

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm - “The Fisherman and his Wife” - Grade 3

Translated by Lucy Crane. Originally published in *Household Stories by the Brothers Grimm*, New York: Dover Publications, 1886.

Learning Objective: The goal of this five-day exemplar is to explicitly model the process of searching for and interpreting intra-textual connections. In this lesson sequence, the teacher poses an analytic focusing question and then guides students in gathering and interpreting evidence from the text in order to come to a deeper understanding of the story. Simple word play and art activities give students practice in closely attending to language and word choice, and in visualizing and recording their interpretations. Discussion and a short writing exercise help students to synthesize what they have learned.

Rationale: Authors make intentional choices. Questioning those choices leads to a deeper understanding of literature. Access to this understanding often rests on the ability to identify patterns, connections, and anomalies within a text. While some children come to school in the habit of approaching literature inquisitively, many do not. Young children need experience with asking interpretive questions and using the text itself to answer them. More importantly, students need to feel the thrill of discovery, as their exploration leads them to a new understanding of the reading. Discussion and teacher “think-alouds” are valuable tools in this process; but for elementary students, active engagement through art, word play, and drama provide a deeper, lasting level of understanding and discovery.

Reading Task: Students will silently read the text independently. Then, a second reading is done together, with discussion, to ensure a basic, literal understanding of the story. In response to an interpretive focusing question posed by the teacher, students then engage with the text a third time as they work in small groups to re-read the text and mark evidence in it. Through art, students actively engage with the evidence they have found. Discussion and a short writing task help students to interpret their evidence and solidify their thinking. The goal is to provide students with repeatedly opportunities to engage with complex text and gain confidence in their ability to do so independently.

Discussion/Language Tasks: In this exemplar, students process information orally using both discussion and word play. It is important that this lesson sequence be taught in heterogeneous groups, so that discussion presents a variety of levels of thinking. Children learn to infer and to interpret literature largely by hearing others do so. This type of modeling is most effective if it comes from both teachers and peers. In addition to small and large group discussion, students use word play to understand, and become comfortable with, some of the differences between written and spoken language. “Playing” with words and sentences allows children to explore complex grammar and sentence structure in a developmentally appropriate way and increases their ability to learn words from context.

Writing Task: As a culminating activity, students synthesize their findings in an opinion paragraph, using specific references to the text. In this lesson, writing helps the children to organize and make sense of their thinking. For most third graders, writing is a relatively new tool for processing thought and one they will need to learn to use. Therefore, this task is highly guided and instructional, providing a model that can be used more independently on subsequent writing tasks.

Outline of Lesson Plan: This lesson can be delivered in five days of instruction and reflection on the part of students and their teacher, with the possibility of additional days devoted to further exploring the text through the use of drama or revising their opinion paragraphs after receiving teacher or peer feedback.

Standards Addressed: The following Alaska English Language Arts Standards are the focus of this exemplar: RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RL.3.5, RL.3.10; W.3.1, W.3.4, W.3.5, W.3.10, W.4.9; L.3.3, L.3.6; SL.3.1

The Text: Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. "The Fisherman and his Wife" translated by Lucy Crane

Exemplar Text	Vocabulary
<p>THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a <u>hovel</u> by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he <u>angled</u> and angled.</p> <p>One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great <u>flounder</u> on the hook.</p> <p>And the flounder said to him, "Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good <u>shall</u> I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away."</p> <p>"Well," said the fisherman, "no need of so many words about the matter; as you can speak, I had much rather let you swim away." Then he put him back into the clear water, and the flounder sank to the bottom... Then the fisherman got up and went home to his wife in their hovel.</p> <p>"Well, husband," said the wife, "have you caught nothing to-day?"</p> <p>"No," said the man--"that is, I did catch a flounder, but as he said he was an enchanted prince, I let him go again."</p> <p>"Then, did you wish for nothing?" said the wife.</p> <p>"No," said the man; "what should I wish for?"</p> <p>"Oh dear!" said the wife; "and it is so dreadful always to live in this evil-smelling hovel; you might as well have wished for a little cottage; go again and call him; tell him we want a little cottage, I daresay he will give it us; go, and be quick."</p>	<p><i>Small, dirty, or poorly built house; to fish with a hook, line, and rod</i></p> <p><i>Edible, flatfish found in shallow, coastal waters</i></p> <p><i>Old-fashioned word meaning "will"</i></p>
<p>And when he went back, the sea was green and yellow, and not nearly so clear. So he stood and said,</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">"O man, O man!--if man you be, Or flounder, flounder, in the sea-- Such a <u>tiresome</u> wife I've got, For she wants what I do not."</p>	<p><i>Annoying</i></p>

