

O. Henry's
The Gift of the
Magi

and other stories

Student Learning Materials

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THE COP AND THE ANTHEM

PRE-READING ACTIVITY 1: COMPLETE THE SENTENCE

“The Cop and the Anthem” is a story about a homeless man named Soapy. In the story, winter is coming and it is getting cold outside. In New York City, winter is very cold. The temperature can go below freezing (zero degrees Celsius, thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit). It often snows a lot. Because of this cold winter weather, Soapy is looking for a winter home to stay warm. This activity will help you learn some key vocabulary words before reading the story.

① Below is a list of keywords from the story. Read the words and definitions.

Words	Definition	Sentence Examples
anthem	A formal song of loyalty, praise, or happiness that is important to a particular group of people	<i>He heard the anthem that came from the church. (p. 40)</i>
arrest	To use the power of the law to take and keep someone who has committed a crime, such as a thief	<i>The cop would arrest him. (p. 36)</i>
cop	A police officer	<i>Men who break windows do not stop there to talk to cops. (p. 37)</i>
prison	A building where people are kept as punishment for a crime or while they are waiting to go to court; a place from which you cannot escape	<i>But in prison a gentleman's own life was still his own life. (p. 36)</i>
sign	Something, such as an action or event, which shows that something else exists, is true, or will happen	<i>That was a special sign for him that winter was coming. (p. 35)</i>

② Now, using the words above, fill in the blanks. These are sentences from the story. Can you find them in the book?

- A. Three months in the prison on Blackwell's Island was what he wanted. (p. 36)
- B. When you see these _____, you know that winter is near. (p. 35)
- C. The _____ helped a lady across the street. (p. 39)
- D. No cop was going to _____ him. (p. 39)
- E. And the _____ that came from the church held Soapy there, for he had known it well long ago. (p. 40)

PRE-READING ACTIVITY 2: THE CHANGING OF THE SEASONS IN YOUR COUNTRY



In this story, Soapy, the main character, notices signs that winter is coming. This activity will help you think about the signs of winter in your own country.

Directions:

1. Read the signs of winter from the story that are listed in the left column.
2. Write **three** signs of winter coming in your country. Some signs are suggested in the list below.

Signs Indicating Winter Is Coming:

- The temperature gets colder.
- It rains a lot.
- It snows.
- The leaves change their color.
- Plants die.

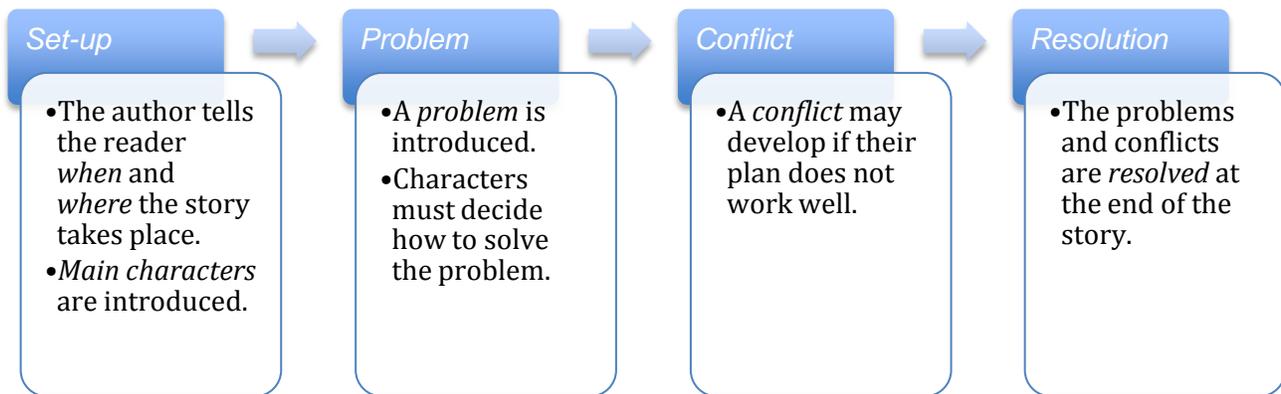
Signs of Winter in the Story	Signs of Winter in Your Country
Birds begin to fly south. (p. 35)	
Women who want nice new warm coats become very kind to their husbands. (p. 35)	
A dead leaf falls at Soapy’s feet. (p. 35)	

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY 1: STORY DEVELOPMENT

In this activity, you will learn about the structure of the story “The Cop and the Anthem”.

PART 1: STRUCTURE OF A STORY

“The Cop and the Anthem” is a story, a narrative account. When authors write narratives, they usually use a similar structure to develop the story. The chart below illustrates four main elements of the story and also explains what each element means.



