

Every Story Has Characters

In this unit, we'll read fables and other genres of fiction featuring a variety of characters, and think in depth about the question "How are people different?" Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about characters, to build on the skills and concepts your child is learning in school. I know exploring this topic together will be fun for both of you!

Topic Connection

Character Twenty Questions

Play the game "Character Twenty Questions" with your child, or with your whole family. Unlike the traditional game, players must choose only characters, not places or things. Invite your child to think of a favorite character from a book, movie, TV show, etc. The character can be real, fictional, or fantastical, but your child should not say who it is aloud. Next, ask your child yes/no questions about the character, such as "Is he or she an animal?" "Is the character from a book?" Keep asking until you guess who the character is. Then switch roles so that you think of the character and your child asks questions.

Comprehension Connection

Compare-a-Character

Your child will be reading a variety of well-known stories featuring a range of characters, from the angry bears in "Goldilocks" to the hardworking and underappreciated Little Red Hen. Making connections between self and characters helps readers better understand characters and their actions, which supports overall comprehension. Encourage your child to consider which of the characters she or he is most like, and why. Divide a sheet of paper in half. Label one side with the character's name and your child's name on the other. Then help them write down or draw the similarities.

Vocabulary Connection

Behaviors in Action

Your child is learning new words associated with characters' actions or how they behave, such as **crawled, roared, laughed, cried, walked, raced, argued, growled, whispered, grumbled,** and **barked**. Review the meaning of these words with your child by acting them out together. Discuss where you've seen these actions before, both in stories and in real life. As you go about your daily activities—playing at the park, shopping at the market, visiting the library—encourage your child to keep on the lookout for these behaviors in action.

Phonics Connections

I Spy a Sound

In this unit, your child is learning and practicing the /s/ sound, as in *snake, sing,* and *soup* and the /t/ sound, as in *turtle, toes,* and *tomato*. Choose one of the two letter sounds, or both, for an extra challenge, and play I Spy a Sound by identifying words you hear during the day that begin with that sound.