

THE CLEVEREST THIEF

First Grade

Outcome:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the story through discussion, reading, writing, acting, predicting, and illustrating.

Overview:

Students will read and explore a folktale from India while utilizing interdisciplinary connections in language arts, visual arts, physical education, character education, and dramatic arts.

Materials:

Book, *The Cleverest Thief*

23 Large index cards, each with one letter from the words “monk,” “monastery,” and “meditation” written on it

Map or globe

Pencils

Lined paper

Blackboard or Whiteboard

Large sheets of paper

Crayons or markers

1 Large towel per student

Optional:

CD featuring soft, calming music

CD player

Forest, Heather. “The Wise Master.” *Wisdom Tales from Around the World*. Little Rock: August House, 1996. 15-16.

Computer with Internet access

Assessment Tools:

“ABC Order” Worksheet A

“ABC Order” Worksheet B

“ABC Order” Worksheet C

“Rhyming Words” Worksheet A

“Rhyming Words” Worksheet B

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INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Introduction:

Materials:

23 Large index cards, each with one letter from the words “monk,” “monastery,” and “meditation” written on it

Directions:

Teacher:

- Chooses four students to go to the front of the classroom.
- Gives each student one index card with one letter from the word “monk” and asks students to hold up the cards so the letters can be seen by their classmates.
- Informs the students that the letters can be arranged to spell a word.
- Selects a remaining student to arrange the students to try to spell “monk.”
- Asks students what a monk is (a member of a religious community, usually referring to men but sometimes also to women, who promise to follow the rules of the order).
- Writes the word “monk” on the board.
- Informs students that they will be reading a story about a monk.
- Informs students that there two more words that begin with the letter “m” in the story.
- Introduces the word “monastery” and asks students what a monastery is (a group of buildings or a building where monks live).
- Selects nine students to go to the front of the classroom.
- Passes out the index cards with the letters from the word “monastery” on them and asks students to hold up the cards so the letters can be seen by their classmates.
- Asks students to listen to the word “monastery” and to see if they can arrange the letters to spell the word.
- Introduces the word “meditation” and repeats the activity used to introduce the word “monastery” with the ten index cards that spell “meditation” (a quiet time of deep, serious thinking), repeating the word aloud as needed.
- Writes “monastery” and “meditation” on the board and asks students how all three words on the board might be related.

Teacher Reads the Story:

Materials:

Book, *The Cleverest Thief*

Map or globe

Directions:

Teacher:

- Informs students that they will be reading a folktale from India.
- Shows students India on a map or globe in relation to their country.
- Asks students to listen for the new words from learned in the previous activity.
- Reads the story.

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Questions for Assessing Students' Comprehension:

- Where does this story take place?
- If you weren't told the story takes place in India, how might you figure it out?
- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What is this story about?
- What does "clever" mean?
- What does "cleverest" mean?
- What is a thief?
- Do you know any other stories or movies that have a thief as a character?
- What is a monastery?
- What is a monk?
- How is meditation a part of the story?
- Why did the great monk choose someone to take his place as leader of the monastery?
- How would you choose a leader?
- What test did the great monk use to choose a leader?
- Do you think the test was a good idea? Why or why not?
- How do you think the monks felt when they were told to steal something so that no one would know?
- How would you feel if you were asked to steal something?
- What did each of the monks steal?
- When they met with the great monk, Dhammika was "empty-handed." What does that mean?
- What was Dhammika's reason for not stealing?
- What did the great monk mean when he said, "...you may hide your actions from the world, but never from yourself"?
- Why did the great monk choose Dhammika to be the next leader?
- What did the great monk mean when he told Dhammika, "You, alone, stayed true to yourself and my teachings"?
- How did the great monk feel about choosing Dhammika?
- How did Dhammika feel about being chosen as the next leader? How can you tell?
- What lesson does this story teach?
- What was your favorite part of the story? Why?

Language Arts:

- **Tell a Friend the Story**

Directions:

Teacher divides the class into pairs and asks students to tell the story to their partners.

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Language Arts cont.:

• **ABC Order**

An activity for differentiated learning

Materials:

“ABC Order” Worksheet A

“ABC Order” Worksheet B

“ABC Order” Worksheet C

Pencils

Directions:

- Teacher divides the class into three groups.
 - Group A: Complete “ABC Order” Worksheet A by writing the following words in alphabetical order: day, ill, monk, name, rice, test, wise.
 - Group B: Complete “ABC Order” Worksheet B by writing the following words in alphabetical order: day, feel, ill, monk, name, old, pick, rice, steal, test, wise, you.
 - Group C: Complete “ABC Order” Worksheet C* by writing the following words in alphabetical order: day, feel, ill, monk, name, old, pick, rice, steal, test, told, wise, worked, you.
*Note that ABC Order Worksheet C includes multiple words beginning with the same letter in which case the second letter in the word will be used to determine alphabetical order.

