



ELA GRADE 3

SPRING BREAK LEARNING

MARCH 10-14

2025

**The Office of
Literacy**

Spring Break Learning Academy



STUDENT RESOURCES

The materials contained in this packet provides students with additional practice reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Students can return the completed packet to their teacher for review. The materials are organized as follows:

Table of Contents

- I. Reading/Writing Companion: Shared Read Text
- II. Literature Anthology: Anchor Text
- III. Practice Book Pages: Vocabulary
- IV. Leveled Reader (On Level)



Reading/Writing Companion

Shared Read Text

Name _____

Anansi Learns a Lesson

1 Main Question

Turtle visited his friend Anansi. What did Turtle and Anansi want?

Anansi the Spider was eating his lunch. Then Turtle came to visit Anansi. Turtle was a friend.

“Those bananas look good,” said Turtle. “I am very hungry.”

Anansi did not want to **share** his bananas. He was hungry. So Anansi **decided** to **trick** Turtle.



Glossary

share (*compartir*)
give any of

decided (*decidió*)
made a plan or made
a choice to

trick (*hacerle una
trampa*) to confuse or
fool someone



Additional Questions

1 What was Anansi doing when Turtle came to visit?

Anansi was eating his _____.

2 What was Anansi eating?

Anansi was eating _____.

3 What did Turtle want?

Turtle was _____ and asked for some _____.

4 What did Anansi want to do?

Anansi did not want to _____ his bananas, so he decided to _____ Turtle.

Word Bank

share

lunch

bananas

hungry

trick

Main Question 1 Revisited

Turtle visited his friend Anansi. What did Turtle and Anansi want?

2 Main Question

Turtle wanted to take a banana. What did Anansi do?

Anansi made a **sly grin**. “**Help yourself**,” he said.

Turtle **reached for** the food. “Please wash your hands,” said Anansi. So Turtle went to wash his hands.

Then Turtle came back, and part of the bananas **were gone**. Anansi ate them.

“I did not want them to **spoil**,” said Anansi.

Turtle made another **attempt** to eat. Anansi stopped him again.

“Please wash your hands,” he said.

Glossary

sly grin (*sonrisa pícaro*) smile that shows he is thinking of a trick or plan

help yourself (*adelante*) take whatever you want

reached for (*iba a tomar*) moved to get

then (*entonces*) next

were gone (*ya no estaban*) missing

spoil (*echen a perder*) become rotten or bad

attempt (*intento*) try or effort

Word Bank

wash

bananas

hands

spoil

ate



Additional Questions

1 What did Anansi tell Turtle to do?

Anansi told Turtle to wash his _____.

2 What happened while Turtle washed his hands?

Anansi _____ some of the _____.

3 What reason did Anansi give Turtle?

Anansi told Turtle that he did not want the

_____ to _____.

- 4 What happened when Turtle tried to take a banana again?

Anansi told him to _____ his hands.

Main Question 2 Revisited

Turtle wanted to take a banana. What did Anansi do?

3 Main Question

Anansi asked Turtle to wash his hands again. Why did Anansi do this?

Turtle knew his hands were clean. But Anansi thought they were **filthy**. Turtle was too **shy** to say no. When Turtle **returned**, the bananas were gone.

“I tricked you,” said Anansi. “Ha, ha, ha.”



Additional Questions

- 1 Why did Turtle wash his hands again?

Turtle was too _____ to tell Anansi that his hands were _____.

Glossary

filthy (*sucias*) very dirty

shy (*penoso*) unsure or not comfortable

returned (*regresó*) came back

Word Bank

all
shy
clean
ate
washed

2 What happened next?

Anansi ate _____ of the bananas.

3 How did Anansi trick Turtle?

Anansi _____ the bananas each
time Turtle _____ his hands.

Main Question 3 Revisited

Anansi asked Turtle to wash his hands again. Why did Anansi do this?

4 Main Question

Turtle was angry at Anansi. What did Turtle ask Anansi to do?

Turtle was **mad**. He decided to **teach Anansi a lesson**. "Anansi, please come to my house for dinner. It is at the bottom of the lake," said Turtle.

Anansi said yes. He loved **free** food.

Glossary

mad (*enojado*) angry or upset

teach Anansi a lesson (*darle una lección a Anansi*) punish Anansi

free (*gratis*) something Anansi did not have to pay for



Additional Questions

- 1 How did Turtle feel after Anansi tricked him?

Turtle felt _____ that Anansi had _____ him.

- 2 What did Turtle decide to do?

Turtle _____ he would teach Anansi a _____.

- 3 What did Turtle say to Anansi?

Turtle _____ Anansi to come to his house for _____.

- 4 What did Anansi do?

Anansi _____ to come to dinner because he loved food that was _____.

Word Bank

tricked
agreed
dinner
mad
free
lesson
decided
asked

Main Question 4 Revisited

Turtle was angry at Anansi. What did Turtle ask Anansi to do?

5 Main Question

Turtle wanted to trick Anansi. Who agreed to help Turtle?

Turtle wanted to trick Anansi, but Turtle needed help. So Turtle found Fish in the lake.

“Fish, I need your help,” Turtle said. “**Together** we will trick Anansi.”

Fish was happy to help. So the two friends worked together and made a **plan**.



Additional Questions

- 1 Who is Turtle’s friend? Where does this friend live?

Turtle’s friend is _____. He
_____ in the _____.

- 2 What did Turtle ask Fish to do?

Turtle wanted Fish to _____
Anansi.

Glossary

together (*juntos*) work or do something as a group or team

plan (*plan*) come up with an idea

Word Bank

together
lives
lake
trick
Fish
plan

3 What did the two friends do?

They worked _____ on a
_____ to trick Anansi.

Main Question 5 Revisited

Turtle wanted to trick Anansi. Who agreed to help Turtle?

6 Main Question

Fish met Anansi at the lake. What did Fish tell Anansi to do?

Fish met Anansi at the lake the next day. "We will swim to Turtle's house together," said Fish.

