

Lesson in Literature

Point of View

Beyond the Mountains

1. The story is told through a narrator.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Anthony and the narrator may be the same person. If they are not, Anthony has shared his thoughts with the narrator and it is clear that the narrator's point of view is the same as Anthony's.

Lesson in Literature ...

BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS

POINT OF VIEW

- A story's point of view depends on who is telling the story.
- Sometimes a story is told from the narrator's point of view.
- Most nonfiction works are written from the narrator's point of view.
- In works of fiction, a story may be told from a character's point of view.

THINK ABOUT IT!

1. Is this story told only through a narrator, or is dialogue used to reveal some of the plot?
2. In the second paragraph, we learn how Anthony felt about his host family. Write two sentences to describe Anthony's visit from the point of view of the host family.
3. In your opinion, do the narrator and Anthony have the same point of view? Explain your answer.



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Vocabulary

- battered** (BAT erd) *adj.*: damaged by rough and careless treatment
- passion** (PASH un) *n.*: an enthusiasm for something
- realign** (REE uh LYN) *v.*: to return to their proper position
- tooling** (TOOL ing) *v.*: driving or riding in a vehicle
- semicircular** (SEM ee SUR kyuh lur) *adj.*: shaped like half of a circle
- pirouettes** (PEER oo ETS) *n.*: a dance step in which the dancer whirls about on one foot
- interchangeable** (IN tur CHAYNGE uh bul) *adj.*: two things that can be used in place of one another
- proposal** (pruh PO zul) *n.*: a suggested plan
- gingerly** (JIN jur lee) *adv.*: with great care
- inspired** (in SPY ehrd) *v.*: filled with a sense of purpose

Justin Lebo
VOCABULARY
Activity I

*battered inspired passion proposal semicircular
gingerly interchangeable pirouettes realigned tooling*

1. John Hanson, in his _____ (damaged by rough treatment) old hat, wrinkled suit, and scuffed shoes did not look like he would be a very interesting teacher.
2. On the first day of our astronomy class, he turned towards the blackboard and _____ (with great care) pulled down a white screen.
3. Once the lights were out, and the slide show had begun, the quiet, shy man began to speak with excitement and _____ (an enthusiasm for something).
4. On the screen was a picture of the sky in mid-summer. All across the top was the curved, _____ (shaped like half of a circle) Milky Way, looking like an arch, or bridge across the sky.
5. "Just look at those moons circling Jupiter!" he exclaimed. "Why, they look like they're doing _____ (a dance step in which the dancer twists about on one foot) right around that planet!"
6. "And look at that shooting star, just _____ (diving or riding in a vehicle) across space!"
7. "Now what about that Pluto? Don't you think it's out of line and needs to be _____ (to return to the proper position) with the planet next to it?"
8. Mr. Hanson then turned on the lights. "I have a _____ (a suggested plan) for you."
9. "I would like our class to build a model of the solar system with parts that are removable and _____ (two things that can be used in place of one another) so that we can keep moving the stars and planets around in our classroom as they move around in the sky throughout the school year."
10. As the year went by, that man in the old hat and wrinkled suit so _____ (filled with a sense of purpose) our class that many of us went on to become scientists, and I, myself, became an astronomer.

78 Unit Three: Hóul, Hóulés, Hóart - (Textbook p. 268)

Workbook

Justin Lebo
VOCABULARY
Activity II

Name _____

Who? What? Where? When?
Why? And How?

1. Where would you wear your **battered** hat?
a. to a family picnic and baseball game
b. to an elegant wedding reception
2. What are you more likely to have a **passion** for?
a. calcium with vitamin D in pill form
b. chocolate ice cream with whipped cream
3. What, on your family's car, might need to be **realigned**?
a. the paint job
b. the wheels
4. Who might you see **tooling** around?
a. a little boy on a bike
b. a handyman repairing your roof
5. Why would one want a **semicircular driveway**?
a. so that a driver does not need to back out
b. so that the surface will never need fixing
6. Who can be seen doing **pirouettes**?
a. a musician
b. a dancer
7. How can you tell if two parts are **interchangeable**?
a. if the instructions tell you they are
b. if the instructions warn you not to use one part in place of another
8. Where would one hear a **proposal**?
a. on a radio station that plays old favorites
b. in a meeting of people looking for a new idea for their business
9. What would you handle **gingerly**?
a. a football
b. a rattlesnake
10. Why might you feel **inspired**?
a. because you just heard a good speech
b. because you just caught the flu

79 Unit Three: Hóul, Hóulés, Hóart - (Textbook p. 268)

Workbook

Anthony didn't know what to expect when his airplane landed in Managua, Nicaragua. He had lived his whole life in the United States, and this trip was the first time he had ever set foot in a foreign country. He was nervous. All he knew about Nicaragua was that it was a Central American country between Honduras and Costa Rica and the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. Would he understand the people? Would the people understand him? How could he possibly understand anything about a poor country in Central America?

The first thing Anthony observed was the beauty of Nicaragua. As his group of college students traveled in the capital city of Managua, he noticed the magnificent mountains surrounding the city. In the city he saw big houses where wealthy people lived, but he also saw many shacks on the outskirts of the city where poor people lived. He saw something else, too. The Nicaraguan people, rich and poor, were just like the people he knew at home in the United States. The family that hosted him for two nights during his stay in Managua seemed a lot like his own family back home.

