FICTION | 6TH GRADE | RL.6.3

PLOT DEVELOPMENT & CHARACTER RESPONSE in literature

LEXILE

PLOT DEVELOPMENT & CHARACTER RESPONSE

6th grade

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*This product includes 9 Lexile® leveled stories in the 6th Grade Common Core Text Complexity Band (the range for 6th grade is 925-1185) and 5 dramas.

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ABOUT LEXILE LEVELS

MagiCore Learning, LLC is a certified Lexile® Partner. These texts are officially measured and approved by Lexile and MetaMetrics® to ensure appropriate rigor and differentiation for students.

The Lexile Framework® for Reading measures are scientific, quantitative text levels. When the Lexile of a text is measured, specific, measurable attributes of the text are considered, including, but not limited to, word frequency, sentence length, and text cohesion. These are difficult attributes for humans to evaluate, so a computer measures them.

Common Core State Standards uses Lexile level bands as one measure of text complexity. Text complexity ranges ensure that students are college and career ready by the end of 12th grade. Lexile measures help educators scaffold and differentiate instruction, as well as monitor reading growth.

Grade Band	Lexile® Bands Aligned to Common Core Expectations
K-1	N/A
2-3	420L-820L
4-5	740L-1010L
6-8	925L-1185L

Keep in mind when using any leveled text that many students will need scaffolding and support to reach text at the high end of their grade band. According to Appendix A of the Common Core Standards, "It is important to recognize that scaffolding often is entirely appropriate. The expectation that scaffolding will occur with particularly challenging texts is built into the Standards' grade-by-grade text complexity expectations, for example. The general movement, however, should be toward decreasing scaffolding and increasing independence both within and across the text complexity bands defined in the Standards."

Describing Plot

In a story or play, the **plot** is the series of events that make up the story. These events are moments in the story that are driven by a **conflict**, or struggle, that the main character attempts to overcome. The events in a plot lead to the **resolution**, or the end of the conflict.

Look at the plot diagram below.

3. Climax
The turning point of the story. Usually the most dramatic part.

2. Rising Action
The events in which a conflict is introduced and problems increase, leading to the climax.

4. Falling Action
The events that lead to solving the conflict.

1. Exposition
Introduces the character and setting and sets the stage for what will happen.

5. Resolution
The final outcome. It tells what happens to the characters after the conflict is solved.

Read the summary of Little Red Riding Hood, then map the story's plot on the dia am.

A young girl, Little Red Riding Hood, sets out through the woods to visit her sick grandmother. On the way meets a wolf. The wolf rushes ahead of her to her grandmother's home where he pretends to be Little R ding Hood in order to get inside. The wolf is able to trick the grandmother. He swallows her whole and uses h othes to disguise himself as the grandmother. When Little Red Riding Hood returns home, she notices that her grandmother looks very strange. As Little Red Riding Hood notes, "What a big mouth you have," the w plies, "The better to eat you with!" and eats the girl. He falls asleep in the grandmother's bed.

3. Climax
Little Red Riding Hood returns home with the wolf disguised as her grandmother

2. Rising Action
The wolf eats Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother and disguises himself

4. Falling Ac
Little Red Riding ... the wolf is dis... as her grandm...

1. Exposition
Little Red Riding Hood meets the wolf on the way to visit her grandmother

5. Resol n
...eats ... Red ... ding ... Little ...

Character Development

Oftentimes, what makes a story most interesting are the characters . Authors can describe the characters' **attitudes**, or how they think, act, and feel. They can also describe the characters' **motivations**, or the reasons for their actions.

A character's attitude and motivation can change throughout a story. As the story goes on, readers learn more about a character based on the way they respond to events.

Read the story below. Then fill out the chart to show how Janelle responds to events.

The Cake Mistake

"Eric!" I stand in the doorway of the reception room, my eyes not able to comprehend what I'm seeing.

