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| **Grade 1****Unit Overview*****Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons: A Study of Story Elements*** |
| **Focus Teaching Points** | * Previewing books to get ready to read
* Using the storyline to predict
* Marking important parts to retell and retain the story
* Rereading to notice new details
* Rereading to notice patterns in important events
* Learning all we can about the main character
* Getting to know characters by paying attention to the relationships in the story
* Rereading to get to learn more about the characters
* Reading with an expectation that characters’ feelings will change; adjusting reading voices to show these changes
* Noticing punctuation and using punctuation when we read orally to bring characters to life
* Rereading with fluency and to show characters’ big feelings
* Setting our own reading goals
* Noticing lessons in books by paying attention to what the character learns when a problem gets solved
* Keeping life lessons in mind right from the start of a new book
* Comparing and contrasting books
* Grouping books by the lessons they teach
* Sharing opinions about books
* Giving book recommendations and rehearsing for these presentations
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| **Key CCSS Standards** | ***Reading Standards for Literature (RL)**** *1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10*

***Reading Standards: Foundational Skills (RF)**** *1, 2, 3, 4*

***Speaking and Listening Standards (SL)**** *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*

***Language Standards (L)**** *1a, 1b, 1c, 1f, 1g, 1h, 1i, 1j, 2, 4a, 5a, 5b, 5c, 6*
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| **Recommended Professional Resource(s) to Guide Instruction** | * *Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons: A Study of Story Elements* from *Units of Study in Teaching Reading, Grade 1* (2015) by Elizabeth Dunford Franco.

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| **Tips for the Unit** | * We highly recommend that you read the first section of the unit, “An Orientation to the Unit” on pages vi – xiv to understand the goals and expectations for this unit, to gain a sense of the unit as a whole, and to understand the important learning of each bend.
* Bend I focuses on the whole story of books (going on adventures!), emphasizing predicting from the storyline, retelling by recalling important parts, and noticing parts that go together.  Students are taught to mark important parts with Post-its and to use a blank booklet as a support for retelling stories in sequential scenes (see Session 3). This retelling work is crucial to the work your students will do in subsequent years.
* Bend II focuses on studying characters in books, becoming the character and adapting reading voices to reflect a character's feelings. In this bend children are reading about different characters in different books, although you may decide to pair children with the same title, if you have multiple copies. This is also an important time to support children with vocabulary acquisition so that they have a wider range of words to describe feelings and also more nuanced words to describe the same feeling. This vocabulary work directly supports deeper comprehension.

During this bend children will come across the term “trouble” frequently. This is how the unit describes how some stories follow a problem-and-solution plot structure. For those children who may not yet be reading at the upper end of grade 1, they may still be reading stories without such conflict. In these cases, help children notice *if* (not when) there is trouble. You might also help them notice if there is a tension, a bad mood, a worry or a want (see page viii for more).* Bend III focuses on the lessons that familiar stories teach, focusing on story elements, comparing and contrasting books and grouping books by the lessons they teach (see page 90).  You will also begin to help students move from literal lessons to universal life lessons—something they will continue in all of the subsequent grades. This third bend also provides children with an opportunity for their own goal-setting as readers.
* Bend IV wraps up the unit by helping children develop and share opinions about the books they read in book talks. This is a great place to bring in [PVLEGS](http://www.ppsliteracycoachconnect.com/teaching-speaking-and-listening-including-pvlegs.html) and give children authentic reasons to rehearse!
* The unit has a suggested three-day plan for your read aloud, beginning on page 106. The plan uses *Upstairs Mouse, Downstairs Mole*, but can be applied to other texts during subsequent weeks.
* The unit also has a suggested plan for your shared reading, beginning on page 114. This five-day plan uses *George and Martha* but as with the read aloud plan, it can be applied to other texts during subsequent weeks. In shared reading, students’ foundational reading skills are supported. Both the read aloud and shared reading times are typically separate components from the reading workshop minilesson. See your literacy coach or CTL for support in fitting these balanced literacy components into your daily schedule.
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| **Classroom Library** | * Book choice is key during this unit. As your students move up in levels, make sure their independent book choices reflect these more challenging texts. Perhaps put away some of your lower-level bins that are no longer needed by the majority of your students and bring out new bins to reflect the higher level texts your readers ready to read.
* Children should also experience reading digital texts. Be sure children read “just right books” on [Storia](http://www.storiaschool.com/) as well.
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| **Materials and Resources** | * Read-alouds that inspire rich conversations
* Tools specifically for this unit (e.g. retelling booklets, student goal cards) described under “Create and Prepare to Distribute Special Tools” on page xiii and found on [Heinemann](http://www.heinemann.com).
* Charts related to routines and expectations for Reading Workshop, particularly expectations related to independent reading and partner conversations
* Anchor charts focusing on word solving strategies from previous units to remind children of the strategies they already know
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| **Assessment** | * Running Records to support ongoing reading assessment and to inform instruction
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| **Celebrations** | * Children can celebrate their growth as readers by giving book talks, ones for which they rehearse and prepare and that highlight all that they’ve learned about becoming strategic readers.
* Consider incorporating [PVLEGS](http://www.ppsliteracycoachconnect.com/teaching-speaking-and-listening-including-pvlegs.html) lessons as you give children authentic reasons to rehearse!

See pages 102-103 for details.  |