When Anthony and his group traveled into the country, a poor farming family hosted them for two nights. In the country Anthony met families that lived together in very small houses. He met hardworking parents, mostly mothers, who cooked, worked in the fields, and took care of their

children. He met children who worked alongside their mothers and who loved to play games with visitors. Despite their circumstances, Anthony understood that these poor people were like anybody he might meet in his hometown in the United States. Although they spoke Spanish and didn't own as many possessions as most Americans, the people he met were full of love and life. He began to feel a strong attachment to the people of Nicaragua.

Anthony, though, was most impressed by something else he saw in Nicaragua. When his group visited an orphanage for handicapped children, he was surprised by the large number of children who lived there. When he realized that they had no homes and no families, he was even more surprised by their friendliness, joy, and excitement when visitors arrived. Anthony didn't think he would ever forget the little girl who took him by the hand to show him around the orphanage.

On his way to the airport, just before he left Nicaragua, Anthony caught another glimpse of the mountains. At the beginning of his trip, he thought his lasting memory of Nicaragua would be the beauty of those mountains, but at the end of his trip he knew differently. His lasting memory of Nicaragua would be the beauty of its people. He would never forget their kindness, friendliness, and hospitality. *Someday*, he thought, *I'll come back to Nicaragua. Someday, I'll come back.*

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Getting Started

Read aloud through page 272 until the words, "Maybe he could do more..."

- How old was Justin Lebo?
 - seventeen
 - ten**
 - fourteen
 - twelve and a half
- What was Justin's hobby?
 - ice hockey
 - stamp collecting
 - photography
 - bike racing**
- Where did Justin buy his old bikes?
 - at garage sales**
 - through advertisements
 - at city hall auctions for lost and abandoned bikes
 - at major bike shop sales

Unit Theme: *Head, Hands, Heart*

Target Skill: *Recognize and identify point of view. Who is telling the story?*

Genre: *Nonfiction Article*

- Which sentence best describes the Lebo garage?
 - It looked like a dinosaur's home.
 - There were tools of almost every kind.
 - It looked like a bike shop.**
 - The old rocking chair and scrap of carpet made it cozy.
- What did Justin do when he got really stuck on repairs?
 - He went to Mel at the bike shop.**
 - He asked his older brother for help.
 - He put the bicycle aside and went to work on the next one.
 - He looked for a solution in his many books about bikes.
- What did Justin call the old bikes that he bought at garage sales?
 - oldies
 - stale wheels
 - race gems
 - junkers**
- What was the name of the place that Justin called about donating bikes?
 - Home Away from Home
 - Kilbarchan Home for Boys**
 - Boys' Town of America
 - Annie Oakley Home for Boys
- How did Justin know about this place?
 - A classmate lived at the home.
 - He once saw it advertised on the bus.
 - He used to live near the home.**
 - He just picked it out of the phone book.
- What happened when Justin and his mother went back to the car after delivering the first two bikes?
 - They realized that they were low on gas.
 - The boys tried to return the bikes.**
 - They decided to go for pizza after all that hard work.
 - They watched the boys carry the bikes into the building.
- How did Justin feel after he gave away the bicycles?
 - happy and satisfied**
 - tired and proud
 - angry and frustrated
 - responsible and smart

Into . . . Justin Lebo

People tend to believe that material possessions will bring them happiness. Although this is true up to a point, it is a truism that as wealth increases the “happiness returns” diminish. John B. Rockefeller (1839–1937), a well-known millionaire, once said, “I have made many millions but they have brought me little happiness.” Multi-millionaire Andrew Carnegie is quoted as saying, “Millionaires rarely smile.” Whether wealth brings happiness and, if it does, how much, is a popular subject of discussion, especially among the less-than-wealthy.

What almost everyone *will* agree on is that giving of oneself will ultimately bring the giver a deep-felt satisfaction. Everyone has the ability to give something to someone somewhere at some time. Having successfully made some contribution, people tend to cultivate the giving habit, a testimony to the pleasure that comes with giving. Performing a selfless act does not require risking one’s life. It is simply doing something kind without thought to personal gain. Having extra money is not a prerequisite to helping people. There are many opportunities to help others with one’s talents, abilities, and resources. (See *Studying the Selection*, #7.) Ask your students to think of opportunities for helping in various ways. Use Justin Lebo as a starting point. Children can do wonders by singing to the elderly or helping a small child on the school bus. Those who are studious and organized can provide a reminder board or tutoring for upcoming tests. Students who have a good sense of humor can help cheer up those who are ill. Anyone with artistic skills can send get-well cards to others, and so on. Some students may suggest major projects, but that is not the goal of this discussion. Explain that taking a few extra minutes to say “Good morning” to a homebound neighbor or “hello” to a new student—especially a lonely or less popular one—is the kind of daily giving we are aiming for.

Eyes On Point of View

Point of view is fun to explain. Make up two or three situations, humorous or serious, and encourage your students to describe them from various points of view. A simple example: a snowstorm. Ask one student to be a mail carrier; one to be a ten-year-old; one to be a bride whose wedding is scheduled for the day of the snowstorm; one to be a principal; and one to be the owner of a snowplow. Tell each to describe the snowstorm from his or her point of view. As you can see, the possibilities are endless!