Anansi jumped into the water. But he was not a good swimmer. He was also very **light**.

"How will I swim down to Turtle's house?" he cried.

"**Grab** some heavy stones. You will **sink**. You will not **float**," Fish said.

Anansi picked up two big stones and jumped into the lake. He sank to Turtle's house. Fish swam beside Anansi. Then Anansi saw a **feast** of berries at Turtle's house.

Glossary

light (*ligero*) not heavy

grab (*toma*) pick up or take

sink (*hundir*) fall to the bottom of the lake

float (*flotar*) stay on the surface of the water

feast (*festín*) a large meal



Additional Questions

Word Bank

swim
light
heavy
house
jumped
sank
berries
two
sink

1 Why did Fish meet Anansi at the lake?

Fish was going to help Anansi _____
to Turtle's _____.

2 What problem did Anansi have?

Anansi was too _____ and could not
_____ well.

3 How did Fish help Anansi?

Fish told Anansi to grab some _____
stones. The stones will make Anansi
_____.

4 What did Anansi do?

Anansi grabbed _____ stones and
_____ in the lake. He _____.

5 What did Anansi see at Turtle's house?

Anansi saw a big bowl of _____ at
Turtle's house.

Main Question 6 Revisited

Fish met Anansi at the lake. What did Fish tell Anansi to do?

7 Main Question

Anansi saw a feast at Turtle's house. What happened next?

“Welcome, Anansi!” said Turtle. “Drop those stones. Help yourself.”

Anansi dropped the stones. Then he rocketed to the top of the lake. “Fish and Turtle tricked me,” he **cried**.



Glossary

welcome (*bienvenido*)

hello

cried (*gritó*) said in an excited or troubled voice



Additional Questions

Word Bank

dropped

feast

lake

top

- 1 What happened when Fish told Anansi to have some berries?

When Anansi _____ the stones, he rocketed to the _____ of the _____.

- 2 Why did Anansi say that he was tricked?

He could not reach the _____ of berries.

Main Question 7 Revisited

Anansi saw a feast at Turtle's house. What happened next?

8 Main Question

Turtle and Fish tricked Anansi. How did they teach Anansi a lesson?

Turtle and Fish laughed.

"We worked together, and we taught Anansi a lesson," said Turtle.

"And we **solved** a problem," said Fish.

"Let's eat!"

Glossary

solved (*resolvió*) found the answer to



Additional Questions

1 What was Fish and Turtle's plan?

Turtle and Fish knew Anansi could not stay at the _____ of the lake. Anansi was too _____ to stay at the bottom without the _____.

2 Why did Fish and Turtle laugh?

Fish and Turtle taught Anansi a _____.

3 What lesson did Fish and Turtle want Anansi to learn?

They wanted Anansi to learn that it is not _____ to _____ your friends.

Word Bank

lesson
stones
light
trick
bottom
nice

Main Question 8 Revisited

Turtle and Fish tricked Anansi. How did they teach Anansi a lesson?

Comprehension Skill

Problem and Solution How did Turtle solve his problem?

Authors can **organize** a story by describing problems and solutions. The author first tells what problem a character has. Later, the author shows how the character fixes, or solves, this problem. Different characters can have different problems.



Practice

1 The author first tells how Anansi created a _____ for Turtle. The problem was that Anansi tricked Turtle and did not _____.

2 Next the author tells how Turtle found a _____. Turtle's _____ was to trick Anansi by _____.

3 **Extension:** Anansi did not want to _____.
To solve his problem, Anansi told Turtle to _____ so Anansi could eat all the bananas.

Glossary

problem (*problema*) something that troubles a character or gets in the character's way

solution (*solución*) how a character solves a problem

organize (*organizar*) tell a story in a certain way or put ideas in order

Word Bank

problem

solution

Comprehension Skill Revisited

How did Turtle solve his problem?



Reread Use the graphic organizer as you reread to list the steps Turtle took to solve his problem.

