

ZB **Zaner-Bloser**
NEXT GENERATION ASSESSMENT PRACTICE
English Language Arts / Literacy

Student Edition

Grade 4
Informative/Explanatory

Name _____

Date _____

PART I: Close Reading

Your Task

You will examine three sources about greed. Then you will answer three questions about what you have learned. In Part 2, you will write an essay comparing and contrasting the role greed played in each source.

Steps to Follow

In order to plan and write your essay, you will do all of the following:

1. Examine three sources.
2. Make notes about the information from the sources.
3. Answer three questions about the sources.

Directions for Beginning

You will have 45 minutes to complete Part I. You will now examine three sources. Take notes because you may want to refer to your notes while writing your essay. You can re-examine any of the sources as often as you like. Answer the questions in the spaces provided.

From
Folktales From Around the World
Chapter 7

“The Clever Judge”

Long ago, in an area known as the Steppe, people respected a judge for his wisdom. They came long distances to ask him to settle their disagreements because they knew he was clever, and they trusted his judgment. One day, two men came to this judge and asked him to settle their dispute.

One man accused the other of cheating him and taking all of his gold pieces. The judge asked the man with the complaint to begin. “Tell me your story,” he said.

“Since I had business in a distant village,” the complainant began, “I had to travel there and leave my home for an extended period of time. I am not wealthy, and all I have are one hundred gold pieces that I worked long and hard to save. Of course, I did not want a thief to come along and steal them while I was away, and neither did it seem like a good idea to carry the gold with me. I trusted this man who stands here with me before you. I gave him my one hundred gold pieces to keep safe for me, but when I returned, he said I never gave him the gold.”

The judge pondered a moment before asking, “Did anyone see you give him the one hundred gold pieces?”

To which the plaintiff responded, “No, unfortunately, no one saw. We were in the middle of the forest when I handed over the gold. Only the trees saw.”

With this, the judge turned to the defendant as he said, “Now, it is your turn. Please tell me your story.”

The defendant seemed untroubled by the charge against him as he shrugged his shoulders and said, “I did not meet this man in the forest, and I don’t know anything about his one hundred gold pieces.”

So, the judge turned to the plaintiff and asked if he could describe the place where the two men met. The plaintiff replied that of course he could. He remembered it clearly. It was at a tall, very old oak tree in the forest, along the banks of a river. The plaintiff went on to say that he could find it again easily.

The judge thought for a moment, and then said, “Well, if this is true, then there is a witness who saw you handing the gold to this man. Take my ring, which has a seal that I use to stamp official documents. Press the

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seal on the ring against the trunk of the tall oak tree and summon that tree to come before me to testify that your story is what happened in the forest.”

The plaintiff set off toward the forest with the ring, while the defendant stayed behind with the judge.

The judge waited patiently for a while, then asked the defendant, “Do you think the man has gotten to the place yet? He’s been gone quite some time already.”

The defendant said, “No, he’s not there yet.”

The two waited a bit longer, and the judge once again asked, “Do you think he has gotten there now?”

This time the defendant said, “Yes, he must be there by now.”

The judge asked the defendant to remain with him until the plaintiff returned. In a while, the plaintiff came into the room with a dejected expression on his face. He said, “I followed your instructions, Honorable Judge, and walked into the forest to the big old oak tree. I pressed the seal on your ring against the trunk of the tree and summoned the oak to come before you to witness the truth of my story, but that tree would not move even an inch. I begged and pleaded, but it was no use. In the end, I had to come back alone.”

“It is no matter,” the judge said to the plaintiff. “The oak tree has appeared to me and witnessed on your behalf.”

Dumbfounded, the defendant cried out, “That is impossible! I have been sitting here the entire time with you, and no oak tree has appeared.”

This time the judge spoke to the defendant, shaking his finger and saying, “You testified that you never went to the forest. When I first asked you if the plaintiff had reached the oak tree, you said he was not there yet. The next time I asked you, you said he was there. Since you know exactly how long it takes to get to the oak tree in the forest, it is apparent that you were there and received the gold pieces from the plaintiff. My decision is that you must return the one hundred gold coins immediately, and in addition, you must pay a fine of one hundred gold coins for your attempt to steal from the plaintiff.”

