



To Know a Character

Through the eyes and voice of characters, readers gain a sense of a story and its events and happenings. The tale of Peter Rabbit includes multiple voices as characters share their opinion about Peter's character, his actions and his choices.

Kentucky English and Language Arts: Arts and Humanities

Reading (1.2) Arts and Humanities (2.24, 2.25) Grades K-3

Character Development

Academic Expectations:

1.2 Students make sense of the variety of materials they read.

2.24 Students have knowledge of major works of art, music, and literature and appreciate creativity and the contributions of the arts and humanities.

Ohio Language Arts Standard > Reading Applications: Literary Text

Character Development

Benchmarks Grades K-3

B. Use supporting details to identify and describe main ideas, characters and setting.

Objective

Students will:

- Describe multiple literary characters through information gained from their actions and choices.

Assessment

Students will be able to:

- Identify characters and their defining characteristics from story details, events and happenings.

Sample selected response items to gauge student understanding:

1. What is a story character?

Answer: A person, animal or personified object found in a book or play.

2. What do characters do?

Answer: Provide information and help us understand a story through their words, actions and interactions with other characters and story events.

3. Describe your favorite storybook character, and what makes him/her/it likeable.

Answer: Individual student response. Emphasis on the attributes and qualities of a book character.

Vocabulary

- Characters
- Attributes
- Traits
- Qualities

Material

- Text version of the tale of *Peter Rabbit*

Activity

Peter, Why Did You Do It?

Teacher will:

1. Engage students through recall of the Children's Theatre of Cincinnati's production of *The Rockin' Adventures of Peter Rabbit*.
2. Have students create mini-descriptions for characters in the production-- Peter Rabbit, Cottontail, Benjamin Bunny, The Father (King Elvis), the mother, the cat. Emphasize the use of "adjectives."
3. Have students identify any similarities between the characters' attributes, traits or individual qualities.
4. Have students consider the opinions of various characters regarding Peter Rabbit's visit to Farmer McGregor's farm when told not to by his mother.
5. Facilitate discussion to address the question, "Did all characters feel the same way about Peter's decision to go to Farmer McGregor's farm?" Why or why not? Have students consider the personalities of the various characters and how their personal traits may have influenced decisions about Peter's actions and choices.
6. Have students write a summary about each character's opinion regarding Peter's actions and choices, and explanation for the character's reasoning behind his/her opinion. Question prompt, "What does each character's thinking tell us about him/her?" Whole class sharing.
7. Facilitate discussion to address the question, "Do any of the characters' opinions conflict with Peter's thinking and decision? Emphasize how the conflicting opinions and reasoning assist in the development of story detail and interest.
8. Have students address the following questions to gain further insight into the impact of characterization in story development.
 - a. What is your opinion about Peter as a character, and about Peter's actions and choices?
 - b. How would the story have changed had Peter made an alternative decision? Or had all the characters followed Peter's lead and visited Farmer McGregor's farm as well?
 - c. Did knowing the other characters' opinion of Peter help your understanding of story events? With understanding Peter's feelings, needs and desires?

9. Conclude and facilitate student thinking with discussion of the importance of any character in a story, and the importance of the actions and choices, he/she makes or takes.