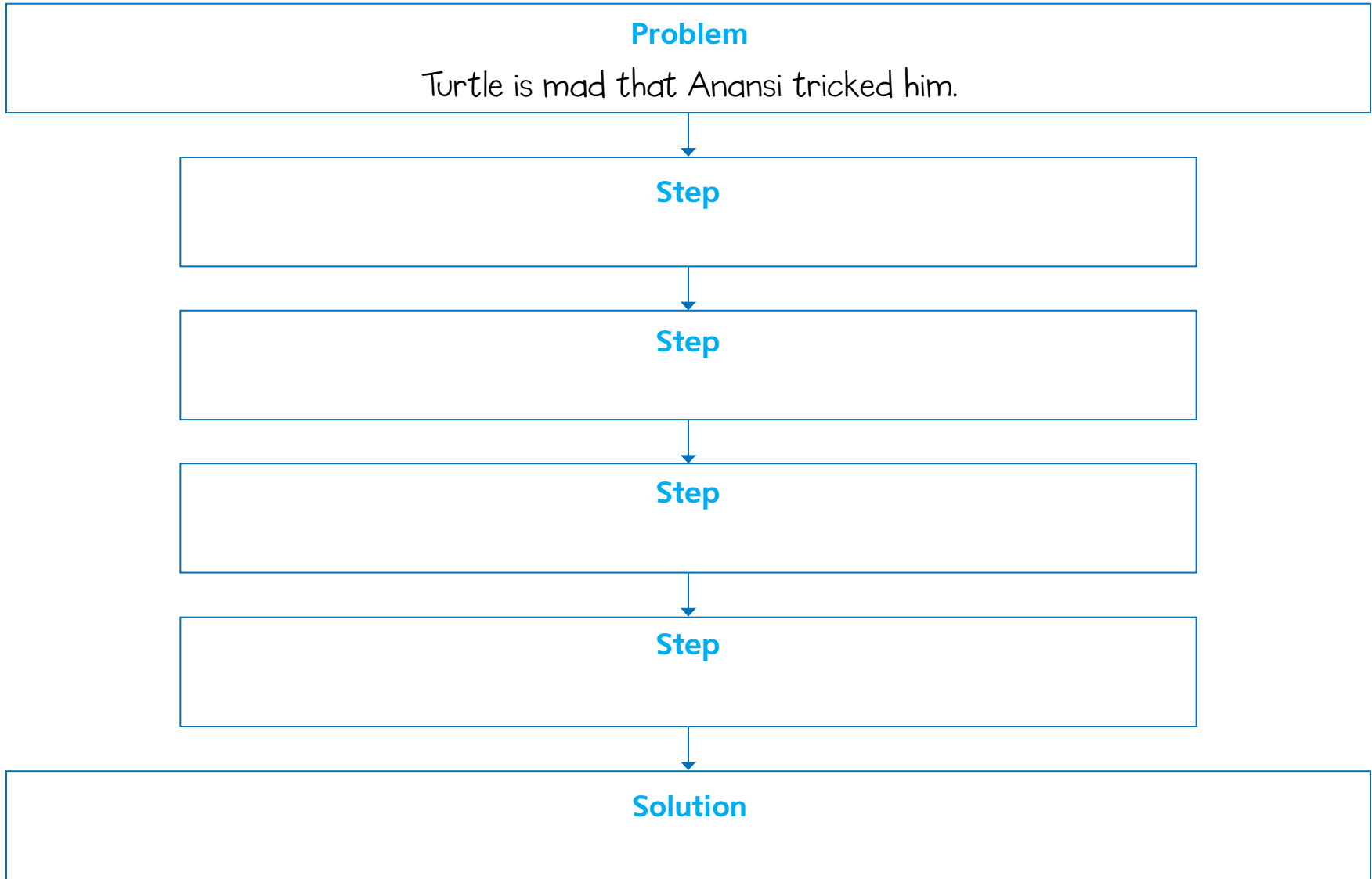
Summarize



Talk with a partner to summarize important ideas and events in “Anansi Learns a Lesson.”

Title _____

Name _____





GLOSSARY

Title _____

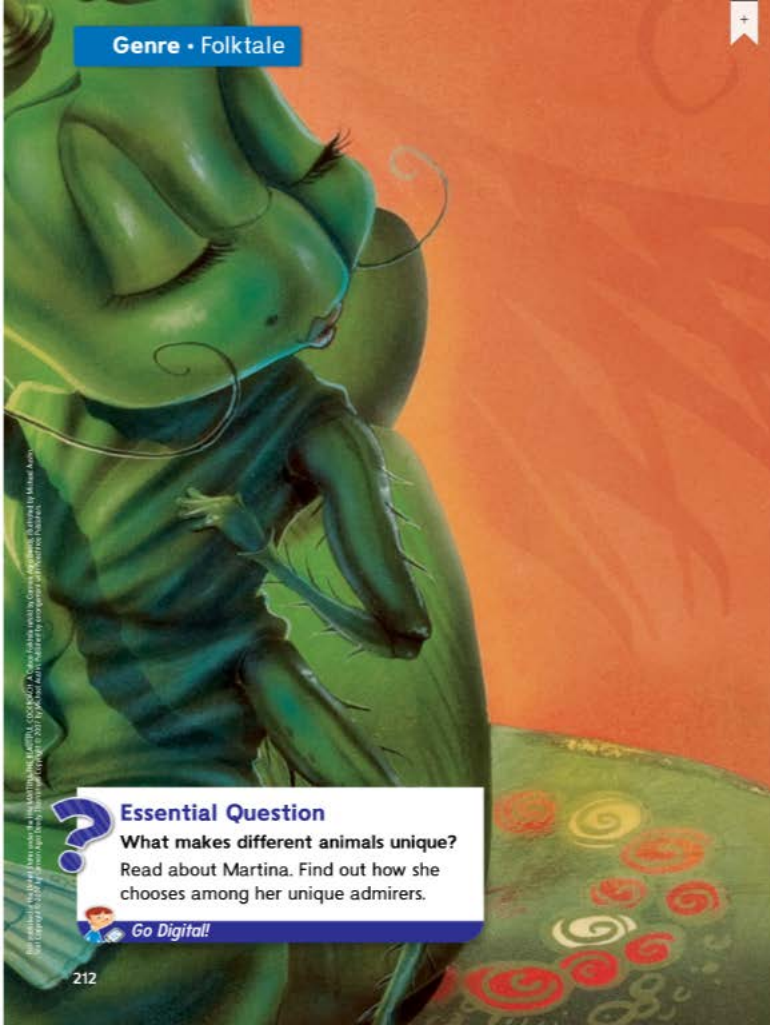
Name _____

Word/ Translation	Your Definition	Page Number	Your Sentence or Example



Literature Anthology

Anchor Text



Essential Question

What makes different animals unique?

Read about Martina. Find out how she chooses among her unique admirers.



Go Digital!



