

Character Interactions & Changes



TEKS 4.8(B) Explain the interactions of the characters and the changes they undergo.

Objective:

I can explain how characters interact with each other and describe the changes they undergo throughout a story.

The anchor strategy students will repeat all lesson:

Who changed? How? Why? (Identify which character changed → describe how they were different at the end compared to the beginning → explain what interaction or event caused the change.)

TEACHER NOTES

This lesson targets three specific misconceptions, named here so you can listen for them:

- 1. Retelling plot instead of describing change** — students summarize what happened ("she found the lost dog") instead of explaining how the character changed on the inside ("she went from being afraid to being brave"). Change is about feelings, attitudes, beliefs, or behavior — not just events.
- 2. Describing actions without feelings or motivations** — students say "he helped his sister" but cannot explain why or how the character felt. Interactions include what characters say, think, and feel about each other — not just what they physically do.
- 3. Not connecting interactions to changes** — students can describe how characters talk to each other and can list how a character is different at the end, but they cannot draw the line between the two. The interaction is the cause; the change is the effect.

The Character Change Tracker (next page) is the fix: it places "Beginning," "Key Interaction," and "Ending" in a visible left-to-right flow with arrows so students must name the cause (the interaction) between the before and after. It separates what happened (middle box) from how the character changed (first and last boxes), which breaks the habit of retelling plot as change.

Teacher language to keep repeating:

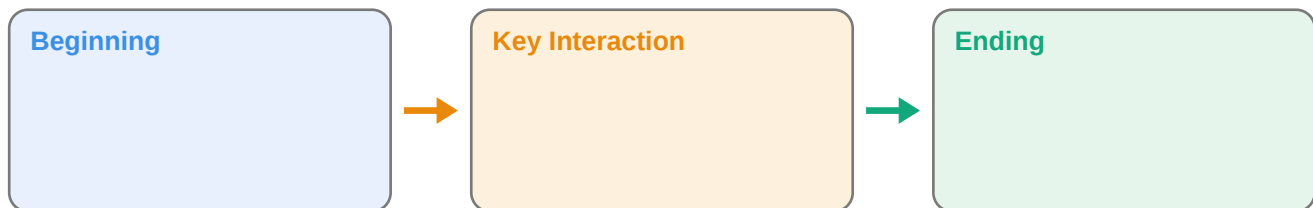
"That's what happened — but how did the character change on the inside?" • "How was the character different at the end than at the beginning?" • "What interaction caused that change?" • "Tell me about the character's feelings, not just their actions." • "Who changed? How? Why?"

Character Interactions & Changes



Graphic Organizer — Character Change Tracker

Track how a character changes from the beginning to the end of a story. The Beginning box describes who the character is at the start (feelings, attitudes, behavior). The Key Interaction box names the event or conversation that caused the change. The Ending box describes who the character has become.



Sentence stems for explaining change:

"At the beginning, [character] was... but by the end, [character] was..."

"[Character] changed because..."

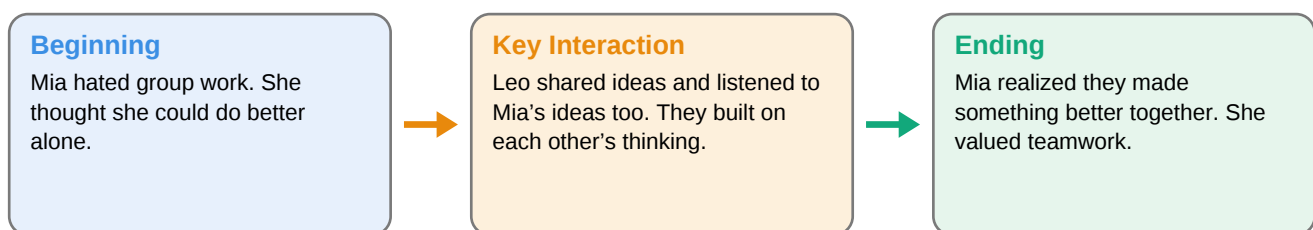
"The interaction between [character] and [character] caused..."

I DO (Modeled — teacher thinks aloud)

Read this short passage aloud:

Mia hated working in groups. She always thought she could do everything better by herself. When her teacher paired her with Leo for the science project, Mia rolled her eyes. But Leo had ideas Mia had never thought of. He listened to her ideas too and added to them. By the time they presented their project, Mia smiled and said, "We made something better together than I could have made alone."

Say: "Who changed? Mia. How? At the beginning, she hated group work and thought she was better alone. At the end, she realized they made something better together. Why? Her interaction with Leo — he shared good ideas and listened to hers. That interaction changed her attitude about teamwork."



