

Word List A

Study these words from “Dragon, Dragon.” Then, complete the activity that follows.

labored [LAY berd] *v.* worked hard

Ahmed labored for hours on the decorations; now he needs a rest.

lair [LAIR] *n.* home or resting place for a person or animal

Zoo workers tried to make the bear’s cage like its lair in the wild.

maidens [MAY duhnz] *n.* young women

In fairy tales, young unmarried women are often called maidens.

merely [MEER lee] *adv.* only, just

He was merely joking when he said that; he didn’t want to hurt anyone’s feelings.

novels [NAHV uhlz] *n.* books that tell a story about made-up people and events

The teacher assigned the students novels, which took longer to read than short stories.

poems [POH uhmz] *n.* pieces of writing that often include rhythm and rhyme

I like the way poems sound, but I don’t always understand their meanings.

slicing [SLY sing] *v.* cutting

Slicing bread is easy with this new, sharp knife.

strolled [STROHLD] *v.* walked in a slow, relaxed way

June and Jim weren’t in a hurry as they strolled through the park.

Exercise A

Fill in each blank in the paragraph below with an appropriate word from Word List A. Use each word only once.

Ray loves reading [1] _____, but he also likes the rhythm and the rhyme of great [2] _____. He thinks of the porch as his own special place, his [3] _____ for resting and reading. He [4] _____ hard to make it that way. First, he put up a hammock. Then, he made a sign for his sisters that said, “NO [5] _____ allowed!” They got angry, pulling it down and [6] _____ it in half. Still, they [7] _____ away and didn’t come back. Ray didn’t mean to be nasty; he [8] _____ needed a quiet place to read.

Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.

You'll read about dragons in stories and longer works like novels. You'll watch dragons in cartoons, coming out of their homes to breathe fire. By the way, a dragon's home is usually called a lair. In movies, you'll see princes and warriors slicing off dragons' heads, but you'll hardly ever see one in real life. In fact, you'll never see one! That's because dragons don't really exist. They are merely make-believe. In ancient times, people believed in dragons, but none have ever been found.

Dragons aren't the only make-believe creatures around. Many other creatures besides dragons live only in legends and fairy tales. One good example is the mermaid. Mermaids are maidens of the sea. They are half-women and half-fish. A mermaid has a woman's head and body but a fish tail in place of legs. Mermaids are usually beautiful. There are many stories in which sailors chasing mermaids walk off their boats and drown in the sea.

One especially famous mermaid tale is "The Little Mermaid." In it, a mermaid gives up her life at sea. She goes to live on land with a prince. Many people have labored hard to find a real mermaid, but without any luck. Half-women, half-fish creatures simply don't exist.

Another famous make-believe creature is the unicorn. A unicorn is an animal that looks something like a horse. It is usually colored white and thought to be very beautiful. What makes a unicorn special is its horn. In stories, poems, and pictures, it always has a single long horn sticking out of its forehead. It often appears in paintings from the Middle Ages. Like the dragon, the unicorn was thought to be real by people of earlier times. However, no unicorn has ever strolled on Earth.

1. Underline the word that names texts that are shorter than novels. Then tell what novels are.
2. Underline the words that explain what a lair is.
3. Circle the words that tell what princes and warriors are slicing off. Then tell what slicing means.
4. Rewrite the sentence using the word merely, replacing merely with a synonym.
5. Underline the word that tells who are maidens of the sea. Then tell what maidens means.
6. Circle the words that tell what people have labored hard to do. Then write a sentence telling about something you labored to do.
7. Underline the words that tell how unicorns are described in poems. What do you like best about poems?
8. Circle the words that tell what has never strolled the earth. Then tell what strolled means.



Dragon, Dragon

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Summary A terrible dragon is frightening the people in a kingdom. The king offers a reward to whoever can kill the dragon. A poor cobbler's three sons have different ideas of how to fight the dragon. The father's advice to his sons becomes the key to success.



Writing About the Big Question

Is Conflict Always Bad? In "Dragon, Dragon," a king sets out to stop a dragon from terrorizing his kingdom. Complete this sentence:

To defend his or her home a person might _____.

Note-taking Guide

Use this chart to record what happens to each of the cobbler's sons.

	Does he follow his father's advice?	What happens to him?
Eldest son	No, he does not.	
Middle son		
Youngest son		

Dragon, Dragon

1. **Connect:** The elder sons ignore their father’s advice about how to kill the dragon. Why do they not believe what he says?

2. **Analyze:** The youngest son kills the dragon. Why is he more successful than his brothers?

3. **Reading Skill:** You **make an inference** when you make a guess based on details in the story. Use the chart below to list details that led you to make an inference about the youngest son. One example is provided. Give one more example.

Details	Inference
He listens to his father’s advice.	He trusts his father’s wisdom.

4. **Literary Analysis:** Writers use **direct characterization** to tell about a character. Give two examples of direct characterization from the story.

Writing: Help-Wanted Advertisement

Write a **help-wanted ad** for a dragon slayer. Answer the following questions to help you organize information for your ad.

- What would you give a dragon slayer in return for his or her services?

- What kind of on-the-job training might you provide?

- What information is usually at the top of an ad?

- What information needs to be in large or bold print?

Research and Technology: Compare-and-Contrast Chart

Fill out a **compare-and-contrast chart** for two dragon tales from different cultures. Label each circle with the culture you have chosen. In the overlapping parts of the circles, write characteristics of dragons that each culture shares. In the non-overlapping portions write what is different about dragons in each culture.

