

# DETERMINING THE LESSON

**2.R.1.A.d. Develop and demonstrate reading skills in response to text by retelling a story's beginning, middle, and end and determining its central message, lesson, or moral.**

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<b>INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR LESSONS 1–3</b>	Detailed walkthroughs of each lesson.
<b>STUDENT HANDOUTS FOR LESSONS 1–3</b>	Reproducible handouts students will use to complete activities during the lessons.
<b>PASSAGE</b>	A story designed to support the skills students practice in the lessons. You may use the provided text or select your own. (Follow all copyright restrictions and guidelines as they pertain to material you select for classroom use from any other source.)
<b>STUDENT FEEDBACK GUIDE</b>	A feedback tool for students to complete following the lesson set.

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# DETERMINING A STORY'S LESSON

## TEACHER NOTES

2.R.1.A.d, Lessons 1–3

### UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit focuses on determining a lesson in a fable or folktale. Students identify the important characters and events in the story, and then use these details to determine what lessons the characters learn. Students show their understanding in a variety of ways, including drawing and discussion.

**Lesson 1:** In this lesson, students review the characteristics of a fable or folktale, discuss what a lesson is, and summarize the unit's story. Then students describe the characters and identify a character that needs to learn a lesson.

**Lesson 2:** In this lesson, students identify which events are most important in the fable or folktale and identify an event that causes a character to learn a lesson. Students also describe the lesson the event teaches the character.

**Lesson 3:** In this lesson, students connect the text to a lesson they have learned. First, students brainstorm words or phrases that represent a lesson learned in the story. Then they describe how their own lesson is similar to a lesson a character learns in the fable or folktale.

Research Findings	Lesson Strategies, Approaches, or Activities
<p>“Talking, writing, and drawing help readers reflect about what they’ve read and share their insights with others.”</p> <p>(Barton &amp; Sawyer, 2003)</p>	<p>Throughout the unit, students share their ideas with the class, write descriptions, and draw their interpretations of the text.</p>
<p>“Thinking strategies interact with readers’ prior knowledge to develop complex understandings of the ideas in the text.”</p> <p>(Barton &amp; Sawyer, 2003)</p>	<p>In the lessons, students develop their understanding of the text by connecting the lessons they have learned to what the characters in the story learn.</p>
<p>“A visual display helps readers understand, organize, and remember.”</p> <p>(Duke &amp; Pearson, 2008)</p>	<p>In Lessons 1 and 2 students use drawings to represent the details of the story and to organize those details into their own interpretations. In Lesson 3, students use a drawing to make a personal connection with the story.</p>

<p>“By the time children enter school, they tell stories, compare and contrast objects, order events in a temporal sequence, and attribute causality. But children have not had sufficient experience to be able to use these structures with ease.”</p> <p>(Williams, 2005)</p>	<p>The lessons give students repeated practice with interpreting a narrative text. They also use small group discussions to strengthen student understanding.</p>
<p>“With adequate instruction, children at the elementary level might also be taught to go beyond the plot level to the lesson or theme of the story.”</p> <p>(Williams, 2005)</p>	<p>The activities’ repetition of reading comprehension skills, such as drawing and discussion, helps students determine the lesson of the story.</p>

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# DETERMINING A STORY'S LESSON