There is a massive hole in my sister Chrissy's wedding cake. My mind starts racing, and I come to the conclusion that I'll have to do what I do best—take the blame for something that is totally my brother's fault.

I keep screaming for Eric but get no response. I leave the room in a frantic sprint. Running through the church's maze of rooms and hallways searching for him, all I can focus on is how irresponsible this kid is. I should have known better than to trust him with the cake. I should have known better than to leave him alone with the baby. I should have known better than to trust him with anything at all. Ugh! I'm running so fast that I almost mistake my brother—who is *also* running at full speed through the hallways—as a blurry painting. Another flash of anger strikes. Is he seriously running away from me?! "Eric! Stop! Running!" I force the words out as I gasp for air.

To my surprise, he halts to a stop. We both stand there in silence, red-faced and panting, looking at each other for what seems like an eternity when he finally bursts out in tears.

"Janelle...it's...Eddie...I...can't...find...him," Eric blubbers between heaving sobs.

Thoughts of blame and rage vanish as a new kind of panic takes over my body. I'm too terrified to be mad at Eric anymore. I take my brother's new kind of panic takes over my body. I'm too down. He sucks in a deep breath, and we take off down the hallway together, this time.

What Janelle does	Why Janelle does it	What this shows about Janelle
She realizes she will have to take the blame for the eaten cake.	She frequently ends up taking the blame for Eric's mistakes.	Janelle is mature; she is probably more responsible than Eric; she feels the need to keep him out of trouble.
She sprints through the hallways looking for Eric.	She wants to find Eric to yell at him for being so careless and to find out exactly what happened.	Janelle feels like she is in charge or that she has to take charge when things go wrong
She tries to calm her brother down.	Janelle realizes that Eric is upset and she is concerned about him	Janelle is empathetic and cares about Eric's emotion and Eddie's safety

Describe how Janelle seems to change over time. Janelle goes from being frustrated with Eric about the cake to understanding and empathetic when she finds out that Eric is having a hard time because he cannot find Eddie. She is also concerned about Eddie, and her frustration is replaced by panic as she starts to help Eric find Eddie.

Drama Plot

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Drama Plot

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MRS. BAKER: No

JOSEPHINE: No,

MRS. BAKER: Oh
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JOSEPHINE nod
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Drama Plot

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Drama Plot Name: _____ Date: _____

Foster Family

JOSEPHINE sits in a cluttered office, surrounded by boxes and shelves overflowing with files and papers. She is twelve years old, with her wild tangled hair pulled back in a loose bun. Her faded sweater is too big, wi holes near the cuffs and bottom edge. JOSEPHINE plays with these nervously, sometimes winding fibers around her fingertips tightly before yanking the thread loose from the sweater and unwinding it with her te Her feet don't touch the ground, and she occasionally wraps her ankle around the leg of the chair.

Enter MRS. BAKER. She is middle aged and wears fashionable glasses, well-tailored blazer, and pencil skirt. She moves briskly and efficiently. S does not look up from the file she is reading as she pushes open the do and then slams it shut behind her. She removes some papers from her and tosses them on the desk before sitting down.

MRS. BAKER: Hi Joseph, I'm Mrs. Baker. I'll be handling you and your brother's transition this time around.

JOSEPHINE: Uh...

MRS. BAKER (talking over her as she flips back and forth through the papers in the file in her hands): Don't worry, I've helped plenty of kids like you and your brother find happy foster homes. I know it can be frustrating to be cycled in and out of different homes, but it's a big messy system we adults have to deal with, and unfortunately there's a lot of trial and error-

970L **Plot** Name: _____ Date

Firefighters

1. The air inside the firehouse was humid and warm. Even with the windows open, the old building didn't have much ventilation, and it didn't help that most of the squad was crowded together in the same room. The annual fitness test also meant that the men and the one woman inside were covered in sweat from the strenuous exercises. They were all breathing heavily, even though at the moment they were watching each other take turns doing pull-ups. The sergeant marked the board as Bobby quickly powered through his last few reps and let go.

