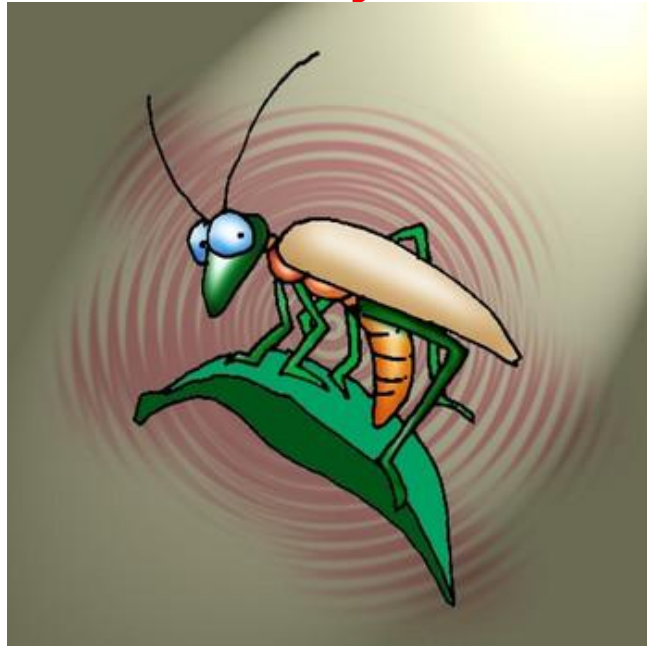


**Sample Pages from
Objective Tests
and Answer Keys
for**

The Cricket in Times Square

By George Selden

A 1961 Newbery Honor Book



A Teaching Pack

by Margaret Whisnant

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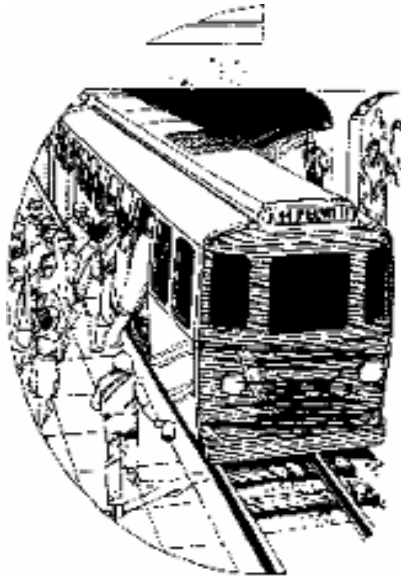
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The Cricket in Times Square

By George Selden

One Tucker

Pages 1-7



Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. Tucker mouse lived in an abandoned drain pipe in the subway station at Times Square.
- _____ 2. In addition to scrounging, Tucker liked to sit in the end of the drain pipe and watch the world go by.
- _____ 3. Mario was kept busy by the hundreds of late night customers stopping at Papa Bellini's newsstand to buy newspapers and magazines.
- _____ 4. Papa Bellini had built the newsstand himself many years ago.
- _____ 5. The drawer of Papa Bellini's cash register was always open because it had gotten stuck once with all the family's money inside.
- _____ 6. The newsstand was left uncovered at night when the Bellinis weren't around, but nothing had ever been stolen.
- _____ 7. Except for the cash register, there was nothing on the shelf that ran along one side of the newsstand.
- _____ 8. The conductors on the shuttle trains liked Mario and came over to talk to him between trips.
- _____ 9. Mario wasn't worried about being up late because he did not have to get up early on Sundays and school was out as well.
- _____ 10. Tucker had never heard a sound quite like the one that caught his attention just as he was about to turn into the drain pipe.

The Cricket in Times Square

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Two **Mario**
Pages 9-17



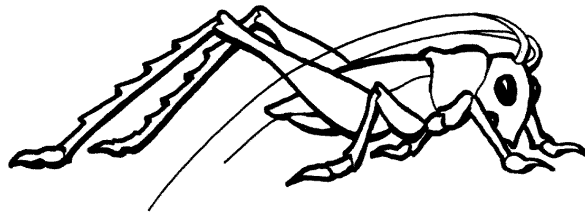
Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Mario thought he knew what the strange sound was because he had heard (A) a similar noise on one of the shuttle trains from Grand Central, (B) a whole chorus of the sounds the summer before in a Long Island meadow, (C) the same sound on his father's radio.
- _____ 2. Mario found the cricket (A) wedged in a crack under a pile of waste paper and soot, (B) under the large box his father locked over the newsstand each night, (C) near Tucker's drain pipe.
- _____ 3. Mario cleaned the cricket by (A) patting him with a damp cotton swab, (B) dusting him with a Kleenx, (C) holding him out into the slow wind blowing from the subway tunnel.
- _____ 4. The cricket was (A) green, (B) brown, (C) black.
- _____ 5. Mario made a new home for the cricket from (A) an empty Kleenx box, (B) a rolled-up newspaper, (C) a matchbox and a sheet of Kleenx.
- _____ 6. The cricket seemed to (A) like his new home, (B) be terrified of Mario, (C) be ill.
- _____ 7. What did the cricket eat from Mario's hand? A piece of (A) cracker, (B) chocolate bar, (C) chocolate chip cookie.
- _____ 8. Mario's mother (A) was tall and slender, (B) liked to climb steps for exercise, (C) was short and stouter than she liked to admit.
- _____ 9. Which of the following was **not** true of Papa Bellini? He (A) was tall and somewhat bent over, (B) had a kindness about him, (C) was much older than his wife.
- _____ 10. Mama ordered Mario to throw the cricket out and refused to allow it in her house because (A) she thought it smelled bad, (B) Mario never took care of his pets, (C) it was a bug and it would attract other bugs.
- _____ 11. Mario tried to convince his mother that crickets were (A) good luck, (B) clean bugs, (C) not really bugs.

