The Crow and the Pitcher
Based on a Fable by Aesop

What is the crow’s problem, and how does she solve it?

One hot day, a crow was feverish from thirst. She came upon a clay pitcher that had once been full of water. But now the pitcher was nearly empty. The parched crow tried to reach the water with her sharp beak, but the neck of the pitcher was too narrow. Again and again she tried, but the pitcher was too tall and the water too shallow for her beak to reach even one tiny drop.

Nearly desperate, the crow stopped to think. Soon an idea came—she could make the water rise! She grabbed a pebble and dropped it into the pitcher. Then she took another pebble and dropped it in. Then she let fall into the pitcher another pebble. One pebble at a time, the crow kept at her plan. Each pebble made the water level rise a bit. And each rise spurred the crow to continue.

At long last, the water level was high enough for the crow to satisfy her thirst. And so she lived to see another day.

**MORAL:** Little by little does the trick.
The Crow and the Pitcher

Answer each question. Give evidence from the fable.

1. If you feel *parched* (line 7), you would probably want ____________________.
   - A. something to eat
   - B. somewhere to sit
   - C. something to drink
   - D. someone to play with

How did you pick your answer? _______________________________________

2. Which part of the pitcher is the *neck* (line 9)?
   - A. its base
   - B. its height
   - C. its handle
   - D. its thinnest part

What in the text helped you answer? ______________________________________

3. Explain the crow’s problem. _______________________________________

4. How do the pebbles make the water rise? _____________________________

5. Explain the meaning of the moral in your own words. ____________________

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*The Crow and the Pitcher*

*Answers to the questions:*

1. C. something to drink
2. D. its thinnest part
3. [Explain the crow’s problem.]
4. [Explain how the pebbles make the water rise.]
5. [Explain the meaning of the moral in your own words.]
Focus  This retelling of an Aesop fable lets readers explore a problem-and-solution structure and challenges them to understand its moral.

Teaching Tips

Before Reading
- Review the features of a typical fable, including animal characters, simple language, brevity, a problem and its solution, and a moral.

During Reading
- Tell readers to pause after each paragraph to write a one-sentence summary of it.

After Reading
- Invite students to investigate the scientific concept of displacement that forms the basis of this story. Pour a small amount of water in a clear bottle with a narrow neck. Then have students drop in pebbles one by one and observe what happens to the water level.

Common Core Connections
RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RL.3.5, RL.3.7, RL.3.10 • RF.3.3, RF.3.4 • W.3.10 • L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.4, L.3.5, L.3.6

Answers

Passage 6: The Crow and the Pitcher

1. C; Sample answer: I read that the crow was feverish from thirst (lines 1–2).
2. D; Sample answer: It says the crow couldn't reach the water because the neck was too narrow (lines 7–10). So, I looked at the picture and saw the place on the pitcher that was too small for the crow's beak to fit in.
3. Sample answer: The crow is very thirsty and finds some water, but she can't reach the water (lines 7–15).
4. Sample answer: The heavy pebbles fall to the bottom and take up space, and lift the water up (lines 18–24).
5. Sample answer: Sometimes the way to solve a big problem is to take small steps. That's what the crow did (lines 17–24).