

Cricket

ISSUE THEME

Beware! Things are not always what they seem. Through strange and secret portals, characters cross into mysterious new worlds.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do decisions change lives?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development
- Students will read closely to make logical inferences from a text
- Students will analyze the elements of fantasy
- Students will analyze places, including their physical, cultural, and environmental characteristics
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information
- Students will explain cultural influences on the way people live



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core STEM skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

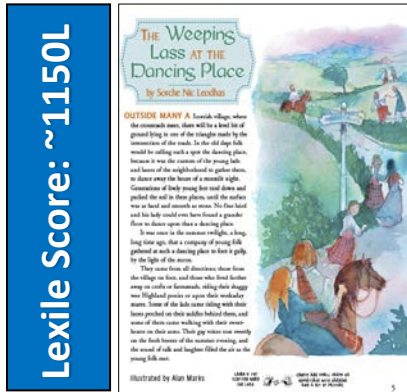
SELECTIONS

- **The Weeping Lass at the Dancing Place**
Folktale, ~1150L
- **The House at the Edge of the Universe**
Science Fiction, ~1050L
- **Between the Pages**
Fantasy, ~550L

The Weeping Lass at the Dancing Place

pp. 5–10, Folktale

Use this folktale about a young woman grieving for her dead lover to help students learn how to determine theme.



RESOURCES

- Determine Theme Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a folktale
- Students will determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development
- Students will analyze places, including their physical, cultural, and environmental characteristics

KEY VOCABULARY

- **trod** (p. 5) crushed or pressed
- **heed** (p. 6) to take notice or give attention to something
- **lament** (p. 7) an expression of sorrow
- **naught** (p. 9) nothing, nil
- **lest** (p. 10) for fear that

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Conversation Question: How do decisions change lives?

Tell students to think about a time when they made a decision based on strong emotions, such as anger, joy, love, or frustration. Ask students if they think they made good or bad decisions at these times. Then briefly discuss whether it's a good idea to make decisions when one is feeling very emotional. Finally, explain that the young woman in the next story makes an emotional decision that changes her life.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and point out the story sentences in which they appear. Explain that folktales sometimes use formal or old-fashioned words that may be unfamiliar and that students can use context clues to figure out the meaning of these words. Have student pairs use context clues to write definitions for the vocabulary words. Then invite students to share and explain their definitions.

READ & DISCUSS

After all students have read the story independently, use the questions below to discuss it:

1. How is the lass different from the other young people?
2. Why did the lass vow never to sing or dance again?
3. How did her decision to follow her lover change her life?
4. What clues on page 8 indicate that the lover is a ghost?
5. Were you surprised by the ghost's actions and attitude toward the lass? Explain why or why not.

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Determine Theme

INSTRUCT: Review the definition of *theme* (a message about life or human nature that an author presents in a literary work). Give some examples of common literary themes, such as “accepting a challenge can lead to positive results,” and “actions speak louder than words.” Point out that themes often sound like good advice. Next, distribute the *Determine Theme* worksheet and have students work independently to answer the questions in Part A.

ASSESS: Have students pair up to compare their answers from Part A of the worksheet. Then have them complete the worksheet by writing and supporting one or more themes for the story.

EXTEND

Social Studies Brainstorm types of physical characteristics (weather, temperature, plant and animal life, etc.) and cultural characteristics (language, religions, architecture, arts). Then have students choose one physical and one cultural characteristic and conduct research to identify examples from Scotland.

Name _____

Determine Theme Worksheet

Part A: Write your answers to the questions below.

1. What lessons does the lass learn in the story? Explain how she learns these lessons.

2. What lesson about life or how to live does the author want you to understand?

Part B: Write the theme or themes of this story.

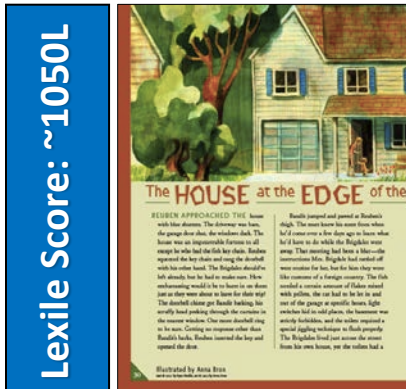
Extra Credit: How does the story title connect to the theme or themes you identified?

Cricket® Teacher Guide: October 2017

The House at the Edge of the Universe

pp. 30–36, Science Fiction

Use this story about a boy who encounters a strange universe when housesitting to teach students how to identify and analyze foreshadowing.