Then the flounder came swimming up, and said, "Now then, what does she want?"
"Oh," said the man, "you know when I caught you my wife says I ought to have wished for something. She does not want to live any longer in the hovel, and would rather have a cottage.
"Go home with you," said the flounder, "she has it already."
So the man went home, and found, instead of the hovel, a little cottage, and his wife was sitting on a bench before the door. And she took him by the hand, and said to him,
"Come in and see if this is not a great improvement."
So they went in, and there was a little house-place and a beautiful little bedroom, a kitchen and larder, with all sorts of furniture, and iron and brassware of the very best. And at the back was a little yard with fowls and ducks, and a little garden full of green vegetables and fruit.
"Look," said the wife, "is not that nice?"
"Yes," said the man, "if this can only last we shall be very well contented."
"We will see about that," said the wife. And after a meal they went to bed.
So all went well for a week or fortnight, when the wife said,
"Look here, husband, the cottage is really too confined, and the yard and garden are so small; I think the flounder had better get us a larger house; I should like very much to live in a large stone castle; so go to your fish and he will send us a castle."
"O my dear wife," said the man, "the cottage is good enough; what do we want a castle for?"
"We want one," said the wife; "go along with you; the flounder can give us one."
"Now, wife," said the man, "the flounder gave us the cottage; I do not like to go to him again, he may be angry."
"Go along," said the wife, "he might just as well give us it as not; do as I say!"
The man felt very reluctant and unwilling; and he said to himself, "It is not the right thing to do;" nevertheless he went.
So when he came to the seaside, the water was purple and dark blue and grey and thick, and not green and yellow as before. And he stood and said,

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"Now then, what does she want?" said the flounder.

In front of

Small, cramped

*Unwilling or unsure
about doing something*

"Oh," said the man, half frightened, "she wants to live in a large stone castle."

"Go home with you, she is already standing before the door," said the flounder.

Then the man went home, as he supposed, but when he got there, there stood in the place of the cottage a great castle of stone, and his wife was standing on the steps, about to go in; so she took him by the hand, and said, "Let us enter."

With that he went in with her, and in the castle was a great hall with a marble pavement, and there were a great many servants, who led them through large doors, and the passages were decked with tapestry, and the rooms with golden chairs and tables, and crystal chandeliers hanging from the ceiling; and all the rooms had carpets. And the tables were covered with eatables . . . for anyone who wanted them. And at the back of the house was a great stable-yard for horses and cattle, and carriages of the finest; besides, there was a splendid large garden, with the most beautiful flowers and fine fruit trees, and a pleasance full half a mile long, with deer and oxen and sheep, and everything that heart could wish for.

"There!" said the wife, "is not this beautiful?"

"Oh yes," said the man, "if it will only last we can live in this fine castle and be very well contented."

"We will see about that," said the wife, "in the meanwhile we will sleep upon it." With that they went to bed.

The next morning the wife was awake first, just at the break of day, and she looked out and saw from her bed the beautiful country lying all round. The man took no notice of it, so she poked him in the side with her elbow, and said,

"Husband, get up and just look out of the window. Look, just think if we could be king over all this country. Just go to your fish and tell him we should like to be king."

"Now, wife," said the man, "what should we be kings for? I don't want to be king."

"Well," said the wife, "if you don't want to be king, I will be king."

"Now, wife," said the man, "what do you want to be king for? I could not ask him such a thing."

"Why not?" said the wife, "you must go directly all the same; I must be king."

So the man went, very much put out that his wife should want to be king.

"It is not the right thing to do--not at all the right thing," thought the man. He did not at all want to go, and yet he went all the same.

And when he came to the sea the water was quite dark grey, and rushed far inland, and had an ill smell. And he stood and said,

*A quiet, tree-planted
area with paths*

Happy and satisfied

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"Now then, what does she want?" said the fish.

"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to be king."

"Go home with you, she is so already," said the fish.

So the man went back, and as he came to the palace he saw it was very much larger, and had great towers and splendid gateways; the herald stood before the door, and a number of soldiers with kettle-drums and trumpets. And when he came inside everything was of marble and gold, and there were many curtains with great golden tassels. Then he went through the doors of the salon to where the great throne-room was, and there was his wife sitting upon a throne of gold and diamonds, and she had a great golden crown on, and the sceptre in her hand was of pure gold and jewels, and on each side stood six pages in a row, each one a head shorter than the other. So the man went up to her and said,

"Well, wife, so now you are king!"

"Yes," said the wife, "now I am king."

So then he stood and looked at her, and when he had gazed at her for some time he said,

"Well, wife, this is fine for you to be king! Now there is nothing more to wish for."

"O husband!" said the wife, seeming quite restless, "I am tired of this already. Go to your fish and tell him that now I am king I must be emperor."

"Now, wife," said the man, "what do you want to be emperor for?"

"Husband," said she, "go and tell the fish I want to be emperor."

"Oh dear!" said the man, "he could not do it--I cannot ask him such a thing. There is but one emperor at a time; the fish can't possibly make any one emperor--indeed he can't."

"Now, look here," said the wife, "I am king, and you are only my husband, so will you go at once? Go along! For if he was able to make me king he is able to make me emperor; and I will and must be emperor, so go along!"