• **Rhyming Words**

An activity for differentiated learning

Materials:

“Rhyming Words” Worksheet A

“Rhyming Words” Worksheet B

Pencils

Lined paper

Directions:

Teacher:

- Reminds students what rhyming words are (words with the same ending sound).
- Calls out several examples of rhyming words.
 - day / play
 - test / rest
 - rice / nice
- Calls out several examples of words that do not rhyme.
 - day / dog
 - test / toss
 - rice / rest
- Asks students to listen to the following word pairs to determine if the words in each pair rhyme. Students put their thumbs up if the words rhyme and put their thumbs down if the words do not rhyme.

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Language Arts cont.:

Rhyming Words cont.

day / say	and / sand	him / ham	said / bed
year / cheer	take / talk	deep / sleep	stole / stale
more / many	not / got	test / task	dawn / den
live / give	love / live	know / knew	meal / steal
thief / chief	all / wall	how / now	cast / fast
fell / fall	night / net	each / beach	eyes / prize

- Divides the class into three groups.
 - Group A: Teacher and students continue the oral activity using the words from “Rhyming Words” Worksheet A. Students put their thumbs up if the words rhyme and their thumbs down if the words do not rhyme.
 - Group B: Students complete “Rhyming Words” Worksheet A individually. Students say each pair of words aloud. Students circle each pair of words that rhyme.

day stall him eyes leg must up him told close all
may all am goes beg most pup Jim bold mess tall

and day monk my up rest beg new how goods be
end say bank sky cap task wig dew cow hoods see

- Group C: Students complete “Rhyming Words” Worksheet B individually. Students say each pair of words aloud. Students circle each pair that rhymes.

day stall him eyes leg must up him told close all and
may all am goes beg most pup Jim bold mess tall end

day monk my up rest be over one know place act task
say bank sky cap task see better fun slow space get ask

but peck you night steal must years monk half went new
rut neck shoe fight meal rest tears thank calf want drew

• True or False

Directions:

Teacher reads the following statements and asks students if they are true or false. If the statements are false, ask students to make the statements true.

1. The great monk was 80 years old. (False: The great monk was 100 years old.)
2. The great monk wanted to go on a vacation, so he needed to choose a new leader. (False: The great monk fell ill, so he needed to choose a new leader.)
3. The great monk created a test to decide who would become the next leader. (True)
4. The great monk told the monks to steal something so that someone would know who stole the item and how it was stolen. (False: The great monk told the monks to steal something so that no one would know who stole the item nor how it was stolen.)

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Language Arts cont.:

True or False cont.

5. The great monk said the cleverest thief would take his place. (True)
6. One monk slipped a neck tie right off a man's neck. (False: One monk slipped a necklace right off the neck of a wealthy woman.)
7. One monk stole a cup of rice from a stall in the bazaar. (False: One monk stole a grain of rice from a stall in the bazaar.)
8. Dhammika was empty-handed when the monks gathered again. (True)
9. Dhammika said that it was impossible to steal so that no one could name the thief. (True)
10. Dhammika stayed true to himself and the great monk's teachings. (True)

Art:

• **Create a Poster**

Materials:

1 Large piece of paper per student
Crayons or markers

Directions:

Teacher:

- Informs students that the great monk taught the other monks the “precepts” for living a good life. He told the monks to:
 - Live without harming others.
 - Defeat greed.
 - Act with wisdom.
- Discusses the precepts with the students and asks how they can apply these precepts to their lives.
- Asks students to each make a poster about the precepts for living a good life.
- Asks students to show their posters to the class and tell about them.

• **Create a Storyboard**

Materials:

Large sheets of paper
Crayons or markers

Directions:

Teacher:

- Informs students that they will be making a storyboard of the story events in *The Cleverest Thief*. The storyboard will be several quick drawings of the most important story events in the order in which they occurred. The drawings should be very simple and will help to retell the story.
- Demonstrates creating a storyboard using a familiar story.
- Divides the class into pairs.
- Instructs each pair to create a storyboard of the story events.
- Asks each pair of students to retell the story using their storyboard.

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Character Education:

• **Create a Skit**

Directions:

Teacher:

- Reminds students that the great monk taught the other monks the “precepts” for living a good life:
 - Live without harming others.
 - Defeat greed.
 - Act with wisdom.
- Discusses the precepts with the students and asks how they can apply them to their lives.
- Divides the class into small groups.
- Asks each group to create a skit showing how they can apply the precepts to their own lives.

