



GRADE

3

New York State ELA

English Language Arts

A photograph of a tall, black and white lighthouse on a grassy coastal dune. In the background, there is a large, multi-story building with a red roof. The foreground is filled with tall, golden-brown grasses. A yellow circular graphic is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

**Sample
Lesson**

Continental Press

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Story Structure

Standard 2.R.12; 2.W.4

Every story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. When you read a story, you understand it better if you recognize these parts.

- In the **beginning** of a story, you meet the main characters and find out what the conflict is going to be about.
- The **middle** of the story has most of the action. It leads up to the high point, or **climax** of the story.
- The **end** of the story starts with the climax. This is where you find out how the conflict turns out. You know by then if the story will have a happy ending or a sad one.

Even “The Three Little Pigs” has these three parts. The beginning of this story introduces the characters. Two of the three pigs want to play instead of building good homes. The middle of the story deals with the wolf’s challenge of trying to blow down the pigs’ homes. At the end of the story comes the climax. The wolf cannot blow down the brick house. The two lazy pigs learn a lesson.



BEGINNING



MIDDLE



END

Guided Practice

Read this story and answer the questions that follow.

The Fox and the Grapes

an Aesop's fable

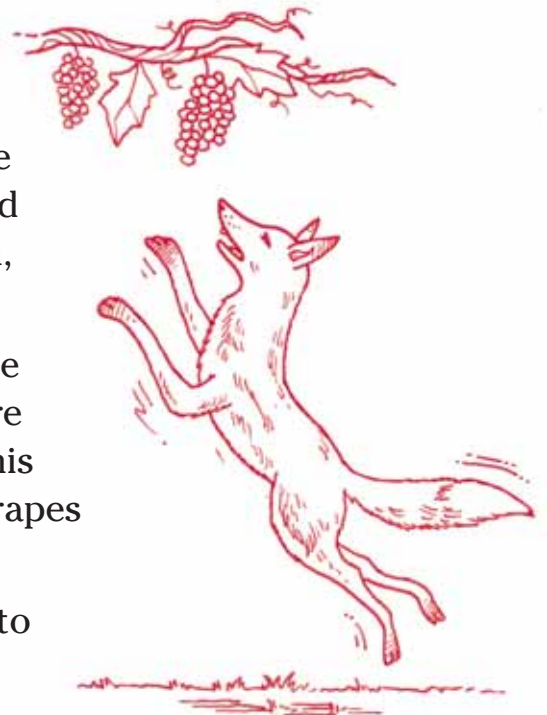
One summer day, a little fox decided to go for a walk. He had been napping all morning, so he needed to get out and stretch his legs. After a few hours, the sun got higher in the sky. As the air felt hotter and hotter, Fox began to pant and sweat. His mouth was as dry as cotton. "I am so thirsty!" Fox thought to himself, smacking his lips. "I wonder where I might find a stream to get some water."

Fox searched and searched, but he couldn't find a drop of water to drink anywhere! Then suddenly, Fox realized he was walking through a vineyard surrounded by plump, ripe grapes. He looked up at bunches of grapes hanging on a vine high over his head. The grapes were big and purple, and they looked ready to burst with juice. Fox licked his lips thinking of how the sweet grape juice would taste as he bit into the fruit. "I must have some of these grapes to quench my thirst!" he said aloud.

Fox jumped high into the air and snapped his jaws, but he fell well short of the dangling vines. He was left with only hot air in his mouth. Then Fox took a running start and leaped into the air. But he still fell short. The grapes gleamed, and Fox got even thirstier. He jumped again and again, but the grapes stayed just inches from his reach.

Finally, Fox was too tired to jump anymore. The juicy grapes seemed to mock him as he stood there panting. Fox glared at the grapes, and then stuck his nose in the air. "Hmph!" he grunted. "I bet those grapes are sour anyway!" And with that, he walked away.

And what is the moral of this story? It's easy to dislike what you can't have!



The beginning of this story ends when

- A** the day becomes very hot
- B** Fox naps the morning away
- C** Fox finds himself in a vineyard
- D** Fox decides the grapes are too sour to eat

The beginning tells you that Fox was napping all day. Then Fox needs to take a walk. It's when he starts walking that he gets thirsty and finds himself in the vineyard. Choice C is the correct answer.

The climax of the story comes when

- A** Fox finally realizes he cannot reach the grapes
- B** Fox walks away with his nose in the air
- C** Fox jumps over and over again
- D** Fox decides he's very thirsty

In the middle of the story, Fox jumps over and over again trying to reach the grapes, but he never does. The climax comes when, after trying for so long, Fox finally gives up. Choice A is the correct answer.

The end of the story explains that

- A** Fox should have had a drink before he left
- B** Fox spent too much time napping in the morning
- C** the day is so hot that Fox couldn't jump anymore
- D** Fox decides the grapes must be sour and walks away

Remember, the end of the story starts with the climax. Fables usually have a short and simple ending. Here, Fox just turns up his nose and walks away. The correct answer is choice D.



Write a summary of “The Fox and the Grapes.” Be sure that you include details from the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

Now read another fable. Then answer the questions that follow.

The Ant and the Dove

an Aesop’s fable

An ant was walking a very long time on a hot day. Even the shade of the pine trees did not cool him off. Finally, he stopped to rest on a rock in the sun. In the silence, Ant thought he heard water running. “It must be a stream,” he thought. He followed the sound of the water. Finally, Ant reached a babbling brook. He drank and drank the cool water until he wasn’t thirsty anymore.

