necessary. When the children are finished, gather to discuss responses.

## EXTEND

**Science/Art** Create a “Who wakes up in spring?” display wall. Assist children in learning about animals that hibernate. Find books or information online. Then tell them to draw one of these animals and use these sentences to write about it: I am a \_\_\_\_\_. I wake up in spring. Post words and pictures on the wall.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Illustrations Worksheet**

<b>Characters</b>	<b>Setting</b>	<b>Events</b>

## The Picnic

pp. 15–18, Fantasy

Teach students to recognize a sequence of events by reading this playful story about people and animals on a picnic.

Lexile: 410L



**The Picnic**  
by Carrie Finkson  
Art by  
Lark Gray

"Let's have a picnic lunch," said Mom.  
"Okay," said Jaden.  
Jaden packed a sandwich, chips, an apple, and a cookie into his lunch box.  
He rode his bike to the park. Mom walked behind him.  
Jaden ate most of his sandwich, most of his chips, and most of the apple. He put the cookie into his pocket for later.  
"I ate my whole lunch!" said Jaden.  
"Good," said Mom.  
Jaden ran to the swings. Mom followed.

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze the structure of texts.
- Students will plan and carry out investigations.

### KEY VOCABULARY

- **run (p. 15)** to move fast using your legs
- **scoot (p. 16)** to leave quickly
- **crawl (p. 17)** to move with your body close to the ground

### ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do you know it's spring?

Ask children if they've ever had spring fever. Explain that spring fever is the feeling you get at the end of winter when you're excited for spring to arrive so that you can go outside and play. Ask them to raise their hands if they think they have spring fever. Invite them to share outdoor activities they are looking forward to. Then ask what lunch foods they would pack for a spring picnic. Point out the story title.

### INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display words and definitions and read them aloud. Have students mimic these actions. Discuss how the movements are similar and different. Remind them to look and listen for these words as you read.

### READ & DISCUSS

Have students listen carefully as you read aloud. Then reread, pausing to discuss these questions:

1. What food does Jaden eat at the picnic?
2. What does Little Squirrel eat at the picnic?
3. What do the little ants eat at the picnic?
4. How do the ants and the squirrels get their food?
5. What foods do the characters save for later?

### SKILL FOCUS: Recognize Sequence

**INSTRUCT:** Prepare for the lesson by displaying the sequence words with arrows below. Also prepare these five sentence strips: *Jaden packed lunch. Jaden rode his bike. Jaden ate lunch. Jaden saved his cookie. Jaden ran to the swings.*

first ➡ second ➡ next ➡ then ➡ last

Read aloud the first page of "The Picnic." Then place the sentence strips under the sequence words, with two events out of order. Read the strips aloud and ask: *Did I place the events in the correct order?* Allow children to suggest corrections. Reread the page if necessary. Then correct the placement of the sentence strips.

**ASSESS:** Divide the class into groups of five. Assign each group member a different event listed on the board and have them draw a picture of it. Then, have groups lay their pictures out in the correct sequence and write the correct sequence word on each picture. Walk around the room to observe and offer help.

### EXTEND

**Science** Help students use library books to learn what ants eat. Then prepare a picnic lunch for ants by gathering a few foods that will attract them. Place the foods outside. Bring the children back later to see if ants are eating the lunch they have prepared. Discuss their observations.

## Xander and the Slide

pp. 24-30, Realistic Fiction

Use this story about a boy who is afraid to go down a slide to help students think about how characters change.

Lexile: 460L



## RESOURCES

- *Character Changes* Worksheet

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will analyze how individuals develop over the course of a text.
- Students will plan and carry out investigations.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **tap (p. 27)** touch something gently
- **energy (p. 27)** strength and power
- **dizzy (p. 28)** a feeling of spinning around

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How do you know it's spring?

If possible, take the children out to outside to look for signs of spring. Have them record in words or pictures what they notice. Back inside, invite the children to share what they recorded. If signs of spring are still scarce, have children predict what signs of spring will arrive soon. Then tell them this story takes place on a playground.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words. Ask volunteers to explain familiar words. Then read the definitions aloud. Next, display these sentence frames and have the children suggest words to fill in the blanks.

- Eat a good breakfast so you will have lots of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Do you feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you are way up high?
- I will \_\_\_\_\_ your shoulder when it's your turn.

## READ & DISCUSS

Have students listen carefully as you read the story aloud. Then reread the story, pausing to discuss these questions:

1. How does Xander feel about the slide?
2. Who does Xander pretend to be?
3. How is Alex different from Xander?
4. Why did Xander pretend to be someone else?
5. What do you think will happen when Xander is on the playground the next day?

## SKILL FOCUS: Character Change

**INSTRUCT:** Tell children you are going to reread the story, and they will listen and think about how Xander changes. Display a two-column chart with the headings "Beginning" and "End." Above the chart, write "How Xander Changes." Begin reading aloud. Pause regularly to have the children identify Xander's traits and feelings. Record these in the chart. Next, have the children talk with a partner about how Xander changed. Invite volunteers to share their ideas and explain their thinking.

**ASSESS:** Distribute the *Character Changes* worksheet. Have them work independently to complete the activity and then share their work with a partner. Invite volunteers to share their pictures and sentences with the class.

## EXTEND

**Science** Help children investigate what happens when different objects go down a slide. Collect at least five objects (tennis ball, ping pong ball, wooden peg, square block, wheel, etc.). Before each object goes down the slide, have the children make and explain predictions about what will happen when each object goes down the slide. Discuss results.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Character Change Worksheet**

**Draw pictures of Xander. Then write sentences.**

<b>Xander at the beginning</b>	<b>Xander at the end</b>
<b>In the beginning, Xander was...</b>	<b>At the end, Xander was...</b>