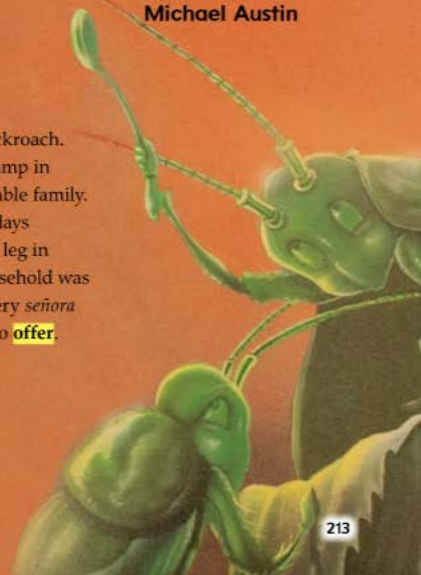
Martina

the Beautiful Cockroach
A Cuban Folktale

retold by
Carmen Agra Deedy

Illustrated by
Michael Austin

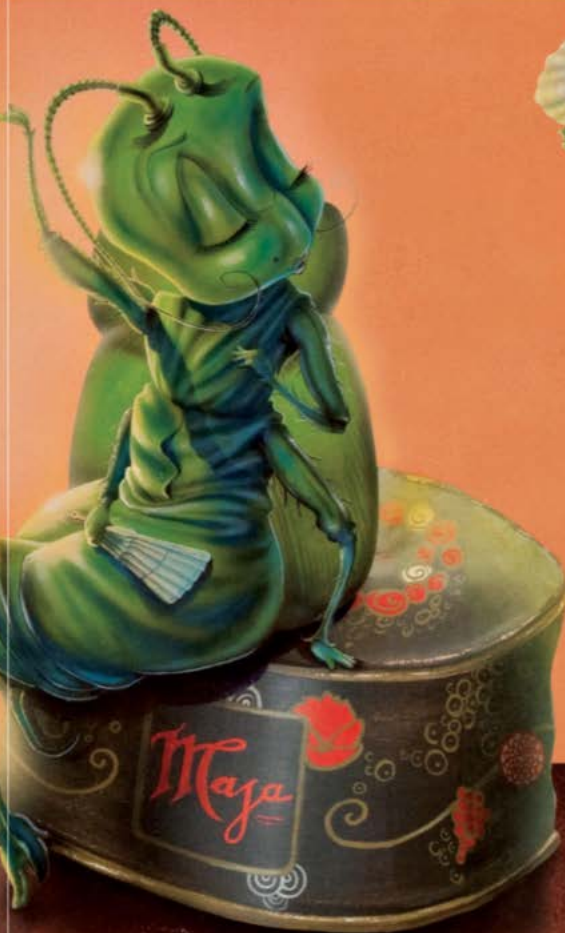
Martina Josefina Catalina Cucaracha was a beautiful cockroach. She lived in a cozy street lamp in Old Havana with her big, lovable family. Now that Martina was 21 days old, she was ready to give her leg in marriage. The Cucaracha household was crawling with excitement! Every *señora* in the family had something to **offer**.



Tía Cuca gave her *una peineta*,
a seashell comb.

Mamá gave her *una mantilla*,
a lace shawl.

But *Abuela*, her Cuban
grandmother, gave her *un consejo*
increíble, some shocking advice.



“You want me to do WHAT?” Martina
was aghast.

“You are a beautiful cockroach,” said *Abuela*.
“Finding husbands to choose from will be easy—
picking the right one could be tricky.”

“B-b-but,” stammered Martina, “how will
spilling COFFEE on a suitor’s shoes help me
find a good husband?”

Her grandmother smiled. “It will make him
angry! Then you’ll know how he will speak to
you when he loses his temper. Trust me, Martina.
The Coffee Test never fails.”



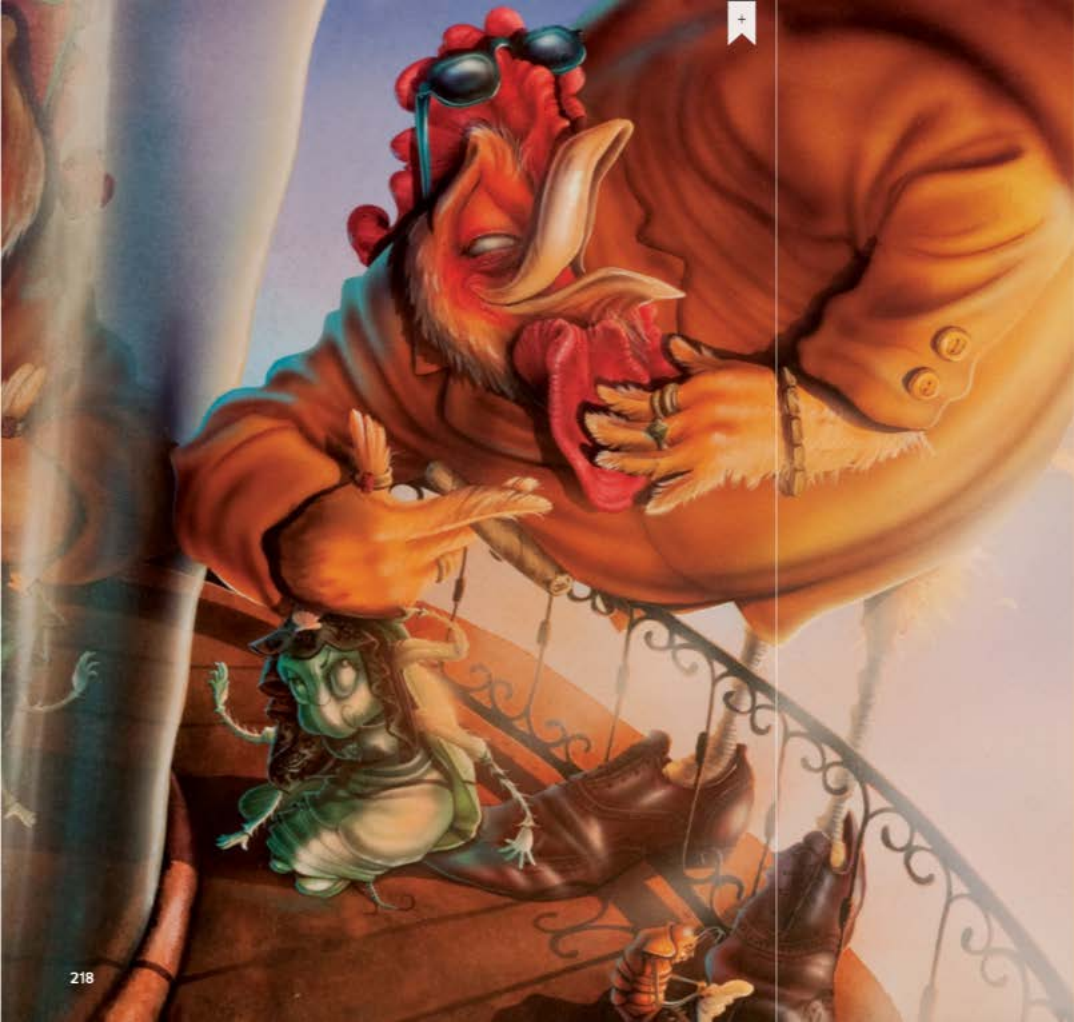
Martina wasn't so sure.

