

lesson plan



Grade: **3-5**

Subject: **ELA**

Time: **20-30 minutes**

Lesson Topic: Detecting Character Traits with Buddy and Panda

Learning Objective/s:

- Students will be able to identify the traits and motivations that make characters interesting and memorable.
- Students will create their own original character using what they have learned about character traits and motivations.

Materials Needed:

- Buddy and Panda worksheet
- [Understanding Character Traits Powerpoint](#)
- Optional for extension: The Missing Hockey Stick by Lori Briley

Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3 / RL.4.3 / RL.5.3
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3 / W.4.3 / W.5.3

Lesson structure:

- **Hook:** Ask your class, "If you were going to build a building, what would you need?" After hearing their answers, ask, "Did you know that building a character in a book is like building a building? Every character is built from the same type of materials - internal traits and external traits.
- Walk your students through the Understanding Character Traits Powerpoint.
- Hand out the Buddy and Panda worksheet. Have the students work in pairs to identify both the physical characteristics and the personality characteristics of both Buddy and Panda. After they have completed the worksheet, display the cover of The Missing Hockey Stick, so they can see how close their physical descriptions came.
- **Pre-Lesson Extension:** Read The Missing Hockey Stick by Lori Briley before starting this lesson.
- **Post-Lesson Extension:** Have students create their own characters and write and illustrate a story that features their character.

Closure:

End the lesson by having students share their drawings and their lists of personality traits. Encourage them to look for both internal and external traits when they read other books.

Detecting Character Traits with Buddy and Panda

Read the following excerpt from *The Missing Hockey Stick* and do the activity that follows.

"Buddy!" A paw hits my face. My eyes flicker open to find Panda's short, black nose in my face.

"Panda. How many times have I told you to leave me alone when I'm napping?" I roll to my stomach and carefully put my feet underneath me on the hardwood floor. Wood floors are tricky. You never know when your feet will lose their traction, and you'll end up sprawled out on your belly. Plus, I'm not as young as I used to be. The only place I'm catching rabbits these days is in my dreams. Speaking of dreams, "You ruined a perfectly good dream, Panda. What was so important you needed to wake me up?"

Panda's tail smacks against my chest as she turns around to face me. Panda is shorter than me, so she moves her face up close to mine and strains her neck up to whisper in my ear. "There's a box."

I stare at her, wondering why this is news. "We have lots of boxes, Panda." Panda's whole body begins to shake, which is a funny sight. While I'm a purebred German shorthaired pointer, Panda is a mutt. She's got a tiny head on an all black labrador's body with super short legs and a long tail that is constantly smacking me in the face. If I'm being completely honest, I'm kind of jealous of the tail since all I have is a stub. When I try to wag my tail, my whole butt shakes. But while my short tail fits with the lean lines of the rest of my brown and white body, Panda looks like some kid put her together out of random body parts, and right now all of those parts are shaking with excitement. Her tail is wagging so fast it's moving in a circle.

In the space below, use the description from the passage to draw Buddy and Panda. Your drawing will show their external traits.

Read the following excerpt from *The Missing Hockey Stick* and do the activity that follows.

Mom calls everyone to dinner—including me and Panda.

Panda leaps to her feet and scrambles across the wood floors to stand by her bowl, tail wagging and tongue hanging out with drool pooling in her mouth. It is terribly undignified, and Panda does it every single time someone mentions food. Food is Panda's love language.

Unlike Panda, I stroll quietly to my bowl and sit next to it, waiting for Eva to drop a couple of scoops of food in the bowl. I gingerly pick up a mouthful of food and chew quietly while Pan-da sticks her entire nose in the bowl and eats without chewing.

"Slow down, Panda. You'll choke," Eva says before heading to the sink to wash her hands.

She wasn't kidding. It has happened before. Panda once ate so fast that she got it caught in her throat. Then someone had to beat her on the back until she coughed it back up. But it didn't slow Panda down. Panda is like that. All action, not a lot of thinking.

Under each dog's name, write down words that describe each dog's personality. These are their internal traits.

Buddy

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Panda

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.