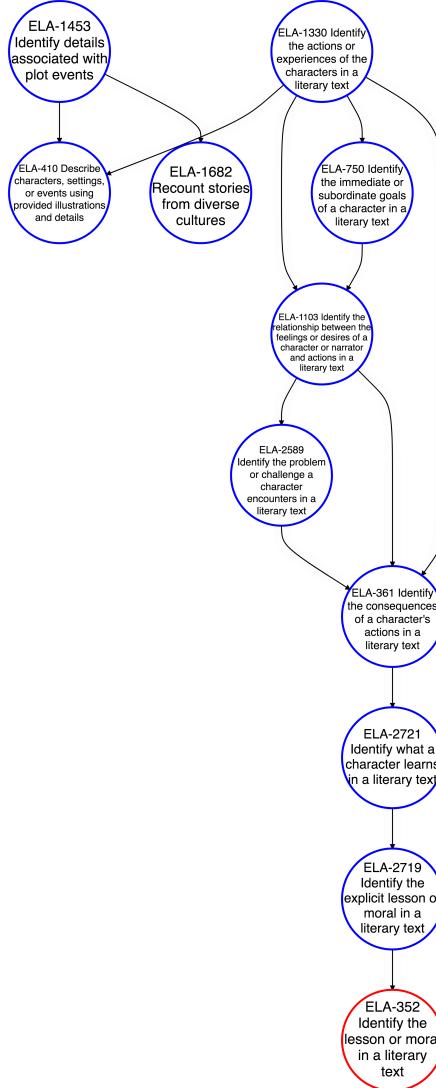
## LEARNING MAP TOOL

2.R.1.A.d

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### STANDARD

**2.R.1.A.d** Develop and demonstrate reading skills in response to text by retelling a story's beginning, middle, and end and determining its central message, lesson, or moral.



\*Learning map model for 2.R.1.A.d

<b>Node ID</b>	<b>Node Name</b>	<b>Node Description</b>
ELA-352	IDENTIFY THE LESSON OR MORAL IN A LITERARY TEXT	Identify a lesson, moral, or central message which can be generalized from a literary text using what was learned by a character in it.
ELA-361	IDENTIFY THE CONSEQUENCES OF A CHARACTER'S ACTIONS IN A STORY	Identify the consequences resulting from the specific actions of a character in a story.
ELA-410	DESCRIBE CHARACTERS, SETTING, OR EVENTS USING PROVIDED ILLUSTRATIONS AND DETAILS	Describe the characters, setting, or events based on illustrations and details provided in a story.
ELA-750	IDENTIFY THE IMMEDIATE OR SUBORDINATE GOALS OF A CHARACTER IN A LITERARY TEXT	Identify the immediate or subordinate goals of a character in a literary text. This skill contributes to the ability to identify the character's main goal in the story (E.g. Ariel wants to search for human stuff is the immediate goal, while wanting to be human is the overall goal.).
ELA-1103	IDENTIFY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FEELINGS OR DESIRES OF A CHARACTER OR NARRATOR AND ACTIONS IN A STORY	Identify how a narrator's or character's actions make him or her feel, or identify how the narrator's or character's desires or feelings lead to a specific action.
ELA-1330	IDENTIFY THE ACTIONS OR EXPERIENCES OF THE CHARACTERS IN A STORY	Identify the actions, experiences, or behavior of characters in a story.
ELA-1453	IDENTIFY DETAILS ASSOCIATED WITH STORY EVENTS	Identify the details related to specific events in a story. This skill requires making a conceptual connection between a detail and an event.
ELA-1682	RECOUNT STORIES FROM DIVERSE CULTURES	Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures.
ELA-2589	IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE A CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS IN A STORY	Identify what hinders or prevents the character from reaching his or her goal in a story.
ELA-2719	IDENTIFY THE EXPLICIT LESSON OR MORAL IN A STORY	Identify an explicit lesson, moral, or central message that can be generalized from a story.
ELA-2721	IDENTIFY WHAT A CHARACTER LEARNS IN A STORY	Identify what a character learns as a consequence of actions in a story.

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# CHARACTERS IN FABLES AND FOLKTALES

## INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

2.R.1.A.d, Lesson 1

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### LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students describe characters' positive and negative qualities and identify a character who needs to learn a lesson.

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### STANDARD

**2.R.1.A.d** Develop and demonstrate reading skills in response to text by retelling a story's beginning, middle, and end and determining its central message, lesson, or moral.

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### PREPARATION

Before the lesson, select a fable or folktale from another culture. The story should have a clear moral or lesson learned by a character. This unit includes a fable, [THE LLAMA AND THE MULE](#), which you are free to copy. For a storybook format, print the passage front and back and staple down the side. Follow all copyright restrictions and guidelines as they pertain to material you select for classroom use from any other source.