Suddenly, Ant slipped on a pebble and fell into the stream. He was quickly carried away by the rushing water. Ant did not know how to swim. No matter how hard he tried, he could not keep his head above water. He was at the point of drowning, when he was spotted.

A dove sitting on a tree overhanging the water saw Ant in trouble. “Little ant!” Dove called. “Little ant, grab hold of this leaf!” She plucked a leaf and let it fall into the stream close to Ant. Ant climbed onto the leaf and floated to safety on the bank. Ant was so grateful! He rested under the large tree to catch his breath.



Shortly afterward, a hunter came and stood under the tree. He laid a trap in the tree for Dove, who was napping in the branches. Ant watched in horror as the hunter hid in the bushes, waiting for Dove to fall into his trap. Ant did the only thing he knew how. He stung the sneaky hunter in the foot! The hunter howled in pain, which awoke Dove from her nap. Spotting the hunter, Dove flew away to safety.

What happens with Ant in the middle of the story?

- A** He is taking a walk.
- B** He stings the hunter.
- C** He drinks from the stream.
- D** Dove rescues him from the stream.

Choices A and C happen in the beginning of the story. These events lead up to the middle part, which is when Dove rescues him from the stream. Choice D is the correct answer.

What is the climax of this story?

- A** The hunter runs away.
- B** Ant stings the hunter to save Dove.
- C** Dove naps in the branches of a tree.
- D** Dove throws a leaf down to save Ant.

The climax of this story happens near the end. Dove saves Ant from the stream in the middle of the story. But the climax makes the story come full circle, teaching a lesson. Ant sees the hunter going after Dove. You wonder what he could possibly do to help. Then he stings the hunter! The correct answer is choice B.



All fables teach a lesson. What lesson does this fable teach?

Use a separate sheet of paper. Write a short story about how you helped a friend in trouble. Make sure your story has a beginning, middle, and an end.

Test Yourself

Now read this story and answer the questions that follow.

Miss Mess

Mr. Trask walked around the room, collecting students' homework from the weekend. Hector reached in his backpack and pulled out his homework. Kendra poked through her messy desk. She sighed loudly, and then poked Hector's back with her pencil. "Ouch!" Hector exclaimed. "Shh!" Kendra whispered. "Don't make Mr. Trask look over here."

"What's wrong?" Hector asked.

"I don't have my homework," Kendra said. "I forgot it."

Hector grinned. "Did you forget it or did you just not do it?"

"Of course I did it. I just forgot it. I think it's on my desk at home." She thought for a minute. "Or maybe it's on the kitchen table. I don't remember!"



Mr. Trask stopped by Kendra's desk. "Kendra, where's your homework?"

"I did it, Mr. Trask. I promise," Kendra said, feeling desperate. "I just forgot it. Can I make it up?"

"Kendra, your homework is due today. I told everyone that there were no make-ups for this assignment," Mr. Trask replied.

"May I look through my backpack again?" Kendra pleaded. "I did it. I really did. Maybe it's just lost in there." "Maybe your dog ate it," someone said. A few students laughed.

"Be quiet, kids," Mr. Trask said. "Look, Kendra, you can have a few minutes to look through your backpack. But after that, I'm going to have to give you a zero for this assignment. You have to learn to be responsible for your work."

Kendra dumped her backpack onto her desk. Everyone watched as a half-eaten apple, several markers, books, hair clips, notebooks, candy, and lots of crinkled papers appeared.

Mr. Trask finished gathering everyone's papers and came back to Kendra's desk. He looked surprised at the messy pile. "Was this all in your backpack?" he asked. "You should see the inside of her desk," Hector snickered. "It's a fire hazard!" Kendra glared.

"Did you find your homework?" Mr. Trask questioned, ignoring Hector's comment. Kendra felt awful. "No, I didn't. But I did the homework, Mr. Trask. I must have left it at home."

"Okay, how about this?" Mr. Trask offered. "You stay after school and let me help you get organized. That's probably why you forgot your homework to begin with. Let's clean out your desk and your backpack and see if we can't put a little order in your life." He smiled.



“That would be great, Mr. Trask,” Kendra sighed. “And what about the homework?”

“I’ll let you make it up after school, if you make me a deal,” Mr. Trask agreed. “But this is the only time I’m going to let you do this. Why don’t you pitch in for planning the spring festival? I know the committee could use some help, and I think this could help you learn to be more responsible.”

Kendra smiled in relief. “No problem, Mr. Trask. I’ll be there.”

- 1 The beginning of the story ends when
 - A Kendra agrees to stay after school
 - B Kendra dumps out her backpack on her desk
 - C Mr. Trask lets Kendra look for her homework
 - D Hector takes his homework out of his backpack

- 2 At the climax of the story,
 - A Kendra tells Mr. Trask she left her homework at home
 - B Kendra pokes Hector in the back with her pencil
 - C Mr. Trask asks Kendra to stay after school
 - D the students laugh at Kendra’s situation



- 3** In the middle of the story,
- A** Mr. Trask starts going around the room collecting homework
 - B** Hector asks Kendra if she actually did her homework
 - C** Kendra pokes through her messy desk
 - D** Kendra searches her backpack

4 Write two things that happen at the end of the story.

5 Use a separate sheet of paper. Write about a time when you forgot to do something. What was the outcome of your situation?

