HOW A CHARACTER RESPONDS TO EVENTS AND CHALLENGES
RL.2.3

CONTENTS

TEACHER NOTES
An introduction to the lessons and a brief discussion of the research used to develop the instructional resources included in the lesson set

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INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR LESSONS 1–3
Detailed walkthroughs of each lesson

STUDENT ACTIVITY
An activity that gives students an opportunity to independently practice the skills from the lessons, intended to be completed following the lesson set

FEEDBACK GUIDE
A feedback tool to use with the lesson set
UNIT OVERVIEW

These lessons promote active engagement with the text as students discover how events and character actions are interrelated.

**Lesson 1:** In this lesson, students will use pictures and illustrations to identify important events in the story and will discuss which event is the most important.

**Lesson 2:** In this lesson, students will discover that a character changes depending on what happens to them in a story. Students will draw a picture of the main character from a particular scene in the story and will then explain how the character behaves in response to the event.

**Lesson 3:** In this lesson, students will become the character, using dramatic interpretation to demonstrate how the character acts and feels following an event in the story. You will help students describe how the character responds to the events or challenges by asking questions that help students see the connections between the events and the character’s behavior.

### Research Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pictures, illustrations, and graphics strengthen a reader’s understanding of the text. “A visual display helps readers understand, organize, and remember.”</th>
<th>In Lesson 1, students use illustrations to determine what the most important events in the story are. Lessons 2 and 3 use charts to visually organize details from the story.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Duke &amp; Pearson, 2008)</td>
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| When students lead the class discussion and share multiple perspectives, it helps “illuminate, complicate, and ultimately enrich” a close reading of a text. | In the lessons, students will share their perspectives about the text with their peers. This interaction helps students examine the text from many angles. |
| (Aukerman & Schuldt, 2016) | |

| Using a text that is culturally familiar to students “may help teachers build upon what students know” and help them make connections while reading. | Choose familiar fairy tales, folktales, and texts with moral dilemmas to help students deepen their connections with what they are reading. |
| (Aukerman, 2015) | |
Using dramatic retelling in the classroom provides students with imaginative engagement. “Students have and explore a range of imaginative, emotional, and performative responses to a text” when they dramatize what they read. “Texts evoke response.”

(Aukerman, 2015)

Lesson 3 gives students the opportunity to dramatize a story, which will help them form deeper connections with the text.

“Readers create images to form unique interpretations, clarify thinking, draw conclusions, and enhance understanding.”

(Miller, 2002)

In the lessons, students will make drawings and act out character responses. These physical representations will help students make deeper connections with the text.

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


STANDARD

RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

*Learning map model for RL.2.3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Node ID</th>
<th>Node Name</th>
<th>Node Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA-362</td>
<td>IDENTIFY THE CAUSES OF A CHARACTER’S ACTIONS IN A STORY</td>
<td>Identify what causes a character to act in the way he or she does in a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-752</td>
<td>IDENTIFY THE CHARACTER’S OVERALL GOAL IN A STORY</td>
<td>Identify the overall goal that drives the actions of a character in a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-1103</td>
<td>IDENTIFY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FEELINGS OR DESIRES OF A CHARACTER OR NARRATOR AND ACTIONS IN A STORY</td>
<td>Identify how a narrator’s or character’s actions make him or her feel; or identify how the narrator’s or character’s desires or feelings lead to a specific action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-1451</td>
<td>IDENTIFY DETAILS ASSOCIATED WITH ACTIONS IN A STORY</td>
<td>Identify the details that depict specific actions in a story. This skill requires making a conceptual connection between a detail and an action in a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-1453</td>
<td>IDENTIFY DETAILS ASSOCIATED WITH STORY EVENTS</td>
<td>Identify the details related to specific events in a story. This skill requires making a conceptual connection between a detail and an event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-2319</td>
<td>DESCRIBE HOW A CHARACTER RESPONDS TO MAJOR EVENTS AND CHALLENGES IN A STORY</td>
<td>Describe how a specific character reacts or responds to the specific major events and challenges he or she encounters throughout the course of a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-2589</td>
<td>IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE A CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS IN A STORY</td>
<td>Identify what hinders or prevents the character from reaching his or her goal in a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-2590</td>
<td>DESCRIBE THE PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE A CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS IN A STORY</td>
<td>Describe what hinders or prevents the character from reaching his or her goal in a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-2601</td>
<td>DESCRIBE THE REASONS FOR A CHARACTER’S ACTIONS OR RESPONSES DURING A MAJOR STORY EVENT</td>
<td>Describe why the character acts or responds in specific ways during a major event in a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-2606</td>
<td>DESCRIBE THE CONSEQUENCES OF A CHARACTER’S ACTIONS DURING THE MAJOR STORY EVENTS</td>
<td>Describe the results of the character’s actions during the major events of a story. The results determine whether the character will be able to achieve the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA-2615</td>
<td>DESCRIBE THE CAUSES OF A CHARACTER’S ACTIONS DURING THE MAJOR STORY EVENTS</td>
<td>Describe what causes the character’s actions during the major events in a story. The causes lead to the character’s actions and motivations as the character pursues the goal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DETERMINING A STORY’S MAIN EVENT OR CHALLENGE
INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY
RL.2.3, Lesson 1