PART 2: MAKING A STORY STRUCTURE MAP

First, the author sets up when and where a story takes place. The author also introduces the main characters. This is called the “Set-Up.” Then, a problem is introduced, and characters must decide what to do. This is called “The Problem.” Once the characters decide what to do to solve the problem, there may be a further conflict if the plan does not go well. This is called “The Conflict.” At the end of the story the problems and conflicts are resolved. This is “The Resolution.” This activity will help you discover the narrative structure of this story.

Directions:

1. While reading, answer the questions in the four boxes on the next page.
2. Write your answers on the lines provided in each box. The first question has been completed as an example.
3. Begin with ***Set-Up***. Then answer the questions in ***Problem***, ***Conflict***, and finally ***Resolution*** in that order.

Story Structure Map

Set Up (page 35)

1. Where and when does this story take place?

The story takes place in New York City when winter is near.

2. Who is the main character of this story?

Soapy



Problem (page 36)

Soapy needs a warm place to live for the winter.

3. How is Soapy planning to get to Blackwell's Island?



Resolution (page 40)

5. What does Soapy hear that makes him change his mind about being arrested?

6. What happens at the end of the story?



Conflict (pages 37, 38, 39)

No matter what Soapy does, a cop does not arrest him.

4. What are **three** of the ways that Soapy tries to be arrested by a cop?

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY 2: DESCRIBING THE MAIN CHARACTER

In “The Cop and the Anthem,” Soapy decides to become a different person after hearing the anthem from outside a church. This activity will help you to think about how Soapy changed from *before* to *after* hearing the anthem.

Identify the Changes to the Character

Directions:

1. While reading the story, decide if the descriptions of Soapy given below occur *before* he hears the anthem or *after* he hears the anthem at the church. The first description has been completed as an example.
2. Write the other descriptions in the correct section of the chart below.

- ~~Wants to get a job.~~
- ~~Tries to steal a meal.~~
- Takes a man’s umbrella.
- Wants to find his purpose in life.
- Wants to be somebody in the world.
- Breaks a window.
- Wants to spend the winter at Blackwell’s Island.
- Is arrested by a cop.

Soapy *before* hearing the anthem

1. *Tries to steal a meal.*
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Soapy *after* hearing the anthem

1. *Wants to get a job.*
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



POST-READING ACTIVITY 1: SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

To understand “The Cop and the Anthem” it is important to remember the order of the events in the story. In this activity, put the major events of the story in the order in which they occur.

Directions:

1. In the chart below, the main events are listed in the first column, ***Event from the Story***, but not in the correct order.
2. Reorder the events to match what you have read. The first event has been completed as an example.
3. Find the second event of the story in the first column and write “2” next to it in the second column, ***Order***. Continue ordering all the events.

Event from the Story	Order
Soapy decides that he wants to spend the winter in prison on Blackwell’s Island.	1
Soapy takes a man’s umbrella.	
Soapy eats a big dinner without paying for his food.	
Soapy decides to try to find a job.	
Soapy decides the best way to go to prison is to have a cop arrest him.	
A cop arrests Soapy for hanging around outside the church.	
Soapy talks to a young woman who is alone.	
Soapy hears an anthem coming from a church that reminds him of his good life long ago.	
Soapy throws a stone through a big store window.	
Soapy dances and shouts in the street. He pretends that he is drunk.	
Soapy tries to eat at an expensive restaurant but is thrown out because of his clothes.	

POST-READING ACTIVITY 2: RIGHT THERE

This activity will help you remember the main events from the story. First, you will answer questions and then draw these events in a comic strip.

PART 1: ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Answer the four questions below about “The Cop and the Anthem”.

Directions:

1. Use a phrase or a short sentence to answer the questions.
2. Use the page numbers provided in parentheses to help you find the answers in the story. The first question has been answered as an example.

Question 1

Why does Soapy want to be arrested by a cop? (pp. 35-36)

Winter is coming and it will be cold. Soapy needs a warm place to live.

Question 2

Soapy tries to do many bad things to be arrested. What is **one** bad thing that Soapy does to be arrested by a cop? (pp. 37-39)

Question 3

What is **one** other bad thing that Soapy does to be arrested by a cop? (pp. 37-39)

Question 4

At the end of the story, what happens to Soapy? (p. 40)

PART 2: DRAWING STORY EVENTS

After you have answered the questions, draw cartoons for four events from the story. This activity will help you visualize these events. The first panel has been completed as an example.

Directions:

1. Use your answers to the questions in Part 1 to help you draw the events. Each event is based on one question from Part 1. The answer for Question 1 has been drawn for you in Scene 1.
2. Draw your answer to Question 2 in Scene 2.

If two characters are having a conversation, write the answer in a speech bubble:



If a character is thinking, write the answer in a thought bubble:



3. Draw the answer to Questions 3 and 4 in Scenes 3 and 4.

Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4