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### MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▶ teacher copy of [PASSAGE: THE LLAMA AND THE MULE](#)
  - ▶ whiteboard or chart paper
  - ▶ [STUDENT HANDOUT: THE CHARACTER](#)
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### IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: "I can describe the good and bad qualities of characters and find a character who needs to learn a lesson."

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**Ask** students to describe a fable or folktale and to give examples of any they know. **Review** the characteristics of a fable or folktale:

- ▶ is passed down to the younger generation by the older generation
- ▶ has special beginnings like “Once upon a time . . .” or “Once there was . . .”
- ▶ often has talking animals as characters
- ▶ uses repeated words or phrases
- ▶ teaches a lesson or moral

**Ask** students to describe a *lesson*. Then ask students to share a lesson they have learned. **Record** responses on a piece of chart paper or on the board. **Tell** the class: “As we read the story, we will pay attention to repeated words or phrases from the story and how those connect with the characters to give us clues about the lesson of the story.”

**Read** the story to the class. Then **ask** students to tell a partner what happens in the story. **Call** on students to share their summaries with the class.

**Read** the story again. **Tell** students that repeated words or phrases sometimes give us clues about the lesson of the story. **Ask** students to recall words or phrases that are repeated in the story. **Write** these words and phrases on chart paper.

**Make** a T-chart and write *Good* on one side and *Bad* on the other. **Ask** students which character is good in the story and to list the qualities of that character? **Add** students’ descriptions to the chart. Go through the same process with a character in the story that exhibits “bad” qualities.

**Connect** the repeated words or phrases from the story with the good or bad characters. (For example, does the repeated word *cheerful* go with the llama or the mule? Why?) **Lead** the class in a discussion about how repeated words or phrases connect with the qualities of the good and bad characters to provide clues about what lesson the character has to learn.

**Pass out STUDENT HANDOUT: THE CHARACTER.** **Instruct** students to identify a character in the story who needs to learn a lesson and to draw a picture of that character. While students work, **circulate** and ask the Checking for Understanding questions.

## CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Determine if the student can **IDENTIFY THE ACTIONS OR EXPERIENCES OF THE CHARACTERS IN A STORY (ELA-1330):**

- ▶ What does the character experience in the story?

Determine if the student can **IDENTIFY THE IMMEDIATE OR SUBORDINATE GOALS OF A CHARACTER IN A LITERARY TEXT (ELA-750):**