Meanwhile, *Papá* sent *el perico*, the parrot,
to spread the word.

Soon all Havana—from the busy sidewalks
of El Prado to El Morro castle—was abuzz
with the news.

Martina the beautiful cockroach was ready
to choose a husband.





As was the custom, Martina would greet her suitors from the balcony, under her family's many **watchful** eyes.

Daintily, she sat down
and crossed her legs,
and crossed her legs,
and crossed her legs.

She didn't have long to wait.

Don Gallo, the rooster, strutted up first. Martina tried not to stare at his **splendid** shoes.

Keeping one eye on his reflection, Don Gallo greeted her with a sweeping bow. "¡Caramba! You really are a beautiful cockroach. I will look even more **fabulous** with you on my wing!"

With that, he leaned forward and crooned,

"Martina

Josefina

Catalina

Cucaracha,

Beautiful *muchacha*,

Won't you be my wife?"

Martina hesitated only for an instant.

"Coffee, *señor*?"

Right on cue, *Abuela* appeared.

With a quick glance at her grandmother, Martina nervously splattered coffee onto the rooster's spotless shoes.

"Oh my!" she said with mock **dismay**. "I'm all feelers today!"

"¡ki-ki-ri-kiiii!" The rooster was furious. "Clumsy cockroach! I will teach you better manners when you are my wife."

Martina was stunned. The Coffee Test had worked!

"A most humble offer, *señor*," she said coolly, "but I cannot accept. You are much too cocky for me."



STOP AND CHECK

Visualize What is the Coffee Test? Use the descriptions to visualize the events in the story.



Don Cerdo, the pig, hoofed up next. His smell curled the little hairs on Martina's legs.

"What an unimaginable scent," Martina wheezed. "Is it some new pig cologne?"

"Oh no, *señorita*. It's the sweet aroma of my pig sty. Rotten eggs! Turnip peels! Stinky cheese!" Don Cerdo licked his chops and sang,

"Martina
Josefina

Catalina

Cucaracha,
Beautiful *muchacha*,

Won't you be my wife?"

Martina had already left in search of coffee.

She wasted no time with the pig.

"¡Gronc! ¡Gronc!" squealed Don Cerdo as he dabbed at the coffee on his shoes. "What a tragedy for my poor loafers!"

He really is quite a ham, thought Martina.
“Calm yourself, *señor*. I’ll clean them for you!”
“I’ll say you will!” he snorted. “When you are my
wife, there’ll be no end to cleaning up after me!”

Martina rolled her eyes in **disbelief**.

“A most charming offer, *señor*,” she said drily, “but
I must decline. You are much too boorish for me.”

The Coffee Test had saved her from yet another
unsuitable suitor.



STOP AND CHECK

Visualize What happens when
Martina pours coffee on the pig?
Use the descriptions to visualize
the events in the story.

The pig was scarcely out of sight when Don Lagarto,
the lizard, crept over the railing. His oily fingers brushed
the little cockroach’s lovely *mantilla*.

“You shouldn’t sneak up on a lady like that!”

“I don’t sneak. I creep,” he said, circling Martina.

For some reason this fellow really bugged her. “I’ve
had enough of creeps for one day,” said Martina. “*Adios*.”





"But I need you! Wait!" The lizard fell on one scaly knee and warbled,

"Martina

Josefina

Catalina

Cucaracha,

Beautiful *muchacha*,

Won't you be my wife?"

Martina sighed. "Let me see if there's any coffee left."

This time she wasn't taking any chances. Martina returned with TWO cups for the lizard. "*¡Pssst! ¡Pssst!*" he spat. Don Lagarto was livid. He changed colors three times before he finally found his true one. "And to think," he hissed. "I was going to eat—er—MARRY you!"

Martina stared at the lizard. You could have heard a breadcrumb drop.

"Food for thought, *señor*," Martina said icily, "but I must refuse. You are much too cold-blooded for me."



When her grandmother returned to collect the day's coffee cups, Martina was still fuming.

"I'm going inside, *Abuela*."

"So soon?"

"¡Sí! I'm afraid of whom I might meet next!"

Abuela drew Martina to the railing and pointed to the garden below. "What about him?"

Martina looked down at the tiny brown mouse, and her cockroach heart began to beat faster.

Ti-ki-tin, ti-ki-tan.

"Oh, *Abuela*, he's adorable. Where has he been?"



"Right here all along."

"What do I do?"

"Go talk to him . . . and just be yourself."

Martina handed *Abuela* her *peñeta* and *mantilla*, then scurried down to the garden. The mouse was waiting.

Ti-ki-tin, ti-ki-tan.

"*Hola*, hello." His voice was like warm honey.

"My name is Pérez."

"*Hola*," she whispered shyly, "I'm Martina—"

"—the beautiful cockroach," he finished for her.

"You think I'm beautiful?"



The little mouse turned pink under his fur. "Well, my eyes are rather weak, but I have excellent EARS. I know you are strong and good, Martina Josefina Catalina Cucaracha." Then he squinted sweetly. "Who cares if you are beautiful?"

TI-KI-TIN, TI-KI-TAN.

"Martina-a-a-a-a! Don't forget the coffee!"

It was *Abuela*.

No, thought Martina. No coffee for Pérez!

"Martina Josefina Catalina Cucaracha!"

"*Sí, Abuela.*" Martina knew better than to argue with her Cuban grandmother.



With a heavy heart, she reached for the cup. But Pérez got there first. Quick as a mouse, he splashed *café cubano* onto Martina's shoes.

Now the coffee was on the other foot.

Martina was too delighted to be angry. At last, she'd found her perfect match. But she had to ask, "How did you know about the Coffee Test?"

