

ELA units · Grades 2 and 3 What they say, what they do Which tells you more about a character: what they say, or what they do?

6 days5 books258

min in full132 min shortGrades 2-3

The idea

A character who says one thing and does another is not inconsistent; they are the normal case. These six lessons ask children to build a judgement from character evidence rather than from a single line or action, and one turns on a character whose written warnings are contradicted by everything she actually does. The unit begins with the sharpest version of that problem what a character says or writes against what the character does - and then widens the evidence. Teasing has to be interpreted, change has to be separated from personality, and consequences have to be read for what they reveal. It is the same evidence discipline as the Grade 1 response unit, applied to people who are harder to read. The unit ends on change - a character who changes what she will settle for rather than who she is, and a character who gets a title she made up herself. Change is last because it needs the person established first.

The arc

1. A character built out of their own paperwork
2. What somebody says and what they do can disagree
3. Written warnings can be contradicted by every action
4. Teasing can be affection, and the characters can say so
5. A person can change what they will settle for
6. A consequence and a reward can arrive in that order

The 6 days

DAY 1

Character Through Text Features: Beatrice's Lists Collect the lists Beatrice makes and explain what each one tells you about her.

Why here. First: a character built entirely out of her own paperwork. The evidence is unusually easy to collect here, which makes a good starting point before the class has to reconcile evidence that disagrees.

From Beatrice More and the Perfect Party by Alison Hughes · A character built out of her own paperwork 43 min full22 min shortMakes: A column of list titles, each with what it reveals

DAY 2

Character: What Hazel Says and What Hazel Does Make two lists - what Hazel says about her brother, and what she does for him - and explain the difference.

Why here. Second, and the point of the unit - a character who has to be judged on both columns. The class discovers that one column is not enough.

From Where's Burgess? by Laurie Elmquist · A character who has to be judged on both columns 43 min full22 min shortMakes: A two-column sheet: her words, and her actions

DAY 3

Character: The Girl Whose T-Shirt Says Go Away Compare what Rita's T-shirts say with what Rita does, and explain what dinner tells you about her.

Why here. Third: handwritten warnings, and everything she does anyway. The columns contradict each other outright.

From Badir and the Beaver by Shannon Stewart · Handwritten warnings, and everything she does anyway 43 min full22 min shortMakes: A two-column sheet: her slogans, and her actions

DAY 4

Character: Three Children Who Argue About Everything Explain how Lark, Connor and Sophie talk to each other, and what their teasing actually means.

Why here. Fourth. Three children who argue about everything, and teasing used as affection - explained by the children themselves, so the class has the interpretation from inside.

From Lark and the Dessert Disaster by Natasha Deen · Teasing used as affection, explained by the children themselves 43 min full22 min shortMakes: A two-column sheet: what is said, and what is meant

DAY 5

Character Change: Bee More Explain what Beatrice means by professional, how the book shows her frustration, and what she gives up by the end.

Why here. Fifth: a character who changes what she will settle for, not who she is. Same book as day 1, so the class can compare their own day-1 evidence with the ending.

From Beatrice More and the Perfect Party by Alison Hughes · A character who changes what she will settle for, not who she is 43 min full22 min shortMakes: A four-row sheet of small surrenders, plus what she keeps

DAY 6

Consequences: The Title She Made Up Explain what the centre does about the escape, how Jelly is treated, and what she is given at the end.

Why here. Last: a consequence and a reward arriving in that order, and a title she made up herself. It closes the unit on somebody who defines her own outcome.

From Princess Angelica, Part-Time Lion Trainer by Monique Polak · A consequence and a reward, arriving in that order 43 min full 22 min short Makes: A procedure sheet for the emergency, plus what Jelly loses and gains Words to use Word How it is used says / does The central comparison on days 2-3, and a useful question whenever words and behaviour pull apart. contradicts

Day 3, where what Rita advertises and what she does disagree.

settles for

Day 5. The distinction between changing a person and changing what

they will accept. consequence

Day 6. What happens after an action, and what that outcome reveals.

What to prepare Checkpoint 1 page, one per child Checkpoint 2 page, one per child A two-column character sheet per child Checkpoints After day 3 · Both columns Rita's shirt and three things she does.

The child fills both columns and says which one they would believe. Without a book. Four statements and no book. Look for. The child chooses the actions and says why. Choosing the words is defensible if the reason is good; having no reason is not. Say to the child. What does her shirt say? What does she do?

Which one tells you who she is? After day 6 · What changed Beatrice at the start and at the end, described.

The child says what changed and what did not.

Without a book. Two short descriptions and no book. Look for. The child says what Beatrice will settle for changed and the person did not. Saying she became a different person is the misreading to correct. Say to the child. What is different about her at the end? What is exactly the same? The task at the end The character sheet, and the strongest evidence Each child takes one character, records at least six pieces of evidence from the lesson, and groups them into two useful categories. The categories may be words/actions, said/meant, before/after, or another pairing that fits the lesson. The child then marks the single most revealing relationship between the two groups - a disagreement, contrast, change or consequence - and writes one sentence explaining what it shows about the character. The sentence is read out without the name and the class guesses the character. Collect.

The evidence sheet, the marked relationship, and the sentence. Time. One session of about 45 minutes.

Teacher key

Checkpoint 1: the shirt says go away and she does nothing of the kind. The actions are the better evidence, and the shirt is evidence about what she wants people to think. Checkpoint 2: what changed is what she will settle for; she has not become a different person. Task: a class guessing the character from the sentence alone shows the relationship between the columns was specific. An unguessable sentence is usually a general statement about people. What a strong answer looks like Strand What to see Evidence Collects specific character evidence accurately. Grouping Sorts the evidence into two categories that fit the lesson. Relationship Identifies an important disagreement, contrast, change or consequence.

Judgement Explains what the evidence shows about the character, with a reason. Keeping the daily evidence Keep each child’s work from days 1 and 6. Look for evidence becoming more precise, and for the child moving from collecting details to explaining what those details reveal. What to pass on Children who wrote that a character became a different person at checkpoint 2 need the distinction again; it recurs in every later unit on character change. Beatrice More carries days 1 and 5 and they should bracket the unit as written. Running them together loses the comparison the fifth day depends on. The books this unit uses

Where’s Burgess? by Laurie Elmquist · 1 lesson Badir and the Beaver by Shannon Stewart ·	1 lesson
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Beatrice More and the Perfect Party by Alison Hughes · 2 lessons Lark and the Dessert Disaster by Natasha