



Describe Characters' Feelings and Actions

GRADE 3 OUTCOME

Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

1 Choose a Level of Support

SCAFFOLD A

Analyzing Dialogue to Learn About a Character

Recommended for students
2+ grade levels below

	MISCONCEPTIONS AND SKILL GAPS	
✓	Students are not yet able to identify or describe character traits, feelings, and motivations.	
	Students are not yet able to explain how a character's actions affect what happens in the story.	✓
	Students are unfamiliar with narrative text structure in stories.	✓

SCAFFOLD B

Analyzing Characters' Actions

Recommended for students
1 grade level below

2 Meet the Texts

Review the complexity of the text for the chosen scaffold to anticipate where students may struggle.

TEXT A

Beary Scared

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Genre: FableThe text features a hiking experience	Knowledge Demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Genre: MythThe story assumes basic understanding that insects represent bad or negative things that can happen, like floods or droughts
Lexical Demands <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vocabulary: <i>hiking, scrambled, terrified</i>Multiple-meaning word: <i>scrambled</i>	Language Demands	Lexical Demands <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vocabulary: <i>appeared, swarm, swatting, horror, comfort, warned</i> Syntax Demands <ul style="list-style-type: none">Use of dash in paragraph 4 to indicate a pause in thought

TEXT B

Here Comes Trouble



Analyzing Dialogue to Learn About a Character

When students are asked to describe a characters' feelings, they might not understand how to use details from a character's dialogue to understand that character. In Scaffold A, students will learn to analyze what characters say to describe how they feel.

Student Outcome I can describe how characters feel.

Student Materials

- Text: *Beary Scared*, p. 1
- Student Activity, p. 2

Duration ~30 minutes

Before Reading

1 Introduce how dialogue helps us understand characters.

- Explain that when we read a story, we learn a lot about characters based on what they say and how they say it. What characters say or speak in the story is called dialogue.
 - Tell students that you are going to say something and you want them to see if they can tell how you're feeling based on what you say. For example, **say**, *I can't wait for the long weekend*. Discuss with students whether they can tell how you feel by your words, and how they know that.
 - Note that if you were a character in a story, the author would use feeling words to describe how you spoke. For example, "I can't wait for the long weekend," the teacher said excitedly.

2 Prepare students to read the text.

- Read the title and discuss what the selection might be about.
- Explain that as students read the text, they are going to focus on the dialogue to help them understand the characters in the story. Read the directions for marking the text on p. 1. If needed, point out an example of dialogue from the text so students can recognize it while reading.
- If needed, define unknown words that may interfere with understanding, such as *hiking*, *scrambled*, or *terrified*. Use students' prior knowledge about the words to deepen understanding.

During Reading

1 Model.

- Read aloud paragraphs 1 through 6 with students.
- Think aloud about what a character says after paragraph 2.
 - **Say:** *I notice that there is someone speaking in paragraph 2. I'm going to underline "It could be a bear," and "We have to get out of here!"*



— **Say:** When we see dialogue, it is important we figure out who is saying the words. Here in paragraph 2, it says Jamal whimpered, so I'll put a star next to Jamal's name.

— Notice how authors don't just tell us who is speaking, but they also tell us how they are speaking. Whimpered is a great description of how Jamal is speaking.

- Repeat the lines of dialogue using a whimpering voice.

2 Practice.

- Silently or in pairs, have students read the rest of the story. Tell students to continue to mark up the text when they notice dialogue.
- When students have finished reading, introduce the **Learn from What Characters Say** chart on p. 2 in the student materials.
 - Arrange students in partners and have them share what they marked in the text and record that dialogue in the chart.
 - Then guide students to discuss how the character feels when he says each thing.
 - See p. 5 for expected responses.
- As students are talking, provide support using the **Check for Understanding** recommendations.

EL Scaffold

The description *wandered away* in paragraph 9 is an important clue for understanding that the bear does not want to harm Jamal or David. Ask students what they think this means, and make sure they understand the connotative meaning and how it affects the story.

✓ CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

As students discuss character dialogue, listen in and provide support as needed.

IF	THEN
Students are confused about how the characters feel when they speak	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have students try speaking dialogue from the story out loud.• Guide students to use clues to help them decide how Jamal and David might feel.



After Reading

1 Reflect.

- Remind students that dialogue is one way to understand not only the characters' feelings in a story, but also big ideas in a text. Ask the following questions to make sure students understood the text.
 - How do Jamal and David feel when they meet a bear on their hike? *(They are scared and worried, but surprised and relieved when the bear licks David's ear.)*
 - In this story, the bear acts in a surprising way. Think about another example of an animal that Jamal and David could meet while hiking and describe what could happen if that animal acted in a surprising way. *(Responses will vary.)*

2 Set next steps.

- Encourage students to look for dialogue in other stories and pay close attention not just to what is said but to how the character says it. This will help students understand the feelings of characters and big ideas in texts.