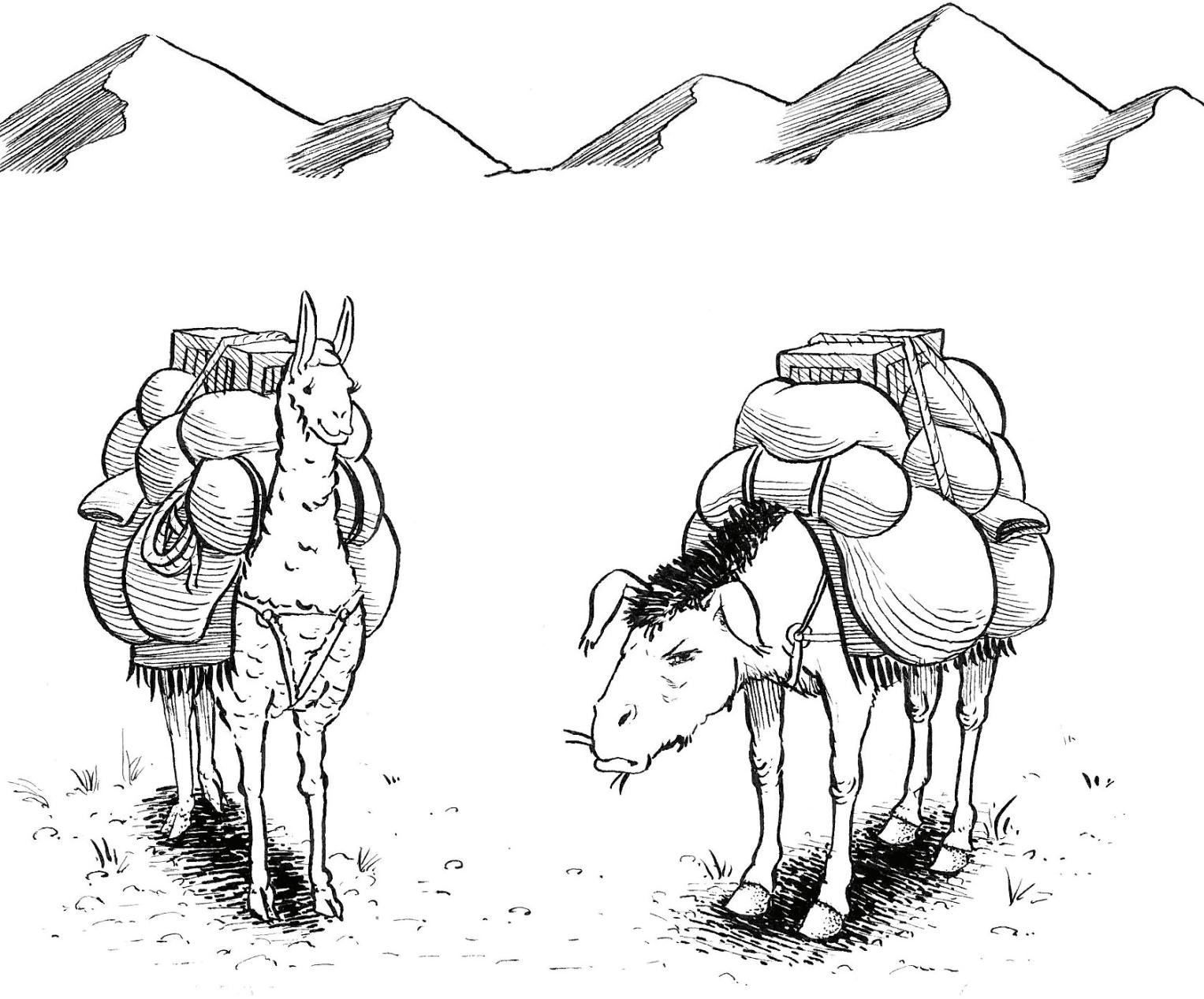
- ▶ What does the character want to do?
- ▶ Why does the character want to do this?

Determine if the student can **IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE A CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS IN A STORY (ELA-2589):**

- ▶ What lesson does the character need to learn?
- ▶ What event in the story teaches the lesson to the character?

Once students have finished drawing their pictures of characters, **ask** them to describe their pictures to a partner and then **ask** for volunteers to share with the class.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the [TEACHER NOTES](#) for this lesson set.



