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Humor



Table of Contents

What Is Fiction?	5
The Importance of Using Fiction	6
Elements of Fiction	10
A Closer Look at Humor	12
Leveled Texts to Differentiate Instruction	14
Teaching Suggestions	17
How to Use This Book	23
Correlation to Standards	27
Setting Passages	31
<i>The Adventures of Pinocchio</i>	31
<i>Mother Goose in Prose</i>	39
<i>Denslow's Three Bears</i>	47
Character Passages	55
<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>	55
<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	63
<i>The Magic Fishbone: A Holiday Romance from the Pen of Miss Alice Rainbird</i>	71
<i>The Book of Nature Myths: Why the Bear Has a Short Tail</i>	79
Plot Passages	87
<i>The Bremen Town Musicians</i>	87
<i>Clever Elze</i>	95
<i>The Story of Doctor Dolittle</i>	103
<i>Tales from Shakespeare</i>	111
Language Usage Passages	119
<i>The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County</i>	119
<i>How the Camel Got His Hump</i>	127
<i>My Father's Dragon</i>	135
<i>The Wonderful Wizard of Oz</i>	143
References Cited	151
Contents of the Digital Resource CD	152

How to Use This Book *(cont.)*

Title	ELL Level	Below Level	On level	Above level
Setting Passages	 1.5–2.2	 3.0–3.5	 5.0–5.5	 6.5–7.2
<i>The Adventures of Pinocchio</i>	2.0	3.5*	5.1	6.5
<i>Mother Goose in Prose</i>	2.2	3.5	5.0	7.2*
<i>Denslow’s Three Bears</i>	2.2	3.3	5.5	7.0*
Character Passages				
<i>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</i>	2.2	3.3	5.0*	6.6
<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	2.2	3.3	5.3*	6.5
<i>The Magic Fishbone: A Holiday Romance from the Pen of Miss Alice Rainbird</i>	2.2	3.0	5.0*	6.5
<i>The Book of Nature Myths: Why the Bear Has a Short Tail</i>	2.1	3.3*	5.1	6.5
Plot Passages				
<i>The Bremen Town Musicians</i>	2.2	3.3	5.5	7.0*
<i>Clever Else</i>	2.2	3.4	5.5	7.2*
<i>The Story of Doctor Dolittle</i>	1.5	3.0	5.4*	6.5
<i>Tales from Shakespeare</i>	2.1	3.0	5.5	6.5*
Language Usage Passages				
<i>The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County</i>	2.2	3.5	5.1	7.0*
<i>How the Camel Got His Hump</i>	2.2	3.5	5.2*	6.8
<i>My Father’s Dragon</i>	2.0	3.1	5.0*	6.5
<i>The Wonderful Wizard of Oz</i>	1.7	3.0	5.0*	6.5

* The passages with an asterisk indicate the reading passage from the original work of fiction.

Excerpt from

My Father's Dragon

by Ruth Stiles Gannett

The tigers walked around him. They made a big circle. Every second they looked hungrier. And then they sat down. They began to talk. "I bet you thought we didn't know you were here! You are in our jungle without our say so! That is trespassing!"

Then the next tiger spoke. "I bet you will say you didn't know it was our jungle!"

"Not one explorer has ever left this island alive!" said the third tiger. My father thought of the cat. So he knew this wasn't true. But he had too much sense to say so. One doesn't argue with a hungry tiger.

The tigers went on talking. Each took a turn. "You're our first little boy. I'm curious. I wonder if you are extra tender."

"Maybe you think we have regular meal-times. But we do not. We eat whenever we feel hungry," said the fifth tiger.

"And we are very hungry right now. In fact, I can hardly wait," said the sixth.

"I *can't* wait!" said the seventh tiger.

Then all the tigers spoke together. They roared, "Let us start right now!" And they moved in closer. My father looked. He saw those seven hungry tigers. And he had an idea. He opened his knapsack. He took out the chewing gum. The cat had told him that tigers really like gum. And it was very rare on the island. So he threw a piece to each one. But they only growled. "We do like gum. But we are sure we would like you even better!" They moved closer. They were so close that he could feel them breathing on his face.