Tell your students that most stories are told by a narrator with an apparently objective or neutral point of view. But that is not always the case; a narrator can be biased. Again, you can play a game with them having various narrators telling the same story from

Blueprint for Reading

INTO . . . Justin Lebo

What does it mean to be *selfless*? The suffix *-less* means “without,” or “not having.” *Careless* means without care. *Hopeless* means without hope. *Selfless* means without self, without thinking of *yourself*. When you are *selfless*, you put someone or something before yourself. The *someone* may be a friend, a parent, or anyone who needs your help. The *something* may be an organization that needs your support. But being *selfless* does not mean that you give everything and get nothing. As you read, see if you can understand what Justin gained from being *selfless* and giving.



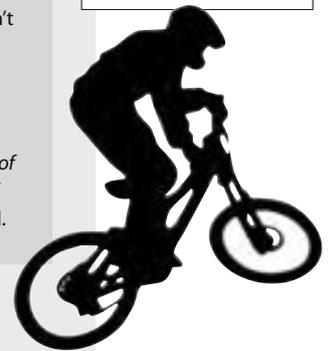
Point of View

A birthday party was held at the home of four-year-old Brian Melton. When his father came home, Brian ran to the door and said, “Daddy! You missed all the fun! A bottle of red soda exploded when we opened it and got all over everything! The kids said it was the best party ever!” When Mr. Melton walked into the kitchen, Mrs. Melton said, “Jim, this was the worst birthday party I have ever given! A bottle of red soda exploded and ruined my carpet.” As Mrs. Melton was sighing, Brian’s older sister, Joannie, walked in looking bored. “Mom, I don’t know how you put up with those little kids. All they do is eat and run around.” Mr. Melton wrinkled his brow. He couldn’t figure it out. It sounded as though there had been three different parties in his house: an exciting one, a terrible one, and a boring one! Which one was it?

The answer is, of course, that the party was all three—exciting, terrible, and boring—depending on your **point of view**. Your *point of view* is the way you look at a situation. As you read *Justin Lebo*, see if you can identify the point of view from which the story is being told.

WORD BANK

battered (BAT erd) *adj.*: damaged by rough and careless treatment
passion (PASH un) *n.*: an enthusiasm for something



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varying points of view. Finally, explain that in some stories the words, thoughts, or actions of characters help tell the story. Those words, thoughts, or actions give the reader a second point of view.

JUSTIN LEBO

PHILLIP HOOSE

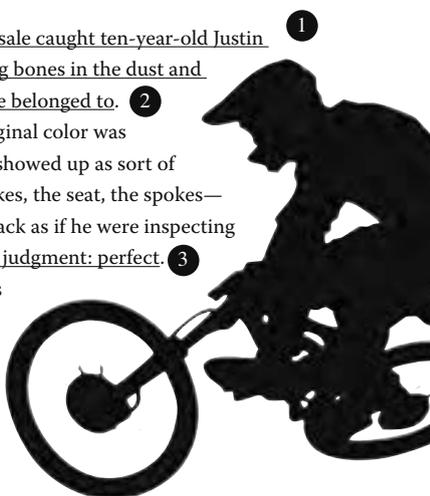


Something about the battered old bicycle at the garage sale caught ten-year-old Justin Lebo's eye. What a wreck! It was like looking at a few big bones in the dust and trying to figure out what kind of dinosaur they had once belonged to.

It was a BMX bike with a twenty-inch frame. Its original color was buried beneath five or six coats of gunky paint. Now it showed up as sort of a rusted red. Everything—the grips, the pedals, the brakes, the seat, the spokes—were bent or broken, twisted and rusted. Justin stood back as if he were inspecting a painting for sale at an auction. Then he made his final judgment: perfect.

Justin talked the owner down to \$6.50 and asked his mother, Diane, to help him load the bike into the back of their car.

When he got it home he wheeled the junker into the garage and showed it proudly to his father. "Will you help me fix it up?" he asked. Justin's hobby was bike racing, a passion the two of them shared. Their



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Selection Summary

Justin Lebo is a ten-year-old boy who lives in Patterson, New Jersey. As the story opens, Justin is at a garage sale, trying to talk the owner of a battered, bent, and broken bike into selling it to him for \$6.50. What will Justin do with it? He and his father will spend many happy hours restoring the bike. After they restore two such bikes, they decide to donate them to the children of Kilbarchan Home for Boys. The bikes are vastly appreciated by the boys—and a hobby is born. Justin resolves to restore a used bike for every boy in the home before the year is out. He has six months to make nineteen bikes.

Justin becomes a one-boy foundation. He asks his parents to provide matching funds for his own donations. He drafts his mother to drive him to garage sales and thrift shops. He works for hours taking apart old bikes and putting the useable parts together to make new bikes. Time is running out and he has completed only ten bikes. Justin gets a break when a neighbor writes a letter to a local newspaper describing Justin's project. The paper does a story on Justin and "overnight," everything changes. Bikes and money begin to flow in. Bike-building help materializes in the form of Mel, the bike shop owner. Justin beats his deadline, bringing joy to the boys in the home and inspiration to all who hear of his project.

