



# 8th Grade Language Arts

Mrs. Kolo

Week of May 4-8

**Hello and welcome to May!** This week you will be reading a short story written in first person point of view from the perspective of a scooter rather than a person (weird, huh?). This story will show you how much information you can get about one character by listening to the observations of another character.

You will also spend some time thinking about personification and how it affects writing.

Please make sure to answer all of the questions thoroughly - no skimpy answers allowed. Also, please use a different color or different font if you type your answers onto the page, so I can easily locate them.



## The Red Scooter

Well, today I was manufactured by a family-owned company called *Cuter Scooter*. I know, it's not a very masculine name, but they did a good job, if I may say so myself.

They created an attractive looking, two-wheeled transportation for on and off the road. Although I am very tough, the manufacturer painted me pink. Don't ask me why. It turned out to be a good thing, though, because I was the only scooter available at the local motorcycle shop when Gary came in with his parents. He loved me immediately, but didn't care much for my color. His father suggested that he could paint me with his son as part of a father and son project. Along with the new paint job, Gary would learn the mechanical aspects and drivetrain of a motor scooter.

"This is the deal of the day," said the salesman when he saw the two looking me over. He noticed the desire in the eyes of the boy.

"Is this a tough motor scooter?" asked the father.

“Well,” said the salesman, “you cannot find a more reliable or better built scooter in the industry.”

As dad pondered the purchase, the salesman offered him a 25% discount due to my color, and the fact that not one person had considered buying me since my entrance into the showroom.

Dad paid in cash, and off we went to the garage behind the house to start the project.

Many hours of disassembling and preparation for painting went into this endeavor. Luckily, I don't have any nerve endings, or the sanding would have killed me. Soon, I was a deep red, and appeared fun and tough.

Gary started driving me everywhere. We went to the park, the baseball field, the school, and even the candy store. Eventually, his friends became quite jealous. They were upset because Gary was not spending much time with them. Also, they wanted a fine-looking scooter of their own. When the friends stopped by, Gary would show them how I got started, how to fuel me up, check my oil, and work my throttle and brakes. Although they enjoyed learning about me, it didn't keep their envy at bay.

They would go for bicycle rides following Gary and I, but it was becoming difficult to keep up with us. After a few months, they got tired of trying, and decided it was time to take me for a ride without Gary.

One Saturday, while Gary was at soccer practice, they had their chance. This plan was not very nice, and they let their jealous natures get the best of them.

They went into the unlocked garage, and grabbed me. They knew Gary kept the key in the top drawer of his tool box. One of his friends started me, opened the door, and away we went, with the two others following on bicycles.

They ran me as fast as I could go, trying to exceed my limitations in every way. Unfortunately, a tree got in our way when we were going top speed. My handlebars smacked right into the tree, and I flipped right over. Although Gary's friend wasn't hurt, I had some visible damage. The friends worked together to try and hide it. I had a large pink scrape, so they got a sticker from a local speed shop. The sticker advertised motor oil, and they stuck it to my frame to hide their crime.

When Gary got home, he noticed the strange sticker. When he ran into his friends, they explained that they thought he would like a sticker on his scooter. He didn't catch on.

Over the course of a few months, Gary's friends took turns taking me out without permission. I got tired of it, and decided to take action. Scratches began showing up all over my frame every time they took me out. Gary didn't notice.

I then decided that any time they took me out, I would stop running when they were far away, so they had to walk me back. Gary, of course, never caught them walking me back home.

Finally, I managed to fall down in the garage after they took me out for a ride. Gary never left me on the ground. The light bulb finally went on. Gary checked me over and found the damage. The gig was up.

One day Gary asked his friends if they were the ones using his scooter. He was shocked when they admitted to taking his scooter and misusing it.

Then, Gary had a thought. What if he made a trail on his property, and let his friends use it? This is a way to share his scooter, but also to make some money, which would cover maintenance along with a small profit.

He built the trail and invited his friends to use it for 10 cents a lap. He had a minimum of ten laps, so he would make one dollar a ride! Well, his friends loved it, and for the whole year, he enjoyed the profits and made enough money to buy a new scooter!

He bought a red one this time, which was for his use only. Now it was time for me to become jealous!

**Study Questions. IF YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE, PLEASE USE RED OR BLUE, NOT BLACK.**

1. Highlight the sentences from the passage that reveal the problem and the solution of this story. (Change the color of the text.) Explain them below.

2. Highlight two sentences from the passage that BEST reveal Gary's personality. (Change the color of the text.) Then, write down several adjectives to describe his character.

3. Highlight two sentences from the passage that BEST reveal the personalities of Gary's friends. (Change the color of the text.) Then, write down some inferences about the friends based on these sentences.

4. Provide an objective summary about the first time the friends took the scooter for a ride. An objective summary is one without personal opinion.

5. Compare and contrast the personality of Gary to his friends.

6. Highlight the two words that represent alliteration in this sentence from paragraph 6: "As dad pondered the purchase, the salesman offered him a 25% discount due to my color, and the fact that not one person had considered buying me since my entrance into the showroom." Then, explain what is

emphasized with the use of this alliteration.

7. Consider an informational article based on a scooter and its components. Then, consider the treatment of this topic with this narrative writing. Analyze how the differing structures of each of these texts contribute to their meaning and style. Explain your conclusions.

8. Think about the elements of plot in reference to this story: exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. Write a sentence to describe each element of plot from "The Red Scooter".

Exposition/Background:

Conflict:

Rising Action:

Climax:

Falling Action:

Resolution:

## Explain the Personification

**Personification** is a figurative element that attributes human thoughts, actions, characteristics or emotions to something that is not human.

**Example:** The sad clouds were ready to spill their tears upon the funeral procession.

**Explanation:** Clouds cannot be sad, nor do they have tears. This shows that the day was cloudy AND the mood was sad.

Directions: Identify and explain the meaning of the personification in the sentences below.

1) The feathers danced in the wind.

Explain:

2) The clock chimed an anxious warning at a quarter to midnight, alerting the children that the deadline had almost arrived.

Explain:

3) The flies buzzed with regret as the lion shook its head.

Explain:

4) The night was sullen and angry; it became darker with each step Maria took.

Explain:

### Part II. In Literature

Read the following passage from “O! Pioneers” by Willa Cather. Write three examples of the use of personification.

“We hadn’t any of us much to do with it, Carl. The land did it. It had its little joke. It pretended to be poor because nobody knew how to work it right; and then, all at once, it worked itself. It woke up out of its sleep and stretched itself, and it was so big, so rich, that we suddenly found we were rich, just from sitting still.”

1)

2)

3)