So he was obliged to go; and as he went he felt very uncomfortable about it, and he thought to himself, "It is not at all the right thing to do; to want to be emperor is really going too far; the flounder will soon be beginning to get tired of this."

With that he came to the sea, and the water was quite black and thick, and the foam flew, and the wind blew, and the man was terrified. But he stood and said,

A fancy room in a large house where people entertain their guests

A staff used during ceremonies to show their importance

A young boy who ran errands

A man who rules an empire

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"What is it now?" said the fish.

"Oh dear!" said the man, "my wife wants to be emperor."

"Go home with you," said the fish, "she is emperor already."

So the man went home, and found the castle adorned with polished marble and alabaster figures, and golden gates. The troops were being marshalled before the door, and they were blowing trumpets and beating drums and cymbals; and when he entered he saw barons and earls and dukes waiting about like servants; and the doors were of bright gold. And he saw his wife sitting upon a throne made of one entire piece of gold, and it was about two miles high; and she had a great golden crown on, which was about three yards high . . .

So the man went up to her and said, "Well, wife, so now you are emperor."

"Yes," said she, "now I am emperor."

Then he went and sat down and had a good look at her, and then he said, "Well now, wife, there is nothing left to be, now you are emperor."

"We will see about that," said the wife. With that they both went to bed; but she was as far as ever from being contented, and she could not get to sleep for thinking of what she should like to be next.

The husband, however, slept as fast as a top after his busy day; but the wife tossed and turned from side to side the whole night through, thinking all the while what she could be next, but nothing would occur to her; and when she saw the red dawn she slipped off the bed, and sat before the window to see the sun rise, and as it came up she said, "Ah, I have it! What if I should make the sun and moon to rise--husband!" she cried, and stuck her elbow in his ribs, "Wake up, and go to your fish, and tell him I want power over the sun and moon."

The man was so fast asleep that when he started up he fell out of bed. Then he shook himself together, and opened his eyes and said, "Oh,--wife, what did you say?"

"Husband," said she, "if I cannot get the power of making the sun and moon rise when I want them, I shall never have another quiet hour. Go to the fish and tell him so."

"O wife!" said the man, and fell on his knees to her, "the fish can really not do that for you. I grant you he could make you emperor . . . do be contented with that, I beg of you."

*Brought together and
organized*

On

And she became wild with impatience, and screamed out, "I can wait no longer, go at once!"

And so off he went as well as he could for fright. And a dreadful storm arose, so that he could hardly keep his feet; and the houses and trees were blown down, and the mountains trembled, and rocks fell in the sea; the sky was quite black, and it thundered and lightened; and the waves, crowned with foam, ran mountains high. So he cried out, without being able to hear his own words,

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"Well, what now?" said the flounder.

"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to order about the sun and moon."

"Go home with you!" said the flounder, "you will find her in the old hovel."

And there they are sitting to this very day.

Day One: Instructional Exemplar for The Grimms’ “The Fisherman and his Wife”

Summary of Activities

1. Teacher introduces the text with minimal commentary and students read it independently (10 minutes).
2. Teacher guides students through a second reading aloud, stopping for discussion as needed to ensure basic comprehension (15 minutes).
3. Students work in small groups to complete a “Word Play” activity (20 minutes).

Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<p>THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a <u>hovel</u> by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he <u>angled</u> and angled.</p> <p>One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great <u>flounder</u> on the hook.</p> <p>And the flounder said to him, “Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good <u>shall</u> I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away.”</p> <p>[Read intervening paragraphs.]</p> <p>“O man, O man!--if man you be, Or flounder, flounder, in the sea-- Such a tiresome wife I've got, For she wants what I do not.”</p> <p>“Well, what now?” said the flounder.</p> <p>“Oh dear!” said the man, “she wants to order about the sun and moon.”</p> <p>“Go home with you!” said the flounder, “you will find her in the old hovel.”</p> <p>And there they are sitting to this very day.</p> <p>THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a <u>hovel</u> by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out</p>	<p>1. Introduce the passage and students read independently. Keep this introduction short. Explain that this is a very old story and parts of the text may be difficult to read because they contain old-fashioned words or say things in unusual ways. If the students are unfamiliar with fairy tales and folktales, you may choose, instead, to read the story aloud. Do this first reading with expression, using your voice to make meaning clear, preferably without stopping for discussion. This will help children to develop a mental model of how the story could sound when read fluently.</p> <p>2. Guide the students through a second reading aloud, stopping for discussion as needed to ensure basic comprehension. The basic plot of this story should be easy for most students to understand. However, unabridged fairy tales like this one are often challenging to read for several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domain specific vocabulary: Fairy tales commonly use words like “shall” and “upon” Most of this vocabulary can be picked up quickly by children with just a little explanation and practice in context. • Context: Some students may need a general understanding of the social/political hierarchy (and its connection with wealth and power) at the time this story was written. Help students to infer this information from the story by asking questions like, “Do you think an emperor was richer or more powerful than a king? What, in the story, makes you think so?” • Sentence structure: Sentences are constructed differently, and words are used in unfamiliar ways. This is due both to the age of the text and the fact that the story has been translated. With practice, students can develop a wider repertoire of familiar grammatical structures, as well as strategies for approaching text

Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<p>every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he <u>angled</u> and angled.</p> <p>One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great <u>flounder</u> on the hook.</p> <p>And the flounder said to him, "Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good <u>shall</u> I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away."</p> <p>[Read intervening paragraphs.]</p> <p>"O man, O man!--if man you be, Or flounder, flounder, in the sea-- Such a tiresome wife I've got, For she wants what I do not."</p> <p>"Well, what now?" said the flounder.</p> <p>"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to order about the sun and moon."</p> <p>"Go home with you!" said the flounder, "you will find her in the old hovel."</p> <p>And there they are sitting to this very day.</p>	<p>with unfamiliar grammar or syntax.</p> <p>3. Students work in small groups to complete a "Word Play" activity.</p> <p>Teachers should break students up into pairs and have them work through the exercises on the two word play activity sheets. The first sheet ensures that students understand the unusual grammatical construction of the verse the fisherman repeats at the water's edge. The second sheet highlights the difference between written and spoken language and focuses on the use of contractions. Both sheets explore conventions by asking students to observe, reflect upon, and then produce language. This connection between oral and written language and between receptive and expressive language, builds a bridge that helps students internalize language structures and strengthens their reading comprehension.</p>

Day Two: Instructional Exemplar for The Grimms’ “The Fisherman and his Wife”

Summary of Activities

1. Teacher poses the focusing question: Why does the sea change throughout the story? (5-10 minutes)
2. Students work in pairs to find evidence relating to the focusing question (30-35 minutes).

Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<p>THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a <u>hovel</u> by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he <u>angled</u> and angled.</p> <p>One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great <u>flounder</u> on the hook.</p> <p>And the flounder said to him, “Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good <u>shall</u> I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away.”</p> <p>[Read intervening paragraphs.]</p> <p>And so off he went as well as he could for fright. And a dreadful storm arose, so that he could hardly keep his feet; and the houses and trees were blown down, and the mountains trembled, and rocks fell in the sea; the sky was quite black, and it thundered and lightened; and the waves, crowned with foam, ran mountains high. So he cried out, without being able to hear his own words . . .</p>	<p>1. Pose the focusing question: Why does the sea change throughout the story?</p> <p>Tell students they will be looking more closely at the message in the story and some of the choices the authors made. Write the focusing question in a place where it can remain in view for the duration of your work on this story. Some students will want to answer this question immediately, but do not let them. Instead, explain that this is a question that has many right answers (and some wrong ones). To answer this question they must first look back closely at the text. Where, in the text, might we start to look for information that will help us to answer this question?</p> <p>2. Students work in pairs to find evidence in the text.</p> <p>Divide students into pairs and give each group a pad of sticky notes¹. Using a document camera or other projected image, demonstrate how to skim the text to find sections that describe the sea and mark each with a sticky note. After one or two examples, pairs should be able to complete this exercise with minimal support. Pairs should work together to find evidence, but each student should mark his/her own copy of the text. When most have finished, have the students share what they have found, pausing to add (or remove) sticky notes as needed so that each student has a full and accurate set of notes.</p> <p>Use this opportunity to teach students to communicate the location of the text they are referring to by stating the page number and describing where the text is on the page. Students can begin simply by using the terms, “top, bottom or middle” (of the page) and gradually move toward using paragraph numbers.</p>

¹ Sticky notes work well as a note-taking tool for younger children. They are easily moved or added as the child receives feedback and reflects. They also expedite the physical process of making notations by eliminating decisions about which specific words should be highlighted or underlined. As students choose where to place their sticky notes, emphasize that the purpose of the notes is to help them return to parts of the text for further thought or reflection; as long as a sticky note does that, it is in “the right place”.

Day Three: Instructional Exemplar for The Grimms' "The Fisherman and his Wife"

Summary of Activities

Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refer back to the focusing question, and students complete their research (10-15 minutes). 2. Students use watercolor paints in order to create a visual representation of each section of the text marked (30 minutes). 	
Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<p>THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a <u>hovel</u> by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he <u>angled</u> and angled.</p> <p>One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great <u>flounder</u> on the hook.</p> <p>And the flounder said to him, "Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good <u>shall</u> I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away."</p> <p>[Read intervening paragraphs.]</p> <p>"O man, O man!--if man you be, Or flounder, flounder, in the sea-- Such a tiresome wife I've got, For she wants what I do not."</p> <p>"Well, what now?" said the flounder.</p> <p>"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to order about the sun and moon."</p> <p>"Go home with you!" said the flounder, "you will find her in the old hovel."</p> <p>And there they are sitting to this very day.</p>	<p>1. Refer back to the focusing question and have students work together to complete their research.</p> <p>Review what was done yesterday and refer back to the focusing question. Point out that the class has collected evidence to show <u>what</u> happens to the sea as the story progresses, but the focusing questions asks <u>why</u> the sea changes.</p> <p>What additional information do they need? Solicit from discussion the idea that it would be helpful to look back in the text at the places they have marked with sticky notes and determine what happens <i>just before</i> the sea changes each time.</p> <p>Using a document camera or other projected image, work together to reread the portion of the text before the first change the students have marked. Explain that one way to take notes on the text is to underline key words and phrases. Demonstrate how to choose and underline just the word or phrase that shows what the Fisherman is about to ask for. Have students work in pairs to underline their own copies and complete this research.</p> <p>Circulate, providing feedback and ensuring that all students have an adequate and accurate set of notes. Encourage students to help each other by explaining what they have underlined and why they chose it.</p>

THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a hovel by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he angled and angled.

One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great flounder on the hook.

And the flounder said to him, "Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good shall I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away."

[Read intervening paragraphs.]

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"Well, what now?" said the flounder.

"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to order about the sun and moon."

"Go home with you!" said the flounder, "you will find her in the old hovel."

And there they are sitting to this very day.

2. Students use watercolor paints to visualize the evidence and create a set of notes from which to work.

Compliment the students on the notes they have taken. Explain that they have gathered so much information that they now need some way to organize it. Pass out the graphic organizer and review the directions for completing it. On this sheet, students will add information to paraphrase the key event that precedes each change in the sea and then use watercolor paints to visualize the passages they marked earlier.

This graphic organizer is highly scaffolded, with much of the information already written in. There are two reasons for this. The first is that students need to see models of effective graphic organizers before they can produce one themselves. The second is that writing and copying, at this grade level, still require a great deal of time and concentration. In this case, the task of copying large chunks of text would interrupt the students' thought processes. This is particularly true for students who struggle with reading and writing.

At the end of this activity, each student will have used the text to create a set of organized notes (in words and pictures) that will help him/her to answer the focusing question. Be sure to provide feedback as students paint, encouraging them to attend closely to the description in the text.

Day Four: Instructional Exemplar for The Grimms’ “The Fisherman and his Wife”

Summary of Activities

1. Students reflect on their notes and discuss their findings as a class (15-20 minutes).
2. Students develop a concise, single sentence answer to the focusing question and teachers provide them with feedback (25 minutes).

Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<p>THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a <u>hovel</u> by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he <u>angled</u> and angled.</p> <p>One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great <u>flounder</u> on the hook.</p> <p>And the flounder said to him, “Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good <u>shall</u> I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away.”</p> <p>[Read intervening paragraphs.]</p> <p>“O man, O man!--if man you be, Or flounder, flounder, in the sea-- Such a tiresome wife I've got, For she wants what I do not.”</p> <p>“Well, what now?” said the flounder. “Oh dear!” said the man, “she wants to order about the sun and moon.” “Go home with you!” said the flounder, “you will find her in the old hovel.” And there they are sitting to this very day.</p> <p>THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a <u>hovel</u> by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out</p>	<p>1. Students reflect on their notes and discuss their findings. Have the students look carefully at the words and pictures on their graphic organizers. Explain that they have created a set of notes – an organized collection of evidence that they can use to look for patterns that may help them to answer the focusing question. Lead a discussion to help students reflect on their findings. What do they see? How does the sea change in the story? What happens before each change? Based on evidence from the text what are some possible answers to the question, “Why does the sea change throughout the story?” What, in the story, makes you think so?</p> <p>Most students will notice that the sea becomes “angry” as the fisherman asks for more. Some may link the changes in the sea to the Fisherman’s conscience – most changes are preceded by the Fisherman’s reflection that asking for more was “not at all the right thing to do”. There are many right answers to this question, but it is important to note that there are also some wrong answers. Students must receive accurate feedback on their responses if they are to grow as readers. Answers that are not supported by text are either incomplete or inaccurate. Students should be guided toward clearly presenting a well-reasoned opinion.</p> <p>2. Students develop a concise sentence to answer the focusing question. A key skill in making an argument is being clear about the point you are trying to support. This is often more difficult than it seems. Work on this skill orally to give students practice in concisely stating their opinions and focusing their thinking.</p> <p>Begin by repeating the focusing question. Then, ask for a volunteer to answer it in a single, complete sentence. Help that student reword the sentence so that it is complete, clear, and concise. (This sentence will later become the topic sentence of a written paragraph.) Be sure that this</p>

Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<p>every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he <u>angled</u> and angled.</p> <p>One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great <u>flounder</u> on the hook.</p> <p>And the flounder said to him, "Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good <u>shall</u> I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away."</p> <p>[Read intervening paragraphs.]</p> <p>"O man, O man!--if man you be, Or flounder, flounder, in the sea-- Such a tiresome wife I've got, For she wants what I do not."</p> <p>"Well, what now?" said the flounder.</p> <p>"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to order about the sun and moon."</p> <p>"Go home with you!" said the flounder, "you will find her in the old hovel."</p> <p>And there they are sitting to this very day.</p>	<p>focusing sentence incorporates the key words in the question ("sea" and "changes").</p> <p>Some examples: <i>The sea changes show the reader that the Fisherman is becoming too greedy.</i> <i>The sea changes because the Fisherman is asking for too much.</i> <i>The changes in the sea show that the fish is becoming angry with all that the Fisherman is asking for.</i></p> <p>Continue calling on students and helping them formulate possible topic sentences, until the concept of creating this focusing sentence is clear. Put two or three of their sentences on the board to serve as models. Pass out sheets of lined paper. Have the students copy your focusing question at the top of the sheet. On the next line, instruct the students to write a single sentence answer to the question. Have every student share his/her focus statement orally, suggesting revisions where needed. Oral sharing provides opportunities for formative assessment, validation, and feedback. Full group sharing, like this, offers repeated models and modeling which are essential to the students' developing understanding of complex concepts.</p>

Day Five: Instructional Exemplar for The Grimms’ “The Fisherman and his Wife”

Summary of Activities

1. Students orally rehearse in order to prepare for writing (15 minutes).
2. Using their focusing sentence and notes, students write a paragraph to explain their analysis and reasoning (30 minutes).

Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<p>THERE was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a <u>hovel</u> by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he <u>angled</u> and angled.</p> <p>One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat. At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great <u>flounder</u> on the hook.</p> <p>And the flounder said to him, “Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an enchanted prince. What good <u>shall</u> I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away.”</p> <p>[Read intervening paragraphs.]</p> <p>“O man, O man!--if man you be, Or flounder, flounder, in the sea-- Such a tiresome wife I've got, For she wants what I do not.”</p> <p>“Well, what now?” said the flounder.</p> <p>“Oh dear!” said the man, “she wants to order about the sun and moon.”</p> <p>“Go home with you!” said the flounder, “you will find her in the old hovel.”</p> <p>And there they are sitting to this very day.</p>	<p>1. Students orally rehearse in order to prepare for writing. Explain that this sentence is their “argument”- an opinion based on evidence from the text. Their job is to write a paragraph explaining their reasoning. To be strong and convincing, this paragraph should include evidence from the story to show that their opinion makes sense.</p> <p>Orally model how students can paraphrase the evidence on their graphic organizers in order to support their arguments. Be sure to use both parts of the evidence collected. For example: When the Fisherman first came to the sea, he asked for nothing and the sea was clear. The second time the Fisherman came to the sea, to ask for a cottage, the sea turned green and yellow . . .</p> <p>Put some transitional words and phrases on the board for students to use in their writing (First, next, then, the second time, finally, etc.) Then, have each student turn to a partner and “talk through” the paragraph, graphic organizers in hand.</p> <p>2. Using their focusing sentence and notes, students write a paragraph to explain their analysis and reasoning. When both partners have orally rehearsed their paragraphs, students begin writing. Encourage them to follow the organizational pattern of their graphic organizers. When most have finished, point out that their paragraphs need an ending sentence that repeats the focus of the paragraph. Explain that the last sentence in an opinion paragraph usually reminds the reader of the point the author is making. It expresses the same idea as the first sentence, using slightly different words. Have students generate some examples of concluding sentences. Then have them add them to their paragraphs. Finally, pair students and have them read their pieces to each other.</p>

Day 6: Optional Follow-up Activity for The Grimms' "The Fisherman and his Wife"

1. Students use pantomime to better understand key sections of the text (15 minutes)
2. Students explore the question, "Why did the Fisherman keep coming back to ask the fish for more?" (30 minutes).

Text Passage under Discussion	Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students
<p><i>The Fisherman asks for a cottage (page 1)</i></p> <p>"Oh dear!" said the wife; "and it is so dreadful always to live in this evil-smelling hovel; you might as well have wished for a little cottage; go again and call him; tell him we want a little cottage, I daresay he will give it us; go, and be quick."</p> <p>And when he went back, the sea was green and yellow, and not nearly so clear. So he stood and said,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"O man, O man!--if man you be, Or flounder, flounder, in the sea-- Such a <u>tiresome</u> wife I've got, For she wants what I do not."</p> <p>Then the flounder came swimming up, and said, "Now then, what does she want?"</p> <p>"Oh," said the man, "you know when I caught you my wife says I ought to have wished for something. She does not want to live any longer in the hovel, and would rather have a cottage.</p> <p>"Go home with you," said the flounder, "she has it already."</p> <p><i>The Fisherman asks for a castle (page 2)</i></p> <p>"Look here, husband, the cottage is really too <u>confined</u>, and the yard and garden are so small; I think the flounder had better get us a larger house; I should like very much to live in a large stone castle; so go to your fish and he will send us a castle."</p> <p>"O my dear wife," said the man, "the cottage is good enough; what do we want a castle for?"</p> <p>"We want one," said the wife; "go along with you; the flounder can give us one."</p> <p>"Now, wife," said the man, "the flounder gave us the cottage; I do not like to go to him again, he may be angry."</p> <p>"Go along," said the wife, "he might just as well give us it as not; do as I say!"</p>	<p>1. Students use pantomime to better understand key sections of the text.</p> <p>Drama can be a valuable tool for enhancing and assessing students' understanding of literature. Using some simple guidelines, have your students pantomime narrated text, in place, in order to build understanding and prepare for discussion.</p> <p>Explain that, as a class, you will further explore the parts of the text where the Fisherman comes to the sea to ask the fish for something. Each of them will act out key parts of the text as you read them out loud. If done thoughtfully, this can help them better understand what the characters may be feeling or thinking in each part. Everyone will act at once and each person will get to be all of the characters, but they must act out the text <u>in place, without using any words or sounds</u>.</p> <p>Read or post these guidelines for the activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act out each part as you hear it read. • Stay "in place" and be careful not to touch anyone else. • Do not use any words or sounds. • Show what is happening in the story with your body and your expressions. <p>Have students spread out throughout the classroom, using their arms to establish an adequate "space bubble". Briefly practice/model running and walking in place and showing emotions such as anger or fear without making any sounds.</p> <p>Be clear about the fact that this is a serious exercise and that any student who becomes silly or out of control will have to sit out of the activity. Most young students will thoroughly enjoy acting and applying themselves to the task of "becoming" each character.</p>