So the old oak tree was a witness, after all, and the wise judge proved once again he was wise indeed and deserved to be called the clever judge.

From Folktales From Around the World
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Which character in the folktale was greedy? Provide details about that character's words, thoughts, or actions to help support your answer.

Five Boiled Eggs

Long ago, a poor country boy left home to seek his fortune. Day and night he traveled, stopping to eat at inns along the way. Though he ate sparingly, his money quickly dwindled until, one day, no silver *akches* remained.

Still, the boy kept walking. Soon, however, his empty belly began to ache. Staggering up to the next inn he saw, he approached the innkeeper.

“Please feed me!” he said. “I don’t have any money now, but I promise to pay you as soon as I can.”

“I’ll see what I can spare,” the innkeeper grumbled. He took five boiled eggs out of a large bowl and put them on a plate with some stale bread. “Here,” he said, plopping the platter in front of the boy.

The famished lad gratefully gobbled every morsel. Then, repeating his promise to pay back the innkeeper, he journeyed on.

Revived by his five-egg breakfast, the boy soon reached a bustling seaport. Intent on finding his fortune, he set sail on the first ship that was leaving the harbor.

Years passed, and the lad prospered. As a sea

merchant, he sailed far, stopping in many exotic ports. However, he never forgot his humble beginnings or the money he owed the innkeeper.

When he finally returned home, he stopped by the old roadside inn.

“Kind sir,” he respectfully inquired, “how much for the five boiled eggs that you served me so long ago?”

In truth, the innkeeper did not remember him, for this fine-looking fellow looked nothing like the scrawny lad who had begged for food some ten years before. Still, eager to make a profit, he readily added up the charges.

“That’ll be ten thousand akches,” he declared.

“For five eggs?” The rich stranger gasped. He had thought that he would have to pay no more than ten or twenty akches.

“Ah, but you must consider their lost worth,” the greedy innkeeper replied. “Had you not eaten those eggs, they would have hatched into hens. Those hens, in turn, would have laid eggs that would have hatched into hens. . . .” On and on he ranted until at last he reached his grand total.

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When the stunned merchant refused to pay, the innkeeper declared that he would take him to court.

A trial was set for the following week. Alas, rumor had it that the judge was a close friend of the innkeeper.

"I'm ruined!" the merchant muttered as he sat in the village square. "What will I do?"

At that moment, he was approached by a sturdy little man wearing a white turban and riding a donkey. "Nasreddin Hodja, at your service," the man said with a friendly nod. "What seems to be the problem?"

After hearing the merchant's story, Hodja announced, "This is your lucky day! It would be my honor to defend you. I have great experience in these matters."

"Thank you," the merchant said, amazed at his good fortune.

But when the court date finally arrived, Nasreddin Hodja was nowhere in sight.

"Woe is me," mumbled the merchant.

"I'll soon be rich!" cried the innkeeper.

"Where is Hodja?" demanded the judge, growing angrier by the minute. He was about to render judgment in the innkeeper's favor when Hodja boldly barged in.

"Pardon me," he said, panting, as he hastily took the witness stand. "I would have been here sooner, but this morning I had the cleverest plan. Instead of eating my boiled corn for breakfast, I planted it. Think of the rich harvest I'll reap!"

"That's absurd," the innkeeper scoffed. "You can't grow corn from cooked kernels!"

"Indeed?" Hodja said with mock wonder. "Then, sir, how is it that you would have been able to hatch chickens from boiled eggs?"

At that, the whole room reeled with laughter.

"Order in the court!" shouted the judge, pounding his gavel and scowling at the innkeeper.

The judge then ruled that the merchant would not have to pay even one akche for the eggs. Instead, the innkeeper would have to pay a fine for wasting the court's time with such foolishness.

"Five Boiled Eggs" by Laura S. Sassi.
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Children, Inc., Columbus, Ohio.

Describe the sea merchant's character. Provide three details from the story that describe his thoughts or actions to support your answer.

The Dishonest Merchant

Once upon a time, a prince known for his intolerance of dishonesty ruled in Romania. During his reign, a greedy merchant from another country traveled through the land.

During one journey, the merchant lost a bag containing one thousand Romanian coins called lei. Each time the merchant came to a crossroads, he told everyone that he would give one hundred lei to anyone who found the money.