The Cricket in Times Square

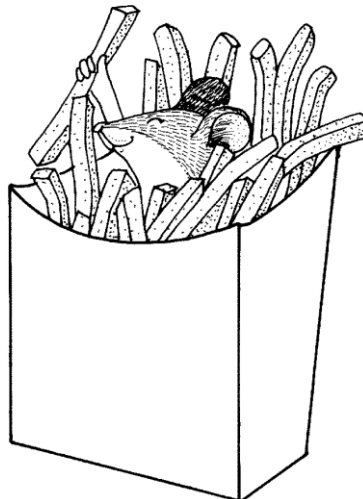
By George Selden

Three **Chester**
Pages 18-26



Write either **Yes** or **No** before each question.

- _____ 1. Was eavesdropping on humans what Tucker Mouse enjoyed most next to scrounging?
- _____ 2. Had Tucker ever seen a cricket?
- _____ 3. Had Chester Cricket known quite a few mice back in Connecticut?
- _____ 4. Did Tucker share the liverwurst he was saving for breakfast with Chester?
- _____ 5. Except for the chocolate Mario gave him, had Chester had anything to eat for three three days?
- _____ 6. Back in Connecticut, had Chester been distracted from his jumping practice by the smell of liverwurst coming from a picnic basket?
- _____ 7. Did Chester decide to hide in the picnic basket because he thought it would be an exciting adventure to see New York City?
- _____ 8. When he took the flying leap from the picnic basket as the people got off the second train, had Chester landed in the pile of dirt where Mario found him.
- _____ 9. After lying in the dirt for three days, did Chester get so nervous he started to chirp?
- _____ 10. Did a cat spring from the darkness and land right next to Tucker and Chester?



The Cricket in Times Square

By George Selden

Four **Harry Cat**
Pages 27-34



Chester
Harry
Tucker
New York City

garbage
talent
Grand Central Station
hiccuping

the newsstand
long-hairs
Times Square
music

the drain pipe
a star
his wings
Mario's mother

From the list above, choose the name, word, or phrase that matches each of the clues below and write it in the blank. **All answers** will be used **at least once**. **Some answers** will be used **more than once**.

- _____ 1. He was a huge tiger cat with gray green and black stripes along his body.
- _____ 2. Although Chester thought he wouldn't get along in this place, Tucker encouraged the cricket to give it a try.
- _____ 3. Harry complained that rich people didn't throw out as much of this as they should.
- _____ 4. Since he didn't know how to get home, he would have to stay in New York for a while.
- _____ 5. Harry Cat was his best friend.
- _____ 6. Chester preferred this to flying.
- _____ 7. They weren't much for flying, but Chester used them to make his special noise.
- _____ 8. It was going broke, and Tucker and Chester fear for its future.

The Cricket in Times Square

By George Selden

Whole Book Test

Chester Cricket
Tucker Mouse
Harry Cat
the radio
Papa Bellini
H. P. Smedley
opera
only once

Mario
Mama Bellini
the matchbox
Times Square
Connecticut
a picnic basket
Orpheus
mulberry leaves

a two dollar bill
the cricket cage
Sai Fong
a silver bell
a subway station
September
the newsstand
concerts



From the list above, choose the word, name, or phrase that matches each of the clues below and write it in the blank. **All** answers will be used **at least once**. **Some** answers will be used **more than once**.

- _____ 1. In Sai Fong's story, the cricket that belonged to the Chinese Princess sang beautiful songs because it ate this food.
- _____ 2. Tucker, using dollar bills as bedding and a piece of Mama Bellini's jewelry as a pillow, spent the night in it.
- _____ 3. She refused to allow Chester in the house because he might attract other bugs or carry germs.
- _____ 4. Chester, Tucker, and Harry accidentally set it on fire.
- _____ 5. This was the home Mario made for his cricket, and Chester preferred it over the cage.
- _____ 6. The Bellini's newsstand was located here.
- _____ 7. He thought of Chester as his pet.
- _____ 8. Chester used it to learn new songs and to practice before a concerts.
- _____ 9. when Chester first saw this place, it was blazing with lights and full of traffic and human noise.
- _____ 10. During the height of his fame, Chester gave two of these each day.
- _____ 11. Mario bought Chester's cricket cage from his shop in Chinatown.
- _____ 12. Chester was accidentally transported to New York because he jumped into one of these to eat liverwurst.
- _____ 13. In the country, he would have been Tucker's enemy; but in New York City, he was Tucker's friend.
- _____ 14. He found Chester wedged in a crack under a pile of papers and dirt.

