



## A Lesson on John's Bright Idea by Lori Vedder

**Grade Level:** Grade 7

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 1 hour

**Lesson Keywords:** John's Bright Idea

**Lesson Description:** In this lesson you will read a passage about a boy who gets help in an unexpected way. After reading the passage twice you will answer vocabulary questions, respond to three discussion questions, and you will write a 500 word essay from the prompt.

### Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4a: Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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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:** economy **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** "Some families were poor because the parents had lost jobs, and the economy was in decline" What does economy mean?

- A: The United States
- B: The way in which goods and services are made, sold and used.
- C: ecosystem
- D: community

**Question:** Which sentence uses the word economy correctly?

- A: I live on the west economy.
  - B: In a healthy economy, demand for goods and services is high.
  - C: The economy grew a vegetable garden.
  - D: None of the above
- =====

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** significantly **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** "Every week he had at least 50 cents to take home and often significantly more" What does significantly mean?

- A: Not very important
- B: Great or worthy of attention
- C: Genuine
- D: None of the above

**Question:** Which sentence uses the word significantly correctly?

- A: Exercising every day will significantly increase your ability to lose weight.
  - B: The shirt was significantly red.
  - C: The dog walked significantly towards the cat.
  - D: None of the above.
- =====

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** challenges **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** "People tried to help each other meet these challenges" What is the correct definition of challenges as used in this passage?

- A: dull, boring
- B: peace, agree
- C: requiring energy, skill, and determination
- D: None of the above

**Question:** Which sentence uses challenges as it is used in the reading passage correctly?

- A: The challenges tasted good today.
  - B: She wiped here eyes and looked ahead at the new challenges now facing her.
  - C: The challenges were sent to the wrong address.
  - D: None of the above
- =====

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** suffering **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** "His family is suffering so much" what does suffering mean in this passage?

- A: pleasant
- B: surprise
- C: discomfort
- D: None of the above

**Question:** Which sentence uses the word suffering correctly?

- A: It is a suffering day outside today.
  - B: The patient is suffering with a toothache.
  - C: The wedding brought great suffering.
  - D: None of the above.
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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.

### John's Bright Idea

by

**Content:** This is an old story. It was written 100 years ago. So you will find it has a different style from stories people read and write today. For example, you'll read that the children sell popcorn for 5 cents a bag and are thrilled. Today, that's not enough money to buy much.

Mrs. Meredith was a most kind and thoughtful woman. She spent a great deal of time visiting the poor. She knew they had problems. She wanted to help them. She brought food. She brought medicine, too.

The family lived in a small community with some people who were poor and others who were rich. In the town, some people worked but others had no jobs, and families needed money to pay their bills. Some families were poor because the parents had lost jobs, and the economy was in decline. People tried to help each other meet these challenges.

One morning she told her children about a family she had visited the day before. There was a man sick in bed, his wife, who took care of him and could not go out to work, and their little boy. The little boy--his name was Bernard--had interested her very much.

I wish you could see him, she said to her own children, John, Harry, and Clara, he is such a help to his mother. He wants very much to earn some money, but I don't see what he can do.

After their mother had left the room, the children sat thinking about Bernard. I wish we could help him to earn money, said Clara. His family is suffering so much.

So do I, said Harry. We really should do something to assist them.

For some moments, John said nothing, but, suddenly, he sprang to his feet and cried, I have a great idea! I have a solution that we can all help accomplish.

The other children also jumped up all attention. When John had an idea, it was sure to be a good one. I tell you what we can do, said John. You know that big box of corn Uncle John sent us for popping? Well, we can pop it, and put it into paper bags, and Bernard can take it around to the houses and sell it.

When Mrs. Meredith heard of John's idea, she, too, thought it a good one. Very soon, the children were busy popping the corn, while their mother went out to buy the paper bags. When she came back, she brought Bernard with her.

In a short time, he started out on his new business, and, much sooner than could be expected, returned with an empty basket. Tucked into one of his mittens were ten nickels. He had never earned so much money before in his life. When he found that it was all to be his, he was so delighted he could hardly speak, but his bright smiling face spoke for him. After he had run home to take the money to his mother, John said, We have corn enough left to send Bernard out ever so many times. May we do it again?

Yes, said Mrs. Meredith, you may send him every Saturday morning, if you will pop the corn for him yourselves. John, will you agree to take charge of the work?

Indeed I will, replied John, and he kept his word. For many weeks, every Saturday morning, no matter what opportunities there were to play, he saw that the corn was all popped, the paper bags filled, and arranged in the basket when Bernard arrived.

People began to watch for the little pop-corn boy, and every week he had at least fifty cents to take home, and often significantly more, income that supported his family. All of this was because of the way John carried out his bright idea.

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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 - How does Mrs. Meredith help her community?

The beginning of the passage tells us Mrs. Meredith is a kind and thoughtful woman, what does she do that helps her community?

### 2 - What was John's great idea?

John had a solution to help Bernard, in what ways does John help Bernard?

### 3 - What lessons can be learned from this reading passage?

Bernard was able to earn money to help his family, why? do you think it was important to Bernard?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** You are to write and post here 500 words essay on how you can relate to this reading passage. In what ways can you help your community??Make sure to provide specific examples.

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