LEARNING GOAL
In this lesson, students will identify the most important event or challenge a character faces in a story.

STANDARD
RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events or challenges.

PREPARATION
Before the lesson, select a story with a moral or ethical dilemma that is well known to students (such as a folktale, fairy tale, or super hero story). Make copies of eight to ten pictures that represent the events and actions from the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Make one copy of two pictures to model the activity with. Make multiple copies of the other images so that you have one copied image per student. (Pictures may be repeated when distributed to students.)

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS
- a teacher copy of the story
- copies of illustrations from the story

IMPLEMENTATION
As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: “I can tell my classmates what the most important event is in a story.”

Introduce the story and ask students to share what they know about it.
Say, “An event is something that happens in a story. The action is all the events that happen throughout a story.”

Read the story to the class.

Divide students into pairs. Explain that each pair of students will receive two pictures that represent events in the story. Pairs will discuss which event is more important to the story, each student explaining their thinking to their partner.

Model the activity with the two illustrations not used in the lesson. Explain why one event is more or less important than the other. Say, “I think this event is more important because . . .” and “This event is less important in the story because . . .”

Ask students to repeat the activity directions. Then pass out the pictures.

While students discuss the illustrations, walk around and check for understanding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concrete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined by the student can IDENTIFY DETAILS ASSOCIATED WITH STORY EVENTS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ What event does the picture show?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, ask pairs to share out which event they decided was the most important and to explain their thinking.

Direct pairs to make a group with another pair of students and combine the pictures into one set. Each group will decide which of the four events is the most important in the story and will rank the rest of the events from least important to most important. Each group should also prepare explanations for their rankings.

As students are discussing, circulate and ask the Checking for Understanding questions.

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<td>Concrete</td>
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<tr>
<td>Determined by the student can IDENTIFY DETAILS ASSOCIATED WITH ACTIONS IN A STORY:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ What happens first in the story?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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To close the lesson, select three or four students to describe the illustration that represents the event that their group determined was the most important and to tell the class why they came to that conclusion. Ask the class to vote on which of the shared illustrations represents the most important event.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the Teacher Notes for this lesson set.
IDENTIFYING THE CAUSES OF A CHARACTER’S ACTIONS

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

RL.2.3, Lesson 2

LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students will identify what causes a character to react in a certain way to the events in a story.

STANDARD

RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events or challenges.

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- a teacher copy of the story used in Lesson 1
- chart paper
- drawing paper
- markers

IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: “I can tell my classmates why a character behaves a certain way in the story.”

Say, “Today we will focus on the main character and the reasons why he [or she] behaves a certain way. In the last activity, we went over the events and actions in the story. A character can have good or bad behaviors in response to the events that happen. A cause is the reason why someone behaves in a certain way. We are going to look for the causes of why the main character behaves like he [or she] does in the story. First, let’s review the events.”

Review who the main character is. Then ask students to recall the important events in the story.

Make a list of the events students recall on a chart or board.

Reread the story to the class. Then ask if any events should be added to the chart.
Ask students the following questions to facilitate a discussion and write students’ responses on the anchor chart.

- Do you act differently when something bad happens to you?
- How do you feel when something bad happens?
- How do you act or behave in response to something bad happening to you?

Now, collect students’ responses to questions about good events.

- How do you feel when something good happens to you?
- How do you act or behave in response to something good happening to you?

Say, “Our story is about [main character’s name].”

Ask the following questions and record the responses.

- How would you describe [main character]?
- What is an important event in the story?
- How does [main character] act after that happens?
- How does [main character] feel because of [event]?
- Why does [main character] feel that way?

Tell students, “Today you will draw a picture of an important event from the story that includes the main character. Then you will explain to the class how the main character feels and behaves after the event happens.”