The man felt very reluctant and unwilling; and he said to himself, "It is not the right thing to do;" nevertheless he went.

So when he came to the seaside, the water was purple and dark blue and grey and thick, and not green and yellow as before. And he stood and said,

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"Now then, what does she want?" said the flounder.

"Oh," said the man, half frightened, "she wants to live in a large stone castle."

"Go home with you, she is already standing before the door," said the flounder.

The Fisherman asks for his wife to be king (page 4)

"There!" said the wife, "is not this beautiful?"

"Oh yes," said the man, "if it will only last we can live in this fine castle and be very well contented."

"We will see about that," said the wife, "in the meanwhile we will sleep upon it." With that they went to bed.

The next morning the wife was awake first, just at the break of day, and she looked out and saw from her bed the beautiful country lying all round. The man took no notice of it, so she poked him in the side with her elbow, and said,

"Husband, get up and just look out of the window. Look, just think if we could be king over all this country. Just go to your fish and tell him we should like to be king."

"Now, wife," said the man, "what should we be kings for? I don't want to be king."

"Well," said the wife, "if you don't want to be king, I will be king."

"Now, wife," said the man, "what do you want to be king for? I could not ask him such a thing."

"Why not?" said the wife, "you must go directly all the same; I must be king."

So the man went, very much put out that his wife should want to be king.

Read each passage from the text, pausing as needed to allow students to show you what they are hearing/thinking with their bodies. Allow students to "hang back" if they choose; most will learn quite a bit from watching others. Observe the choices students make so that you can refer to them or ask questions about them later during discussion.

2. Students discuss the question, "Why did the Fisherman keep coming back to ask the Fish for more?"

Have the children sit in a circle or at their desks for discussion. Be sure each child has his/her marked copy of the text easily available. Explain that something about this story has been puzzling you: If the sea kept getting "angrier" each time the Fisherman returned to ask for more, why did the Fisherman keep coming back?

Lead a class discussion, referring back to their experiences in acting out the text and drawing students back into the text itself.

Possible questions may include:

- How did the Fisherman feel when he approached the sea the first time? How do you know? What in the text makes you think so?
- I was noticing your expressions as the Fisherman's wife told him to go back and ask to be King, what might he have been thinking at that time?
- Show me the expression you used when you played the Fisherman approaching the sea for the last time. Why did you choose that expression? How do you think he was feeling?
- Did his feelings change throughout the story? Why?
- What was the Fisherman's wife like? What in the text makes you think so?
- Did the Fisherman think that asking for more was wrong?
- If he did think asking for more was wrong, why did he keep returning?
- If asking for more was wrong, why was the fisherman's request granted each time until the last?

Encourage students to quote passages or paraphrase parts of the text during discussion. End by posting the original question on the board and

"It is not the right thing to do--not at all the right thing," thought the man. He did not at all want to go, and yet he went all the same.

And when he came to the sea the water was quite dark grey, and rushed far inland, and had an ill smell. And he stood and said,

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"Now then, what does she want?" said the fish.

"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to be king."

"Go home with you, she is so already," said the fish.

The Fisherman asks for his wife to be emperor (pages 5)

"Well, wife, this is fine for you to be king! Now there is nothing more to wish for."

"O husband!" said the wife, seeming quite restless, "I am tired of this already. Go to your fish and tell him that now I am king I must be emperor."

"Now, wife," said the man, "what do you want to be emperor for?"

"Husband," said she, "go and tell the fish I want to be emperor."

"Oh dear!" said the man, "he could not do it--I cannot ask him such a thing. There is but one emperor at a time; the fish can't possibly make any one emperor--indeed he can't."