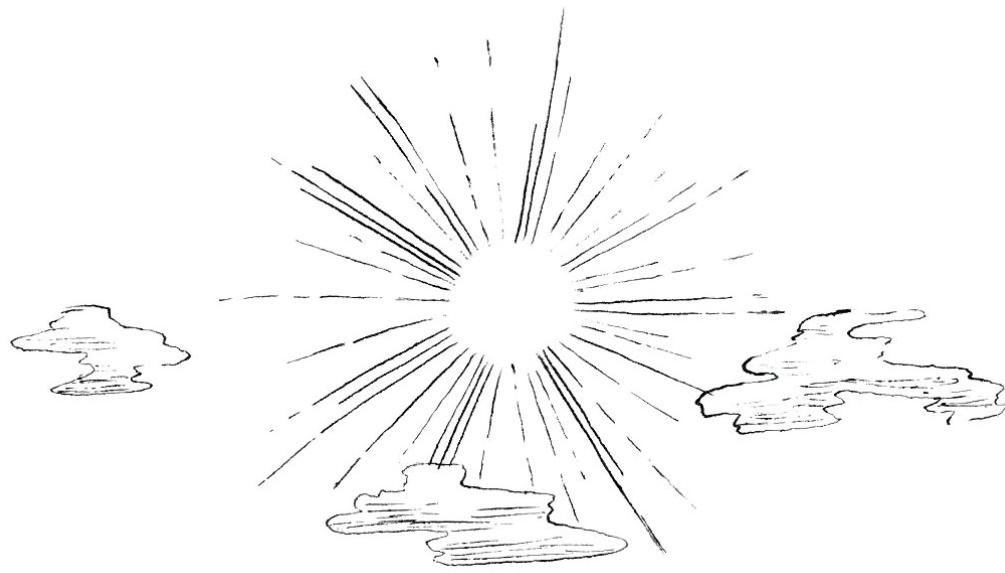
# The Llama and the Mule

**A story based on an Aesop fable**

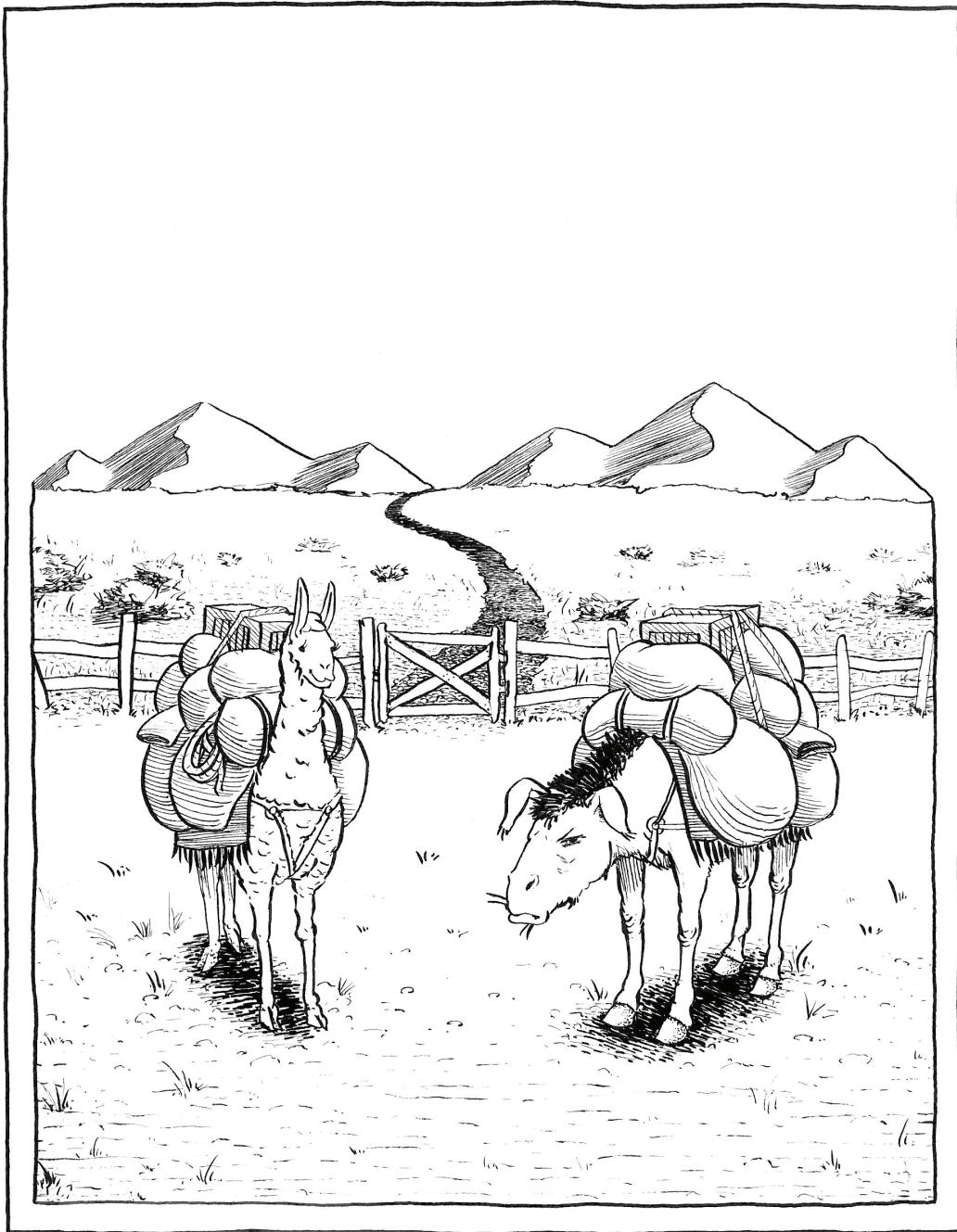
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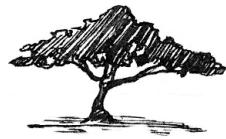
by Pat Trattles

