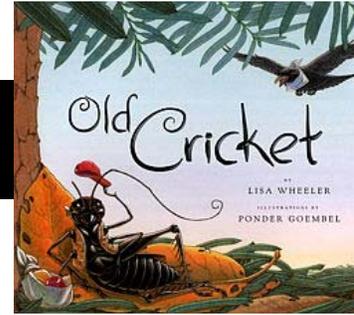


# Old Cricket



written by Lisa Wheeler ♦ illustrated by Ponder Goemmel

## Pre-reading

Group discussion questions:

How many of you have chores? What are they? Do you ever feel like not doing them? Why? Have you ever tried to get out of doing your job?

## Knowledge

Explain what you think this means; “You don’t get to be an OLD cricket by being a dumb bug.”  
Who are the characters in the story? Who do you think is the most important, why?

## Comprehension

Describe in your own words what happens in the story.

Give examples of where Old Cricket makes a decision in the story. Does it happen more than once?

## Application

Collect at least ten excuses you hear people use during the day.

Predict what Old Cricket will say when his wife asks him to take out the trash the next morning.

## Analyze

How would the story be different if written through the eyes of the wife? The crow?

Read *The Little Red Hen* and compare these two stories where people avoid work.

## Synthesize

- Imagine what each person would say to Old Cricket if they knew he was “faking it.”
- Do you think Old Cricket’s wife had any idea that he didn’t really have a creak in his knee? What makes you think so or not?

## Evaluation

Which illustration is your favorite? Why?

Do you think Old Cricket will ever fake out his friends again? Why or why not?

# Old Cricket

## **Verbal/ Linguistic:**

Write a story about one of the other characters from Old Cricket.

-or-

Write a series of haiku poems (5-7-5 syllables) about the scenes in the book.

## **Visual/ Spatial**

Ponder Goembel's illustrations are remarkably detailed. Choose a common item and really study it (even under a magnifier). Make a list of details you noticed you never had before. Then, create a piece of art (in any media you prefer) that incorporates what you discovered.

## **Body/Kinesthetic**

Pretend you are Old Cricket's personal trainer. What exercises might improve his poor overall health. Write a prescription including aerobic and weight-training exercises that you think will help him. Illustrations are optional. Then, create an exercise plan for yourself and stick with it!

## **Musical Rhythmic**

Divide the class into sections and assign each small group a sound: creak- creak-creak  
crick-crick-crick, crack-crack-crack and hic-hic-hic. Then, let the students either make the sounds with their voices, or provide some hand held instruments and have them experiment to create the sound with their tools (or other objects). Then, the teacher can act as composer and point to each section creating a musical ensemble of pain! Brave teachers can allow students to try, or create new whining sections to vary the composition.

## **The Little Cricket**

(Point to one finger at a time.)

The first little cricket played a violin.

The second little cricket joined right in.

The third little cricket made a crackly song.

The fourth little cricket helped him along.

The fifth little cricket cried, "Crick-crick-cree.

The orchestra is over and it's time for tea?

## **Interpersonal:**

Choose an animal from Old Cricket to learn more about. Then, in small groups create a poster or pamphlet about what you learned. Be sure to divide the work equally among group members. At the end of the project, team members will "grade" the members for how hard they worked and cooperated.

## **Intrapersonal:**

Everybody would like to bail sometimes on things they have to do. Instead, as a class, write a list of things you can tell yourself when you need to get things done. Make a poster or scroll and keep it up for a few weeks as a positive reminder. **For example:**

- Do what you don't want to do most, FIRST. Then, it is out of the way.
- Treat yourself to something when you get something difficult done.