

Everett Public Schools Assessment of Student Learning

Student Packet



Coached Reading Assessment Grade 7 Grading Period 1

"The Cat Who Thought She Was a Dog"
"Kam's Mirror"

Student: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Period: _____

Literary Passage – Russian Folktale

Directions: Read the following passage and then answer the questions.

The Cat Who Thought She Was a Dog and the Dog Who Thought He Was a Cat

by Isaac Bashevis Singer



- 1 Once there was a poor peasant, Jan Skiba by name. He lived with his wife and three daughters in a one-room hut with a straw roof, far from the village. The house had a bed, a bench, and a stove, but no mirror. A mirror was a luxury for a poor peasant. And why would a peasant need a mirror? Peasants aren't curious about their appearance.
- 2 But this peasant did have a dog and a cat in his hut. The dog was named Burek and the cat Kot. They had both been born within the same week. As little food as the peasant had for himself and his family, he still wouldn't let his dog and cat go hungry. Since the dog had never seen another dog and the cat had never seen another cat and they saw only each other, the dog thought he was a cat and the cat thought she was a dog. True, they were far from being alike by nature. The dog barked and the cat meowed. The dog chased rabbits and the cat lurked after mice. But must all creatures be exactly like their own kind? The peasant's children weren't exactly alike either. Burek and Kot lived on good terms, often ate from the same dish, and tried to mimic each other. When Burek barked, Kot tried to bark along, and when Kot meowed, Burek tried to meow too. Kot occasionally chased rabbits and Burek made an effort to catch a mouse.
- 3 The peddlers who bought goats, chickens, eggs, honey, calves, and whatever was available from the peasants in the village never came to Jan Skiba's poor hut. They knew that Jan was so poor he had nothing to sell. But one day a peddler happened to stray there. When he came inside and began to lay out his wares, Jan Skiba's wife and daughters were bedazzled by all the pretty doodads. From his sack the peddler drew yellow beads, false pearls, tin earrings, rings, brooches, colored kerchiefs, garters, and other such trinkets. But what enthralled the women of the house most was a mirror set in a wooden frame. They asked the peddler its price and he said a half gulden, which was a lot of money for poor peasants. After a while, Jan Skiba's wife, Marianna, made a proposition to the peddler. She would pay him five groshen a month for the mirror. The peddler hesitated a moment. The mirror took up too much space in his sack and there was always the danger it might break. He, therefore, decided to go along, took the first payment of five groshen from Marianna, and left the mirror with the family. He visited the region often and he knew the Skibas to be honest people. He would gradually get his money back and a profit besides.
- 4 The mirror created a commotion in the hut. Until then Marianna and the children had seldom seen themselves. Before they had the mirror, they had only seen their reflections in the barrel of water that stood by the door. Now they could see themselves clearly and they began to find defects in their faces, defects they had never noticed before. Marianna was pretty but she had a tooth missing in front and she felt that this made her ugly. One daughter discovered that her nose was too snub and too broad; a second that her chin was too narrow and too long; a third that her face was sprinkled with freckles. Jan Skiba too caught a glimpse of himself in the mirror and grew displeased by his thick lips and his teeth, which protruded like a buck's. That day, the women of the house became so absorbed in the mirror they didn't cook supper, didn't make up the bed, and neglected all the other household tasks. Marianna had heard of a dentist in the big city who could replace a missing tooth, but such things were expensive.

- 5 The girls tried to console each other that they were pretty enough and that they would find suitors, but they no longer felt as jolly as before. They had been afflicted with the vanity of city girls. The one with the broad nose kept trying to pinch it together with her fingers to make it narrower; the one with the too-long chin pushed it up with her fist to make it shorter; the one with the freckles wondered if there was a salve in the city that could remove freckles. But where would the money come from for the fare to the city? And what about the money to buy this salve? For the first time the Skiba family deeply felt its poverty and envied the rich.
- 6 But the human members of the household were not the only ones affected. The dog and the cat also grew disturbed by the mirror. The hut was low and the mirror had been hung just above a bench. The first time the cat sprang up on the bench and saw her image in the mirror, she became terribly perplexed. She had never before seen such a creature. Kot's whiskers bristled, she began to meow at her reflection and raised a paw to it, but the other creature meowed back and raised her paw too. Soon the dog jumped up on the bench, and when he saw the other dog he became wild with rage and shock. He barked at the other dog and showed him his teeth, but the other barked back and bared his fangs too. So great was the distress of Burek and Kot that for the first time in their lives they turned on each other. Burek took a bite out of Kot's throat and Kot hissed and spat at him and clawed his muzzle. They both started to bleed and the sight of blood aroused them so that they nearly killed or crippled each other. The members of the household barely managed to separate them. Because a dog is stronger than a cat, Burek had to be tied outside, and he howled all day and all night. In their anguish, both the dog and the cat stopped eating.
- 7 When Jan Skiba saw the disruption the mirror had created in his household, he decided a mirror wasn't what his family needed. "Why look at yourself," he said, "when you can see and admire the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the earth, with all its forests, meadows, rivers, and plants?" He took the mirror down from the wall and put it away in the woodshed. When the peddler came for his monthly installment, Jan Skiba gave him back the mirror and in its stead, bought kerchiefs and slippers for the women. After the mirror disappeared, Burek and Kot returned to normal. Again Burek thought he was a cat and Kot was sure she was a dog. Despite all the defects the girls had found in themselves, they made good marriages. The village priest heard what had happened at Jan Skiba's house and he said, "A glass mirror shows only the skin of the body. The real image of a person is in his willingness to help himself and his family and, as far as possible, all those he comes in contact with. This kind of mirror reveals the very soul of the person."