← ***The change: her attitude about teamwork (not just what she did, but how she felt)***

Character Interactions & Changes

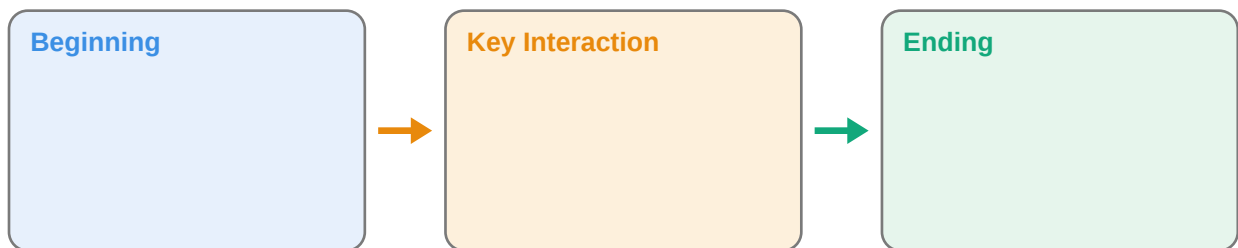


I DO

- 1 Read the passage. Then complete the organizer.

Mia hated working in groups. She always thought she could do everything better by herself. When her teacher paired her with Leo for the science project, Mia rolled her eyes. But Leo had ideas Mia had never thought of. He listened to her ideas too and added to them. By the time they presented their project, Mia smiled and said, "We made something better together than I could have made alone."

Character Change Tracker for: _____



- 2 Explain the change in complete sentences:

Who changed? _____

At the beginning, this character was... _____

The key interaction was... _____

By the end, this character... _____

This character changed because... _____

Character Interactions & Changes



WE DO (Guided — students prompt the steps)

Read the passage below together. Then work through the three prompts — each one targets a misconception. Have students tell you each move: "Who changed?... How?... Why?"

Guided passage — "The Spelling Bee":

Carlos slammed his spelling list on the table. His best friend Amara had won the class spelling bee three times in a row, and Carlos was tired of losing to her. He started avoiding her at lunch. One afternoon, Amara sat down next to him anyway. "I only win because my sister quizzes me every night," she said. "Want to practice together?" All week, they tested each other on the hardest words, laughing at their silly memory tricks. At the next bee, Carlos finished second — his best ever. When Amara won again, he was the first one clapping.

Prompt 1 — Retelling vs. change: Ask "What happened to Carlos?" Students will retell the plot (he practiced, he got second place). Then ask "But how is Carlos different now? How did his feelings about Amara change?" Push past the events to the internal shift: jealousy → genuine happiness for his friend. (Misconception 1)

Prompt 2 — Actions vs. feelings: When a student says "Amara helped Carlos practice," ask "Why did she sit next to him even though he was avoiding her? How did Carlos feel before and after? What does her choice tell us about their friendship?" (Misconception 2)

Prompt 3 — Connecting interaction to change: Fill in the tracker together. After students write the Beginning box (jealous, avoiding Amara) and the Ending box (clapping first when she wins), point to the middle box and ask "What happened between these two versions of Carlos? What conversation caused the change?" (Misconception 3)

Find the Error

Show students this sample response about "The Spelling Bee" and ask: "What is missing? How do we fix it?"

"Carlos practiced spelling words with Amara and then they went to the spelling bee and Carlos got second place."

What to listen for: this response is all actions and events — it never names how Carlos changed on the inside. A strong fix adds the internal change: "At the beginning, Carlos was jealous of Amara and avoided her. After they practiced together, he stopped seeing her as a rival and was happy for her when she won."

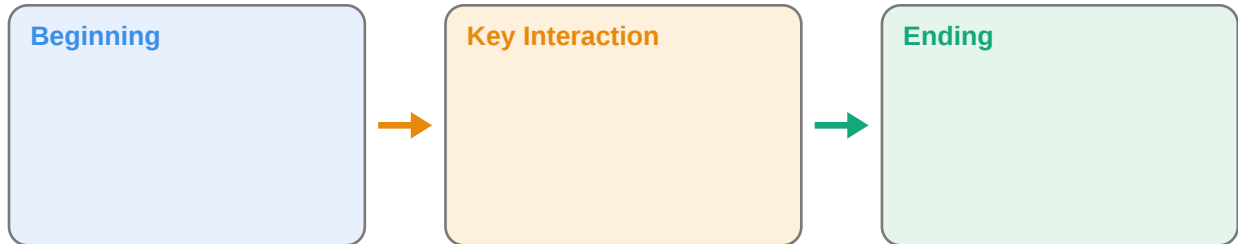
Exit Ticket: Assign the quick check from the teacher dashboard.

Character Interactions & Changes

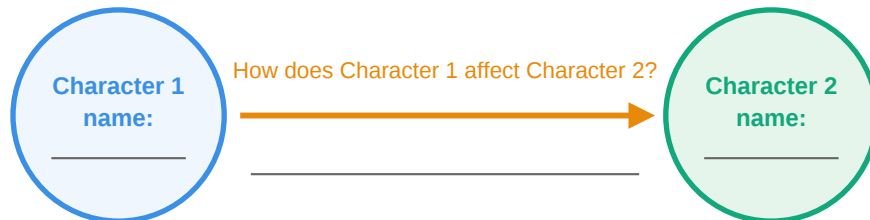
WE DO

- 1 Complete the Character Change Tracker for "The Spelling Bee":

