

FOCUS UNIT

Using literature as a rich natural resource for developing language and thinking skills.

WORKS WITH
ANY
PICTURE
BOOKS

DYNAMIC CHARACTERS

CHARACTER TRANSFORMATION IN LITERATURE

GRADES
3-5

1 You wake up to the smell of something delicious. You head downstairs and see a stack of pancakes on the table. You grab syrup and dig in. It's going to be a great day!

2 He's at the movies and the lights dim. The trailers start playing and he grabs a big tub of popcorn. When the movie finally starts, he leans back in his seat and enjoys the show!

3 You're walking through the mall with your friend. You stop to look at a cool hoodie in a store window. You try it on and it fits perfectly! You ask your friend, "Should I get it?"

4 I went camping with my dad last weekend.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Perspective

How does the character's perspective change the way the event is presented in the story?

Perspective is how a character thinks or feels about an event.

Two different perspectives.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Who told the story?

Story #1:

Title: _____

Author: _____

Who told the story? _____

How do you know? _____

Point of View: _____

Story #2:

Title: _____

Author: _____

Who told the story? _____

How do you know? _____

Point of View: _____

★ What is point of view?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write the card numbers on the correct shelf.

FIRST PERSON

The narrator is a character in the story.

SECOND PERSON

The narrator is speaking directly to you.

THIRD PERSON

The narrator is not a character in the story.

VOCABULARY POSTERS

LITERATURE-BASED RESPONSES

STUDENT PAGES

BOOK SUGGESTIONS

ANSWER KEYS & TEACHER GUIDE

Review & Assessment:

Materials:

- Vocabulary review matching cards
- "Being Smart" short story
- "Nap Time" short story
- Assessment pages & key

To review, students match the vocabulary cards, then use their work to check their work. This can go home for studying also.

Step 4: Student Practice (Differentiation)

You can gradually increase rigor across days:

Early Days (Days 2–3)

- Use Short Response Pages
- Focus:
 - Identifying type of transformation
 - Simple explanation

Middle Days (Days 3–4)

- Use Table Version
- Students:
 - Describe beginning
 - Cite specific text evidence

Teacher prompt:

"What part of the story shows the transformation?"

Later Days (Days 5–6+)

- Use Extended Written Response
- Students write a paragraph
 - Identify transformation
 - Explain how the character changed
 - Include evidence

Closely monitor student work.

- Students
- Teachers
- Students

Lessons 2-5 (or 2-7 depending on your pacing)

Focus: Identifying and supporting evidence

Materials:

- Internal vs. External transformation
 - Short response version
 - Table (with text evidence)
 - Extended written response
- Mentor texts (picture books with transformations)
- Vocabulary posters (internal, external, dynamic character)

Continue or Day 2

Step 4: Second Read-Aloud (External Transformation)

Text: *A Bad Case of Stripes* by David Shannon

1. Repeat the process. Provide a character.

Step 5: Compare & Define

Guide students through comparing the two characters.

- "How did the character change?"
- "Was the change inside or outside?"

Step 6: Explicit Teaching (Internal Transformation)

Introduce:

Book Recommendations

External Transformation Book Recommendations:

- The Six Swans* retold by Christine San Jose (traditional)
- The Old Woman and the Vinegar Bottle* retold by M.R. MacDonald (traditional)
- Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* by William Steig

Detailed, Standards Aligned Lesson Plans

Work with any picture book with character transformation.

Book Suggestions are Provided

• "What is the character like right now?"

• "Do you notice any changes starting to happen?"

Step 3: Identify the Transformation

After reading, guide students with questions:

- "What was the character like at the beginning?"
- "What were they like at the end?"
- "Did the change happen inside or outside?"

Internal Transformation



Dynamic Character

External Transformation



Static Character

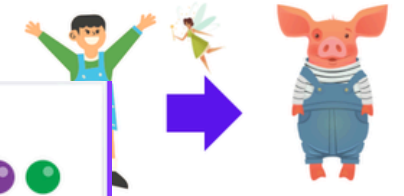
Transformation in Literature

Name: _____ Date: _____

Transformation - _____

There are two types of transformation in literature.

External Transformation



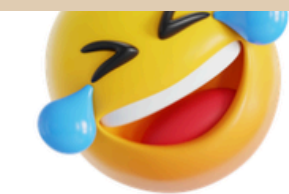
Vocabulary posters for types of transformation & dynamic character.
Student vocabulary note catcher.

thoughts, feelings, values

A character who changes through an internal transformation.

The character physically changes. Usually magic is involved.

End:



When a character stays the same from the beginning to the end of the story. There is no transformation.

Name: _____ Date: _____

External Transformation



Title of Book: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Author: _____



Main ch

Internal Transformation



Name: _____ Date: _____

Static Character



f the story?

Name: _____ Date: _____

External Transformation

Title of Book: _____

Author: _____

Main character: _____

Short Answer

In a few words describe the character at the beginning of the story:



Text Evidence

Name: _____ Date: _____

Internal Transformation

Title of Book: _____

Author: _____

Main character: _____

What ha
characte

Describe
transfor

Short Answer



In a few words describe what the character is like at the beginning of the story.