Justin does not stop when his project is complete. He takes on new challenges, volunteering to make bikes for a series of groups and causes. Making other people happy makes him happy. And, in his words, "that's why I do it."

Guiding the Reading

Literal

Q: How old was Justin Lebo?

A: He was ten years old.

Q: What caught Justin's eye at the garage sale?

A: He saw a battered old bicycle.

Q: What kind of bike was it?

A: It was a BMX with a twenty-inch frame. Buried beneath several layers of paint, the original color was red. Almost every part of the bike was bent or broken.

Q: What did Justin ask his father when he arrived home with the old bike?

A: He asked his father to help him fix it.

Q: What hobby did Justin and his Dad share?

A: They had a passion for bike racing.

Analytical

Q: What is a junker?

A: It is something that is essentially junk, ready to be thrown out, but can be used for parts or perhaps even rebuilt.

Q: Was \$6.50 the original price at the garage sale?

A: No. Justin "talked the owner down," which means he convinced him to lower the price.

Literary Components

1 Setting; Characterization: From the opening line, we learn that the setting is somewhere in the United States in modern times. Justin Lebo appears to be an ordinary ten-year-old who likes old bikes.

2 Simile: This is a wonderful example of a simile. Point out the phrase "it was like," as the indicator for a simile.

3 Rising Action; Narrative Voice: The reader becomes curious about why Justin finds battered bikes "perfect," and wants to read on. An unseen narrator will tell the story.

4 Characterization: Justin's parents seem to be good people and we see how well he gets along with both of them.

Literary Components

5 Narrative Voice; Background: The narrator interrupts the action to catch us up on the background to the story.

6 Characterization: Justin is someone who continuously strives to outdo himself. He is independent and likes to handle problems himself, if possible.

7 Minor Theme: Justin's excellent relationship with his parents is a backdrop to the action.

5 garage barely had room for the car anymore. It was more like a bike shop. Tires and frames hung from hooks on the ceiling, and bike wrenches dangled from the walls.

After every race, Justin and his father would adjust the brakes and realign the wheels of his two racing bikes. This was a lot of

6 work, since Justin raced flat out, challenging every gear and part to perform to its fullest. He had learned to handle almost every repair his father could and maybe even a few things he couldn't. When Justin got really stuck, he went to see Mel, the owner of the best bike shop in town. Mel let him hang out and watch, and he even grunted a few syllables of advice from between the spokes of a wheel now and then.

7 Now Justin and his father cleared out a work space in the garage and put the old junker up on a rack. They poured alcohol on the frame and rubbed until the old paint began to yield, layer by layer. They replaced the broken pedal, tightened down a new seat, and restored the grips. In about a week, it looked brand new.

Justin wheeled it out of the garage, leapt aboard, and started off around the block. He stood up and mashed down on the pedals, straining for speed.

It was a good, steady ride, but not much of a thrill compared to his racers.

WORD BANK

realign (REE uh LYN) v.: to return to their proper position



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Guiding the Reading

Literal

Q: Why didn't the garage have room for the car?

A: There were bikes, bike parts, and tools all over the place.

Q: What would they do after each race?

A: They would adjust the brakes and realign the wheels of their two racing bikes.

Q: What did Justin know about fixing bikes?

A: He had learned just about everything his father knew and maybe even a few things that he did not.

Q: Who was Mel?

A: He was the owner of the best bike shop in town who let Justin hang around and watch him work. Mel helped Justin when he was not able to fix something himself and would sometimes give Justin advice.

Q: What did Justin and his father use to strip away some of the paint layers?

A: They rubbed the bike with alcohol.

Q: What else did they fix on the bike?

A: They replaced the broken pedal, put on a new seat, and restored the grips.

Q: How long did it take to repair the old junker?

A: It took about a week.

Literary Components

8 Theme: Although a more “spiritual” theme will emerge, the theme of fixing what is broken, making the useless into something useful, starts in a very tangible, material way. Choosing to rejuvenate old bikes, rather than viewing them as junk to be thrown out, is one of Justin’s characteristics.

Soon he forgot about the bike. But the very next week, he bought another junker at a yard sale and fixed it up, too. After a while it bothered him that he wasn’t really using either bike. Then he realized that what he loved about the old bikes wasn’t riding them: it was the challenge of making something new and useful out of something old and broken.

Justin wondered what he should do with them. They were just taking up space in the garage. He remembered that when he was younger, he used to live near a large brick building called the Kilbarchan Home for Boys. It was a place for boys whose parents couldn’t care for them for one reason or another.

He found “Kilbarchan” in the phone book and called the director, who said the boys would be thrilled to get two bicycles. The next day when Justin and his mother unloaded the bikes at the home, two boys raced out to greet them. They leapt aboard the bikes and started tooling around the semicircular driveway, doing wheelies and pirouettes, laughing and shouting.



WORD BANK

tooling (TOOL ing) *v.*: driving or riding in a vehicle
semicircular (SEM ee SUR kyuh lur) *adj.*: shaped like half of a circle
pirouettes (PEER oo ETS) *n.*: a dance step in which the dancer whirls about on one foot

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Guiding the Reading

Literal

Q: What did Justin do with the bike when he was done with the repairs?