illustrated by Trevor Eagleman



Early one morning, Mule and Llama set off on a trip to the market. Mule carried half of a merchant's goods on his back, grumbling all the while. Llama cheerfully carried the other half. The journey was a long one. They would need to cross a hot desert, climb a steep mountain, and go through a wide valley before reaching the market.





Mule, who had traveled this way before, kept his head low as he plodded along the dusty path. Llama skipped along, stopping every few steps to look around.

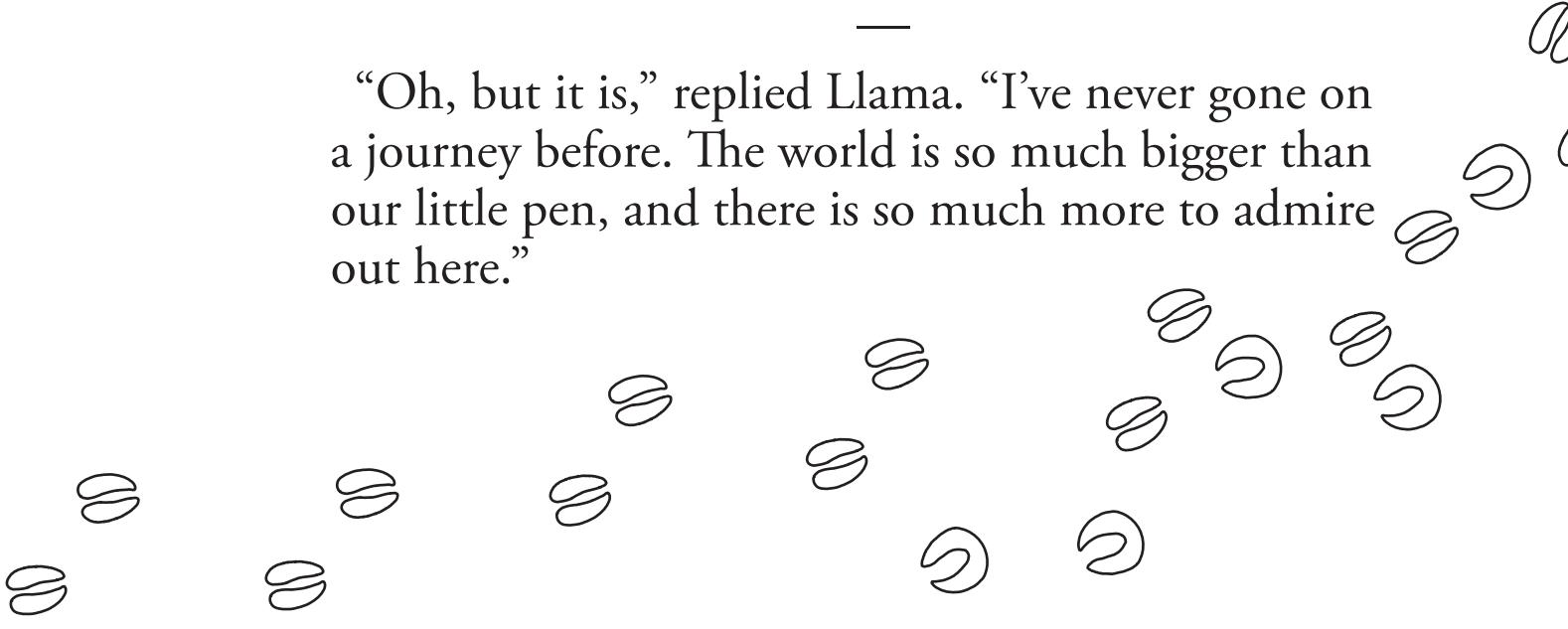
Mule shook his head at Llama.

