

Lesson: Language Arts Grades 4-6 Character Development



Peter Rabbit Makes The “Change”

Introduction

Objective:

Students will explore the changes a character makes as the story progresses.

Students will understand how character change leads to the development of the moral of a story.

Academic Content Standards:

Students learn to apply the reading process to the various genres of literature, including fables, tales, short stories, novels, poetry and drama.

Students demonstrate their comprehension by describing and discussing the elements of literature (e.g., setting, character and plot), analyzing the author's use of language (e.g., word choice and figurative language), comparing and contrasting texts, inferring theme and meaning and responding to text in critical and creative ways.

- ❖ Ohio Academic Content Standards for Language Arts: #5 Reading Application: Literary Text Standard, Benchmark A.
- ❖ National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association Standards for English Language Arts: #3.

Getting Started

Materials:

- *Handout A* and *Handout B*: Graphic Organizers
- Tool: Internet connectivity

Vocabulary:

- Character
- Personality
- Moral
- Change
- Behavior
- Attitude

Technology:

Inspiration software graphic organizer literary web templates to create *Handout A*, for use with student group activity.

A computer word processing program to create *Handout B* for use with student writing activity.

Web Links:

<http://www.tcom.ohiou.edu/books/kids.htm> for an online version of “The Tales of Peter Rabbit.”

Lesson

Orientation Activity:

Whole group discussion with teacher and students begins by asking of the question, “What is a character?” Read either a print or on-line version of the original “Peter Rabbit” to the class. List on the

board the students' favorite characters from the book and discuss reasons that they like those characters. Do the same after seeing The Children's Theatre production of "The Rockin' Adventures of Peter Rabbit."

Ask the question, "What makes these characters unique?" Develop a working definition for the vocabulary term "character." Include the fact that personality is a large part of what makes character distinctive or unique.

Review the vocabulary words "moral," "change," "behavior" and "attitude." Discuss with students if change is evident in any of the characters within the "Peter Rabbit" stories.

Learning Activity:

Present an overhead transparency of *Handout A*, and explain its purpose and use with this activity. Group students into 3 or 4 member teams to discuss each character's feelings toward Peter Rabbit's behavior at the beginning of the story, and then at the end of the story.

Distribute *Handout A* to each student. Students will label each character's behavior or attitude towards Peter, as "B" for BIG CHANGE, "L" for LITTLE CHANGE, or "N" for NO CHANGE. Allot sufficient time for student groups to complete the handout, and for student discussion of the various characters' observation of change in the main character, Peter Rabbit. Student groups share answers with the whole group. Answers are recorded on the transparency overhead of the graphic organizer, *Handout A*. Whole class discussion follows with debate for consensus as to whether the changes were big, little or nonexistent. Next, have students discuss the differences between changes in behavior, and changes in attitude.

Follow with the question, "What is the biggest change that Peter Rabbit experiences from the beginning of the story to the end?" Next, display *Handout B* on the overhead. List on the handout/graphic organizer, the changes experienced by the character Peter Rabbit. Ask the questions, "How do the changes experienced by Peter Rabbit reflect with the lesson or moral of the story?" "What is the moral of the story?" Have students write the moral of the story on *Handout B*.

Evaluation and Follow-Up

Assessment Tools and Methods:

Teacher's observation and recorded anecdotal notes on individual student and group collaboration and contributions. Student completion of both *Handouts A* and *B*, and participation in class discussions.

Interdisciplinary Connections:





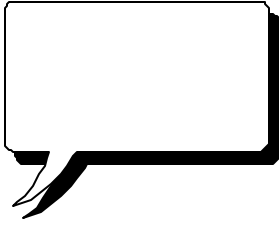
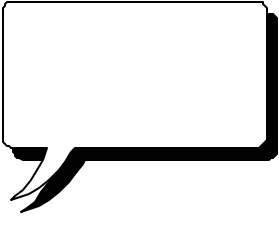


Writing Applications: Students write personal narratives regarding a personal lesson learned, one similar to the lesson learned by Peter, and highlights similarities and differences.

Social Studies: Students use *Timeliner* software to create a time line of their lives including lessons or morals learned along the way.

Handout A

Name _____

Directions: In groups of 3 or 4, you will discuss and write down in the provided spaces how each character feels about Peter Rabbit's behavior at the beginning of the story, and then at the end of the story. In the last column, you will label the change in Peter's behavior or attitude as "B" for BIG CHANGE, "L" for LITTLE CHANGE, or "N" for NO CHANGE.

Character	Feelings at the beginning of story	Feelings at the end of story	Changes Made?
Peter Rabbit			Big Little No Change
Flopsy, Mopsy, & Cotton-tail			Big Little No Change
Mother Rabbit			Big Little No Change
Benjamin Bunny			Big Little No Change

