



Story elements

Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Practice

A parent or tutor should read along with the student, helping as needed.

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Stories have a beginning, a middle, and an ending.

The beginning of a story tells you *who* the story is mostly about, and *where* the story mostly takes place.

The **characters** are *who* the story is mostly about.

The **setting** is *where* the story mostly takes place.

The middle of a story tells you the *things that happen* in the story.

The **events** are the *things that happen* in the story.

The **plot** is *all of the events* in the story. The plot usually includes some kind of *problem*.

The ending of a story tells *how the problem is solved*.

The **problem solution** is *how the problem is solved*.

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Think about these **story elements** as you listen to this story.

The Golden Fish Keeps a Promise

By L. M. Gask

Upon a certain island in the middle of the sea lived a fisherman and his wife. They were so poor they often went without bread when the fishing did not go well.

One day when the man had been fishing for many hours without any luck, he hooked a small golden fish with eyes as bright as diamonds.

“Let me go, kind fisherman,” the little creature cried. “I would not even make a single mouthful for your dinner.”

The man was so moved by the beauty of the golden fish that he let him go. Before he swam away, the fish promised that he would come back if the fisherman ever needed help.

The fisherman laughed, for he could not think how a little fish could help him, other than providing a bit of food. He went home and told his wife about his adventure.

“What!” she cried. “You let him go? We have not a scrap of food in the house, and I suppose that now we must starve.”

The fisherman’s wife continued to fuss at him until, finally, he decided to go and put the little fish to the test. He hurried down to the seashore, and stood at the edge of the waves.

“Golden Fish, Golden Fish! Come and help me, please,” he called. The last word was not out of his mouth when the little fish popped its head up out of the water.

“You see I have kept my promise,” said the fish. “How can I help you, my friend?” And when the fisherman made his request, the fish simply said, “Don’t worry about that. There will be plenty of food when you get home.”

And strangely enough, when the fisherman arrived home, there was a basket of bread on the table, and cheese and fruit as well.

Now let’s think about the **story elements**.

1. **Characters:** *Who* is this story mostly about?

- A. a little golden fish
- B. a fisherman, his wife, and a little golden fish
- C. a fisherman’s wife and a little golden fish

2. **Setting:** *Where* does this story mostly take place?

- A. in a small cabin
- B. on a beach
- C. on an island

3. **Problem:** What *problem* does one or more of the story characters have?

- A. The fisherman and his wife do not have much food to eat.
- B. The fisherman does not want to let the golden fish go free.
- C. The golden fish does not keep his promise to help the fisherman.

4. **Event 1:** Which event happens *first* in this story?
- A. The fisherman's wife fusses at him for letting the fish go free.
 - B. The fisherman catches a small golden fish.
 - C. The fisherman calls for the golden fish to come and help him.
5. **Event 2:** Which event happens *second* in this story?
- A. The fisherman's wife fusses at him for letting the fish go free.
 - B. The fisherman catches a small golden fish.
 - C. The fisherman calls for the golden fish to come and help him.
6. **Event 3:** Which event happens *third* in this story?
- A. The fisherman's wife fusses at him for letting the fish go free.
 - B. The fisherman catches a small golden fish.
 - C. The fisherman calls for the golden fish to come and help him.
7. **Problem Solution:** How is one of the characters' problem *solved*?
- A. The fisherman catches the golden fish again.
 - B. The fisherman asks the golden fish for help, and food appears on the table.
 - C. The fisherman's wife asks the golden fish for help.

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8. How does thinking about **story elements** help you to understand the story better?

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## Answer Key

1. B
2. C
3. A
4. B
5. A
6. C
7. B
8. Accept any reasonable answers. For example, paying attention to the setting, the characters, the problem, and the events in the story can help you picture what is happening. This helps you understand and remember what is most important in the story.