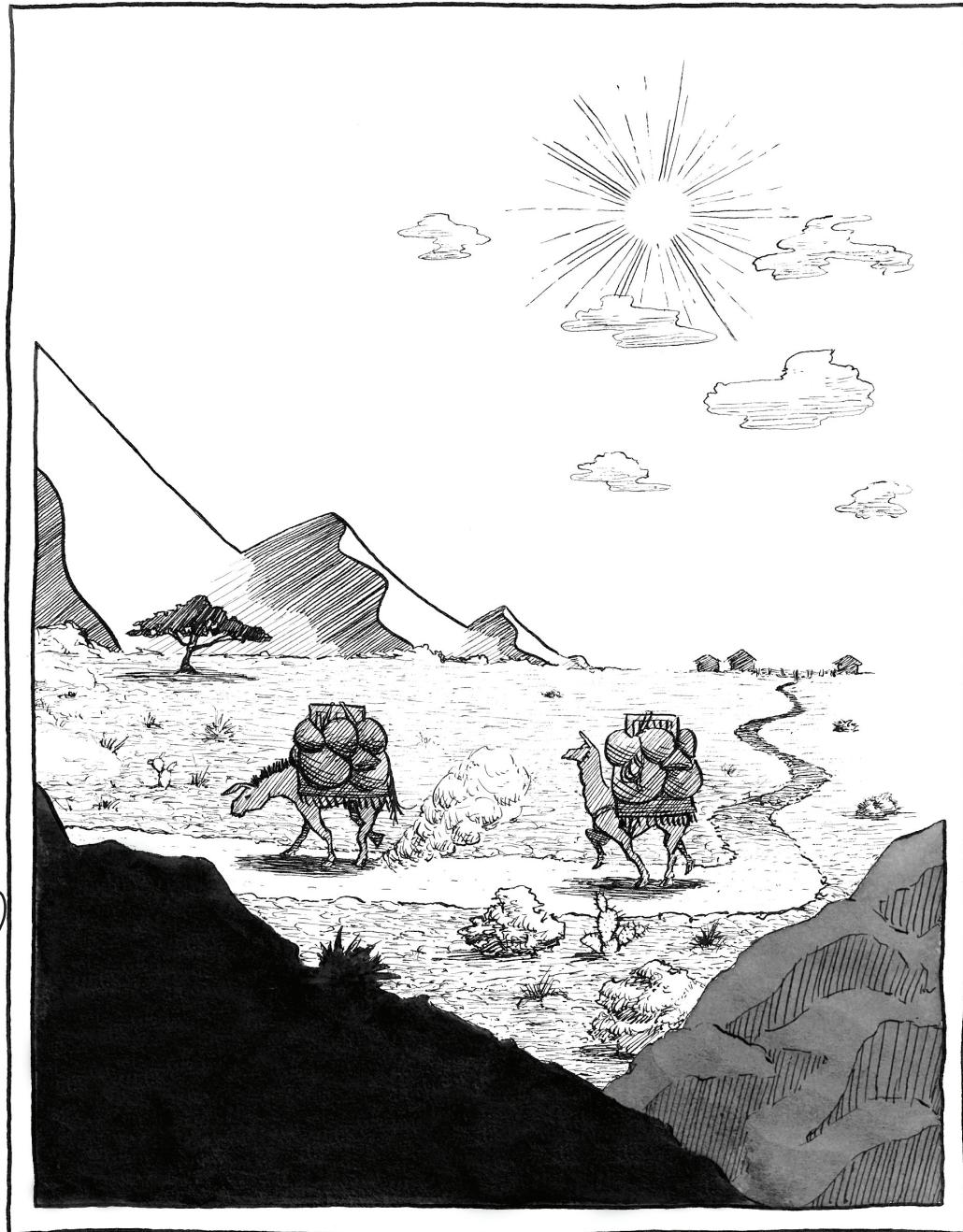
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"We'll take all day," he complained,  
"if you keep acting like this is some  
big adventure."

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"Oh, but it is," replied Llama. "I've never gone on a journey before. The world is so much bigger than our little pen, and there is so much more to admire out here."







"Admire?"

