

PBS Lesson Series

ELA, Grade 5, Lesson 20

Teacher Packet

Independent Practice – Lesson 18

Imagine that you are Blackfoot, the Wang's faithful dog.

You and Tabby, the Wang's cat, have been long-time pals, through thick and thin. Most recently, you've stuck together through times of plenty when the golden beetle made tons of amazing food. Now, hunger has entered your lives again and Tabby says she knows how to solve this problem. The two of you are going to retrieve the golden beetle from the thief that took it: Mrs. Chu. Your travels to the Chu house that night were adventurous and it felt great to help your friend carry out her rescue plan. Now you are back home and, seeing through the window that Widow Wang and Ming-li aren't sleeping well due to hunger, Tabby tells you she is going inside to make them happy.

1. Tell about your midnight adventure with Tabby, to retrieve the golden beetle from the Chu's house.
2. Continue your story, starting at the moment that Tabby slipped back into the house to make the Wang's happy.

Make sure to include:

- ☐ the thoughts, feelings, and actions that you would experience from Blackfoot's point of view.
- ☐ good, descriptive words to help your reader *see* the story you are telling.
- ☐ dialogue to make your story more interesting to read.

To support your writing, use evidence from your character chart as well as your answers to the questions asked in today's reading.

Keep up with your narrative writing and make sure you have it for lesson five! I can't wait to see what you come up with!

Student Response:

I stood there in the dark staring at Tabby with my eyes wide open. I couldn't believe what she was saying. She had known all along that Mrs. Chu had stolen the magical, golden beetle. She had let Widow Wang, Ming-Li and me starve. "How could she not say something when the villagers would not even give us their scraps?" I muttered under my breath. But as Tabby told me of her plan to take back the golden beetle, I remembered that she was my friend. We had been through good times when food was plentiful and bad times when food was scarce.

I could feel the excitement begin to rise. I wagged my tail and told Tabby, "Of course, I will go with you to get the golden beetle back from the Chu's!" In my excitement, I forgot I was a dog and not as nimble as a cat. "Tabby, how will we get the golden beetle?" I asked. "I can't move as quickly as you and I am not as sly as you." I told her with worry in my voice. Tabby, who always seemed to have everything figured out, explained her plan to me and how we would work together to get the golden beetle back to the Wang's. "At midnight, we go!" hissed Tabby more determined than ever to retrieve the golden beetle.

As the clock struck midnight, Tabby and I set out on our adventure. We quietly walked down the road from the Wang's house as if we were tiptoeing into an unknown world. Tabby and I snuck in and out of doorways and alleys as we made our way through our village. So far, no one had noticed us or at least no one was given us any attention. "But why should they now?" I thought to myself. "They didn't before."

Once we made it to the river, I looked at Tabby with questioning eyes. "What now?" I asked her. "I can swim and enjoy the water because I have since I was a puppy. But you are a cat, you don't like to be in the water." Tabby sat down and licked her paw then said, "I know that which is why I am going to ride on your back Blackfoot". "What? How?" I exclaimed. "Just trust me, Blackfoot," said Tabby. I stood there for a moment and all the memories of our friendship came rushing back. I admitted it was crazy but I trusted Tabby and we had no other choice.

Student Response continued:

I laid down and let Tabby climb on my back. Tabby, ever so gently, got on my back and off we went across the river. Tabby didn't weigh that much since we hadn't eaten in some time because Mrs. Chu had stolen the golden beetle. However, I was beginning to get tired from a lack of strength. I just kept saying, "We are getting the beetle back. We will eat wonderfully again". This motivated me to swim harder. We finally reached the other side of the river and without even shaking the water off my body I ran with Tabby to Mr. and Mrs. Chu's house. Once we reached it I stood up tall on all four legs so Tabby could again get on my back. Once there, Tabby used all her strength and bounded up and over the wall. "Stay here and be quiet", she whispered to me.