2. Maria stared at the pull-up bar and gritted her teeth in determination. As she walked through the other firefighters, Bobby looked at her and rolled his eyes to the rest of the squad.

3. "Alright guys, now for a nice long awkward break as the girl tries to do her set," he said, grinning widely.

4. "Enough of that, Henderson," the sergeant said, not looking from his clipboard. "C'mon, next up."

5. Maria ignored Bobby and hopped up to grab the bar. She hung easily and pulled her chin to the bar swiftly a few times, but her arms started to shake a little when she lowered herself back down. She managed a few more before she started to slow noticeably. Behind her, she could hear snickering as her arms shook and strained a little over halfway through her set. She pulled as hard as she could but wasn't moving at all. Finally, she gave up and dropped to the ground.

6. "Well, it was almost as good as last time," the sergeant said under his breath as he wrote on his clipboard. Maria felt her face get even hotter and hoped no one noticed. Before she could stop herself, she was glancing at Bobby, who had his mouth open like he was going to crack another joke.

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970L **Plot** Name: _____ Da

7. Whatever he was about to say was abruptly dro
sound of the alarm bell. Everyone leapt into action and r
lockers as their training took over. Within minutes they
and roaring out onto the street, sirens blaring.

8. Maria grimaced involuntarily when they arrive
house was older; it looked to be mostly wood and plas
already shooting out of the second-floor windows, and
trees in the front and back yard that would make it di
ladder up there.

9. "We have children trapped on the third floo
shouted as he leapt off the truck. "Henderson, Diaz,
if you can get them out!" As the others started to ho
the hydrant, Maria and Bobby grabbed axes and pul
they ran into the burning building.

10. Smoke billowed out of the front door, and
rooms at the back of the house. Without pausing,
stairs. Maria could see the steps cracking beneath

11. "Wait!" she called, reaching out to try to
watched as his boot punched through the next ste
him, she felt the floor collapse beneath her as we
in a cloud of soot and rubble, crashing through t
below them.

12. Maria managed to land on her side, he
helmet. Bobby laid awkwardly on his tank, shak
struggling to get up while still holding his axe.
but he was still stunned. Maria looked up at th
raging in the open doorway. She stood up and
way out.

13. Behind her, a window at the top of t
bushes in the front yard. She reached up and
then tried calling for help. Between her mask
no one would be able to hear her. Bobby ma
as she leapt up to grab the bottom of the wi
her gear up through the narrow window and
unsteadily walked over and grabbed the led
himself up and through until Maria grabbed
backwards.

Plot

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©Pablo Bachas

Plot

Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated.

1. What part of the story's plot structure does the third paragraph illustrate?

1160L **Plot** Name: _____ Date: _____

shelter and-" Suddenly, the television flickered off, and the kitchen became unnaturally quiet. Yasmin looked around and saw all had gone off. In the sudden silence, she could hear the outside and the pattering of rain against the side of windows, with the occasional slap of a branch siding.

7. "Yasmin, why would you s said angrily as she stepped into the bowl. "We need to hear-" She stopped droning from a low roar to a high, pier other, eyes wide, and then moved almos cans and running out the back door towa the ground were still wide open, and they as they ran down into the small, cramped s the concrete floor, and her mother reached u was still holding the gravy boat, and she froze in her hand.

8. "Grandma's china!" Her voice was full thinking, Yasmin ran back up the stairs. The wind pulling her hair across her face, and a strong gust making her stumble. She was almost to the back d hands grab her shoulders to pull her back. Her moth back to the cellar, and Yasmin could see her mouth m up at her. The wind stole the words from her mouth, a menacing clouds behind her whirled angrily as they rea touch the earth.

