Fable Mentor Text Character Traits and Motivations Lesson 1

**I can ask relevant questions and write about character traits, motivations, and feelings.**

**Essential Question: How do the decisions and actions of characters reveal their personalities?**

**Connect:** We’ve looked at several fairy tales. This week we’ll look at fables, another type of folktale, but we get to do something really cool with them. Remember when we compared different stories by the same author? This week, we’ll look at different versions of the same fable.

**Teach:** As I read the story, of course I’ll think about questions that pop up, then revisit the questions to see what answers I found just like we’ve been practicing, but what I really want to focus on today are the characters. Today we will begin learning the strategy of **asking questions about and thinking about our characters’ traits, motivations and feelings**. Repeat that with me. You guys are experts on questions, right? Turn to your partner and talk about these words on the board one at a time: trait, motivation, and feelings. First: start with traits (30 seconds each), now: motivations (30 seconds each), and finally: feelings (30 seconds each). Share what your partner thought about the word trait. Remember to use the sentence starter, “My partner thinks the word trait means….because…”. Discuss as a class, scribing on the anchor chart. I remind students that motivation answers why a character chooses an action or saying. That’s a lot to think about in one day, but they all work together. To make it easier, **I like making a chart with columns: 1) Action or Saying 2) Feelings 3) Motivations 4) Traits. Underneath this, I write Question.** Motivations and Traits are the last columns because the first 2 columns are clues to what the character is like. Why he/she makes the choices made or is a certain way. We can write these sideways in our reader’s response journals, then make a new one tomorrow with a new chart. Copy mine in your Reader Response journal and write Question on the bottom inside like my example. We’ll work through it together. Give students time to create chart in their chart. Those who finish early can help a partner in need. Read one version of a fable such as The Three Little Pigs, The Lion and the Mouse, The Grasshopper and the Ant, or The Tortoise and the Hare. Model on an Anchor Chart how to fill out the chart **choosing an action or feeling**, then inferring motivation and trait. Skip to the space underneath for your next observation. You only fill out two columns each time: action/trait or motiso students have a visual. You could pre-make a smaller one for the document camera to shorten your time. As you read, think aloud some questions you have, then point out when or if they are answered along the way. The main focus is the chart: stop in the story when you notice an example of character action or feeling then connect it with the appropriate inference and motivation. Ex: When Grasshopper’s action is to to chat and play, then he is motivated by NOT wanting to work and we can infer that he is lazy or likes to put off work (procrastinator).

Students can write it like this in their Readers’ Response Journal if they are advanced enough or use flip book papers that you’ve prepared.

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| **Action/Words** | **Feeling** | **Motivation (Why?)** | **Trait** |
| **The grasshopper plays his music instead of working** |  | I can infer that he doesn’t like to work | I can infer that he is lazy or a procrastinator. |

**Question:** How will Grasshopper eat when it is winter?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action/Words** | **Feeling** | **Motivation (Why?)** | **Trait** |
|  | **The ants were tired, but continued working** | I can infer the ants wanted to be prepared. | I can infer that the ants have stamina and perseverance (keep to it attitude) |

**Question:** Why do the ants work the whole time? Could they play some?

**Active Engagement (Included during Teach Time):** Show students how to make the 4 columns sideways. Students will copy yours for this first day as they share ideas with partners and the class in an interactive style. Discuss how do the decisions and actions of the characters reveal their personalities?

**Link:** When we can take the time to think about our characters, then we know we are really digging into our story, understanding more about who our character is. This makes our reading more interesting as we engage and become a part of the story. Tomorrow, we’ll work on another version of our story, working in small groups. During your reading today, find something your character does, says, or feels and infer what that tells you about the character. Write it on a post-it note in your book for sharing time.

**Share:** Share with a partner how using the strategy to think about your characters’ actions, words, and feelings helped you understand the character and the story better. How did your character act? What decisions did he/she make? What does this tell you about the character? How do you know? What questions did you have? How were they answered? If they weren’t answered, can we infer the answer?