I waited for what seemed like an eternity. Time drug slowly by as I kept as quiet as I could while Tabby was behind the wall of the Chu's house. I ran off rats, growled at cats, and stared down other dogs just to keep us safe so we could get the golden beetle and make our way back to the Wang's. "Won't they be surprised?" I thought and started daydreaming about how happy the Wang's would be when they saw Tabby and I return with the golden beetle. About that time, I heard a loud bang and looked up to see Tabby jumping down from the wall. "Go, go, go!" she yelled. We both started running like gazelles being chased by lions. Once at the river, Tabby jumped on my back and I swam as hard as I could in order to make it to the other side. On the other side, we ran through the streets of the village without caring who saw us. "Tabby" I panted, "can we slow down now?" "NO!", she screeched. Finally, as we ran up the hill to the Wang's house we slowed our pace. We stopped just outside the window and peered in to see the Wang's tossing and turning. "Oh Tabby," I said. "Look how pitiful and hungry they are but we have done it. We have saved the day by returning the golden beetle to its rightful home."

Student Response continued:

Tabby turned and looked at me. “Yes” she purred. “But let me go in and show them. You are still wet from the river. Plus, you know how excited you get when something good is about to happen.” I stood there and looked at her. She was right. I was a mess and I could be over excited sometimes. “Okay Tabby” I said. “You go and show them the golden beetle we have returned. I will watch through the window and then come in after the Wang’s are so happy to have it back.”

I watched Tabby gingerly walk in the house. She confidently strutted her way across the floor. Tabby jumped on Widow Wang’s bed which woke Widow Wang up. Tabby dropped the golden beetle on the bed in front of Widow Wang and sat down on the bed. “Oh Tabby!” Widow Wang yelled. “You have returned our most prized possession!” Tabby rubbed her body against Widow Wang. It was at the point I started to go into the house when I heard Widow Wang say, “Oh Ming-Li look at what Tabby has done for us”. I stopped in my tracks. “Tabby has done for us? What did Widow Wang mean? I helped to get the golden beetle back as well.” I said to myself.

Tabby turned and looked at me with a glint in her eyes. She purred even louder and rubbed her body against Widow Wang’s and Ming-Li’s legs. Widow Wang said, “Tabby, you will get the first food now that the golden beetle is back.” I couldn’t believe it. I had been Tabby’s friend through everything. I had helped her get the golden beetle for the Wang’s so our bellies could be full again and we could be a happy family once more. Now, I knew I had been used. The longer I stood there and watched them love and praise Tabby the madder I became. Never again would I trust Tabby. “I have been used for Tabby’s gain” I said to myself between my gritted teeth.

CHARACTER	WHAT WE KNOW
Widow Wang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a widow ● Ming-li's mother ● used money on medicine for Ming-li when he was sick ● poor and hungry ● has a dog and cat ● visited by old monk ● monk gives her gift from the gods: magical golden beetle ● surprised at the gift ● told how to use the magical golden beetle when she wants food ● used the magical golden beetle to cook "something" after the monk left her house ● discovered that the golden beetle worked. ● convinced Ming-li that the golden beetle was real and magical. ● was happy to feed her son, the dog, and the cat. ● began using the beetle to make lots of fancy food. ● was so proud of their new luck that she asked others to dinner. ● beetle is gone - hungry again!

CHARACTER	WHAT WE KNOW
Ming-Li	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● son of Widow Wang ● feels bad for his mom ● poor and hungry ● eldest, or oldest, son of Widow Wang ● was very sick during the winter after trying to fix the roof of family's house ● doesn't have a job ● believes the gods will provide ● looks for a job every day ● came home to tell his mother he didn't get a job - again! ● thought his mother was stark mad when she told him about the magic beetle. ● felt totally surprised when it worked! Yummy dumplings! ● listened to his mother's tale of how the magic beetle worked. ● ate a lot, with the dog and the cat, and eventually got lazy - no need to work anymore. ● was so proud of their new luck that he asked others to dinner. ● beetle is gone - hungry again!

