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# What Makes a Story a Story?



## Introduction

THEME: >>> Storyteller Voices

**Stories** have paragraphs and chapters. They include descriptions of characters, setting, a problem to be solved, and events.

### Read the paragraph.

Once upon a time, there lived a little girl named Little Red Riding Hood. One day, she decided to visit her grandmother, who lived in the Deep Dark Woods. She packed a picnic basket full of her grandmother's favorite foods and got ready to leave. "Be careful," warned her mother. "The forest is a scary place. Beware of animals and other dangers." Little Red Riding Hood said she would be careful and set out on her journey. The Deep Dark Woods were deep and dark indeed. Soon, Little Red Riding Hood was hidden inside the thick trees.

Think about the parts of a story. What do these parts tell about stories? Write your answers in the boxes.

Parts of a Story	What do these parts tell you about stories?
Who is telling the story?	
Who are the characters?	
What is the setting?	
What is the problem?	

Read the first part of the story. Then answer the questions.

### The Case of the Missing Lunch

1 This was going to be an extremely difficult case—one of the toughest I had ever had, but I knew I could handle it. No case was too tough for me.

2 My name is Jimmy Davies, and I am known to be something of a super sleuth among the students at Middletown Elementary School. When my friends or neighbors find something missing or have a mystery to solve, they come to me. I know just the right questions to ask, and I know just what clues to pick up on—and I always solve my cases! When Sarah told me her lunch was missing, I knew I had to come to her aid.

3 “Jimmy!” Sarah said, “I don’t know what to do. I just cannot find my lunch. I know I had it early this morning before I left for school, but when I got to school, I set my backpack down for just a minute. I went to put my lunch in my cubby, and it was gone!”

4 I nodded my head and scribbled some notes on my small notepad. “Anyone walk to school with you?” I asked. “Anyone ask you about your lunch?”

5 “No!” Sarah said. “What am I going to do? I am going to be so hungry at lunch—plus, there is a thief in our midst!”

6 I shook my head. “I will find him, Sarah...or her. I will definitely find out who did this!”

#### Think About It



**How does the author tell this story?** The question asks you what parts the writer uses to tell the story.

Who is telling the story? \_\_\_\_\_

What paragraph tells you who the story is about?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the problem in paragraph 3?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**A CLOSER LOOK**

Events in a story usually build on one another. The actions of the characters move the story from one event to another and show how a problem is solved. Underline what happens after school.

Continue reading the story. Then answer the question.

7 I started questioning my classmates, but they all shook their heads and denied having any involvement in this lunch theft. “No,” they all said. “I would not take Sarah’s lunch!”

8 One of them even said, “No! I have leftover pizza for lunch, my favorite! Why would I take someone else’s lunch?”

9 At the end of the day, I had not found the culprit. I shared my lunch with Sarah, because I felt bad about not coming through for her. I walked her home. When we walked through her front door, I noticed something: there was a brown paper bag on the floor. It looked kind of like a bag you might take your lunch in. It was all torn up. I walked a bit farther down the hall, and I noticed a plastic baggie with some holes in it. The holes looked a bit like teeth marks. Then I saw a chewed apple core sitting on the kitchen floor.

10 Just then, Sarah’s dog, Scooter, walked in. He noticed me looking at him, and he looked guilty.

11 “Hey, Sarah,” I said. “I believe I know who took your lunch!”

What does Jimmy do in this story?

What does Jimmy do to solve the mystery?

- A He blames his classmates.
- B He asks questions.
- C He scribbles in a notebook.
- D He shares his lunch with Sarah.

**DISCUSS IT**

How do Jimmy’s actions build the story? Discuss with another student what Jimmy does and says that moves the story along.

**A CLOSER LOOK**

Circle the parts of the story that are told through dialogue. Underline the parts that are shown through the characters' actions.