A: He took one ride and then forgot about it.

Q: What did he do the following week?

A: He bought another junker bike at a yard sale.

Q: What started to bother Justin?

A: He was not using the bikes that he bought at sales.

Q: What challenge did he enjoy?

A: He liked making something new out of something old and broken.

Q: What was Kilbarchan?

A: It was a home for boys whose parents could not care for them for one reason or another.

Q: Why did Justin call the director of the home?

A: He offered them two refurbished bicycles.

Q: What happened when Justin and his mother arrived at Kilbarchan?

A: Two boys raced out to greet them. They started riding the bikes and having fun right away.

Literary Components

9 Voice: In the middle of the narrative, the narrator inserts lines spoken by Justin. The lines are in quotation marks, so the reader recognizes that these words were actually spoken by Justin. This is a nonfiction piece, so the lines are “real.”

10 Internal Dialogue: The narrator now shifts to internal dialogue, telling us what Justin is thinking.

11 Characterization: This author views determination and exceptional behavior as a virtue. Justin is trying to excel at helping others. Point out that in *The Perfect/Imperfect Book Report*, Cricket was trying to excel for purely selfish reasons.

12 External Conflict: The struggle here will be against time. Justin will race to finish the bikes while the weeks fly by.

Guiding the Reading

Literal

Q: What happened when the Lebos got back in the car to go home?

A: The boys told them that they’d forgotten their bikes.

Q: How did Justin feel after he gave away the bikes?

A: It made him feel good to see others so happy.

Q: What did Mrs. Lebo think when Justin was quiet on the way home?

A: She assumed that he was thinking about the satisfying feeling that comes along with helping someone.

Q: What was Justin really thinking?

A: He was wondering what would happen once the rest of the boys saw the bikes. He was afraid the bikes would cause more problems than they solved. Then he began to think of what else he could do to help.

Q: What idea did Justin share with his mother?

A: He wanted to fix up enough bikes for every boy in Kilbarchan.

Q: What was Mrs. Lebo’s response to Justin’s idea?

A: She did not say anything, she only looked at him. She noticed that he was extremely determined.

Q: How many boys in total were at Kilbarchan?

A: There were twenty-one.

Q: How many more bikes did Justin need to repair?

A: He would need to repair nineteen more.



The Lebos watched them for a while, then started to climb into their car to go home. The boys cried after them, “Wait a minute! You forgot your bikes!” Justin explained that the bikes were for them to keep. “They were so happy.” Justin remembers. It was like they couldn’t believe it. It made me feel good just to see them happy.”

On the way home, Justin was silent. His mother assumed he was lost in a feeling of satisfaction. But he was thinking about what would happen once those bikes got wheeled inside and everyone saw them. How would all those kids decide who got the bikes? Two bikes could cause more trouble than they would solve. Actually, they hadn’t been that hard to build. It was fun. Maybe he could do more...

“Mom,” Justin said as they turned onto their street, “I’ve got an idea. I’m going to make a bike for every boy at Kilbarchan for the holidays.” Diane Lebo looked at Justin out of the corner of her eye. She had rarely seen him so determined.

When they got home, Justin called Kilbarchan to find out how many boys lived there. There were twenty-one. It was already June. He had six months to make nineteen bikes. That was almost a bike a week. Justin called the home back to tell them of his plan. “I could tell they didn’t think I could do it,” Justin remembers. “I knew I could.”

Justin knew his best chance was to build bikes almost the way GM or Ford builds cars: in an assembly line.¹ He would start with frames from three-speed, twenty-four-inch BMX bicycles. They were common bikes, and all the parts were interchangeable. If he could find enough decent frames, he could take parts off broken bikes and fasten them onto the good frames. He figured it would take three or four junkers to produce enough parts to make one good bike. That meant sixty to eighty bikes. Where would he get them?

1. In an *assembly line*, a product is manufactured piece by piece. As each part of the product is made, it is passed to the next worker, who adds the next piece to it, and so on, until the entire product is completed.

WORD BANK

interchangeable (IN tur CHAYNGE uh bul) *adj.*: two things that can be used in place of one another
proposal (pruh PO zul) *n.*: a suggested plan
gingerly (JIN jur lee) *adv.*: with great care

Q: How long would it take him to fix the nineteen bikes?

A: It was June and he set a goal of six months for himself—he wanted each boy to have a bike by the end of the year. He would have to produce about one bike a week.

Q: What did he tell the adults at Kilbarchan?

A: He told them of the plan that he had.

Q: What lesson did Justin learn from car companies like GM and Ford?

A: He learned to work on his project using an assembly line.

Q: What bike did he want to use for each one?

A: He would use three-speed, twenty-four inch BMX bicycles.

Q: Why did Justin use this bike in particular?

A: They were common and the parts were easily interchangeable.

Q: How many bikes did Justin think he would need to have one useable bike?

A: He would need three or four junkers.

Q: About how many bikes would he need in total?

A: He would need between sixty and eighty bikes.

Literary Components

13 Theme: Helping those less fortunate than you is one of the story's themes. Justin will work hard, sacrifice time, effort, and money to help others. He will have strong support from his parents, friends, and the community at large. *Shared values* are another theme. Justin, his parents, and all those who help him have shared values. When many share the same values, much can be achieved.

