



## A Lesson on A Great Digger by Miranda Brower

**Grade Level:** Grade 5

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 2 hours

**Lesson Keywords:** badger, lesson, reading

**Lesson Description:** The goal of this lesson is to give students the opportunity to use the reading and writing habits they've been practicing on a regular basis. By reading and rereading the passage closely and focusing their reading through a series of questions and discussion about the text they will be able to identify new vocabulary and use the vocabulary learned. This lesson could easily be adapted into a science lesson. This lesson could also be broken up into two days.

### Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.5: Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1a: Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.2e: Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.4a: Use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.5c: Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words.

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## Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

**Instructions:** Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

### A Great Digger- North American Fable

by

**Content:** This is an old American fable. Its not certain who first told it, but it teaches a lesson of importance.?

Badger always had a good dayhe never complained and always turned a problem into?an opportunity. He liked living on the high, dry plains where he had many ground squirrels?and prairie dogs as his neighbors. He probably enjoyed their company much more than they?did his. If anyone had asked them, they would have said that they wished Badger were?somewhere else. He was always disturbing their tranquil community with his daily digging.?

Badger wanted to be helpful, and he washe enabled his neighbors to construct safe?homes. They lived in burrows, which are homes under the ground, and creating them is a?challenge. Usually the soil is hard and difficult to move, especially below the topsoil. They?made their tunnels where he had dug, they were able to dig easily because he had made the?soil soft.?

Badger was lonely because the other animals never stopped to be with him. They?would run and stay inside their burrows shouting, Watch out, boring Badger is coming.?Badger would try to follow them into their homes for companionship, but the other animals?just ignored him.

So Badger just dug and dug all day every day. Im designed for digging, he said to?himself. He had a powerful body: short, stout legs, and big feet, which had long, strong claws.?When he started to dig, he could makethe dirt fly.?

Badger enjoyed digging so much that he dug countless holes of his own, just for the fun?it gave him and how it helped others. More than one fox and coyote had made his home in a?hole dug by Badger. They never did take the trouble to thank him though. Instead, they often?laughed about his odd way of having fun and commented that Benny must be a stupid fellow.

If they really thought that, they were wrong as well as ungrateful. He was slow and?clumsy at everything except digging. He was too heavy and squat to be quick on his feet in?order to chase and catch his faster neighbors. That was not because he was not smart. His?wits were sharp, he knew he was designed to dig.?

Usually, nobody saw Badger until night. He rarely left his den in the daytime, except to?sun himself. Then not many noticed him because of camouflage. He did not hide when anyone?surprised him while taking a sunbath, but he had a trick of lying flat in the grass without?moving, and his striped body blended with the vegetation. So, it took a sharp eye to spy him?when he lay low in that fashion.

Sleeping, with his long fur on end, he looked too comfortable to disturb. At least, that?was what the ground squirrels thought. And if one of those busy little fellows ever paused to?stare at Benny when he was napping in the sunshine, Badger just had to turn his head toward?the onlooker. That was sure to make him run away.

One day there was a great wind, a tornado with tremendous force. It blew all the trees?away and even removed bushes and grass. The animals all hid in their burrows. When it was?calm again, they came out. They said to themselves, its a good thing we have our holes to?keep us safe. Then they said, What a difference it makes to have holes for homes. We should?thank Badger for doing all that digging.

He was glad the animals thanked him, they now realized that his help to build their?homes had safeguarded them. He would keep digging so that every day was a good one and?everyone would have a safe home.

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## Task 1: Vocabulary

**Instructions:** Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

**Q: 1 WordPhrase:** They lived in burrows, which are homes under the ground, and creating them is a challenge.

**WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** What does the word "burrows" mean in this sentence?

**A:** A challenging maze.

**B:** A kind of animal.

**C:** Homes for animals, which are underground.

**D:** Homes for birds.

**Question:** Which one of the sentence below uses the term "burrows" correctly?

**A:** Timothy Burrows loved chocolate chip cookies after dinner?

**B:** Bunnies live in burrows just behind my house.

**C:** I put my burrows on this morning backwards.

**D:** The bird outside my window burrows in the tree next door.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** Badger wanted to be helpful, and he was?he enabled his neighbors to construct safe homes.

**WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** What does the word "enabled" mean in this sentence?

**A:** To be helpful.

**B:** To destroy.

**C:** To fight.

**D:** To lie.

**Question:** Which sentence below uses the word "enable" correctly?

**A:** Jessica enabled her lunch.

**B:** Mary enabled her shoes tightly.

**C:** My studying has enabled me to do well.

**D:** Fan went around and enabled keeping us cool.

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** One day there was a great wind, a tornado with tremendous force **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** What does the word "tremendous" mean in this sentence?

**A:** A chemical.

**B:** A color.

**C:** A train.

**D:** A very great amount.

**Question:** Which one of the sentences below uses the word "tremendous" correctly?

**A:** Douglas plays the tremendous in his band.

**B:** There was a tremendous amount of thunder in the storm last night.

**C:** The color tremendous was Sarah's favorite color.

**D:** The mouse was very tremendous and sneaky.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** Usually the soil is hard and difficult to move, especially below the topsoil. **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** What does the word "topsoil" mean in this sentence?

**A:** Leaves.

**B:** Concrete.

**C:** The top layer of soil.

**D:** A type of food.

**Question:** Which one of the sentences below uses the word "topsoil" correctly?

**A:** Tiny little insects burrow and crawl along the topsoil of my front yard.

**B:** My favorite food is topsoil.

**C:** The clouds are made of topsoil.

**D:** Cars produce topsoil when the engine is in use.

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## Task 2: Forum Discussion

**Instructions:** This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

### 1 - What does the author want to teach us?

In the beginning of the story, the author writes, This is an old American fable. Its not certain who first told it, but it teaches a lesson of importance. Explain what lesson the story teaches its readers.

### 2 - What style of writing is the story written in?

Is the story written in expository, descriptive, persuasive or narrative form? Explain why.

### 3 - What would you say to persuade...?

What would you say to the other animals in the habitat to persuade them that badger is a valued member of their environment when the author says, If anyone had asked them, they would have said that they wished Badger were somewhere else. He was always disturbing their tranquil community with his daily digging.?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** You are to write and post here 500 words (2 or 3 paragraphs) essay on another story, myth or fable that teaches a lesson, you are to contrast these two stories (What is different? For example: were there no talking animals, was the story based on something fictional, did the lesson present itself differently). Use details. Submit your essay using the box below.

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