Coached Reading Assessment

Grade 7 – Grading Period 1

“The Cat Who Thought She Was a Dog and the Dog Who Thought He Was a Cat”

Fill in the bubble next to the letter of the best answer.

1. Which sentence best summarizes the Skiba household before Jan bought the mirror? [LC02]
 - ☐ A. They were poor peasants, but lived a happy life.
 - ☐ B. They were miserable until Jan bought the mirror.
 - ☐ C. They were happy, but always worried about their appearance.
 - ☐ D. They were a sad family until they were able to see their defects.

2. What does the author mean when he says, “And why would a peasant need a mirror? Peasants aren’t curious about their appearance,” in paragraph 1 of the story? [LC03]
 - ☐ A. Peasants don’t need a mirror to know how they look.
 - ☐ B. Peasants believe it is a bad habit to worry about one’s appearance.
 - ☐ C. Peasants live in very small homes and there is no room for mirrors.
 - ☐ D. Peasants are too busy working to meet their basic needs.

3. What is the theme of the story? [LC01]
 - ☐ A. Appearances can be deceiving.
 - ☐ B. True worth is not based on a person’s appearance.
 - ☐ C. A life of poverty makes happiness impossible.
 - ☐ D. Even animals can be confused about their identity.

4. What is the meaning of the word *perplexed* in paragraph 6 of the story? [LC04]
 - ☐ A. Sad
 - ☐ B. Angry
 - ☐ C. Puzzled
 - ☐ D. Worried

5. **Short Answer- 2 pts**

In your own words, write a summary of the story. Include a **summarizing statement** and **three main events** from the story in your summary. [LC02]

Literary Passage – Korean Folktale

Directions: Read the following passage and then answer the questions.

Kam's Mirror

- 1 Long ago, in the country of Korea, there lived a hard-working farmer named Kam along with his family. Although Kam had lived happily in his remote village for his entire life, he dreamed of journeying off to visit the great capital city of Seoul. One day Kam decided that he would leave his village and make the long journey to the royal city before he grew too old to travel. So he sadly bid farewell to his family, his old father, his wife and his daughter, and ventured forth.
- 2 After a long journey, Kam arrived at the great city and marveled at the bustling streets, the fine houses and shops. After wandering about the market in awe, he bought some presents to take home with him: an ivory comb for his wife, a shiny black pipe for his father, and two lovely silk scarves for his daughter. Just as he was leaving the market something caught his eye. He stopped in front of the window and gazed at the strangest thing he had ever seen. It was a round, shining piece of metal, and in it a man's face seemed to be staring in amazement at Kam. Additionally, the man in the metal seemed to copy everything that Kam did. Who was that person?
- 3 Kam immediately entered the shop and bought the magic piece of metal. Wrapping it carefully, he put it in the bottom of his bag and set off for his village. There were many questions he wanted to ask that man in the metal who had looked so familiar, yet so strange.
- 4 When he arrived back home, Kam's family was delighted to see him, especially when they were handed gifts to be unwrapped. That night a great feast was held in his honor. After the wonderful meal, Kam went outside the hut to take care of his pigs. After Kam left to work outside, Kam's daughter noticed that one parcel remained in her father's bag. She carefully picked it up, slowly unwrapped it, and stared in amazement. "Look at this," she cried out. "Father has brought a pretty young girl into the house and hidden her by magic in this piece of metal."
- 5 Kam's wife came over to look at the metal object in her daughter's hands. Seeing the face of a woman, the wife flew into a jealous rage. "That cruel man! He has brought back a woman from the city to take my place. And a bad-tempered woman she looks, too!"
- 6 Hearing their commotion, Kam's father hobbled in. He grabbed the metal object out of his daughter-in-law's hands and took a quick glance at it. "Why has Kam brought back this ugly, old man? What kind of a present is this! I suppose he will want to eat my rice and sleep on my mat!"
- 7 Kam, finally noticing their cries and screams, came running back into the hut. As soon as he entered, his wife attacked him, pulling his hair and beating him with her fists. "What a wicked man you are for bringing that mean-looking woman here from the city to take my place."
- 8 "And for bringing in that ugly, old man to sleep on my mat!" shouted his father.
- 9 "And for bringing that silly-looking girl to ruin my marriage chances," cried out his daughter.
- 10 "Come with me. We will see what the priest has to say about this situation," Kam declared.