About Your Teaching Pack

The primary goal in creating the teaching packs for children’s novels is to provide a **classroom-ready**, non-threatening method for checking student comprehension and stretching thinking skills. **When used as a basic guide for teaching a novel, the materials offer many and varied opportunities for learning.**

Use your teaching pack as a guide and lead your students into discovering new ideas about

THE PLOT

Each test page is actually an outline of the plot. In your teaching pack, the chain of related events that tell the story has been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of questions. Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot; and consequently **comprehend** the story. This “plot rhythm” is the basic structure of the tests.

To further your students’ understanding of plot, try the following activities:

Summarizing the Story: Using only the chapter questions as a guide, have your students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven. For twenty questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Reporting the News: Have students write a newspaper article, based on the events from a set of questions, and add the *who, what, when, where, why* format. Some needed information may be located in previous chapters.

Twisting the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, or a different answer—and explain how changing a single (or several) events would change the story. To further illustrate the rhythm of a good story, try changing the answers to one complete set of questions. Your students will see how difficult, if not impossible, it is to tell a sensible story from a tangled set of events.

THE CHARACTERS

Questions that illustrate character motivation and personality are purposely included. Too often, when they are asked to tell what kind of person a story character is, the only answer many of our students can muster is “nice.”

In your efforts to remove “nice” from your students’ literary vocabulary, try this idea:

Character Charts: Display individual charts for the main characters. As the chapters are read, record **facts, behaviors, or events** that relate to the each character. Then connect the items with several appropriate words such as **empathetic, brave, calloused, bold, untrustworthy**, etc. The teacher can take the lead by contributing the first few words and then assigning the task of identifying more terms to students. Record the word collections on the charts with the story facts.

This information is a valuable student resource when displayed in the room for all to see and use during a writing assignment. In creating and using character charts, students will soon begin writing more fluently and insightfully about story personalities.

Use the charts to encourage your students to try some “predicting” or “detective” writing about what the character(s) might do next or what might have happened after the story ended. Let the charts help your students recognize **CHARACTER CHANGE (dynamics)**.

Another fun activity with the charts is to match a book personality with a zodiac sign. Students must justify their reason for thinking a character is a particular sign by citing his/her behaviors, words, reactions to situations, etc. that prove the match.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

(Implied Meaning)

Because the primary goal for the objective questions is **basic comprehension**, items requiring a student to **interpret** an event or a character’s behavior are not included. Always included, however, are questions that *establish the existence of a story component carrying an implied meaning.*

MAKING PREDICTIONS

(Recognizing Story Clues)

Authors subtly place clues in the story line giving the reader hints as to what is about to happen. Like the implied meaning, these clues are brought to the reader's attention in the form of a question. Once a student learns to spot the gems, his/her ability to comprehend and enjoy a story tends to leap forward.

Use "thinking-out-loud" class discussions to list all the possible meanings of the clue questions. Have your student write their individual predictions (no sharing or telling), store the papers until the novel is finished, and then retrieve them for reading. Sometimes, a wrong prediction makes a story as good as the original.

OTHER FUNCTIONS

The objective test pages are excellent discussion guides for both whole groups and small groups. They work well as homework reading guides and as conferencing tools. They are also useful management tools for teachers who wish to use multiple titles in one classroom.

IMPROVING/DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS

Rather than always requiring your students to answer test questions on a printed page, surprise them (and save paper!!) by occasionally doing the test orally.

Try this technique:

Student Rules for an Oral Test:

The teacher will read each question *two times*. No comments or questions that interrupt this initial phase of the test are allowed.

When all questions have been read, individual students may ask for repeats of any question he/she wishes to hear again.

No interruptions/comments during the re-reading part of the test.

Teacher Rules for an Oral Test:

The teacher will read each question *two times*. Except to remind students that a re-reading phase will follow after the last question, he/she will not respond to comment/question during this period.

The teacher will repeat **any** and **all** questions (even if it results in reading the same question multiple times).

(The second teacher rule is a *vital* part of the exercise. Asking for multiple repeats of a question does not mean students aren't paying attention. It does indicate their desire to *understand* and *answer* the question correctly.)

As students become more comfortable and experienced with oral test-taking, the number of requests for repeated questions will diminish. An added bonus to this technique is that skills learned in these testing periods tend to translate into other situations where teacher-talking and student-listening are required components of learning.

Final Note

The Novel Teaching Packs are designed for use as supplementary material that supports a total reading program. It is my goal to provide busy teachers with a classroom-ready, practical resource loaded with motivational and learning opportunities for their students. It is my hope that your purchase will prove to be a hard-working instructional component for years to come. Thanks for choosing one of my products for your classroom.



Margaret Whisnant, Author