RESOURCES

- Identify Foreshadowing Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze science fiction
- Students read closely to make logical inferences from a text
- Students will obtain, evaluate, and communicate information

KEY VOCABULARY

- bizarre (p. 31)** very unusual or strange
- contraption (p. 33)** a piece of equipment that is unusual or strange
- portal (p. 34)** a doorway, gate, or entrance
- exotic (p. 36)** very different, strange, or unusual
- transporting (p. 36)** carrying from one place to another

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Conversation Question: How do decisions change lives?

Ask students to explain what it means to make a sacrifice (give up something you want or need to help someone else). Ask students to share times when they decided to give up something (large or small) to help a neighbor, friend, or relative. Discuss the effects and outcomes of these decisions. Then explain that the next story tells about a character who makes a decision that saves a life.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and ask volunteers to explain the meanings of familiar words. Acknowledge correct meanings and then read the definitions aloud. Next, have students work in pairs to put the words into groups and make predictions about what will happen in the story. Invite pairs to share their word groups and predictions.

READ & DISCUSS

After all students have read the story independently, use the questions below to discuss it:

- How would you describe Reuben?
- Why do Mrs. Brigdale's instructions seem like "customs of a foreign country" to Reuben?
- What important decisions did Sally Brigdale make?
- How did this decision affect Sally and her family? How did it affect Reuben?
- What do you learn about the values and characteristics of the inhabitants of the other universe?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Identify Foreshadowing

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that foreshadowing is a technique authors use to hint at events that will happen later in a story. Continue by explaining that examples of foreshadowing can be found in descriptions of setting, characters, and events. Foreshadowing often creates a feeling of suspense in a story. Read aloud the first five lines of the story as students follow along. Discuss the ideas these details convey about the house and what events they might hint at.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to fill in the chart on the *Identify Foreshadowing* worksheet. Then bring the class together to discuss the details students noted in their charts.

EXTEND

Science Explain that the portal in this story is make-believe, but science fiction stories are often based on real science. Have students conduct research to find out if real portals exist. Invite students to share what they learn with the class.

Name _____

Identify Foreshadowing Worksheet

Reread the story to find words and details that hint at events that occur later. In the chart below, list the details and describe the events they hint at.

example of foreshadowing	events it hints at

Between the Pages

pp. 38–44, Fantasy

Two girls from different times and places meet in the pages of a book. Use this story to teach students the characteristics of fantasy.



ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do decisions change lives?

Ask students to think about decisions they have made that resulted in surprising outcomes. For example, maybe they decided to try something—a food, an activity, or a relationship—that became important in their lives as a result. Then explain that in the next story, one character’s decision changes several lives.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and review the definitions. Ask students what they notice about these words. Explain that they are adverbs—words that describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. Continue by explaining that adverbs ending in *-ly* often tell *how* something was done. (Example: *She opened the door quietly.*) Have students write sentences using the vocabulary words and then share them with the class. Finally, tell students to look for other *-ly* adverbs as they read.

RESOURCES

- Elements of Fantasy Worksheet

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a fantasy story
- Students will analyze the elements of fantasy
- Students will explain cultural influences on the way people live

KEY VOCABULARY

- **quickly** (p. 38) in a fast or quick manner
- **cautiously** (p. 39) in a way that avoids danger or risk
- **obviously** (p. 40) in a way that is easy to see or understand
- **tentatively** (p. 42) in a way that lacks confidence
- **involuntarily** (p. 43) not by choice

READ & DISCUSS

After all students have read the story independently, use the questions below to discuss it:

1. What decision did Audrey make? How did this decision affect her and the other characters?
2. Compare Audrey and Angel. How are they similar and different? Think about their words, actions, and relationships.
3. Compare the two settings. How are they similar and different?
4. What are Marcus’s character traits?
5. Describe the relationship between Marcus and Audrey.
6. How does the story’s mood, or feeling, change at the end?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Elements of Fantasy

INSTRUCT: Explain that this story is a work of fantasy and ask students to describe this genre. Then tell students that a fantasy contains at least one fantastic or unreal character, setting, or event. Finally, tell students that many fantasy stories combine realistic and fantastic details. Invite a few volunteers to identify realistic and fantastic details in the story.

ASSESS: Have students work independently to complete the *Elements of Fantasy* worksheet. Then have students share their ideas with the class.

EXTEND

Social Studies Have student groups use *who, what, when, where, why, and how* to come up with two or three questions about gargoyles. Then have them use these questions to guide their research, using the internet and/or library to find answers. Invite students to present their questions and answers in a creative, multimedia format.

Name _____

Elements of Fantasy

Fill in the chart with realistic and fantastic details about the characters, setting, and events in "Between the Pages."

	Realistic Details	Fantastic Details
characters		
setting		
events		

Group Activity: Work with classmates to brainstorm ideas and make predictions about what will happen next in this story.