Pérez grinned. "Well, *mi amor*, my love . . .

. . . I too have a Cuban grandmother."



STOP AND CHECK

Reread Why doesn't Martina want to pour coffee on the mouse? Reread to find the answer.

About the Author and Illustrator

Carmen Agra Deedy

loves spinning stories. She travels around the world entertaining people with her tales. Carmen came to the United States from Cuba in 1960. She and her family settled in Georgia. Carmen has not forgotten her Cuban culture. She shares it with the world through her stories.



Michael Austin

grew up in a small town in Florida, where he combined his imagination and love of drawing. He drew on rocks, paper plates, boxes, and even the walls. He grew up to be an illustrator of many award-winning books.



Author's Purpose

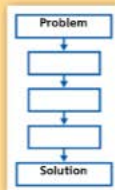
What message did the author want to tell readers?



Respond to the Text

Summarize

Think about how Martina finds a husband. Summarize the events in the story. The information from your Problem and Solution chart may help you summarize.



Write

How does Carmen Agra Deedy help you predict how the coffee test will turn out for each character? Use these sentence frames to organize your text evidence.

Carmen Agra Deedy describes each animal by . . .
Then she . . .
This helps me understand why Martina . . .

Make Connections

What makes Pérez unique among Martina's suitors? **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

Why do people like to watch animals? What is interesting about animals? **TEXT TO WORLD**

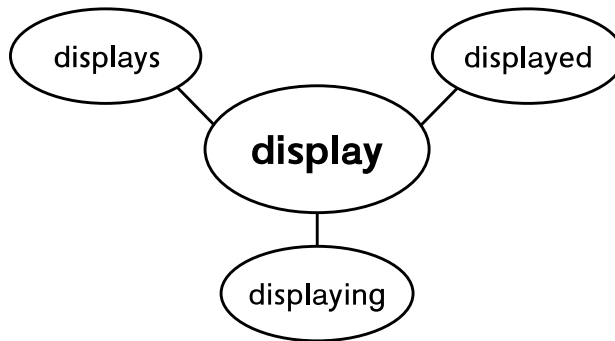


Practice Book Pages

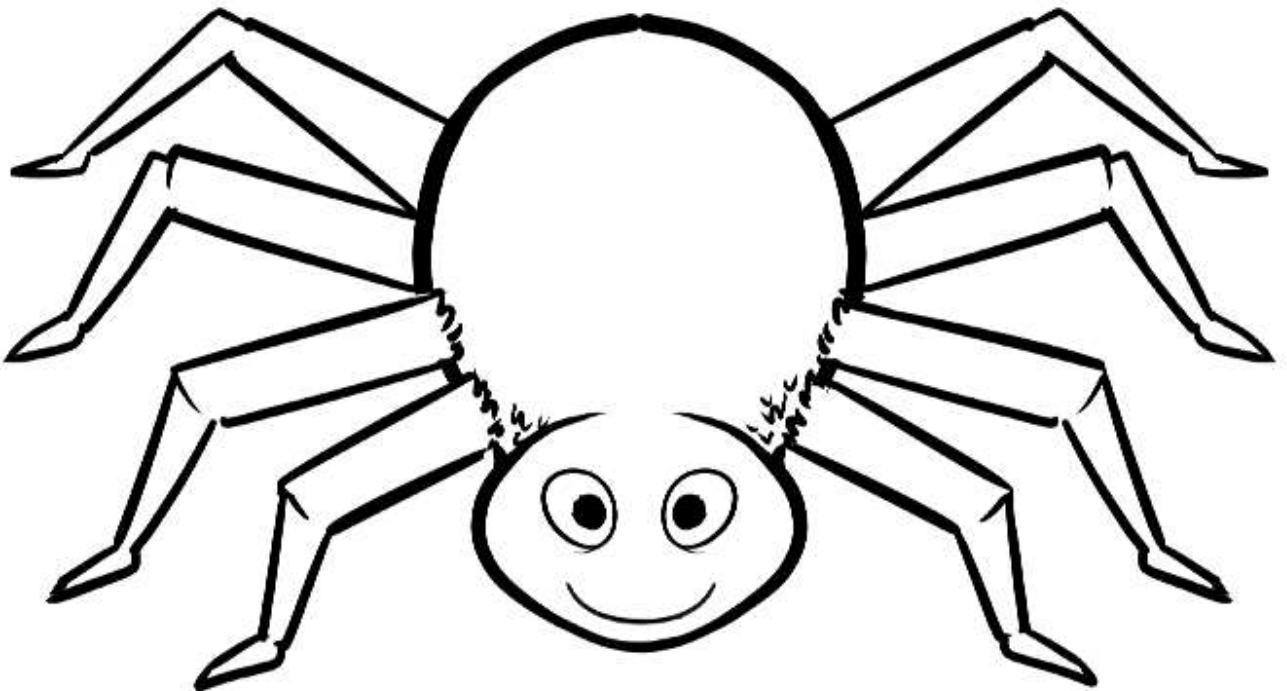
Vocabulary

Name _____

Create new forms of a base word by adding or removing inflectional endings, prefixes, or suffixes.



Use your notes from "Anansi Learns a Lesson." Choose one word and write it on the body of the spider. Then write as many related words as you can on the spider's legs. Use a dictionary to help you.



Name _____

Read the clues. Complete the puzzle with your vocabulary words. Put the letters in the boxes together to learn a fun fact at the end.

amount	convince	globe	courage
warmth	photographs	support	temperature
remind	solar system	astronomy	surface

1. A quantity of something _ _ _ _ _ _ _
2. Cause someone to remember something _ _ _ _ _ _
3. The outside part of something _ _ _ _ _ _
4. The world _ _ _ _ _
5. Cause someone to believe or do something _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
6. Bravery _ _ _ _ _ _
7. Pictures taken with a camera _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
8. Provide what someone or something needs _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
9. Our sun and the planets around it _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
10. A measurement of hot or cold _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
11. The study of the stars and planets _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
12. Heat _ _ _ _ _ _

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This unit of distance is equal to 5.88 trillion miles.