14 Turning Point: We will see that one external conflict—Justin's determination versus the lack of money to pay for the bikes—is won by Justin.

Garage sales seemed to be the only hope. It was June, and there would be garage sales all summer long. But even if he could find that many bikes, how could he ever pay for them? That was hundreds of dollars.

He went to his parents with a proposal. "When Justin was younger, say five or six," says his mother, "he used to give some of his allowance away to help others in need. His father and I would donate a dollar for every dollar Justin donated. So he asked us if it could be like the old days, if we'd match every dollar he put into buying old bikes. We said yes."

Justin and his mother spent most of June and July hunting for cheap bikes at garage sales and thrift shops. They would haul the bikes home, and Justin would start stripping them down in the yard.

But by the beginning of August, he had managed to make only ten bikes. Summer vacation was almost over, and school and homework would soon cut into his time. Garage sales would dry up when it got colder, and Justin was out of money. Still, he was determined to find a way.

At the end of August, Justin got a break. A neighbor wrote a letter to the local newspaper describing Justin's project, and an editor thought it would make a good story. One day a reporter entered the Lebo garage. Stepping gingerly through the tires and frames that covered the floor, she found a boy with cut fingers and dirty nails,



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Guiding the Reading

Literal

Q: What was Justin's greatest concern?

A: Even if he managed to find enough bikes at garage sales over the summer, how would he pay for all of them?

Q: What did Justin's parents agree to do in order to help?

A: They would contribute a dollar for every dollar he spent.

Q: Where did he get that idea?

A: When he was as young as five or six, he often gave away part of his allowance. At that time, his parents donated a dollar for every dollar that Justin donated.

Q: What did Justin and his mother do for most of June and July?

A: They went to many garage sales and thrift shops to find cheap bikes.

Q: How many bikes had Justin repaired by the beginning of August?

A: He'd managed to finish ten bicycles.

Q: What problems did Justin face in August?

A: Since summer vacation would be over soon, school and homework would not leave much time to work on bikes. Also, there would not be many garage sales with the approach of fall. Most of all, Justin did not have any more money to spend for bike purchases.

Q: Was Justin going to give up because of the many obstacles that stood in his way?

A: No, he was determined to find a way to make things work.

Q: How did the reporter find out about Justin and his project?

A: A neighbor wrote a letter to a local newspaper and one of the editors thought it would make a good story.

Literary Components

15 Voice; Characterization: Again, the author inserts real quotes into the narrative. We see that what we had guessed about Justin is true: he hates the lime-light and self-aggrandizement. He is the ideal person who helps for the sake of helping and seeks neither credit nor praise.

banging a seat onto a frame. His clothes were covered with grease. In her admiring article about a boy who was devoting his summer to help kids he didn't even know, she said Justin needed bikes and money, and she printed his home phone number.

Overnight, everything changed. "There must have been a hundred calls," Justin says. "People would call me up and ask me to come over and pick up their old bike. Or I'd be working in the garage, and a station wagon would pull up. The driver would leave a couple of bikes by the curb. It just snowballed."

By the start of school, the garage was overflowing with BMX frames. Pyramids of pedals and seats rose in the corners. Soon bike parts filled a toolshed in the backyard and then spilled out into the small yard itself, wearing away the lawn.

More and more writers and radio reporters called for interviews. Each time he told his story, Justin asked for bikes and money. "The first few interviews were fun," Justin says, "but it reached a point where I really didn't like doing them." The

15



274 Unit 3

Guiding the Reading

Literal

Q: How does the author describe the reporter's first look at Justin Lebo?

A: He was a boy with cut fingers and dirty nails. His clothes were covered in grease.

Q: What information did she include in her article?

A: Justin was a boy who devoted his summer to helping kids he did not know. He was in need of bikes and funds. She printed the phone number where people could reach him.

Q: How did the newspaper article affect Justin's project?

A: He received about one hundred calls and people were constantly donating old bicycles for him to use.

Q: By the time school started, what did the Lebo garage look like?

A: It was overflowing with bikes and their parts.

Q: Was the first reporter the only one who took interest in Justin's project?

A: No, he received many interview requests from writers and radio reporters.

Q: What did Justin ask for each time he shared his story with a reporter?

A: He asked for more bikes and money to continue his project.

Q: Did Justin enjoy giving interviews?

A: No, he did not.

Analytical

Q: What did Justin mean when he said, "It just snowballed"?

A: Just as a snowball grows bigger as it rolls down a hill, so too, his bike business grew and gained momentum.

Literary Components

16 Theme: The only thanks Justin wants is to see the joy of the Kilbarchan boys when they get the bikes.

publicity was necessary, though. I had to keep doing interviews to get the donations I needed.”

By the time school opened, he was working on ten bikes at a time. There were so many calls now that he was beginning to refuse offers that weren't the exact bikes he needed.

As checks came pouring in, Justin's money problems disappeared. He set up a bank account and began to make bulk orders of common parts from Mel's bike shop. Mel seemed delighted to see him. Sometimes, if Justin brought a bike by the shop, Mel would help him fix it. When Justin tried to talk him into a lower price for big orders, Mel smiled and gave in. He respected another good businessman. They became friends.