"But this is very special gum," said my father. "Keep chewing it long enough, and it will turn green. Then you can plant it. And it will grow more! The sooner you start the sooner you will have more."



The tigers said, “Why, you don’t say! Isn’t that fine!” Each one wanted to be the first to plant the gum. So they all unwrapped their pieces. They began chewing. They chewed as hard as they could. Every once in a while one tiger would look into another’s mouth. He would say, “Nope, it’s not done yet.” Soon, they were all busy looking into each other’s mouths. They wanted to make sure that no one was getting ahead. They forgot all about my father!

My father walked back and forth. He was trying to think. He needed a way to cross the river. He found a high flagpole. It had a rope going over to the other side. He was about to start up the pole. The monkeys made a lot of noise. But he heard a loud splash behind him. He looked all around in the water. But it was dusk now. He could not see anything.

“It’s me, Crocodile,” said a voice to the left. “The water’s lovely! I have such a craving for something sweet. Won’t you come in for a swim?” A pale moon came out from behind the clouds. My father could see where the voice was coming from. The crocodile’s head was just peeping out of the water.



“Oh, no thank you,” said my father. “I never swim after sundown. But I do have something sweet to offer you. Perhaps you’d like a lollipop! And, perhaps you have friends who would like lollipops, too?”

“Lollipops!” said the crocodile. “Why, that is a treat! How about it, boys?” A whole chorus of voices shouted, “Hurrah! Lollipops!” My father counted as many as seventeen crocodiles with their heads just peeping out of the water.

“That’s fine,” said my father as he got out the two dozen pink lollipops and the rubber bands. “I’ll stick one here in the bank. Lollipops last longer if you keep them out of the water, you know. Now, one of you can have this one.”

The crocodile who had first spoken swam up and tasted it. “Delicious, mighty delicious!” he said. “Now if you don’t mind,” said my father, “I’ll just walk along your back. Then I will fasten another lollipop. I will put it on the tip of your tail with a rubber band. You don’t mind, do you?”

Element Focus: Language Usage

Describe the tigers and the crocodiles.
In what ways are they like people?

Excerpt from

My Father's Dragon

by Ruth Gannett

The tigers walked around him in a big circle. They were looking hungrier all the time. And then they sat down and began to talk. "I suppose you thought we didn't know you were trespassing in our jungle!"

Then the next tiger spoke. "I suppose you're going to say you didn't know it was our jungle!"

"Did you know that not one explorer has ever left this island alive?" said the third tiger. My father thought of the cat and knew this wasn't true. But of course he had too much sense to say so. One doesn't contradict a hungry tiger.

The tigers went on talking. Each took a turn. "You're our first little boy, you know. I'm curious. I wonder if you are especially tender."

"Maybe you think we have regular meal-times. But we don't. We just eat whenever we're feeling hungry," said the fifth tiger.

"And we're very hungry right now. In fact, I can hardly wait," said the sixth.

"I *can't* wait!" said the seventh tiger.

And then all the tigers spoke together. They said in a loud roar, "Let's begin right now!" And they moved in closer. My father looked at those seven hungry tigers. Then he had an idea. He quickly opened his knapsack. He took out the chewing gum. The cat had told him that tigers were especially fond of chewing gum. And it was very rare on the island. So he threw them each a piece. But they only growled, "As fond as we are of chewing gum, we're sure we'd like you even better!" They moved so close that he could feel them breathing on his face.

"But this is very special chewing gum," said my father. "If you keep on chewing it long enough, it will turn green. Then if you plant it, it will grow more chewing gum! The sooner you start chewing, the sooner you'll have more."



The tigers said, “Why, you don’t say! Isn’t that fine!” Each one wanted to be the first to plant the chewing gum. So they all unwrapped their pieces and began chewing as hard as they could. Every once in a while one tiger would look into another’s mouth and say, “Nope, it’s not done yet,” Finally, they were all so busy looking into each other’s mouths to make sure that no one was getting ahead that they forgot all about my father.

My father walked back and forth along the bank. He was trying to think of some way to cross the river. He found a high flagpole with a rope going over to the other side. He was about to start up the pole. But despite all the noise the monkeys were making, he heard a loud splash behind him. He looked all around in the water. But it was dusk now. He couldn’t see anything there.

