

B is for Bear Assignment 8

- Complete Lesson 8 in your B is for Bear textbook, volume 1. Complete Lesson 8 of your handwriting book.
- Memorize part 3 of John Keats' "To Autumn."
- Students should write out Dictation 8, found below.

EXERCISE A

He fries with spice.
His head was cold.
She thought it was enough.
Her hand was cold and red.
The nice old man pays for ice.

EXERCISE B

Spread this on.
Throw the ball.
His rice was now cold.
Do not tread on it!
Did the old man count the gold?



This week students will go over two famous ancient Greeks with very unusual names—*Zeuxis* and *Parrhasius*. *Zeuxis*, who lived in the 5th century B.C., was a painter whose works have not survived into modern times; however, his competition with a fellow painter *Parrhasius* is recounted by the Roman historian *Pliny the Elder* in his *Natural History* (Book 35). Like *Zeuxis*, *Parrhasius* is known only through ancient writings, as all of his works have been lost. The competition that students are going to read about concerns the ability to paint realistically. *Zeuxis* is jealous of his rival because of his ability to draw something so realistically that his eyes are deceived. There are some more contemporary works that are remarkable in the way they realistically portray things, such as *Andrew Wyeth's* "Christiana's World," *John Baeder's* "John's Diner with John's Chevelle," *Malcolm Morley's* "Tackle," and *William Harnett's* "The Old Violin." Before reading the selections, ask your child the following two questions.

1. What makes a good painting? (Tastes differ. Some like to see realistic or at least concrete images represented. Others enjoy the colors, shapes and design of art works. There must be, however, something in a work of art that appeals to the mind or senses.)
2. What is the goal of an artist when painting? Is it to draw something as realistically as possible? (Explain that some of the best works of art are not realistic at all. Suggest that there is more to good painting than what is called *photorealism*. Teachers might want to show paintings that are realistic, such as the above mentioned works and those that were not drawn so realistically but are nonetheless are considered great, such as Van Gogh's "Starry Night" and "Sunflowers," Grant Wood's "American Gothic," and early 20th century cubist paintings.)

The other selection this week is the story "Criticism." Prepare students for the second reading selection by asking, *Who likes to be criticized?* Most likely none of the students will not raise a hand, unless it is to ask what *criticize* means. To criticize means to evaluate, and often the evaluation involves making a negative remark about what someone says or does. There may be one student in particular that is not very teachable. He or she may be crushed by the slightest reproof or correction. (Some students are even crushed unless they receive excessive praise.) This reading selection will allow teachers to combat that dislike of criticism, which is absolutely necessary for improvement. In the story, a young woman named Eleanor resists the criticism of her employer. Although she is admittedly a good worker, Eleanor must learn to accept criticism with thoughtfulness and grace, before she can perform her job as she is asked to. Before going over this reading selection, ask the following questions:

1. What is criticism? (Criticism is finding fault with something.)
2. How do you feel when you are criticized? (Student answers may vary, but one common response might be that it makes us feel inadequate in some way. When we do not do something right, we may feel that we lack the skill that others have. It also may make us feel that we are "bad." When adults criticize our behavior, we may be led to think that we have done something terribly or intentionally wrong, when we were really just thoughtless. Though we want to be good and have others think that we are good, criticism may frustrate us and make us sad that others would think poorly of us. Another response might be that it makes us angry. We may think that others are saying untrue things just to injure us.)
3. Is criticism bad or good? (It can be either good or bad. Bad criticism seeks to put others down and make them feel bad about themselves. It is often untrue or given unkindly. Good criticism, however, seeks to encourage others in doing better. It should be given gently and with a consciousness that it may be difficult to receive.)
4. Is criticism necessary? (Definitely. If we want to become good at a sport, in art or music, or in some hobby, we need to be able to accept criticism, especially from teachers who know better.)

The third selection is William Wordsworth's famous poem "The Rainbow." The poem has an apparent paradox at the conclusion in that it expresses something that appears to be contradictory: *The child is father of the man*. Ask students to explain this strange statement before reading the literary word (*paradox*) that follows. The instructional material that follows the questions explains that everyone must be a child before becoming an adult; in this sense, the child is the father of the man, as he comes *before* the man. Also, the child is father of the man in terms of its ability to see and appreciate the things of nature, an ability that is expressed in the beginning of the poem. When children are young, they have a heightened ability to experience the beauty of nature, as expressed in the first stanza of Christina Rossetti's poem "Seasons":

In Springtime when the leaves are young
Clear dewdrops gleam like jewels hung
On boughs the fair birds roost among.

- Here are two book recommendations for you:

Julius Lester. Jerry Pinkney, illustrator. *John Henry*. 1994. Reprint. Perfection Learning, 1999. An artistically illustrated retelling of the legendary steel-driver.

John Langstaff. Feodor Rojankovsky, illustrator. *Frog Went A-Courtin'*. Harcourt, 1955. A lighthearted nursery ballad from Scotland, quaintly and humorously illustrated.