LESSON PLAN

The Widow and Her Little Maidens

GRADES	TIME	READING LEVEL
2–5	50 min	4

Lesson flow



5 min

Opening Hook

Start with a brief discussion on the concept of problem-solving. Ask students if they have ever faced a situation where trying to solve a problem made it worse. Share a short example to engage them.

15–20 min

Story Exploration

Read "The Widow and Her Little Maidens" aloud. Pause at key moments to ask predictive questions about the characters' choices and potential outcomes. Discuss the emotional tone of the story.

15 min

Analysis Exercises

Divide students into small groups. Each group will analyze one character's decision, focusing on the consequences. They will present their findings to the class.

10 min

Application/Reflection

Students will write a short paragraph reflecting on how they would have handled the maidens' situation differently and what they learned from the story.

5 min

Assessment Strategy

Collect the reflection paragraphs and use a rubric to assess understanding of the moral and character motivations.

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1. STORY OVERVIEW

- **Title and Moral/Theme**: "The Widow and Her Little Maidens" - The moral of the story is that trying to eliminate a problem can sometimes lead to even bigger difficulties.
- **Plot Summary**: A widow who enjoys cleanliness wakes her two maidens at the crack of dawn. Frustrated by their early mornings, the maidens decide to eliminate the rooster that wakes them. However, their plan backfires, leading to even worse consequences as their mistress begins waking them up even earlier.
- **Key Characters**:
  - **The Widow**: Represents authority and the importance of routine; her actions drive the plot.
  - **The Little Maidens**: Symbolize the struggle against authority and the consequences of misguided solutions.

2. LESSON FUNDAMENTALS

- **Learning Objectives**:
  - Students will identify the moral of the story.
  - Students will analyze the characters' motivations and their consequences.
  - Students will discuss alternate solutions the maidens could have considered.
  - Students will connect the story to other culturally significant moral stories.
- **Discussion Questions**:
  1. What lesson can we learn from the maidens' decision to kill the rooster?
  2. How might the story change if the maidens communicated their frustrations to the widow instead?
  3. Can you think of a time when trying to solve a problem made a situation worse for you or someone you know?
- **Required Materials**:
  - Copies of "The Widow and Her Little Maidens"
  - Whiteboard and markers
  - Discussion handouts

3. LESSON FLOW

- **Opening Hook (5 min)**:

Start with a brief discussion on the concept of problem-solving. Ask students if they have ever faced a situation where trying to solve a problem made it worse. Share a short example to engage them.

- **Story Exploration (15-20 min)**:

Read "The Widow and Her Little Maidens" aloud. Pause at key moments to ask predictive questions about the characters' choices and potential outcomes. Discuss the emotional tone of the story.

- **Analysis Exercises (15 min)**:

Divide students into small groups. Each group will analyze one character's decision, focusing on the consequences. They will present their findings to the class.

- **Application/Reflection (10 min)**:

Students will write a short paragraph reflecting on how they would have handled the maidens' situation differently and what they learned from the story.

- **Assessment Strategy (5 min)**:

Collect the reflection paragraphs and use a rubric to assess understanding of the moral and character motivations.

4. SUPPORTING ELEMENTS

- **Extension Activities**:
    1. Write an alternate ending for the story where the maidens successfully resolve their issue.