CHARACTER	WHAT WE KNOW
Tabby the cat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● hungry ● cold ● skinny ● full and fat ● hungry and skinny again ● hates not having decent food to eat ● knows about the golden beetle ● saw Mrs. Chu steal the golden beetle ● develops a plan to get the golden beetle back ● convinces Blackfoot to help with the plan to get the golden beetle back ● rides Blackfoot's back across the river ● protected from strange animals by Blackfoot ● retrieves the golden beetle from the Chu's house ● slips inside the house once they got back with the beetle

CHARACTER	WHAT WE KNOW
Blackfoot the dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● hungry ● almost dead ● cold ● full and fat ● hungry and skinny again ● hates not having decent food to eat ● surprised Tabby knew about the golden beetle ● willing to help Tabby get the golden beetle back ● wishes he was a cat so he could do things like Tabby ● carries Tabby across the river ● protects Tabby from strange animals ● can't get into the house with the door locked and has to wait as Tabby goes in

CHARACTER	WHAT WE KNOW
Mrs. Chu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● from another village ● visited the Wang's for a nice dinner ● surprised at the nice meal ● saw the "charm" (golden beetle) and how Widow Wang used it to cook dinner ● has a plan to "borrow" the golden beetle to cook with it too ● not worried about removing the golden beetle from the house ● willing to lie to take the golden beetle from the Wang's house ● convinces Mr. Chu that they should go forward with the plan to borrow the beetle ● no one, but Tabby the cat, saw her take the golden beetle ● <i>didn't have the beetle long!</i>
Mr. Chu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● from another village ● visited the Wang's for a nice dinner ● surprised at the nice meal - best meal he had ever eaten! ● believes they will always be poor – no luck ● unsure if they should "borrow" the golden beetle ● tries to find holes in Mrs. Chu's plan ● reminds Mrs. Chu they are only "borrowing" the golden beetle, not "stealing" it. ● <i>didn't have the beetle long!</i>

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CHARACTER	WHAT WE KNOW
Blackfoot the dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● hungry ● almost dead ● cold ● full and fat ● hungry and skinny again ● hates not having decent food to eat ● surprised Tabby knew about the golden beetle ● willing to help Tabby get the golden beetle back ● wishes he was a cat so he could do things like Tabby ● carries Tabby across the river ● protects Tabby from strange animals ● can't get into the house with the door locked and has to wait as Tabby goes in ● <i>doesn't get any credit for help Tabby retrieve the golden beetle</i> ● <i>stands outside and smells Widow Wang's first meal since their return</i> ● <i>is shocked when Tabby comes out and brags about Widow Wang's kindness</i> ● <i>forced to go back to the streets for food</i> ● <i>is very angry and tells all other dogs to never trust cats</i> ● <i>he, and his descendants will hate cats forever</i>

Independent Practice:

Why the Dog Hates the Cat is a Chinese fable that teaches us a lesson through the eyes of some very interesting characters! Widow Wang, Ming-li, Mr. and Mrs. Chu, as well as Tabby and Blackfoot have all shown us that relationships can change a lot during difficult times. Throughout the story, we've see this play out in each relationship. Characters treated each other in a variety of ways, and most characters ended up acting selfishly and damaging their relationships.

Remember, this fable was told by a narrator. Now, *you* are going to be the narrator and rewrite this fable. It's the same story with all of the same characters, but with a twist! Instead of approaching the problem of hunger in a selfish way, the characters in *your* version choose to be kind and caring.

Think about:

- The way your characters react to the magic golden beetle.
- How your characters interact with one another.
- What will change in your characters' relationships based on the way they treat one another.

Last, but not least, you get to give your version of the fable a new title!

To support your writing, use evidence from your character charts as well as your answers to the questions asked throughout our time together.