- 11 So together they all marched off in search of the wise village priest. Whereupon, they each recounted what they had seen in the mirror. “Let me see this magic metal,” insisted the priest. Since their priest had been to the great city and knew of its splendors, Kam and his family knew that the priest would know what to do. The old priest carefully held up the shiny metal and stared very intently at the reflection.
- 12 Finally he spoke to Kam and his family. “You each are wrong,” he said decisively. “All I can see is the face of a wise, old priest.” He then explained to them that their metal object was a mirror, and how foolish they had been. “In the future,” he advised, “if you are feeling angry when you look into the mirror, you should drink very slowly one cup of rice-water before saying a word.” They all promised to follow the priest’s advice, and headed off to their hut, laughing at their silly mistake.
- 13 Soon mirrors were found in every hut in the village, but in Kam’s house, visitors would find next to the mirror a cup of rice-water, just in case it was needed. The members of Kam’s family never forgot that although a mirror has its uses, it does not always tell you the whole truth.



Coached Reading Assessment

Grade 7 – Grading Period 1

“Kam’s Mirror”

Fill in the bubble next to the letter of the best answer.

6. Based on the information in the story, what inference can you make about why the priest told Kam’s family, “... to slowly drink one cup of water before saying a word?” [LC03]
- ☐ A. The priest knew it is harder to talk after drinking water.
 - ☐ B. The priest knew they would be thirsty after being so angry.
 - ☐ C. The priest knew that by drinking the water slowly, they would have time to calm down.
 - ☐ D. The priest knew that the people would not go away until he told them something to solve their problem.
7. Which sentence best summarizes this story? [LC02]
- ☐ A. A priest must solve the problems of a family when one of them returns from a long journey.
 - ☐ B. A man’s family is in crisis because they have assumed the worst about him when he returns from a long journey.
 - ☐ C. A man plans to replace members of his family when he returns from a long journey with people hidden inside a metal piece.
 - ☐ D. A man tests his family’s devotion for him by tricking them into thinking he will replace them.
8. What is the main conflict in the story? [LA05]
- ☐ A. Kam bought a foolish trinket for himself while visiting the city.
 - ☐ B. Kam’s family believes he was tricked into wasting his money on a metal piece.
 - ☐ C. Kam’s family believes he would bring strangers home to disrupt their happiness.
 - ☐ D. Kam tried to replace his wife and other family members because they did not trust him.
9. How does Kam’s daughter feel about the metal object that Kam brought home? [LA05]
- ☐ A. She is relieved that someone else will share the chores.
 - ☐ B. She is angry because the girl in the metal object is more beautiful than she.
 - ☐ C. She is fearful that the girl in the object will steal her possible marriage partners.
 - ☐ D. She is angry that she didn’t pick out her own metal object in the city.

10. Which word could the author have used in paragraph 2 instead of *bustling*? [LC04]

- ☐ A. Busy
- ☐ B. Noisy
- ☐ C. Narrow
- ☐ D. Polluted

11. What is the main idea of the selection? [LC01]

- ☐ A. Outside advice can be misleading when dealing with a crisis.
- ☐ B. Love can get a family through any situation.
- ☐ C. Be wary of things unknown because they may cause problems.
- ☐ D. A poor peasant can become rich by visiting the city.

12. **Short Answer- 2 pts**

The story shows that problems arise when people do not trust each other and assume the worst in a situation. Provide **two** details from the story that support this idea. [LC01]

13. Extended Response- 4 pts

What problem does Kam experience? What are **three** steps he takes to solve this problem? Include information from the story in your answer. [LA05]

[illegible]