Two Tales, One Lesson

Trace how a shared theme grows in two short tales.

4.LF.19.b "Analyze a common or shared theme and its development in stories, myths, and/or other traditional literature."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each main character's first choice, then circle a later action by other people in each tale. Use your marks to track how a shared lesson develops.

The Bridge and the Well

1. In the old tale "The Broken Bridge," a storm swept away the only bridge to a village. Nila owned a small sack of rice, but the bridge builders had no food. She cooked the rice and carried bowls to the riverbank. Her brother worried that their own supper would be thin. "If the builders must stop, everyone will go hungry," Nila said. By sunset, she had fed every worker.

2. The workers finished the bridge before nightfall. The next morning, neighbors brought Nila beans, eggs, and a loaf of bread. Across the hills, storytellers told "The Dry Well." In this tale, a long summer emptied a town's well. Tomas had saved one jug of water for his garden. When he saw his neighbors carrying empty cups, he hid the jug behind his door.

3. Then Tomas saw an older neighbor resting in the heat beside the empty well. Her cup was dry, and she could barely speak. Tomas brought out his jug and filled her cup. Another neighbor saw this and offered his own saved water. Soon others carried cups to people who had none. When the water cart finally arrived, the neighbors helped one another fill their jugs.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What lesson do both tales share? Give one detail from each tale that supports it.

2. How does Nila's choice at the riverbank help bring about the ending of "The Broken Bridge"?

3. How does Tomas's choice change during "The Dry Well," and how does that change help show the shared lesson?

4. How do the endings show the shared lesson in different ways?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a new four-sentence folk tale with different characters and a different place. Show the same shared lesson through a choice and its result, then add one sentence explaining how your tale and one tale above show the lesson in different ways.

ANSWER KEY

Two Tales, One Lesson

GRADE 4 · 4.LF.19.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each main character's first choice, then circle a later action by other people in each tale. Use your marks to track how a shared lesson develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What lesson do both tales share? Give one detail from each tale that supports it.	**Sharing what you have can bring people together. Nila feeds the builders, and Tomas gives water to a neighbor in need.**
2	How does Nila's choice at the riverbank help bring about the ending of "The Broken Bridge"?	**Nila feeds the builders so they can keep working. They finish the bridge, and neighbors later share food with her.**
3	How does Tomas's choice change during "The Dry Well," and how does that change help show the shared lesson?	**Tomas first hides his water, but later gives some to an older neighbor. His gift leads other neighbors to share water too.**
4	How do the endings show the shared lesson in different ways?	**In "The Broken Bridge," neighbors bring food to Nila after she feeds the builders. In "The Dry Well," neighbors follow Tomas's example and share water with people who have none.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In a mountain village, Suri kept all the firewood inside her shed during a snowy week. When she saw a neighbor shivering, she gave him half her wood. He shared some with a family whose stove had gone cold. Soon the neighbors collected fallen branches and kept every home warm. Like "The Broken Bridge," my tale shows that sharing helps a whole community, but Suri learns to share after first keeping her supply to herself.

Accept other clearly stated lessons about sharing or helping others when students support them with details from both tales. For the new tale, look for a choice, a result that develops the shared lesson, and a comparison with one passage tale.