Text Evidence

Does the

In a few words describe the character at the end of the story.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Internal Transformation



Title: _____

Author: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

External Transformation



Title: _____

Author: _____

What is the character like at the beginning of the story? Use text details to support your answer.

What was the cl

Name: _____ Date: _____

Dynamic or Static?



Changes or

Student response sheets to accompany picture books
Differentiated student response to literature pages.

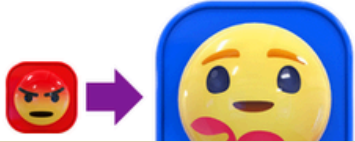
Does the character change during the story? _____

What is a static character? _____

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Transformation in Literature - Review Cards

Directions: Cut out the cards below. Shuffle them. Match them up. Check your work using the definition page from class.

When a character changes on the inside. The character has a change in thoughts, feelings, beliefs or values.	Internal Transformation 
A character who has gone through an internal transformation.	Dynamic Character 

A character that is the same from the beginning to the end of the story. There is no transformation.	Static Character 
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Name: _____ Date: _____
Transformation in Literature - Assessment - Vocabulary
Nap Time

Marcy and seven her ballet classmates rushed down the hall of the old auditorium. They were so excited to be dancing in the competition today. As they skidded they came to a sudden halt at the dressing room door. They gasped. The room's wallpaper was peeling, the mirrors were clouded over with years of dirt, the floor had missing tiles and an odd smell. As the overhead lights flickered, the girls slowly entered the room and noticed the broken down rack.

"What is that?!" Alexis asked with a quaver in her voice. From under a couch that had been at one end crept a small creature. As it stood up, it shook its red curly hair from its eyes. Its dress was covered in dust and crumbs. Slowly, the creature looked up at the girls.

"Who is interrupting my nap?" a high-pitched voice screeched. The dancers just stood there hanging open-mouthed. The room twirled and the girls felt like they were spinning.

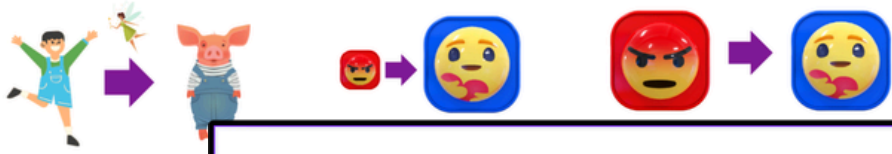
Just then, Marcy put my stuff... dart under the floor at her feet. Alexis! While you?"

From under alone." Marcy was they were supposed groans coming muttered loudly pulled out a pencil removed the...

Name: _____ Date: _____
Transformation in Literature - Assessment - Being Smart

Brady's foot bounced as he waited for the teacher to call his name. He could do all the problems in his head and didn't want to show his work. Math was easy for him. He wanted him to show his work. Math was easy for him. He wanted to showoff a bit. Smart kids finish first, he thought. As the teacher called Brady's name, he pulled out a pencil and began the first problem.

Name: _____ Date: _____
Transformation in Literature - Assessment - Vocabulary



What is an internal transformation?

What is an external transformation?

Name: _____ Date: _____
Transformation in Literature - Assessment

Directions: Read each of the stories, then answer the questions.

Which Story has internal transformation? _____

Who is the main character? What is this character like at the beginning of the story?	What is the character like at the end of the story?	
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Name: _____ Date: _____
KEY

Transformation in Literature - Assessment

Directions: Read each of the stories, then answer the questions.

Which Story has internal transformation? **Being Smart**

Who is the main character? What is this character like at the beginning of the story?	What is the character like at the end of the story?	What caused the change?
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Review match cards.
Summative Assessment & Key

chance to retake the test tomorrow."

"Thank you, Mr. Smith," Brady replied.

That night Brady showed his test paper to his parents. They agreed with Mr. Smith. They talked about how being smart meant finishing first and doing the work in his head wasn't right. Maybe, to show smart he is, he would need to slow down and show his work. He didn't like to do that, but he would have to.

The next day Brady retook the test. He took his time, showed all his work and did well. In the afternoon, Mr. Smith handed the test back to Brady with a "100%" written in blue across the top of the paper. A slow smile spread across his face. He liked how good it felt and promised himself that from now on he would take his time and do his work thoughtfully.

Which story has external transformation? **Nap Time**

Who is the main character(s)	How is the character changed?	What caused the change?	Does the character change back? If so, what causes the change?
Marcy, Alexis and the other dancers.	All the dancers except Marcy are shrunk and frozen in a dance pose.	The angry red-haired creature from under the couch was made and muttered some words.	The dancers are changed back after Marcy creates a sleeping area for the creature. The creature is content and mutters some words that change them back.

Which character is a dynamic character? **Brady**. Give text evidence. In the text it says...

"He liked how good it felt to do well and promised himself that from now on he would take his time and do his work thoughtfully."