

Teacher Guide

Grades 3–4

The Cricket in Times Square

George Selden

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THE CRICKET IN TIMES SQUARE

by
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Teacher Guide

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Note

The Dell Yearling paperback edition of the book published by Dell was used to prepare this guide. The page references may differ in other editions.

Please note: Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with your class.

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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, comparing
and contrasting, evaluating,
analyzing details

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing,
cause/effect, inference,
problem solving and decision
making, K-W-L

Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot,
theme

Writing

Response journal, chapter
summaries, descriptive,
newspaper story, fantasy

Vocabulary

Antonyms/synonyms, root
or base words, prefixes/
suffixes

Listening/Speaking

Role play, participation in
discussion, participation in
dramatic activities

-
3. **Creative Thinking:** What if Chester hadn't been transplanted to the Times Square subway station? How would the story be different? Write a short paragraph to explain your answer.

Chapter Five: "Sunday Morning"—Pages 35-41

Vocabulary:

counterman (36)

dunked (36)

instinct (40)

prophesy (41)

shrugged (41)

Vocabulary:

List the vocabulary words for the day on large sheets of paper. Leave space for students to: a) illustrate the meaning next to each word; b) list a memory device to remember the word.

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Why was Mario especially anxious to get to the newsstand on Sunday morning? (Page 35, *He was anxious to play with his new cricket.*)
2. Have you ever seen a pet cricket at a lunch counter? What might other customers have thought about a cricket at a lunch counter?
3. What suggestions did Mickey make to help Chester drink? (Page 36, *He suggested that Chester, the cricket, stand on the rim of the glass.*)
4. How big was Chester's soda? (Page 36, *Very small; "Mickey took a tablespoon and put a drop of strawberry syrup into it. Then he added a drop of cream, a pinch of soda water and a dip of ice cream about the size of your fingernail."*) How big is a cricket? Research.
5. Who was Mr. Smedley? How did Mr. Smedley react to Chester? (Page 38, *The best customer at the newsstand; he was a music teacher who really did not like bugs.*)
6. What was Mr. Smedley's prophesy about Chester? What is a prophesy? (Pages 39-41, *Someday Chester might play as well as Orpheus.*) Who was Orpheus? (*A poor and beautiful musician, son of Apollo; when his wife died, he descended to Hades and played Pluto by his music, that the gods would let him to lead his wife back to earth on the condition that he would not look behind him. But he looked back and the wife, Eurydice, vanished among the shades.*)

Prediction:

Do you think Mr. Smedley's prophesy about Chester will happen? Ask some predictions for the rest of the book. Keep them on a list and check them out as you finish the book. (Sample prediction sheet included on next page.)

Sample Prediction Sheet

List your predictions for the book at these places in the story. Put a check next to your predictions that turn out to be correct.

Place in Story	My Prediction	✓ if Correct
<p>Mr. Smedley says, "I properly speak things for a creature of such ability." (page 41)</p>		
<p>Fortune Cookie says, "Good luck is coming your way. Be ready." (page 51)</p>		
<p>After the incident, Mama Bellini says, "He's a jinx." (page 59)</p>		

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Cause/Effect Map

To plot cause and effect in a story, first list the sequence of events. Then mark causes with a "C" and effects with an "E." Use an arrow from the cause to the effect. Remember that many effects cause something else so they might be marked with an "E" and a "C" with an arrow to the next effect.

Events in the Story:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Another way to mark cause and effect is to look for an effect and then backtrack to the single or multiple causes.