The week before the holidays Justin delivered the last of the twenty-one bikes to Kilbarchan. Once again, the boys poured out of the home and leapt aboard the bikes, tearing around the snow.

And once again, their joy inspired Justin. They reminded him how important bikes were to him. Wheels meant freedom. He

WORD BANK

inspired (in SPY ehrd) *v.*:
filled with a sense of purpose

16



Justin Lebo 275

Guiding the Reading

Literal

Q: If he did not like the interviews, why did he agree to them?

A: He needed the publicity in order to get the necessary materials and funding.

Q: At what point did Justin refuse the offers?

A: By the time school started, he was busy working on ten bikes at a time. If a caller did not have the exact bike or parts that he needed, he declined the offer.

Q: What did Justin do once he received a large amount of money?

A: He set up a bank account.

Q: How did the relationship between Justin and Mel change throughout this project?

A: They became friends.

Q: Did Justin reach his goal of delivering a bike for every boy in Kilbarchan before the end of the year?

A: Yes.

Analytical

Q: How do you know that Justin was a good businessman?

A: He was responsible about the money, he made wise decisions such as ordering in bulk, and he negotiated prices with Mel. He also seemed to have a good work ethic.

Literary Components

17 Theme: Helping others brings great happiness to the helper.

18 Voice; Theme: In Justin's own voice we see a small part of another theme that is not fully developed in the story. It is the theme of independence, which a bike—and a book—represent to Justin.

thought how much more the freedom to ride must mean to boys like these who had so little freedom in their lives. He decided to keep on building.

"First I made eleven bikes for the children in a foster home my mother told me about. Then I made bikes for all the women in a homeless shelter. Then I made ten little bikes and tricycles for the kids in a home for sick children. Then I made twenty-three bikes for the Paterson Housing Coalition."

In the four years since he started, Justin Lebo has made between 150 and 200 bikes and given them all away. He has been careful to leave time for his homework, his friends, his coin collection, his new interest in marine biology, and of course his own bikes.

Reporters and interviewers have asked Justin Lebo the same question over and over: "Why do you do it?" The question seems to make him uncomfortable. It's as if they want him to say what a great person he is. Their stories always make him seem perfect, which he knows he isn't. "Sure it's nice of me to make the bikes," he says, "because I don't have to. But I want to. In part, I do it for myself. I don't think you can ever really do anything to help anybody else if it doesn't make you happy."

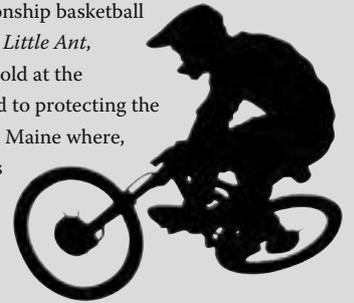
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18

"Once I overheard a kid who got one of my bikes say, 'A bike is like a book; it opens up a whole new world.' That's how I feel, too. It made me happy to know that kid felt that way. That's why I do it."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Phillip Hoose writes books, essays, stories, and articles. He has written on a wide variety of subjects, including stories about endangered species, a perfect World Series game, and a championship basketball team. He wrote one of his most popular books, *Hey, Little Ant*, with his daughter Hannah, who was only nine years old at the time. Mr. Hoose works for an organization dedicated to protecting the habitats of endangered species. He lives in Portland, Maine where, in addition to writing books, he writes and performs his own songs.



276 Unit 3

Guiding the Reading

Literal

Q: What was Justin feeling and thinking after he gave away all the bicycles he had worked so hard to repair?

A: The joy felt by the boys inspired Justin. He thought about how much the freedom to ride meant to boys who had so little freedom in their lives.

Q: What did Justin Lebo do after his project for the Kilbarchan Home was complete?

A: He decided to continue building new bikes to give to others.

Q: Name some of the organizations that benefited from Justin's kindness.

A: He made bikes for children in a foster home, women in a shelter, seriously ill children, and for the Paterson Housing Coalition.

Q: How many bicycles did Justin make and give away during the four years since he started?

A: He gave away between 150 and 200 bikes.

Q: What were some of Justin's other interests?

A: Justin had a coin collection and a new interest in marine biology.

Q: What question was Justin asked most by reporters?

A: "Why do you do it?"

Q: What answer did Justin usually give?

A: "I don't think you can ever really do anything to help anybody else if it doesn't make you happy."

Q: How did one of the boys who got a bike describe the feeling of owning a bike?

A: "A bike is like a book; it opens up a whole new world."

Analytical

Q: In brief, what is the answer to the question, "Why do you do it?"

A: It makes others happy and that makes Justin happy.

Q: Why did it make Justin Lebo feel uncomfortable when people asked him why he put so much effort into his bike project?

A: He was sincere about helping others and making them happy. He did not wish to be in the spotlight or appear to be someone great. He agreed that it was a nice thing for him to do but he does it partially to make himself happy.



Justin Lebo 277

About *Holding Up the Sky*

Poetry Shares Big Ideas

This poem is thought-provoking. It tells the fable of a hummingbird who lies on his back with his feet in the air to keep the sky from falling. When an elephant taunts him for thinking one tiny hummingbird can hold up the sky, the hummingbird answers:

“Not alone. But each must do what he can.
And this is what I can do.”

