

The Paper Bag Princess

Analyze Characters

TIME	33 minutes full · 17 minutes short
PRIMARY SKILL	Compare a character's responses to different challenges
OBJECTIVE	Describe Analyze Characters the dragon's threat and Ronald's insult, then explain what the two responses have in common.
STUDENT	Two response comparisons and one statement about the reply Elizabeth refuses to give.
EVIDENCE	
ESSENTIAL	How can a character answer without accepting the argument she is given?
QUESTION	

Before teaching

Read or play the complete book before the timed lesson. Mark the cave-door exchange and the conversation with Ronald after the rescue.

Materials:	The book; marked passages 5 and 11; Student Evidence page; pencil.
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Mark these moments: dragon threatens and boasts · Elizabeth asks a question instead · Ronald criticizes her appearance · Elizabeth answers in his own pattern

Lesson sequence

TIME	TEACHING MOVE
4 min	A threat, and no argument Read the dragon's threat. Ask what Elizabeth does instead of running away or debating the threat.

7 min	Notice the shape of the replies Lay Ronald's remarks beside Elizabeth's reply. Count the parts and notice that she mirrors the structure before giving her verdict.
12 min	Compare both responses Students record what is said to Elizabeth and what she says back at the cave and after the rescue.
10 min	Name the reply she leaves out Ask what Elizabeth never bothers to deny or defend, and why that omission matters to understanding her response.

ELA SKILL LESSON · TEACHER SUPPORT

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Access routes

SOLO	Use the two marked passages to complete both response pairs and the “does not say” box independently.
SUPPORTED	Read one exchange at a time. Use the frame “They say _____. Elizabeth answers _____.” Then compare the two responses.
LISTENING	Replay the two exchanges. Student tells what was said and what Elizabeth did or said back; adult may scribe.
EXTEND	Explain why agreeing with a factual description can still be a refusal of the judgment attached to it.

Teacher guidance

Keep the lesson on response, not on whether every statement made about Elizabeth is factually true.

Her defining move is that she refuses the frame of the challenge: she redirects the dragon and refuses Ronald's standard of what matters.

Accuracy note: Elizabeth does not win by shouting or by disproving Ronald's appearance details. Her response is controlled and changes what counts as important.

Assessment

- States that Elizabeth does not run from the dragon.
- Says she redirects the dragon with a question.
- Identifies at least two things Ronald criticizes.
- Explains how Elizabeth answers Ronald without defending her appearance.
- Names a common feature of the two responses.

Short route · 17 minutes 3 min - cave-door response. 5 min - compare Ronald's and Elizabeth's final speeches. 9 min - complete the two response pairs and the omitted-reply statement.

STUDENT EVIDENCE · GRADE 1

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What Is Said, What Elizabeth Says Back

Name _____ Date _____ Record each challenge and Elizabeth's response. Then identify the reply she chooses not to give.

AT THE CAVE

What does the dragon say or threaten? What does Elizabeth do or say back?

AFTER THE RESCUE

What does Ronald criticize or demand? What does Elizabeth say back?

WHAT SHE DOES NOT SAY

What does Elizabeth never bother to defend or deny? Why does that matter?

TEACHER KEY · GRADE 1

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Analyze Characters

Strong response

At the cave, Elizabeth does not argue with the dragon's threat; she asks about what it can do and turns its need to prove itself into an opening. After the rescue, she does not defend her hair, clothes, shoes, or smell. Instead she mirrors Ronald's appearance-focused speech and ends by judging his behavior. In both moments she answers without accepting the other character's frame.

Expected evidence

- Dragon: threat/boast -> Elizabeth redirects with a question.
- Ronald: appearance complaints/demand -> Elizabeth mirrors his structure, then gives her verdict.
- Omitted reply: she does not defend her appearance or promise to change.

Watch for

- Reducing the cave response to “she tricks him” without describing how she answers.
- Saying she proves Ronald’s description false.
- Treating refusal as no response.

Independent success

The student accurately compares both responses and explains that Elizabeth refuses the terms of the challenge rather than arguing inside them.