LESSON PLAN

The Image of Mercury and the Carpenter

GRADES
2–6

READING LEVEL
4

STORY OVERVIEW

- **Title and Moral/Theme:** The Image of Mercury and the Carpenter; The moral illustrates that sometimes true value and rewards come from unexpected actions rather than traditional devotion or expectations.
- **Plot Summary:** A poor carpenter worships a wooden image of Mercury, hoping for wealth. Despite his constant offerings, his situation worsens. In frustration, he destroys the image, only to find gold pouring out, revealing that true rewards can come from unexpected actions.
- **Key Characters and Their Significance:**
  - **The Carpenter:** Represents the struggle of devotion without tangible results, illustrating the futility of blind faith.
  - **The Image of Mercury:** Symbolizes the misleading nature of material worship and the irony of rewards.

LESSON FUNDAMENTALS

- **Learning Objectives:**
  - Students will analyze the themes of unexpected rewards and the nature of devotion.
  - Students will discuss the implications of the carpenter's actions and their outcomes.
  - Students will reflect on how the story relates to modern contexts of faith and expectation.
  - Students will draw parallels between the story and other thought-provoking moral stories.
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. What does the carpenter's treatment of the image tell us about expectations in relationships and devotion?
  2. How does the story challenge our understanding of what it means to receive rewards or benefits?
  3. In what ways can the moral be applied to our daily lives, especially in stressful situations?
- **Required Materials:**
  - Copies of the story "The Image of Mercury and the Carpenter"
  - Whiteboard and markers
  - Notebooks for reflection

LESSON FLOW

- **Opening Hook (5 min):** Begin with a thought-provoking question: "Have you ever received something good after giving up on it?" Encourage students to share brief personal experiences.
- **Story Exploration (15-20 min):** Read the story aloud or in small groups. Pause at key moments to allow for predictions and

reactions. Discuss initial impressions of the characters and their motivations.

- **Analysis Exercises (15 min):**
  - Break students into small groups to identify key themes and moral lessons.
  - Ask each group to create a mind map connecting the story to other engaging moral tales or short stories with moral for adults.
- **Application/Reflection (10 min):** Have students write a short reflection about a time they experienced unexpected rewards or learned a lesson from failure. Encourage them to connect their experiences back to the story.
- **Assessment Strategy (5 min):** Conclude with a quick exit ticket where students write down one thing they learned and one question they still have about the story.

SUPPORTING ELEMENTS

- **Extension Activities:**
  - Research and present on other moral stories from different cultures that explore similar themes.
  - Create a modern adaptation of the story in a