

PBS Lesson Series

ELA, Grade 5, Lesson 18

Teacher Packet

Independent Practice – Lesson 17

Imagine that you are Ming-Li. Retell the events in the story from *your* point of view. Start at the beginning of the story as you leave to look for work, and end where our text ended today. Remember, you, your mother, your cat and dog are all living a wonderful life full of good food from the magic of the golden beetle. And now, you and your mother have decided to share your wonderful food with friends and family members. Will you share the secret of the golden beetle, too?

Make sure to include thoughts, feelings, and actions from Ming-Li's point of view. You might even see things differently than the way the narrator portrayed it. Include good, descriptive words to help your reader see the story you are telling. Also add some dialogue to make your story more interesting to read.

Student Response:

I stop and take a deep breath. “The gods will take care of us.”, I say quietly to myself as I make my way down the path from our home toward the village to look for work. I ask every shop owner, every villager, and every family member I see, if they have work I could do. The only answer I receive from them all is no. At the end of the day, I drag my tired, hungry body back to our small house and say to myself, “The gods will take care of us.” As I enter the house, I notice the big smile my mother, Widow Wang, has on her face and how happy she is. “Mother, what is going on?” I ask. “Why are you so happy? Can’t you tell I didn’t find work again today?” I say sadly and hang my head.

“Yes, but I have the most wonderful news. We have been blessed by the gods.” My mother tells me with a huge smile on her face. “Wait and see what can happen!” she says excitedly.

I think to myself that my mother has gone crazy from not having any food. I watch her take something and place it in a pot with water, say a rhyme, and then wait for something to happen. While I watch my mother and think she has lost her mind, I begin to smell the most wonderful smell. I ask, “Mother, just what is that smell?” “Sit down Ming-Li and enjoy!”, my mother says. I sit at the table as Mother places the best-looking pork dumplings in front of me. I can’t believe my eyes. “Have the gods answered my prayers?” I wonder out loud. “Eat my son who loves me so much, then I will answer your question.”, Widow Wang, my mother, exclaims!

I eat quickly and feel my stomach filling up with the best pork dumplings I have ever tasted. I look at my mother who could no longer keep her secret. “Ming-Li, look”, she says. She holds out the magical, golden beetle for me to see. “Mother, what is that?”, I ask. My mother, Widow Wang, tells me, Ming-Li, the story of how the Old Monk came and gave her the golden beetle but told her not to sell it. She told me that the Old Monk said to use it to make food for our family. I couldn’t believe my ears. The gods had answered my prayers so much so that even Blackfoot and Tabby had leftovers to eat.

The days went by and my mother, me, Blackfoot and Tabby ate every kind of wonderful food we could think of eating. Our bellies got very full. I thought how lucky I was that I no longer had to work since Mother had the magical, golden beetle. In fact, I told her, “I am so blessed by the gods since I will never have to work again and it’s all because of your golden beetle!” I thought for a second then excitedly said, “Mother let’s invite all our family and friends to see how good the Window Wang and her family have it now and that we are have so much food even our dog and cat are fat.” So, we invited everyone to come see our wonderful magical, golden beetle that provided us with every food we could think of and to show how blessed we were by the gods. Family and friends came from near and far to see our magical, golden beetle and eat with us. I thought to myself as I rubbed my full, fat belly, “It is very nice to have all these people think we are special.”

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 ● <i>discovered that the golden beetle worked.</i> ● <i>convinced Ming-li that the golden beetle was real and magical.</i> ● <i>was happy to feed her son, the dog, and the cat.</i> ● <i>began using the beetle to make lots of fancy food.</i> ● <i>was so proud of their new luck that she asked others to dinner.</i>

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 ● <i>came home to tell his mother he didn't get a job - again!</i> ● <i>thought his mother was stark mad when she told him about the magic beetle.</i> ● <i>felt totally surprised when it worked! Yummy dumplings!</i> ● <i>listened to his mother's tale of how the magic beetle worked.</i> ● <i>ate a lot, with the dog and the cat, and eventually got lazy - no need to work anymore.</i> ● <i>was so proud of their new luck that he asked others to dinner.</i>

CHARACTER	WHAT WE KNOW
Tabby the cat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● hungry● cold● skinny● <i>full and fat</i>
Blackfoot the dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● hungry● almost dead● cold● <i>full and fat</i>

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
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.

Independent Practice

Everything changed for Mr. and Mrs. Chu once they showed up to the Wang's for dinner and saw the fabulous feast that lay before them. Mrs. Chu was clever enough to know that this was *not* the normal feast of her friends, Widow Wang and Ming-li. Mrs. Chu knew she had to watch closely to see if she could figure out how Widow Wang made this unbelievable meal, and she did! Mrs. Chu discovered Widow Wang's secret of the golden beetle and made a plan to borrow it, if only for a few days, and then return it later. After a bit of convincing, Mr. Chu agreed and Mrs. Chu was off to take the golden beetle from Widow Wang's kitchen cupboard.

Mr. and Mrs. Chu made the decision to 'borrow' the golden beetle without telling Widow Wang. They were hungry too and thought they would only need it for a few days to fatten up, then, they would return it. No harm done!

Form an opinion about this situation, either agreeing or disagreeing with Mr. and Mrs. Chu's decision to take the beetle from the Widow Wang. Based on your opinion, include how their decision might impact their relationship with one another and with the Wangs.

Support your opinion with reasons and evidence pulled from your notes, including your character chart and answers from the questions you answered during today's lesson.

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