COMPREHENSION TOOLS

Name:

Describe Characters' Feelings and Actions

ACTIVITY A

Learn from What Characters Say

Look back at what you underlined and starred in **Beary Scared**. Write the character's name and what he says on the left. Then, on the right, write how the character feels.

What the Character Says	How the Character Feels
<i>Jamal - It could be a bear. We have to get out of here!</i>	<i>scared, frightened</i>
<i>David - We don't have time. Let's climb a tree.</i>	<i>worried, nervous</i>
<i>Jamal - That's a good idea!</i>	<i>happy, relieved</i>
<i>Jamal - It looked like that bear whispered something in your ear.</i>	<i>curious, surprised</i>
<i>David - The bear did tell me something. He told me to choose a better friend to hike with.</i>	<i>funny, clever, slightly angry</i>



Analyzing Characters' Actions

When students are asked to study a character, they need to understand how the character's actions affect the story. In Scaffold B, students will learn that what a character does can affect the sequence of events in a text.

Student Outcome I can determine how a character's actions affect what happens in a story.

Student Materials

- Text: *Here Comes Trouble*, p. 3
- Student Activity, p. 4

Duration ~30 minutes

Before Reading

1 Introduce how characters' actions affect a story.

- Explain that what a character does can affect other characters, as well as events in the story.
— **Say:** *If something affects a person or thing, it influences them or causes them to change in some way.*
- Clap loudly, without warning, and see how students react. Point out that what you did is an action.
— **Say:** *How did my action affect you? (Responses will vary but may include: I jumped, I blinked, I yelled.)*
- Discuss how the action of someone suddenly clapping loudly might change what happens if students were asleep or taking a test in a quiet room. Point out that the way one person acts may change what happens to other people.

2 Prepare students to read the text.

- Tell students that **Here Comes Trouble** is a myth and that it explains why things are the way they are in the world. Explain that as you read, you will be focused on thinking about characters' actions.
- If needed, define unknown words that may interfere with understanding, such as *swatting*, *horror*, or *comfort*. Use students' prior knowledge about the words to deepen understanding.



During Reading

1 Model.

- Read aloud paragraphs 1 to 5 to students.
 - Pause after paragraph 1. **Say:** *In the first paragraph Epi bends down to pick up a box that fell from the sky. This is an action he took. As we keep reading, I will be looking for the effect on the story events.*
 - Pause after paragraph 5. **Say:** *Wow, because Epi opened the box, all of these bugs flew out. Swarms of bugs can be annoying, but I know from other myths and fables that bugs can also be a sign of bad things to come.*

2 Practice.

- In pairs, have students read the rest of the text, paragraph by paragraph. Pairs may want to take the role of Pandora or Epi and read in that character's voice.
- Direct students to the **Match Character Actions and Effects** activity on p. 4 of the student materials. Have them work with a partner to draw an arrow to match the character actions with the effects in the story.
- Have students discuss their matching activity with their partners. See p. 9 for expected responses.
- While students are discussing character actions and effects, provide support using the **Check for Understanding** recommendations.

EL Scaffold

Point out that writers use different words to show when characters talk. Students likely know *said* and *asked*. Invite them to use these words to tell what someone said to them or asked them today. Have students notice *the voice whispered* in paragraph 8. Model whispering with students to show the way the words are spoken in this example.

✓ CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

As students discuss character actions and story effects provide support as needed.

IF	THEN
Students have difficulty understanding the effect of characters' actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have students underline a character's action in the text, then have them keep reading and underline the next thing that happens.• Go over the meaning of the word <i>effect</i>. Say: <i>The effect of one thing on another is the change that the first thing causes in the second thing.</i>



After Reading

1 Reflect.

- Discuss the story further to ensure students understood it. Pose the following questions:
 - The characters open the box twice. What effect did these actions have, and how are the effects different? *(When Epi opens the box, he lets stinging bugs out into the world. When Pandora opens the box, she lets a fairy named Hope out. The action is the same, but one effect is that trouble was let out into the world, and the other effect is that Hope is let out into the world.)*
 - If you were to find a small box that glowed purple and green, describe what you would do with it. How would you feel? *(Responses will vary.)*

2 Set next steps.

- Encourage students to notice the effects of character actions in other stories they read. **Say:** *When you read, pay close attention to what a character does. Look for what happens to other characters and the outcome in a story.*



COMPREHENSION TOOLS

Name: _____

Describe Characters' Feelings and Actions

ACTIVITY B

Match Character Actions and Effects

Reflect on the characters' actions in **Here Comes Trouble**. Match how the character action effects the story events.

Character Actions

Epi bends down to pick up the box.

Epi opens the box.

Pandora opens the box.

A voice from the box whispers, "I'm here to help you."

Epi says he's sorry.

Effects on Story Events

Stinging bugs fill the sky.

Pandora says not to worry because they have Hope.

Pandora thinks and then slowly opens the box.

Pandora tells about a dream she had and warns Epi.

A green and purple fairy flies out.