9. Together, they p the cellar doors, fighting w to get them shut. Yasmin fe on the steps crunch under h she looked down to see the s gravy bowl just as the doors c last of the light. Her mother gra her and pulled her to the ground, covering Yasmin's body with her c They stayed there while the tornad roared like a freight train over their heads and off into the distance.

1160L **Plot** Name: _____ Date: _____

Tornado

1. "Quick, go get the canned food from the cupboard!" Yasmin's mother shouted as she frantically pulled the fine china from the hutch, wrapping dishes in bubble wrap before stacking them in a cardboard box. Yasmin had just come back from the cellar, and she ran to the kitchen, grabbing a cloth shopping bag on her way. As she shoved the cans into the bag, the TV continued to play the news channel they had been watching that morning during breakfast.

2. "...repeat, there is a tornado warning for all residents of Lin County," the newscaster urgently said as he intently stared at the camera. "The National Weather Service advises that all residents of Lincoln County take immediate safety precautions, and go to your basement, or the lowest, smallest room in your home. Stay awa windows and doors and watch out for-" Yasmin glanced up at t television as the man suddenly stopped talking. He was lookin side with his hand to his ear, then turned back to the camer pained look.

3. "Ladies and gentlemen, a funnel cloud has touc Lincoln County." Yasmin dropped the can she was holdin to the floor, rolling across the linoleum as the blood po She couldn't focus on whatever the man said next.

4. "Mom!" she called, her voice cracking with her voice tight and shrill. "Not now, Yasmin!" her mother yelled fro

5. was a sudden clatter of dishes, followed by a fru Yasmin whirled around, looking for the can she continued as she dropped to her knees and s vegetables into the bag by the armful.

6. "This is now a Particularly Dange warning," he said, putting a strong emph forward in his chair. "Residents of nearb

Firefighters

1. The air inside the firehouse was humid and warm. Even with the windows open, the old building didn't have much ventilation, and it didn't help that most of the squad was crowded together in the same room. The annual fitness test also meant that the men and the one woman inside were covered in sweat from the strenuous exercises. They were all breathing heavily, even though at the moment they were watching each other take turns doing pull-ups. The sergeant marked the board as Bobby quickly powered through his last few reps and let go.

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7. Whatever he was about to say was abruptly drowned out by the sound of the alarm bell. Everyone leapt into action and raced to their lockers as their training took over. Within minutes they were on the truck and roaring out onto the street, sirens blaring.

8. Maria grimaced involuntarily when they arrived. The three-story house was older; it looked to be mostly wood and plaster. Flames were already shooting out of the second-floor windows, and there were large trees in the front and back yard that would make it difficult to get a ladder up there.

9. "We have children trapped on the third floor!" The sergeant shouted as he leapt off the truck. "Henderson, Diaz, get in there and see if you can get them out!" As the others started to hook the hose up to the hydrant, Maria and Bobby grabbed axes and pulled their masks on as they ran into the burning building.

10. Smoke billowed out of the front door, and flames engulfed the rooms at the back of the house. Without pausing, Bobby pounded up the stairs. Maria could see the steps cracking beneath his feet.

11. "Wait!" she called, reaching out to try to grab his tank. She watched as his boot punched through the next step. As she reached for him, she felt the floor collapse beneath her as well. They tumbled down in a cloud of soot and rubble, crashing through the basement stairs below them.

12. Maria managed to land on her side, her axe clanking off her helmet. Bobby laid awkwardly on his tank, shaking his head and struggling to get up while still holding his axe. She tried to help him up, but he was still stunned. Maria looked up at the broken stairs and the fire raging in the open doorway. She stood up and looked around for another way out.

13. Behind her, a window at the top of the wall looked out into the bushes in the front yard. She reached up and smashed it with her axe, then tried calling for help. Between her mask and all the noise outside, no one would be able to hear her. Bobby managed to get to his feet just as she leapt up to grab the bottom of the window and pull herself and her gear up through the narrow window and into the bushes. Bobby unsteadily walked over and grabbed the ledge, but he couldn't pull himself up and through until Maria grabbed his arms and hauled backwards.

