

# Day 5: "Why the Dog Hates the Cat"

## Begin lesson

Card 1 of 11

Begin lesson

### Teaching notes

Click the "Begin lesson" button to view this lesson.  
Teaching notes for each slide will appear in this box.

## Before the Lesson

Card 2 of 11

Before the  
Lesson

### Teaching notes

# Anchor Text

Card 3 of 11



## Teaching notes

Download and print copies of the anchor text for each student.

# Student Notes Sheet

Card 4 of 11



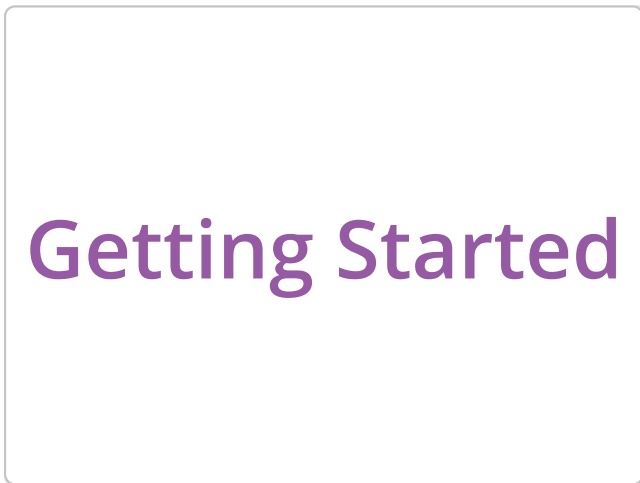
## Teaching notes

- This guided notes sheet provides students with the text-dependent questions associated with this lesson, and relevant graphic organizers. You may modify these sheets as needed.
- During class, students can use these sheets to record their responses, notes, or ideas. Use the back to record responses to the focus question.

- Following class, collect student notes to use as a formative assessment.

# Getting Started

Card 5 of 11



## Teaching notes

# Introduction 1 of 2

Card 6 of 11

**Why the Dog Hates the Cat**

From A Chinese Wonderbook  
By Norman Hinsdale Pitman  
Illustrated by Li Cho-Tung

"What we shall eat tomorrow, I haven't the slightest idea!" said Widow Wang to her oldest son, as he started out one morning in search of work.

"Oh, the gods will provide. I'll find a few pennies somewhere," replied the boy, trying to speak cheerfully, although in his heart he also had no idea in which direction to turn.

The winter had been a hard one: extreme cold, deep snow, and violent winds. The Wang house had suffered greatly. The roof had fallen in, weighed down by heavy snow. Then a hurricane had blown a wall over, and Ming's, the son, up all night and exposed to a bitter cold wind, had caught pneumonia. Long days of illness followed, with the spending of extra money for medicine. All their usual savings had soon melted away, and at the shop where Ming's had once worked his place was filled by another. When at last he arose from his bed he was too weak for hard labor and there seemed to be no work in the neighboring villages for him to do. Night after night he came home, trying not to be discouraged, but in his heart feeling the deep pang of sorrow at the sight of his mother suffering for food and clothing.

"Bless his good heart!" said the poor widow after he had gone. "No mother ever had a better boy. I hope he is right in saying the gods will provide. It has been getting so much worse these past few weeks."

- "Why the Dog Hates the Cat"
- By: Norman Hinsdale Pitman

## Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~10 minutes

### Notes:

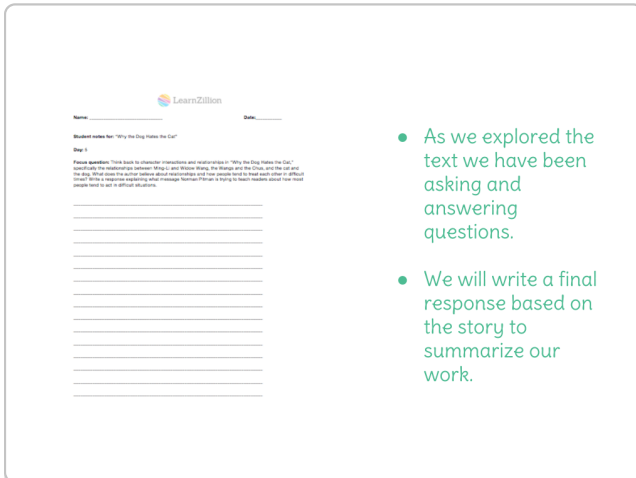
- Remind students that this week, we have read the story, "Why the Dog Hates the Cat" closely. This means going back and rereading the story, answering questions based on evidence in the text.
- Make sure that students have copies of the story

and the student notes worksheet.

- Read the culminating task aloud with students.
- Tell the students that they may utilize any part of the text and their prior knowledge from the work they did this week to answer the culminating questions.
- Have students reread the text and answer the culminating writing task independently.

# Introduction 2 of 2

Card 7 of 11



The screenshot shows a student worksheet with a header for 'LearnZillion' and a title 'Student notes for "Why the Dog Hates the Cat"'. Below the title, there are several lines of text, some of which are highlighted in green. The text includes instructions for a 'Focus question' and a 'Final response'.

- As we explored the text we have been asking and answering questions.
- We will write a final response based on the story to summarize our work.

## Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~10 minutes

### Notes:

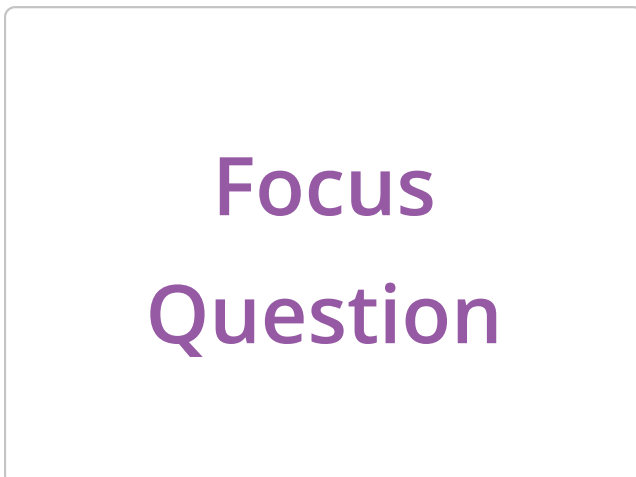
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# Focus Question

Card 8 of 11



The image shows the words 'Focus Question' in a large, bold, purple font, centered within a white rectangular box.

## Teaching notes

# Focus Question

Card 9 of 11

## Think back to character interactions and relationships in "Why the Dog Hates the Cat," specifically

### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~35

**Standard:** RL.5.2 and RL.5.6

**Purpose:** It is key that students understand not only the surface level purpose in the fable, but also Pitman's beliefs and message surrounding the human condition, human relationships, and how we treat each other--particularly in difficult times.

#### Answer:

In "Why the Dog Hates the Cat," Norman Pitman is trying to teach readers about how people and even animals tend to treat each other pretty rottenly during hard times. During the entire story, in each relationship most characters treat each other in a way that is selfish and often even mean. Starting at the beginning of the story, we notice that Widow Wang is really demanding of her son who is ill. Despite being sick and weak, Widow Wang turns selfishly to her son to solve their problem, saying, "Bless his good heart!" after her son had gone out, but failing to do any work to solve their problem herself.

In the same way, the Chus are selfish and unkind to the Wangs after the Wangs invite them into their home for dinner. Instead of being thankful for the generous meal that Ming-Li and Widow Wang give them, they are greedy and selfish, only wanting more for themselves. This leads them to steal from close friends in order to help themselves while doing something that is not only wrong, but also leads to their dear friends' hunger.

In the end, the cat Tabby treats her friend, Blackfoot the dog, in a way that is selfish, which ultimately leads to all dogs hating cats. Tabby uses Blackfoot to help her get the golden beetle back. However, when they return to the house, Tabby turns her back on Blackfoot, goes inside, presents herself as the hero to the Widow Wang, and then tells Blackfoot, "You should have been inside to see what a feast they gave me...too bad old fellow, that you are hungry. You'd better run out into the street and hunt up a bone." Instead of doing the good and right thing of sharing credit with Blackfoot and helping him out, Tabby takes all the credit for herself, selfishly and unkindly betraying her friend.

The exception to all of this meanness is Ming-Li who instead of being selfish or angry in the story, continues to help his mom out, even though he's really sick and hungry too. When his mom expresses her fear about where their next meal will come from Ming-Li responds, "Oh the gods will provide. I'll find a few pennies somewhere," he then goes on to actively look for work even though he is hungry, sick, and discouraged too.

Overall, Norman Pitman is trying to show that in hard times, most people (or animals) tend to act in ways that are selfish, and even unkind, in order to make their lives easier and achieve their own goals.

#### Look for students....

- To identify what Pitman is trying to teach his readers (that most people act poorly when faced

with challenging situations).

- To recognize that Pitman is talking about most, but not all people.
- To use specific examples of character interactions to show that most people respond poorly.
- To use the example of Ming-Li as an exception.

**Guiding questions and prompts:**

- Ask, "How do most people in the story respond to challenges? What does this tell you about the author's beliefs?"
- Ask, "Do all people act poorly in the story? What does this tell you about the author's beliefs?"

**Additional Notes:**

- Give students time to return to the text to gather evidence. Encourage them to reread the sections, annotating.
- Provide students time to write the response independently.
- This response should be in writing so teachers can assess each student's understanding.
- Beyond the expectations modeled in this response, a student may utilize any other specific character interactions to illustrate Pitman's theme.

## After the Lesson

Card 10 of 11

After the  
Lesson

Teaching notes

# Comprehension Skill Video

Card 11 of 11

Core Lesson Reread your notes, noting how characters interact with each other.

Core Lesson Ask yourself, "what do these interactions reveal about their relationships?"

- Wing compares to her son about her
- Wing responds by reassuring her
- Wing promises to look for another cat
- Wing checks for each other's safety
- Wing talks about how good a companion "Fudge" is.

Core Lesson Ask, "How do the characters treat each other?"

Core Lesson Ask, "How do the characters feel about each other?"

Core Lesson Ask, "How is this character better or different from others in the story?"

When faced with challenges, instead of acting poorly or complaining, Wing's actions show that he is going to solve the problem. How do the words one used to encourage, not complain.

How do characters interact?

LearnZillion

Visit <https://haywood.lzill.co/r/41945>

## Teaching notes

Use this video as an intervention tool for students who struggle to answer the focus question. The video uses a metacognitive approach to model the targeted reading comprehension skills.