Not long afterward, a peasant found the bag. He was an honest man, and he hastened to find the merchant.

“I found this bag behind the fish market at the crossroads near my home,” the peasant said to the merchant.

The merchant trusted no one, so he went aside to count the money. To his surprise, all one thousand coins were still in the bag. He was happy to have his money back, but he was also saddened by the thought of giving some of it away. He wondered how he could get out of his promise and still appear to be fair.

At last he went back to the peasant. “I thank you

for returning my money,” he said. “I notice that you have already taken your reward, for there were only nine hundred coins in the bag.”

The peasant protested. “But I did not even open the bag before I gave it to you!”

The merchant ignored the peasant’s words. “I hope you enjoy your reward,” he said. “Thank you again and good-bye.” He quickly departed.

The peasant was upset—not just because he had received no reward but because he had been accused of taking money without permission. He hurried to the palace and requested to see the prince. He told his sad story, and the prince promised that he would uncover the truth.

The prince sent word for the merchant and the peasant to appear before him on a certain day. He told the merchant to bring the bag of money.

When the day arrived, the merchant told his side of the story and the peasant told his. As the prince listened, it became obvious to him that the peasant was telling the truth.

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When they had finished, the prince said to the merchant, “You lost a bag with one thousand coins. Is that correct?”

“Yes,” said the merchant.

The prince took the money bag, which now held only nine hundred lei. “And when you were handed this bag, it contained only nine hundred coins?”

“That is true,” said the merchant, trying to look sincere.

“I am sure that you are telling the truth,” said the prince, “for nothing is punished so severely in this court as dishonesty. However, these facts present me with a problem.”

The prince held up the bag for all to see. It was an ordinary leather bag, like thousands of others. He asked the merchant, “If your bag contained one thousand coins and this bag has only nine hundred, then how do you know this is your bag?”

The merchant had trouble speaking. “I . . . I,” he stammered. Then he was silent.

The prince continued. “It is obvious that this is not your bag. My verdict therefore is that you should continue to inquire at crossroads until you find your bag with one thousand lei. I wish you well in your quest.”

The prince turned to the peasant. “And I decree that you take care of this bag of nine hundred coins until the rightful owner comes forth. If we do not find the owner within three months, then the money will be yours as a reward for your honesty.”

There was nothing more to say, since there could be no appeal regarding the prince’s verdict. The dishonest merchant and the honest peasant left the prince’s chamber, the first very sad and the other very happy.

Thus was dishonesty treated in the days of the prince.

"The Dishonest Merchant" by David Roper. Copyright ©2000 by Highlights for Children, Inc., Columbus, Ohio.

Which character should get to keep the money? Provide two details from the story to support your answer.

PART 2: Writing to Multiple Sources

You will now have 70 minutes to review your notes and sources, plan, draft, and revise your essay. You may use your notes and refer to the sources. You may also refer to the answers you wrote to questions in Part I, but you cannot change those answers. Now read your assignment and the information about how your essay will be scored; then begin your work.

Your Assignment

Think about how you would compare and contrast the role greed plays in each folktale. Then think about how the honest characters overcame this greed, including tricking the defendant into giving away that he knew where the oak tree was, proving that boiled eggs can't hatch chickens, and claiming that many people have leather bags that look like the merchant's. Your assignment is to write an essay comparing and contrasting the role of greed in these three folktales. Include details about the conflicts, characters' motivations, and resolutions. Support your essay with information from the sources you have examined. The audience for your essay will be a judge in court.

Essay Scoring

Your essay will be scored on the following criteria:

- I. **Focus and organization** How well did you introduce your topic? How well did you use clear transitions? How well did you group related information in paragraphs? How well did you stay on topic throughout the essay? How well does your conclusion relate to the information you presented?

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Essay Scoring (continued)

- 2. Elaboration of topic** How well did you develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples? How well did you clearly express ideas using precise language and domain-specific vocabulary that was appropriate for your audience and purpose?
- 3. Conventions** How well did you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

Now begin work on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- plan your essay.
- write your essay.
- revise and edit for a final draft.

Spell check is available to you.

Type your response in the space provided on the following page. Write as much as you need to fulfill the requirements of the task. You are not limited by the size of the response area on the screen.

Type your response below.



Go to the next
page if you need
more space.



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