Pass out drawing paper. Tell students that while they are working, you will come around and ask questions. Circulate and ask the Checking for Understanding questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concrete</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determine if the student can IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE A CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS IN A STORY:</td>
<td>Determine if the student can DESCRIBE THE PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE A CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS IN A STORY:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is happening to the character in your picture?</td>
<td>How does this event make the character feel?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When does this happen in the story?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine if the student can DESCRIBE THE REASONS FOR A CHARACTER’S ACTIONS OR RESPONSES IN A MAJOR STORY EVENT:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does the character do because of this event?</td>
<td>Why does he [or she] do this?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ask for volunteers to share their picture and to describe what the character is doing and feeling. Select several students who drew pictures of different events to share with the class.

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To close the lesson, **discuss** how the main character feels at the beginning, middle, and end of the story. If students are unsure, review the events and how the character feels in response to each one.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the **Teacher Notes** for this lesson set.
DESCRIBING A CHARACTER’S RESPONSE
INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY
RL.2.3, Lesson 3

LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students will use dramatic interpretation to demonstrate how a character responds to an event or challenge.

STANDARD

RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

PREPARATION

Before the lesson, select a story with an ethical dilemma that is familiar to the students, such as a folktale, fairy tale, or super hero story. The story should be different from the story used in Lessons 1 and 2.

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- a teacher copy of the story
- chart paper

IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: “I can act out how a character feels after an event in a story.

Tell students, “Last time we saw that [main character] behaved certain ways when events happened in the story. Each time something happened, [main character] looked and sounded and behaved differently.

Ask students to share the event they drew in the previous lesson and how the character felt and acted because of that event. Review the anchor chart from the previous day.

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Tell students, “Today we will read a different story.” Read the title of the story and ask, “What do you know about this story?” Write students’ comments on chart paper.

Tell students, “As I read, pay attention to how the main character feels during the action of the story. Remember the action is all the events that happen in the story.”

Read the story to the class. Then draw a T-chart on a new page of chart paper. Label the left side Events and label the right side Feelings & Behaviors. Ask students to name all the events, and write the list on the chart paper in the order they occurred in the story.

Tell students, “Now I will read the story again. Pay attention to how the main character feels and behaves after each event.

Read the story again. Then read the first event on the chart and ask, “What word describes how the main character feels or behaves after this event? As students respond to each listed event, complete the feelings and behaviors list on the chart.

Say, “What does it look like when you are mad? Everyone make a mad face.”

Then say, “What does it look like when you are sad? Everyone make a sad face.”

Finally say, “What does it look like when you are happy? Everyone make a happy face.”

Tell students, “You will choose an event from our chart and act out the character’s response to that event for a partner. Pretending to be the character, you will tell your partner how you feel about that event and why you feel that way. Use this sentence to answer as the character.”

Write the sentence on the board: I feel _____ because __________.

Say, “Then act out the character’s behavior after the event, being sure to show the character’s emotions with your face and body.”

Assist students with finding a partner and then circulate and check for understanding.
Bring the class back together and have students volunteer to share the event they chose and to act out the character’s response. Choose students who selected different parts of the story.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the Teacher Notes for this lesson set.

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**HOW A CHARACTER RESPONDS TO EVENTS AND CHALLENGES**

**STUDENT ACTIVITY**

**Directions:** In the first box, draw a picture of the most important event in the story. In the second box, draw a picture of what the main character did because of that event. Underneath each picture, write a sentence that describes what is happening.
# How a Character Responds to Events and Challenges

**Teacher’s Feedback Guide**

**RL.2.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concrete</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Determine if the student can determine details associated with story events:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Can the student identify the important events in the story?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Can the student identify the most important event (climax) in the story?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Can the student determine what event changed the ending of the story?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Determine if the student can describe the reasons for a character’s actions or responses during a major story event:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Can the student describe how the most important event changed the character’s actions or behavior?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Determine if the student can describe how a character responds to major events and challenges in a story:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ How does the character respond to the problem or challenge in the story?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Common Misunderstandings

- Student identifies supporting actions but cannot identify the most important action.
- Student describes the actions in the story but not the reasons for the action.
- Student describes the action but cannot describe how the character responds to the challenge or problem.

## Suggestions for Next Steps

- Review what event made the largest change in the story.
- What was most important in each part of the story?
- Have students identify important events from the beginning, middle and end.
- Review how the character feels at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story.
  - What makes the character feel differently?
  - Why does this happen?
- Review the story illustrations or pictures to determine how the character changes and acts by the end of the story.
  - What changes does the character make?
  - How does this happen?