“It’s me, Crocodile,” said a voice to the left. “The water’s lovely! I have such a craving for something sweet. Won’t you come in for a swim?” A pale moon came out from behind the clouds. My father could see where the voice was coming from. The crocodile’s head was just peeping out of the water.



“Oh, no thank you,” said my father. “I never swim after sundown. But I do have something sweet to offer you. Perhaps you’d like a lollipop! And, perhaps you have friends who would like lollipops, too?”

“Lollipops!” said the crocodile. “Why, that is a treat! How about it, boys?” A whole chorus of voices shouted, “Hurrah! Lollipops!” My father counted as many as seventeen crocodiles with their heads just peeping out of the water.

“That’s fine,” said my father as he got out the two dozen pink lollipops and the rubber bands. “I’ll stick one here in the bank. Lollipops last longer if you keep them out of the water, you know. Now, one of you can have this one.”

The crocodile who had first spoken swam up and tasted it. “Delicious, mighty delicious!” he said. “Now if you don’t mind,” said my father, “I’ll just walk along your back. Then I will fasten another lollipop to the tip of your tail with a rubber band. You don’t mind, do you?”

Element Focus: Language Usage

In what ways are the tigers and crocodiles personified in the text?

Excerpt from

My Father's Dragon

by Ruth Stiles Gannett

The tigers walked around him in a big circle, looking hungrier all the time, and then they sat down and began to talk. “I suppose you thought we didn’t know you were trespassing in our jungle!”

Then the next tiger spoke. “I suppose you’re going to say you didn’t know it was our jungle!”

“Did you know that not one explorer has ever left this island alive?” said the third tiger. My father thought of the cat and knew this wasn’t true. But of course he had too much sense to say so. One doesn’t contradict a hungry tiger.

The tigers went on talking in turn. “You’re our first little boy, you know. I’m curious to know if you’re especially tender.”

“Maybe you think we have regular meal-times, but we don’t. We just eat whenever we’re feeling hungry,” said the fifth tiger.

“And we’re very hungry right now. In fact, I can hardly wait,” said the sixth.

“I *can’t* wait!” said the seventh tiger.

And then all the tigers said together in a loud roar, “Let’s begin right now!” and they moved in closer. My father looked at those seven hungry tigers, and then he had an idea. He quickly opened his knapsack and took out the chewing gum. The cat had told him that tigers were especially fond of chewing gum, which was very scarce on the island. So he threw them each a piece but they only growled, “As fond as we are of chewing gum, we’re sure we’d like you even better!” and they moved so close that he could feel them breathing on his face.

“But this is very special chewing gum,” said my father. “If you keep on chewing it long enough it will turn green, and then if you plant it, it will grow more chewing gum, and the sooner you start chewing the sooner you’ll have more.”



The tigers said, “Why, you don’t say! Isn’t that fine!” And as each one wanted to be the first to plant the chewing gum, they all unwrapped their pieces and began chewing as hard as they could. Every once in a while one tiger would look into another’s mouth and say, “Nope, it’s not done yet,” until finally they were all so busy looking into each other’s mouths to make sure that no one was getting ahead that they forgot all about my father.

My father walked back and forth along the bank trying to think of some way to cross the river. He found a high flagpole with a rope going over to the other side. He was about to start up the pole when, despite all the noise the monkeys were making, he heard a loud splash behind him. He looked all around in the water but it was dusk now, and he couldn’t see anything there.

“It’s me, Crocodile,” said a voice to the left. “The water’s lovely, and I have such a craving for something sweet. Won’t you come in for a swim?” A pale moon came out from behind the clouds and my father could see where the voice was coming from. The crocodile’s head was just peeping out of the water.



“Oh, no thank you,” said my father. “I never swim after sundown, but I do have something sweet to offer you. Perhaps you’d like a lollipop, and perhaps you have friends who would like lollipops, too?”

“Lollipops!” said the crocodile. “Why, that is a treat! How about it, boys?” A whole chorus of voices shouted, “Hurrah! Lollipops!” and my father counted as many as seventeen crocodiles with their heads just peeping out of the water.

