



A Lesson on The Gift by Amanda Stern

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour 15 minutes

Lesson Keywords: Reading, writing, critical thinking

Lesson Description: The ultimate goal of the lesson is to allow students to demonstrate the reading and writing skills that they have been practicing to understand the idea of honesty in the story "The Gift". The students will use their critical thinking skills to answer questions specific to the story.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.8: Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2b: Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

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.

The Gift

by

Content: One windy day in March, Mary Miller was on her way to school when she looked in a store window. She saw a lovely red apples. Oh, she said, how lovely! If only Mamma could have one!

Mary's mother was very poor. She had been a nurse ever since Mary's father died. She had worked hard to earn a living for herself and Mary. But now she had become sick. She was obliged to lie in bed all day, and when Mary was away at school, the house was very lonesome. She missed her little angel. That is what she called Mary. Mary took care of her mother. She cooked her food. Mostly she cooked soup. They could not afford fresh fruit. She would sing to her at night.

She was usually a good student, but that day she made so many mistakes that the teacher looked at her in surprise. She was not paying attention. She was thinking about her mother and the apples.

When school was dismissed, Mary started home. She had gone only a short distance when she saw a man in front of her drop his wallet. Running quickly forward she picked it up. There must be a good deal of money in it, thought Mary. How I wish I could keep it. Then I could buy Mamma a red apple and so many other things she needs.

She knew this would not be right, so she hurried after the man. Touching him on the arm, she said, Please, Sir, you dropped your wallet.

Thank you, said the man taking the wallet. Then noticing how poorly she was dressed, he said, Why did you not keep the wallet?

Because that would be stealing, replied Mary. But, she continued honestly, before I thought I must give it back to you, I did wish I could keep it, for then I could buy Mamma a red apple.

He smiled kindly and said, You are a good little girl to return my wallet. I would like to give you a little present and then you can buy a red apple. He handed her a dollar and then said goodbye.

Mary was so surprised that she ran to the store. The store owner happened to look out and saw the same little girl who stood looking so longingly in at his window in the morning. He quickly picked out the biggest, roundest, reddest apple he could find. He took it out to Mary and said, Would you like this one?

She took the apple and gave him the dollar. No charge, he said, returning it. She thanked him for my mother, and he smiled and gave her another. For you, too, he said. When Mary reached home with her treasures, she found her mother fast asleep. She put the apples and dollar on a plate where her mother could see them when she awoke.

When Mrs. Miller was told the wonderful story, she kissed her little daughter and said, You see, dear, it always pays to be honest and truthful.

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: Lonesome **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: "...when Mary was away at school, the house was very lonesome" What does the word "lonesome" mean in the sentence?

- A: dark
- B: clean
- C: lonely
- D: colorful

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

- A: Suzy felt lonesome at her birthday party with all of her friends.
- B: I felt very lonesome when my mom went on vacation for a week.
- C: Look at that lonesome wolf in the pack of wolves.
- D: The ants were lonesome at the picnic.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: Fast asleep **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: "...she found her mother fast asleep..." What does the phrase "fast asleep" mean?

- A: soundly
- B: quickly
- C: abruptly
- D: happily

Question: Which sentence uses the phrase "fast asleep" incorrectly?

- A: My parents were fast asleep when their alarm went off.
- B: The Johnson's were fast asleep when a young kid broke into their car.
- C: I was fast asleep while jumping on the trampoline.
- D: They did not expect the child to be fast asleep during the movie.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: Obligated **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: "She was obliged to lie in bed all day..." What does the word "obliged" mean in this sentence?

- A: determined
- B: required
- C: given an option
- D: refused

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

- A: The students were obliged to go to the school assembly.
- B: You are obliged to go to the dance, but only if you want to.
- C: The teacher was obliged to volunteer at the school carnival.
- D: My mom was obliged to sell my girls scout cookies.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: Longingly **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: "...the same little girl who stood looking so longingly in at his window..." What does the word "longingly" mean?

- A: angrily
- B: unwillingly
- C: voluntarily
- D: sincerely

Question: Which sentence uses the word "longingly" incorrectly?

- A: The boy longingly played video games.
- B: I longingly searched for my twin sister.
- C: My parents and I longingly looked through old photo albums.
- D: Bobby longingly waited for his grandparents train to arrive.

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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 - Mary's present

Why does Mary want to buy an apple for her mother? Which sentence helps to explain your answer?

2 - Is Mary always distracted?

Why was Mary so distracted during class? Is this normal for her? If no, explain why. Use examples from the text.

3 - Being honest and truthful

Why did Mary want to keep the wallet at first? What made her change her mind and decide to return the wallet? How did the gentleman respond to Mary's actions? Use quotes and examples from the text to support your answer.

4 - Apple for mother and you, too.

What made the store owner decide to give Mary not one, but two free apples? How do you know this? Use examples from the story to support your answer.

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: For your writing assignment, imagine that you are the person who dropped their wallet on the street. What would your reaction be if a child returned the wallet to you with all of your money still in it? Would you give the child a reward for returning your lost wallet? Why or why not? What kind of reward would you give them? Write 1-2 paragraphs (minimum 200 words) explaining these answers. Submit your assignment in the text box below.

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