 -



Leveled Reader

On Level

Folktales



KING OF THE BIRDS

A Mayan Folktale

retold by Karen Alexander

illustrated by Linda Bittner

Mc
Graw
Hill
Education

PAIRED
READ

The Real Quetzal

STRATEGIES & SKILLS

Comprehension

Strategy: Visualize

Skill: Problem and Solution

Content Standards

Science

Life Science

Vocabulary

disbelief, dismay, fabulous,
features, offered, splendid,
unique, watchful

Word count: 964**

**The total word count is based on words in the running text and headings only. Numerals and words in captions, labels, diagrams, charts, and sidebars are not included.

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Essential Question

What makes different animals unique?

KING OF THE BIRDS



A Mayan Folktale

retold by Karen Alexander • illustrated by Linda Bittner

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**PAIRED
READ**

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Chapter 1

THE GATHERING



The rain forest was alive with birds. Birds sang in the treetops. They poked among the leaves on the ground, looking for insects to eat. They made nests in the hollows of tree trunks. All day long, the birds also squabbled.

Hawk looked around the forest in dismay. For many years, he had ruled the birds. Now, he was old and tired. Hawk called a meeting of the birds. He told them they must choose a new king who could stop them from fighting.



The birds made plans for a great gathering to choose a king. Each bird secretly thought that it would make the best king.

Mockingbird marched to the front first. She thought she should be king because her voice was more splendid than that of any other bird. To prove her point, she sang her heart out. She sang the songs of other birds. She sang the songs of crickets and frogs.

The other birds were very impressed. They thought that maybe Mockingbird should be king.





Then Cardinal strutted to the front of the meeting. He paraded up and down, showing off his wonderful red feathers. He flapped his wings, and he made the crest, or tuft of feathers, on his head stand up.

The other birds were amazed by Cardinal's beautiful scarlet feathers and his strong beak. They thought that maybe Cardinal would be a good king.

Next, Turkey offered her services as king. She puffed up her chest. Turkey's voice was loud and confident. It reached to the very back of the gathering. Turkey argued her case well. She said that she was big and strong, so she could keep order among the birds. She could stop fights. Turkey said she was also very watchful, so she would be able to keep the birds away from danger.

The other birds listened very carefully. Maybe Turkey should be king.





All day long, birds stepped forward to explain why they should be king. There were birds of all colors and sizes. There were loud birds and quiet birds. There were boastful birds and shy birds. As each bird spoke, the other birds nodded their heads. They whispered among themselves. Maybe this was the bird that should be king.

Only Quetzal kept quiet. The other birds looked at him in disbelief, because Quetzal was known to be proud and ambitious.



Chapter 2

QUETZAL FOR KING!



Now Quetzal had a problem. He knew he was clever and smart. He was sure he was the perfect choice to be king. But his feathers were dull. Then Quetzal thought of Roadrunner—the messenger of the birds. Roadrunner had fabulous, colorful feathers.