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

**Chase's Wish**

by Joanne Mattern

- 1 “Dad, when can I get a puppy?” Chase asked as he walked into his father’s workshop. His father was bent over his worktable, carving a piece of wood. Chase was used to seeing his father this way. Woodcarving was Dad’s favorite hobby, and he spent a lot of his free time carving away.
- 2 “Chase, we’re too busy to get a pet,” Dad said, looking up from his work. “You’ve been asking Mom and me the same question all year, and I always tell you the same thing.”
- 3 “I would take care of a puppy,” Chase insisted. “I know everyone says that, but I really mean it.”
- 4 “No, Chase,” his father said as he started carving again. “This just isn’t a good time.”
- 5 Chase sighed and walked into the house. His mom was looking at a cookbook in the kitchen. Chase grabbed an apple from a bowl on the table and crunched into the tasty fruit. “Mom, can I have a puppy?” he asked.
- 6 “No, dear,” his mother said, flipping pages. “You’re not old enough. A puppy is a lot of work and responsibility. Your father and I don’t have the time to take care of a puppy, and you’re just not ready.”
- 7 Chase scowled and threw the apple core into the garbage. “I’ll show them,” he muttered under his breath as he left the room.
- 8 For the next few weeks, Chase worked hard. He carried in the groceries for his mother and helped her cook dinner. He swept the garage and cleaned the driveway after a storm left branches all over the yard. “Don’t worry about the mess,” he told his dad as he raked up the leaves. “I know you want to work on your carving, and I’ve got this under control.”

**9** After dinner one night, his father told Chase to stay at the table. Then he went into his workshop and came back carrying his carving. “Chase, you’ve been so helpful lately that I was able to finish this carving sooner than I expected. Take a look.”

**10** Chase leaned close. “Hey, that’s us!” he exclaimed as his fingers traced the figures of his dad, mom, and himself. “But what’s this?” In the corner of the carving, right by Chase’s side, was a puppy!

**11** “You’ve been so patient and helpful lately that we’ve decided you are responsible enough to have a pet,” his mother explained.

**12** “My friend Jack has a litter of puppies, and he promised we could choose one for ourselves,” his father continued. “What do you say we drive over to his house right now?”

**13** “Hooray!” Chase yelled, leaping up from the table. “Thank you!” He grabbed his jacket and ran outside to start the journey to his new friend.

SAMPLE



What does Chase say and do in the story? How do these actions show his personality?

- 1 What two words would best describe Chase? Use details from the story to explain your choices.

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What do Chase's mom and dad say when Chase asks for a puppy?

- 2 Why won't Chase's parents let him have a puppy?

- A They don't want a pet.
- B They already took care of a puppy.
- C They think a puppy will be too messy.
- D They think Chase will not help take care of it.

What does Chase do after he says those words?

- 3 What does Chase mean when he says, "I'll show them"?

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Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

*adapted from Cousin Charlie*

*by F. Clifton Bingham*

1 “I have a surprise for you, dears,” said mother, coming into the nursery one morning, followed by a bright-looking boy about 10 years of age. “Here is your Cousin Charlie come to spend the day with you.”

2 Dolly and May were delighted, and Mother said they might stay out all the morning. For the first hour they were very happy. There were so many new things to show Charlie, but he was one of those restless boys who gets tired of everything very quickly.

3 “What shall we do next?” he kept saying. They tried hunting for eggs in the barn, but he soon called that “slow.”

4 “Let’s go and pick blackberries in the upper field,” said little May.

5 So they started off and had only picked a very little while when Charlie suddenly asked, “Whose orchard is that just across the next field?”



6 “It’s Farmer Giles’s,” said Dolly.

7 “Let’s climb over and get some apples,” was his next idea.

8 Dolly and May opened their eyes very wide. “That would be stealing,” they cried, both together.

9 “Nonsense,” said Charlie. “That’s just like girls. They are always afraid to do anything. I mean to get a pocketful, so you can wait till I come back.”

10 They waited and waited such a long time, but he never came, so they went slowly home. It was nearly tea-time when nurse came and said, “Farmer Giles has brought Cousin Charlie back.” And a very miserable-looking boy he was.

11 When he had filled his pockets and meant to come down, he saw Rover, the savage farm dog, waiting for him below. He had to stay in the tree, and might have had to remain all night, only the farmer happened to ride by and heard the dog barking.

12 Dolly and May were very sorry for him, and their mother did not scold him as she meant to do, because, she said, “the fright had been punishment enough.”

### 1 Part A

Is Charlie a good playmate? Why, or why not?

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### Part B

Which detail from the story best supports the answer to Part A?

- A Charlie quickly gets tired of activities.
- B The girls are delighted to stay out all morning with Charlie.
- C The girls have lots of things to show Charlie.
- D Charlie teases the girls when he wants to steal apples.

2 Why does Charlie want to take Farmer Giles's apples?

- A He thinks it would be fun.
- B He is not afraid of the dog.
- C He wants to get the girls in trouble.
- D He wants to get away from the girls.

3 Who is telling the story?

- A May
- B Charlie
- C a narrator
- D the nurse

4 What shows this is a story and not a play?

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