

Name: _____ Teacher: _____ School: _____

Grade 5: Lesson 19 Students will read a section of *Why the Dog Hates the Cat* to analyze the interactions and change in relationship between Tabby and Blackfoot as they approach a challenge.

Why the Dog Hates the Cat

From A Chinese Wonderbook by Norman Hinsdale Pitman

Section 4:

Then came days of hunger that were all the harder to bear since the recent time of good food. Oh, if they had only not got used to such delicious food! How hard it was to go back to scraps and scrapings!

But if the widow and her son were sad over the loss of the good meals, the two pets were even more so. They were reduced to hunger and had to go out every day to the streets in search of stray bones and garbage that decent dogs and cats turned up their noses at.

One day, after this period of hunger had been going on for some time, Tabby began suddenly to jump about in great excitement.

"Whatever is the matter with you?" growled Blackfoot. "Are you mad from hunger, or have you caught another flea?"

"I was just thinking, and now I know the cause of all our trouble."

"Do you indeed?" asked Blackfoot, surprised. "Yes, I do indeed. Are you willing to help me bring good fortune back to our family?"

"Of course I am. Don't be silly," barked the dog, wagging his tail joyfully at the thought of another good dinner.

"All right. Here is the plan. There has been a thief in the house who has stolen the widow's golden beetle. You remember all our big dinners that came from the pot? Well, every day I saw the widow take a little golden beetle out of the black box and put it into the pot.

One day she held it up before me, saying, 'Look, kitty, there is the cause of all our happiness. Don't you wish it was yours?' Then she laughed and put it back into the box that stays in the cupboard."

"Is that true?" questioned Blackfoot. "Why didn't you say something about it before?"

"You remember the day Mr. and Mrs. Chu were here, and how Mrs. Chu returned in the afternoon after the widow and Ming-li had gone to the fair? I saw her, out of the tail of my eye, go to that very black box and take out the golden beetle. I thought it curious, but never dreamed she was a thief. I was wrong! She took the beetle, and if I am not mistaken, she and her husband are now enjoying the feasts that belong to us."

"What do you suggest?" said Blackfoot. "I am with you through thick and thin."

"Let's go to the Chu house and make off with the beetle."

"I wish I were a cat!" moaned Blackfoot. "If we go there I couldn't get inside, they will keep their gates well locked. If I were like you I could scale the wall. It is the first time in all my life I ever envied a cat."

"We will go together," continued the cat. "I will ride on your back when we are fording the river, and you can protect me from strange animals. When we get to the Chu house, I will climb over the wall and manage the rest of the business myself. Only you must wait outside to help me to get home with the prize."

No sooner arranged than done. The companions set out that very night on their adventure. They crossed the river as the cat had suggested, and Blackfoot really enjoyed the swim, for, as he said, it took him back to his puppyhood, while the cat did not get a single drop of water on her face. It was midnight when they reached the Chu house.

"Just wait till I return," purred Tabby in Blackfoot's ear.

With a mighty spring, she reached the top of the mud wall, and then jumped down to the inside court. Once inside, Tabby made straight for the kitchen. Slinking along the wall in a shadow, she scanned for any glint of gold. There! A crack between two bricks glowed oddly. Tabby pushed on the loose brick, it clattered noisily to the floor and she froze. Silence. Peering into the space where the brick had been, Tabby caught sight of the golden beetle.

Two minutes later, she was back on the other side of the wall, beside Blackfoot, the golden beetle in her mouth.

The two adventurers reached the river just as the sun was rising above the eastern hills. When they reached the cottage, the door was shut, the Widow Wang and Ming-li still sleeping a fitful, hungry sleep.

"They have given up," whispered the cat, "I will go inside and make them happy."

Independent Practice:

Imagine that you are Blackfoot, the Wang's faithful dog.

You and Tabby, the Wang's cat, have been long-time pals, through thick and thin. Most recently, you've stuck together through times of plenty when the golden beetle made tons of amazing food. Now, hunger has entered your lives again and Tabby says she knows how to solve this problem. The two of you are going to retrieve the golden beetle from the thief that took it: Mrs. Chu. Your travels to the Chu house that night were adventurous and it felt great to help your friend carry out her rescue plan. Now you are back home and, seeing through the window that Widow Wang and Ming-li aren't sleeping well due to hunger, Tabby tells you she is going inside to make them happy.

1. Tell about your midnight adventure with Tabby, to retrieve the golden beetle from the Chu's house.
2. Continue your story, starting at the moment that Tabby slipped back into the house to make the Wang's happy.

Be sure to include:

- The thoughts, feelings, and actions that you would experience from Blackfoot's point of view.
- Good, descriptive words to help your reader *see* the story you are telling.
- Dialogue to make your story more interesting to read.

To support your writing, use evidence from your character chart as well as your answers to the questions asked in today's reading.

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