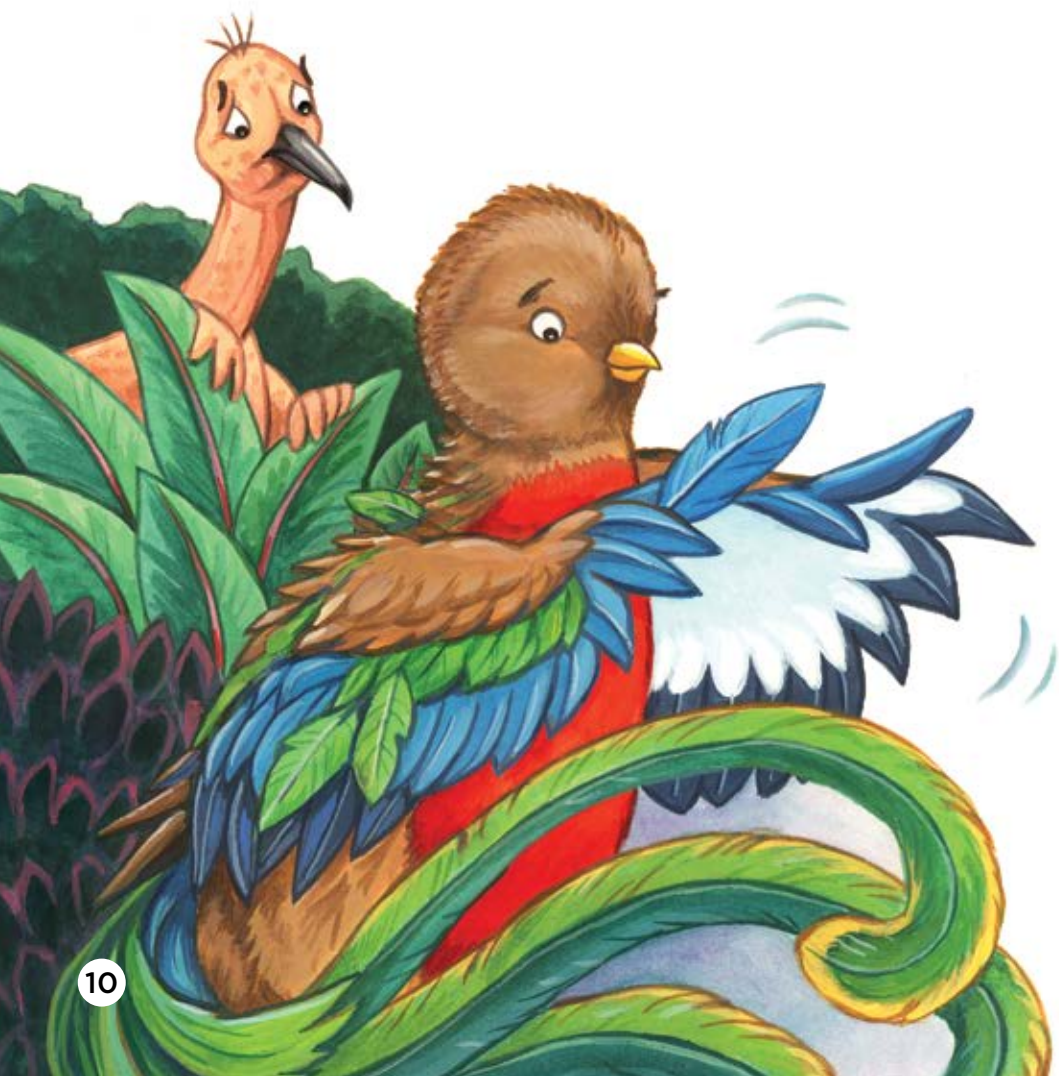


Quetzal went into the forest to talk to Roadrunner. He told Roadrunner that she was much too busy to be king. Quetzal boasted about how clever he was. He said that he would make the best king of the birds. The only thing he didn't have was splendid feathers. But Roadrunner did.

Quetzal started to convince Roadrunner to lend Quetzal her feathers. In return, Quetzal promised to share all the riches of being king with his friend.

Now Roadrunner wasn't very happy about this idea. She was fond of her feathers, and, anyway, she would be cold without them. Quetzal was very convincing, though. It wasn't long before he talked Roadrunner into parting with her feathers.

Quetzal didn't give any of his feathers to Roadrunner. He just added Roadrunner's feathers to his own.





A few minutes later, a magnificent bird flew into the meeting, swishing its long, colorful tail. Not only was Quetzal beautiful, but he was also a very strong speaker. In a short time, he had won over all of the birds and he was chosen as the new king.

Chapter 3

ROADRUNNER BETRAYED

Quetzal was very busy being king. He forgot all about his friend Roadrunner.

But, after a few days, the other birds realized they hadn't seen Roadrunner for a while. They searched all through the forest for her.



At last, they found Roadrunner hidden behind a tree. She was cold and hungry. She was hiding because she was too ashamed to be seen in her bare skin.

The birds all helped Roadrunner. They brought food for her, and each bird gave her some of its feathers to keep her warm.



Roadrunner felt warm and well-fed again. However, she was sad because she no longer had her beautiful feathers. Roadrunner's new feathers were many different colors and shapes. She looked odd and patchy. She looked forward to getting her own feathers back.



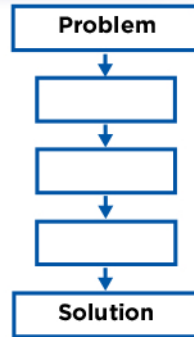
Roadrunner waited hopefully for Quetzal to bring back her fabulous colorful feathers. But Quetzal didn't ever come back. Even today, Roadrunner races around, anxiously searching the roads for Quetzal.



Respond to Reading

Summarize

Use details from *King of the Birds* to summarize what was special about each of the different birds. Use your graphic organizer to help you.



Text Evidence

1. How do you know *King of the Birds* is a folktale? **GENRE**
2. What problem does Hawk have? What solution does he find? **PROBLEM AND SOLUTION**
3. Find the word *squabbled* on page 2. What nearby word helps you figure out what *squabbled* means? **SYNONYMS**
4. Write about Quetzal's problem and the steps he took to solve the problem. **WRITE ABOUT READING**

Compare Texts

Read about the unique quetzal.



THE REAL QUETZAL

Quetzals live in Central American rain forests. Male resplendent quetzals have beautiful, bright feathers and a long emerald-green tail. Their bodies are about 15 inches long. Their tails can be twice that long.

Quetzals belong to a family of birds with a unique feature. The two inner toes face backward, and the two outer toes face forward. This helps the birds to perch on the branches of trees. But it makes walking hard, so the birds are not often seen on the forest floor.



Bird Feet

the foot of most birds	the foot of a quetzal
	

Resplendent means “dazzling,” and these birds have dazzled people for thousands of years. Quetzals were very important in Mayan culture. Their feathers were treasured. The feathers were used to decorate the clothes worn by rulers. They were also traded. The male quetzal’s bright green tail feathers were more valuable than gold. For this reason, the birds were seen as a sign of wealth.

Quetzals are heard more often than they are seen. They hide among the green leaves of the forest.



(okgal) Comstock Images/Alamy, (c) Kevin Schafer/Alamy



Quetzals use their beaks to hollow out a nest in a rotting tree.

Today, quetzals are endangered for two main reasons. First, they are hunted for their feathers. Second, the rain forests where they live are being destroyed. In some countries, the birds are now protected.



Make Connections

How does *The Real Quetzal* help you understand what makes an animal unique? **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

How does the description of the quetzal in *The Real Quetzal* help you understand the characteristics of the quetzal mentioned in *King of the Birds*?

TEXT TO TEXT

Focus on Genre

Folktale *King of the Birds* is a folktale. A folktale is a story that is passed down over time by storytellers. Folktales are often very old. This one was told by the Mayans. It could be more than two thousand years old. Each person who tells a folktale changes it a little. Folktales often personify animals as if they have human characteristics. Sometimes they try to teach us a lesson.

Read and Find Many folktales give animals human characteristics, such as greed or vanity. Folktales are not real. The events that occur could not usually happen in real life. For example, in *King of the Birds*, Roadrunner lends her feathers to Quetzal. This could not really happen. Folktales often have a moral. They teach us about human nature and how we should behave.

Your Turn

Write your own folktale. This can be either your version of an old folktale or a new, imaginary folktale. Remember that your story needs to have a message that shows people how to behave.

Literature Circles

Fiction

Thinkmark

Plot

In *King of the Birds*, Hawk, Quetzal, and Roadrunner have a problem. Did they all find a solution?

Sequence of Events

What happened *first*, *next*, *then*, and *finally* in *King of the Birds*?

Author's Purpose

Why do you think the author retold *King of the Birds*?

Make Connections

Do you think any of the birds in the story have human characteristics? If so, which ones, and what characteristics?

Be Unique

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