

Lesson 8 Part 1: Introduction 

Determining the Central Message

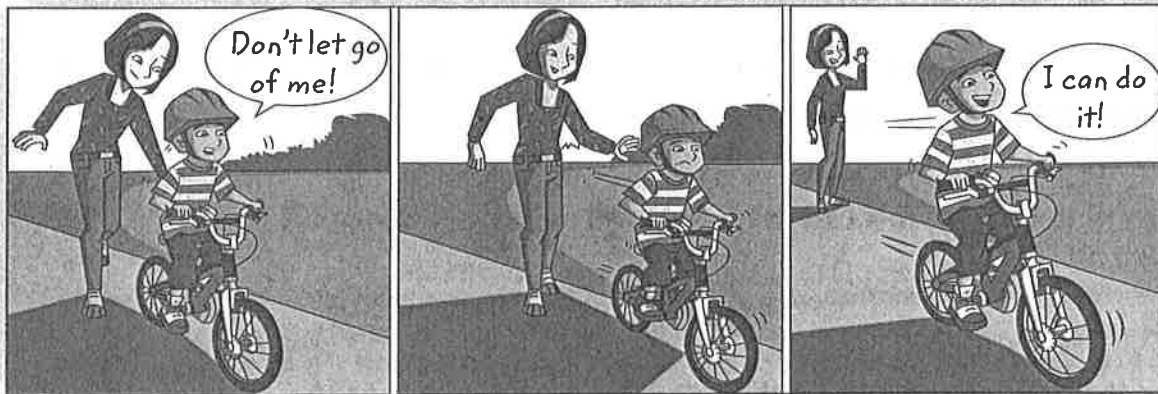
CCSS

RL.3.2: ... determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

Tales of Wisdom

Most stories have a **central message** the writer wants to share with readers. This “big idea” is often a **lesson** about life that the story teaches through the characters and the things that happen to them. Look for the **key details**, or the most important events, in a story to find the central message.

Look at the cartoon and circle the parts that show what lesson the boy learns.



Now look at the chart below to see how putting together key details from the cartoon can help you find the central message or lesson.

Key Detail in First Panel	Key Detail in Second Panel	Key Detail in Third Panel
The boy is worried about riding a bike by himself.	The girl lifts her hands off the bike while the boy is riding it.	The boy realizes he can ride a bike by himself.

Even though he is afraid at first, the boy learns that he can ride a bike by himself. Based on the key details in the cartoon, the central message is “Don’t be afraid to try new things.”

Good readers put the key details of a story together to figure out the central message or lesson about life the author wants to share.



Read the first part of a story about a girl picking apples. Then read and answer the question that follows.

Genre: Fable

The Girl and the Apples *by Tala Rutchel*

One fall afternoon, a girl went to a farm to pick apples. She was in a hurry so she picked carelessly, both ripe apples and unripe ones. When she finished, her wagon was filled with a small mountain of apples.

The girl asked the farmer, "Quick, tell me how long you think it will take me to get back home."

The farmer thought carefully. Then he said, "Be patient. If you go slow, you will be back soon. If you go fast, you will not get back until night. It's your choice."

The girl thought, "How can that be? How can it take so long if I go fast?"

(continued)

Based on the story so far, how do the key details hint at a lesson the girl might learn?

Look for key details about what the girl and the farmer say and do. Think about what their words and actions tell you about them and what might happen in the next part of the story.

Write in the chart below some key details about what the characters say and do.

What the Girl Says and Does	What the Farmer Says and Does
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> picks apples carelessly because she is in a <u>hurry</u> wonders how it can take so long if she <u>goes fast</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tells the girl to be patient tells the girl that if she goes <u>slowly</u>, she will be home soon, but if she <u>hurries</u>, it will take longer to get home tells the girl "It's your choice."

Fill in the blanks to write how the key details suggest a lesson the girl might learn.

The farmer tells the girl that going slowly will get her home sooner than going quickly, but that it is her choice. The key details suggest the girl will learn a lesson about making wise choices.