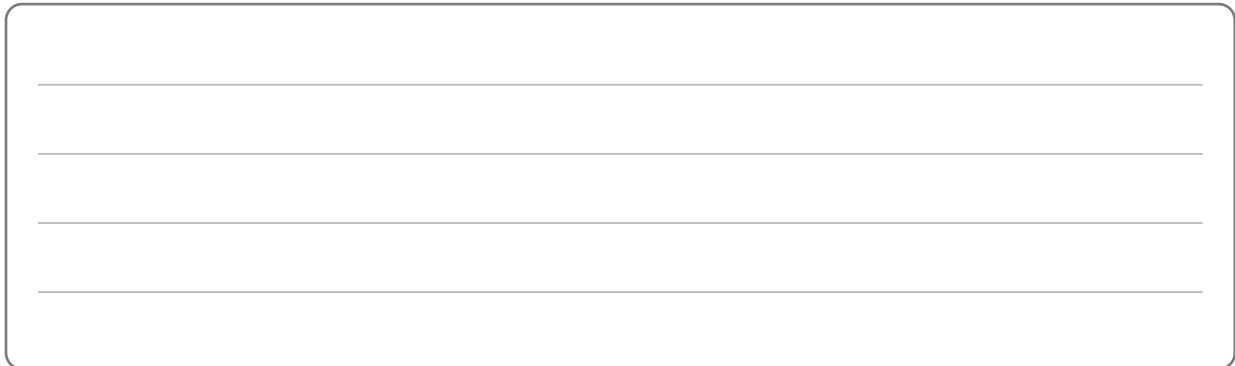
Character who changed: _____



- 2 Character Interaction Map — How do the characters affect each other?



- 3 Explain: How did the interaction change the character?



A large rectangular box with a thin black border, containing four horizontal lines for writing.

Character Interactions & Changes



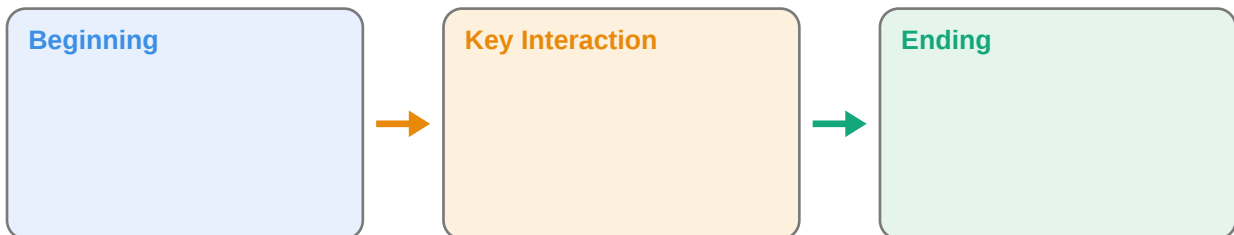
YOU DO (Independent)

Read "The Garden Fence" on your own. Then complete every part below.

Nora groaned when Grandpa handed her a tiny paper packet of seeds. She had wanted to plant a garden that looked like the pictures online — today. "Nothing worth growing happens fast," Grandpa said. Every evening, he showed her how to water the soil, pull the weeds, and wait. Nora complained at first, but she kept coming back. Weeks later, the first green sprouts pushed up in a crooked little row. Nora ran to get Grandpa. "They're small," she said proudly, "but we grew them." She asked if they could plant another row — even though she knew it would take just as long.

Character who changed: _____

1 Complete the Character Change Tracker:



2 Explain the change using the sentence starters:

At the beginning... The key interaction was... By the end... This character changed because...

3 Would Nora have changed without her interactions with Grandpa? Why or why not?

Character Interactions & Changes



ANSWER KEY (Teacher Reference)

Student wording will vary. Accept any response that names an internal change and links it to the interaction.

I DO — "Mia and Leo"

Beginning: Mia hated group work and believed she did everything better alone.

Key Interaction: Leo shared ideas Mia had never thought of and listened to her ideas too.

Ending: Mia valued teamwork — she said they made something better together.

The change: her attitude about working with others (internal), not the project itself (event).

WE DO — "The Spelling Bee"

Character who changed: Carlos.

Beginning: Carlos was jealous of Amara's wins and avoided her at lunch.

Key Interaction: Amara sat with him anyway, admitted her "secret" was practice, and offered to study together.

Ending: Carlos felt proud of his own progress and was genuinely happy for Amara — he clapped first when she won.

Interaction Map: Amara's kindness and honesty turned Carlos's jealousy into friendship; Carlos's effort gave Amara a true practice partner.

Find the Error fix: The sample only retells events. A corrected response names the internal change: jealousy → happiness for his friend, caused by practicing together.

YOU DO — "The Garden Fence"

Character who changed: Nora.

Beginning: Nora was impatient — she wanted a finished garden right away and groaned at the seeds.

Key Interaction: Grandpa taught her to water, weed, and wait every evening, telling her "nothing worth growing happens fast."

Ending: Nora was patient and proud of slow work — she asked to plant another row even knowing how long it would take.

Question 3: No — without Grandpa's daily lessons and his words about waiting, Nora would have stayed impatient. His interaction is the cause of her change.