Drama:

• **Brainstorming**

Directions:

Teacher:

- Asks students to give their opinions about how the great monk chose the next leader.
- Asks students to brainstorm other ways that he could have chosen the new leader.
- Asks students to think of places where there are leaders.
- Asks students how they could choose a class leader.

Physical Education:

• **Meditation**

Materials:

1 Large towel per student

Quiet, peaceful environment

Optional: CD featuring soft, calming music

Optional: CD player

Directions:

Teacher:

- Reminds students that after a night of deep mediation, the great monk decided he would use a test to help him choose the next leader.
- Reminds students that meditation is a quiet time of relaxation, concentration, and deep thinking.
- Sets up a quiet, comfortable environment for students.
- Speaks in a soft, slow, and relaxed voice and asks students to lie down on their towels, close their eyes, and relax.
- Directs students to focus on their toes and to tighten and tense them, and then relax them.
- Directs students to tense and then relax their calves, knees, thighs, stomach, back, shoulders, arms, hands, neck, and head.
- Asks students to relax and concentrate on their breathing:
 - Breathe in through the mouth for the count of three, hold the breath, and then breathe out through the nose for the count of three.

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Physical Education cont.:

Meditation cont.

- While breathing in, think of energy, peace, and happiness.
- While breathing out, think of sadness, anger, and tiredness leaving the body through the nose.
- Asks students to see themselves on a very big movie screen. Looking at the screen, they should see themselves as being very calm, quiet, and relaxed. Next, they should see themselves being a patient, loving, person. Then, they should see themselves as a good friend and good student.
- Asks students to slowly start thinking about their body again. They should start feeling their body parts, starting with their toes. They should stay relaxed as they wiggle their toes, roll their ankles in both directions, and then progressively wiggle all of their body parts individually. They should end by gently rolling their head from side to side.
- Asks students to slowly open their eyes and take a few slow, deep breaths.
- Asks students to sit up slowly.
- Asks students to share how they feel after their meditation experience.

Extension Activities:

• Technology Connection

Materials:

Computer with Internet access

Directions:

- Teacher helps students access www.storycove.com.
- Students view the animation for *The Cleverest Thief* narrated by the author.
- Students explore the animations and activities for other stories on www.storycove.com.

• Compare and Contrast

Materials:

Computer with Internet access

Directions:

Teacher helps students access www.storycove.com.

Students:

- View the animation for *The Drum*.
- Compare and contrast this folktale from India with *The Cleverest Thief*.
- View the animation for *Growing Gold*.
- Compare and contrast this folktale from India by the same author with *The Cleverest Thief*.

• Read Another Version of the Story

Materials:

Book, *Wisdom Tales from Around the World*

Directions:

Teacher reads “The Wise Master” on page 15 of *Wisdom Tales from Around the World* by Heather Forest. Students compare and contrast this version of the story with *The Cleverest Thief*.

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Worksheet A

Name _____ Date _____

ABC Order

Directions: Write the story words below in alphabetical order.

monk

ill

test

wise

rice

name

day

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Worksheet B

Name _____ Date _____

ABC Order

Directions: Write the story words below in alphabetical order.

monk _____

ill _____

test _____

wise _____

rice _____

name _____

day _____

steal _____

pick _____

you _____

feel _____

old _____

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Worksheet C

Name _____ Date _____

ABC Order

Directions: Write the story words below in alphabetical order.

monk _____

ill _____

test _____

wise _____

rice _____

name _____

day _____

steal _____

pick _____

you _____

feel _____

old _____

next _____

worked _____

told _____

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Worksheet A

Name _____ Date _____

Rhyming Words

Directions: Read each pair of words out loud. Circle the pair if the words rhyme.

day
may

stall
all

him
am

eyes
goes

leg
beg

must
most

up
pup

him
Jim

told
bold

close
mess

all
tall

and
end

day
say

monk
bank

my
sky

up
cap

rest
task

beg
wig

new
dew

how
cow

goods
hoods

be
see

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Worksheet B

Name _____ Date _____

Rhyming Words

Directions: Read each pair of words out loud. Circle the pair if the words rhyme.

day
may

stall
all

him
am

eyes
goes

leg
beg

must
most

up
pup

him
Jim

told
bold

close
mess

all
tall

and
end

day
say

monk
bank

my
sky

up
cap

rest
task

be
see

over
better

one
fun

know
slow

place
space

act
get

task
ask

but
rut

peck
neck

you
shoe

night
fight

steal
meal

must
rest

years
tears

monk
thank

half
calf

went
want

new
drew