Your more literal-minded students may find the fable’s message a bit hard to digest. Why should the hummingbird be admired for believing something ridiculous, or for wasting his energy on an impossible job? He might be better off burrowing into the earth to find a secure hiding place. As for the elephant’s question,

“Do you really think ...
that those tiny feet could help hold up the sky?”

The comedians in your class may provide the hummingbird with the obvious repartee,
“Well it hasn’t fallen yet, has it?”

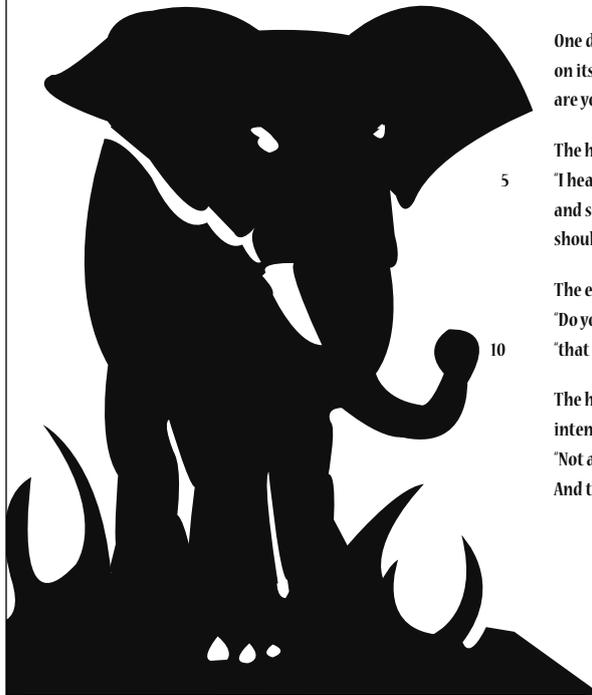
However, once we accept the fable’s premise (that the sky is going to fall in, or that it is all right for the hummingbird to think it will), the message is clear. The hummingbird is heroic because he is willing to give heart and soul to save the world. The same idea was taken very seriously, indeed, when phrased by Tennyson,

“Ours is not to reason why,
Ours is but to do and die”

The theme of the poem is that every creature has something to contribute, and that even if the contribution seems miniscule, the spirit driving the contribution is gigantic. The power of the spirit combined with the many and varied efforts of all creatures to “save the world” will bring success.

HOLDING UP THE SKY

A TALE FROM CHINA



One day an elephant saw a hummingbird lying on its back with its tiny feet up in the air. “What are you doing?” asked the elephant.

5 The hummingbird replied,
“I heard that the sky might fall today,
and so I am ready to help hold it up,
should it fall.”

10 The elephant laughed cruelly.
“Do you really think,” he said,
“that those tiny feet could help hold up the sky?”

The hummingbird kept his feet up in the air,
intent on his purpose, as he replied,
“Not alone. But each must do what he can.
And this is what I can do.”

Poetry shares big ideas

Studying the Selection

QUICK REVIEW

1. What did Justin look for at garage sales?
2. What did Justin do with the junkers he brought home?
3. How did Justin collect enough bicycles and money for this project?
4. To whom did Justin donate twenty-one bikes?

FOCUS

5. Why was freedom an important concept in this story?
6. Write at least two sentences describing some event in the story from the point of view of one of the following individuals: Mel, Mom, or the director of the Kilbarchan Home for Boys.

CREATING AND WRITING

7. Everyone has their own unique combination of talents. Write about how you can contribute to individuals and groups in your community. You may write about your past involvement in a project or an idea you have for the future.
8. Write about a group of students who raise money to help needy children attend summer camp. Include details about the campaign. Describe the feelings about the project from the point of view of the students and of the needy children.
9. Think of a creative way to make a model bicycle. You can use any material such as pipe cleaners or aluminum foil. Speak to your teacher about which materials you would like to use. When your model is complete, write a meaningful slogan on it, such as, "Giving is a cycle."

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Who gained more from the bicycle project—Justin or the boys?

Justin Lebo 279

First Impressions

Answers will vary. The likely answer will be that they both benefited.

Quick Review

1. Justin looked for old bikes, especially BMXs.
2. He fixed them and sometimes asked his father or Mel, the owner of the bike shop, for assistance with the repairs.
3. At first, he was having difficulty getting the help he needed. His parents contributed money on top of what Justin himself had given to the project. Once the reporters publicized what Justin was doing, the contributions were overwhelming.
4. Justin gave the bikes to the children in the Kilbarchan Home for Boys.

Focus

5. Justin understood that the bikes allowed the boys at Kilbarchan to have a sense of freedom and independence. This was especially important, since they had very little freedom in other aspects of their lives. Justin's own freedom allowed him to make decisions and to spend his time and money helping others.
6. Answers will vary.

Creating and Writing

7. Answers will vary. If the students have difficulty getting started, provide a few examples, such as playing an instrument for patients in the hospital or lending something that you already have.
8. Answers will vary.
9. Responses will vary. Bring in a variety of materials for your students. You may plan a day for planning and then bring the materials to class or allow your students to work on the project at home. The sayings will vary. Accept any slogan that demonstrates an understanding of the assignment.