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14. Once the fire was out, Maria and Bobby sat on the curb, waiting for the paramedics to tend to the children rescued from the building. The others had managed to get a ladder up and pull them out so the hoses could douse the flames. After chewing them out for not being more careful, the sergeant had ordered Maria and Bobby to take it easy and get checked out by the paramedics while the rest of the squad finished putting out the fire.

15. Bobby had been uncharacteristically quiet since the sergeant had left, but after a few minutes he turned to look at Maria. She glanced back at him, expecting him to snap at her, but was surprised at the embarrassed look on his face.

16. "Listen, back at the firehouse..." He looked away, and Maria thought she could see his cheeks turn red under the soot. "I shouldn't have been such a jerk. Heck, we probably wouldn't have fallen through if it wasn't for me, so I guess… " He sighed and slid his hand over his head, struggling to figure out what to say next. Maria elbowed him and smiled when he looked back up at her.

17. "Don't sweat it, Henderson," she said and put out her hand. "Just watch where you're going next time, alright?" Bobby gave an awkward smile and accepted the handshake.

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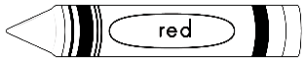
Plot

Answer the following questions. <u>Underline</u> the text evidence in the color indicated.

1. Which part of the story's plot structure does this sentence from the ninth paragraph illustrate?



"We have children trapped on the third floor!" The sergeant shouted as he leapt off the truck. "Henderson, Diaz, get in there and see if you can get them out!"

a. Exposition
b. Rising action
c. Climax
d. Resolution

2. Which of these sentences shows how the plot of this story is revealed?

a. Maria forgives Bobby for insulting her earlier.
b. Maria helps Bobby get himself out of danger.
c. Bobby causes the stairs to collapse beneath them.
d. The firefighters respond to the fire at the hospital.

3. What is the main conflict of this story? Cite evidence.

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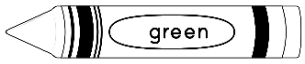
Plot

4. Which word best describes Maria's response to the events of the story?



a. Intimidated
b. Arrogant
c. Spiteful
d. Determined

5. Why does Bobby's attitude towards Maria change? Cite evidence.

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Foster Family

JOSEPHINE sits in a cluttered office, surrounded by boxes and shelves overflowing with files and papers. She is twelve years old, with her wild, tangled hair pulled back in a loose bun. Her faded sweater is too big, with holes near the cuffs and bottom edge. JOSEPHINE plays with these nervously, sometimes winding fibers around her fingertips tightly before yanking the thread loose from the sweater and unwinding it with her teeth. Her feet don't touch the ground, and she occasionally wraps her ankle around the leg of the chair.

Enter MRS. BAKER. She is middle aged and wears fashionable glasses, a well-tailored blazer, and pencil skirt. She moves briskly and efficiently. She does not look up from the file she is reading as she pushes open the door and then slams it shut behind her. She removes some papers from her seat and tosses them on the desk before sitting down.

MRS. BAKER: Hi Joseph, I'm Mrs. Baker. I'll be handling you and your brother's transition this time around.

JOSEPHINE: Uh…

MRS. BAKER (talking over her as she flips back and forth through the papers in the file in her hands): Don't worry, I've helped plenty of kids like you and your brother find happy foster homes. I know it can be frustrating to be cycled in and out of different homes, but it's a big messy system we adults have to deal with, and unfortunately there's a lot of trial and error-

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JOSEPHINE (a little flustered, speaking louder than she intended): My name's not Joseph!

MRS. BAKER looks up at JOSEPHINE for the first time, surprised and a little annoyed. She takes her in, then flips back to the first page in the file, scans it, then looks back up at the girl in the chair. Suddenly, she bursts out with a big, hearty laugh.

