LESSON PLAN

A Smiling Idol

GRADES	TIME	READING LEVEL
9+	50 min	5

Lesson flow



5 min

Opening Hook

Ask students to think about a time they felt strongly about an issue or belief. How did their emotions influence their actions? Introduce the story as a reflection on the power of belief.

15–20 min

Story Exploration

Read *A Smiling Idol* aloud. Pause intermittently to discuss key events and character actions. Encourage students to visualize the scenes and consider their implications.

15 min

Analysis Exercises

- Break students into small groups. Assign each group a character to analyze. Have them consider the motivations, strengths, and weaknesses of their character and how these contribute to the story's moral.

10 min

Application/Reflection

Facilitate a class discussion on how the themes of the story apply to their own beliefs and actions. Encourage students to share examples from their lives where zeal or strong beliefs led to unforeseen consequences.

5 min

Assessment Strategy

Use a quick exit ticket where students write down one lesson they learned from the story and how it might

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STORY OVERVIEW

- **Title and Moral/Theme**: A Smiling Idol - The moral of the story illustrates the danger of misguided zeal and the consequences of underestimating the power of belief, as well as the irony of using words as weapons that can lead to one's own destruction.
- **Plot Summary**: In this tale, an idol converses with a missionary, questioning the missionary's disdain for idol worship. The missionary, armed with scripture and zeal, attempts to combat the idol's influence. However, his misguided fervor leads to his own demise during a religious ceremony, revealing the irony of his situation.
- **Key Characters**:
  - **The Idol**: Represents misguided belief and the dangers of idolization.
  - **The Missionary**: Embodies zeal and the use of faith as a weapon, ultimately leading to his downfall.

LESSON FUNDAMENTALS

- **Learning Objectives**:
  - Students will understand the key themes of the story and how they relate to moral choices.
  - Students will analyze character motivations and their consequences within the narrative.
  - Students will discuss the impact of belief and zeal in shaping actions and outcomes.
  - Students will connect the story to broader folklore and moral stories relevant to their lives.
- **Discussion Questions**:
  1. What does the idol symbolize in modern society, and how can this apply to our own beliefs?
  2. In what ways does the missionary misinterpret the power of belief and words?
  3. How can the moral of this story apply to real-life situations where zeal may cloud judgment?
- **Required Materials**:
  - Copies of A Smiling Idol
  - Whiteboard and markers
  - Paper and writing utensils for students

✓ Original text available on the story page.