"Now, look here," said the wife, "I am king, and you are only my husband, so will you go at once? Go along! For if he was able to make me king he is able to make me emperor; and I will and must be emperor, so go along!"

So he was obliged to go; and as he went he felt very uncomfortable about it, and he thought to himself, "It is not at all the right thing to do; to want to be emperor is really going too far; the flounder will soon be beginning to get tired of this."

With that he came to the sea, and the water was quite black and thick, and the foam flew, and the wind blew, and the man

giving students a few minutes to share their final answers with a partner.

was terrified. But he stood and said,

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"What is it now?" said the fish.

"Oh dear!" said the man, "my wife wants to be emperor."

"Go home with you," said the fish, "she is emperor
already."

The Fisherman asks for power over the sun and moon (pages 6)

"Husband," said she, "if I cannot get the power of making
the sun and moon rise when I want them, I shall never have another
quiet hour. Go to the fish and tell him so."

"O wife!" said the man, and fell on his knees to her, "the
fish can really not do that for you. I grant you he could make you
emperor ... do be contented with that, I beg of you."

And she became wild with impatience, and screamed out,
"I can wait no longer, go at once!"

And so off he went as well as he could for fright. And a
dreadful storm arose, so that he could hardly keep his feet; and the
houses and trees were blown down, and the mountains trembled,
and rocks fell in the sea; the sky was quite black, and it thundered
and lightened; and the waves, crowned with foam, ran mountains
high. So he cried out, without being able to hear his own words,

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

"Well, what now?" said the flounder.

"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to order about the
sun and moon."

"Go home with you!" said the flounder, "you will find her
in the old hovel."

And there they are sitting to this very day.

Word Play Activity

Playing with Words

"O man, O man!--if man you be,
Or flounder, flounder, in the sea--
Such a tiresome wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

-from The FISHERMAN and his WIFE

1. Use the template below to rewrite this verse as if you were the Fisherman talking to a female tuna fish. Then think of another word to describe your wife.

"O _____, O _____!--if _____ you be,
Or _____, _____, in the sea--
Such a(n) _____ wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

2. Now write one of your own to share with the class!

"O _____, O _____!--if _____ you be,
Or _____, _____, in the sea--
Such a(n) _____ wife I've got,
For she wants what I do not."

3. If you finish early, write another verse or draw a picture to go with your verse on the back of this sheet.

Playing with Words

We write differently than we speak. The language in this story is more formal than the language you might use when talking to your friends. Here is a simple trick you can use to "translate" some of the sentences so that they sound more familiar and are easier to understand.

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence from the story out loud. Then, replace the underlined words with a contraction. Read the new sentence out loud.

Example:

Sentence from the story: "Look," said the wife, "is not that nice?"

New sentence: "Look," said the wife, "isn't that nice?"

1. "There!" said the wife, "is not this beautiful?"
"There!" said the wife, "_____ this beautiful?"
2. So she took him by the hand and said, "Let us enter."
So she took him by the hand and said, "_____ enter."

Now try making the following sentences more formal by changing the contraction back into two words. Read your new sentence aloud (Have fun by trying to sound like a King or a Queen!).

3. Let's go to the store.
_____ go to the store.
4. Isn't that your brother?
_____ that your brother?

Graphic Organizer

Graphic organizers help us to organize information so that it is easier to make sense of it. Follow these directions to complete this graphic organizer on "The Fisherman and his Wife". You will need your marked copy of the text, a pencil, watercolor paints, a brush, and a cup of water.

DIRECTIONS:

1. The box at the top of each column tells what happens in the story just before the sea changes. Use the words you underlined in the text to fill in this box.
2. The box at the bottom of each column gives the words from the story that show how the sea changes. These are the parts of the text you marked with sticky notes.
3. In the middle box of each column, use your watercolor paints to show how the sea changed. Your painting should match the word picture below it. You may want to underline the important words in the description of the sea before you paint.

When you have finished, look at the set of notes you have created. What patterns do you see?
Be prepared to discuss your thinking.

Why did the sea change?

<p>1. When the Fisherman first came to the sea, he asked for _____</p>	<p>2. The second time the Fisherman came to the sea, he asked for _____</p>	<p>3. The third time the Fisherman came to the sea, he asked for _____</p>
<p>"he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water " page 1</p>	<p>"the sea was green and yellow, and not nearly so clear " page 1</p>	<p>"the water was purple and dark blue and grey and thick " page 2</p>

<p>4. The fourth time the Fisherman came to the sea, he asked for _____</p>	<p>5. The fifth time the Fisherman came to the sea, he asked for _____</p>	<p>6. The last the Fisherman came to the sea, he asked for _____</p>
<p>"the water was quite dark grey, and rushed far inland, and had an ill smell." page 3</p>	<p>"the water was quite black and thick, and the foam flew, and the wind blew" page 4</p>	<p>"rocks fell in the sea; the sky was quite black, and it thundered and lightened; and the waves, crowned with foam, ran mountains high " page 5</p>