MRS. BAKER: Oh my goodness! I am so sorry… the computer cut off your first name on the form! Usually I catch that, but I guess I was distracted by all the- well, nevermind that. I'm sure it's not the first time that's happened to you! Anyway, (takes a moment to close the file, cross her knees, place her hands on them, and look over the top of her glasses) we have something very important to talk about.

JOSEPHINE: We… we do?

MRS. BAKER: We have a family that met your little brother Patrick yesterday. He really took a liking to them, especially the dad. You should have seen it! They were playing ball for almost half an hour. Pat had to be told-

JOSEPHINE: His name is Patrick.

MRS. BAKER: … Right. Anyway, here's the thing. They already have a daughter of their own, and they can't afford to take on two new kids. Frankly, they're not alone; not many families want to take on a child as old as you, especially one with your… (gestures with the file) history.

JOSEPHINE looks down at her fingers, curling both feet around the chair legs and rapidly wrapping a long fiber from her sweater around her finger.

MRS. BAKER: So, what do you say?

JOSEPHINE (looking up, surprised): What? What do you mean? It's up to me?

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MRS. BAKER: We try not to separate siblings, but, well, to be honest, there are quite a lot of siblings in the system. (She lifts the lid off one of the boxes, spilling some papers out) Whoops! See what I mean?

JOSEPHINE quickly hops off the chair and drops to her knees, grabbing all the papers up and trying to straighten them. She moves frantically, and mutters apologies breathlessly as she tries to quickly shove them back into the box. MRS. BAKER is stunned by her sudden change in behavior. The clutter falls off the desk as the girl moves the box on top of it, and she bursts into tears.

JOSEPHINE (collapsing onto the floor): I'm sorry! I didn't mean to make a mess! I'm sorry!

MRS. BAKER (losing her poise and awkwardly getting on JOSEPHINE'S level, slowly): Hey, hey… it's okay, it's not your fault… I'm a slob and that happens all the time. Please don't worry about it.

JOSEPHINE slows to a sniffle and rubs her face, getting back up into the chair as MRS. BAKER picks up the files on the floor and tries to straighten up her desk. There is an awkward silence for a while except for the shuffling of papers.

JOSEPHINE: I'll do it.

MRS. BAKER: No, no, I've been meaning to tidy up this desk anyway.

JOSEPHINE: No, I mean… I'll let Patrick go with that family by himself.

MRS. BAKER: Oh! Okay then. Well… great, that's settled then. (She picks up the file from her chair, writing in it) Why don't we go give him the good news then? (She forces a big smile)

JOSEPHINE nods, wiping her face and smiling as she stands up and follows MRS. BAKER out of the room.

©Julia Bochoso

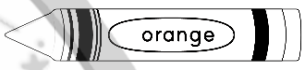
Plot

Answer the following questions. <u>Underline</u> the text evidence in the color indicated.

1. Which sentence best describes Mrs. Baker?

   a. She is well-dressed and uncaring.
   b. She is distracted but fastidious.
   c. She is disorganized but kind.
   d. She is considerate and attentive.

2. Which word best describes Josephine at the beginning of the play?



   a. Rude
   b. Dirty
   c. Playful
   d. Nervous

3. What is the main conflict of this play? Cite evidence.

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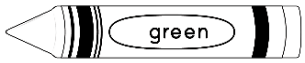
Plot

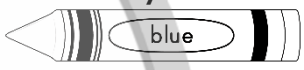
4. Which part of the play's plot structure does this sentence indicate?

"MRS. BAKER: … Right. Anyway, here's the thing. They already have a daughter of their own, and they can't afford to take on two new kids. Frankly, they're not alone; not many families want to take on a child as old as you, especially one with your… (gestures with the file) history."



a. Exposition
b. Rising Action
c. Climax
d. Falling Action

5. Why does Josephine decide to let Patrick go with the family? Cite evidence.



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