“That’s fine,” said my father as he got out the two dozen pink lollipops and the rubber bands. “I’ll stick one here in the bank. Lollipops last longer if you keep them out of the water, you know. Now, one of you can have this one.”

The crocodile who had first spoken swam up and tasted it. “Delicious, mighty delicious!” he said. “Now if you don’t mind,” said my father, “I’ll just walk along your back and fasten another lollipop to the tip of your tail with a rubber band. You don’t mind, do you?”

Element Focus: Language Usage

What are some examples of personification in the text.

Excerpt from

My Father's Dragon

by Ruth Stiles Gannett

The tigers prowled around him in a big circle, appearing to grow constantly hungrier, and then they abruptly crouched down and began to speak. "I suppose you were under the impression that we were unaware that you were trespassing in our jungle!"

Then the next tiger spoke. "I suppose you're going to deny that you knew it was our jungle!"

"Were you aware that not a single explorer has ever left this island alive?" demanded the third tiger. My father thought of the cat and knew this wasn't true, but of course he had too much sense to say so. One simply doesn't contradict a hungry tiger.

The tigers continued speaking in turn. "You're our first little boy, you know, so I'm curious to know if you're especially tender."

"Maybe you think we have regular meal-times, but we don't. We simplify matters by dining whenever we're feeling hungry," said the fifth tiger.

"And I should probably mention that we are extremely hungry right now. In fact, I can hardly wait to take my first bite," confessed the sixth.

"I *can't* wait!" declared the seventh tiger emphatically.

And then all the tigers said together in a loud roar, "Let's begin right now!" and they moved in closer. My father peered at those seven hungry tigers, and then he had an idea. He swiftly opened his knapsack and retrieved the chewing gum he had stashed there. The cat had informed him that tigers were especially fond of chewing gum, which was very scarce on the island. So he distributed a piece to each of them, but they only growled, "As fond as we are of chewing gum, we're sure we'd like you even better!" and they advanced so close that he could feel them breathing on his face.

"But this is very special chewing gum," said my father. "If you keep on chewing it long enough, it will turn green, and then, if you plant it, it will grow more chewing gum. The sooner you start chewing, the sooner you'll have more."



The tigers said, “Why, you don’t say! Isn’t that fine!” And as each one wanted to be the first to plant the chewing gum, they all unwrapped their pieces and began chewing as hard as they could. Every once in a while, one tiger would look into another’s mouth and say, “Nope, it’s not done yet,” until finally they were all so busy looking into each other’s mouths to make sure that no one was getting ahead that they forgot all about my father.

My father paced thoughtfully along the bank trying to think of some convenient way to cross the river. He found a high flagpole with a rope going over to the other side and was about to start up the pole when, despite all the noise the monkeys were making, he heard a loud splash behind him. He looked all around in the water but it was dusk now, and he couldn’t distinguish anything identifiable.

“It’s me, Crocodile,” said a voice to the left. “The water’s lovely, and I have such a craving for something sweet, so won’t you come in for a swim?” A pale moon came out from behind the clouds and my father could just determine where the voice was coming from. The crocodile’s head was barely peeping out of the water.



“Oh, no thank you,” said my father. “I never swim after sundown, but I do have something sweet to offer you. Perhaps you’d like a lollipop, and perhaps you have friends who would enjoy lollipops, too?”

“Lollipops!” cried the crocodile happily. “Why, that is a treat! How about it, boys?” A whole chorus of voices shouted, “Hurrah! Lollipops!” and my father counted as many as seventeen crocodiles with their heads just peeping out of the water.

“That’s fine,” said my father as he got out the two dozen pink lollipops and the rubber bands. “I’ll stick one here in the bank since lollipops last longer if you keep them out of the water, you know. Now, one of you can have this one.”

The crocodile who had first spoken swam up and tasted it. “Delicious, mighty delicious!” he declared. “Now if you don’t mind,” said my father politely, “I’ll just walk along your back and fasten another lollipop to the tip of your tail with a rubber band. You don’t mind, do you?”

Element Focus: Language Usage

Give several examples of ways that personification is used to heighten the humor of the story.