Mule snorted.

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"Admire the dust and the heat and the glaring sun? The journey is just hard work. It will be long enough without stopping to explore."

"There is so much to enjoy," insisted Llama. "We can smell the sweet air, feel the wind on our faces, and notice the interesting sights as we go. It will help the journey feel more pleasant."

Llama's cheerfulness annoyed Mule. "Just pay attention to your work and keep up," Mule said.



Llama did his best to match Mule's pace. Each time Llama slowed down to enjoy the view, Mule grumbled, and Llama trotted to catch up. They traveled through the desert this way until they reached the foot of the mountain.

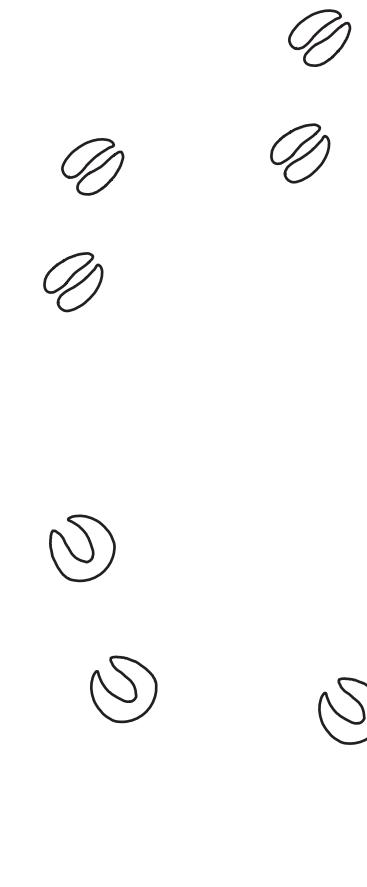
Mule navigated the familiar, rocky path. Yet Llama wasn't used to climbing, and the heavy pack made it even harder. Soon, his pack shifted and he stumbled.

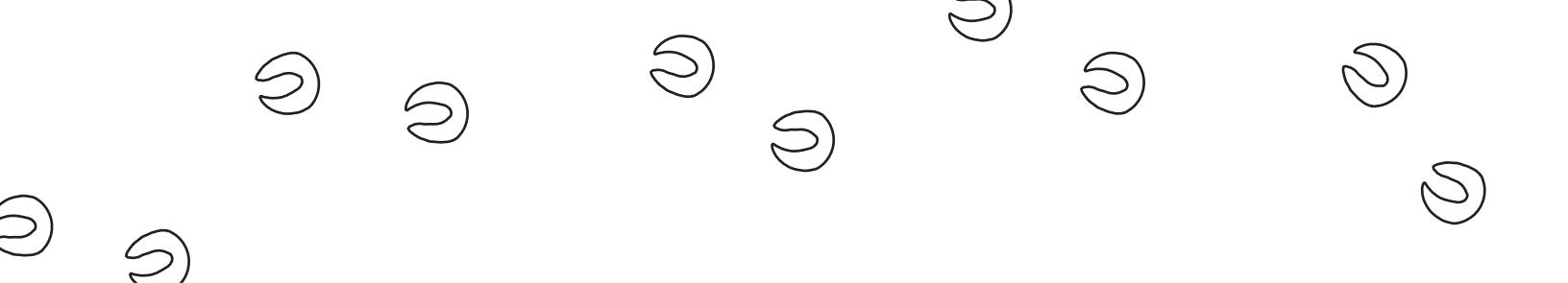
"Please, Mule, the path is steep, and this pack is very heavy. Will you slow down just a little?"

"Going slower will only make the journey longer," argued Mule. "Focus on your work and hurry up."

For a while, they continued up the mountain. Although Llama was careful to watch his footing, he soon stumbled again.

Once he felt steady on his feet, Llama asked Mule, "Will you tell me about the market? I have heard there is a wonderful shady place to rest and delicious olives to eat and sweet cool water to drink. It all sounds so lovely."





“There is a stream,” Mule said, “and some olive trees. We will wait there until the merchant sells his goods. Then we will make the long trip home. Now, stop asking questions. You’re slowing us down.”

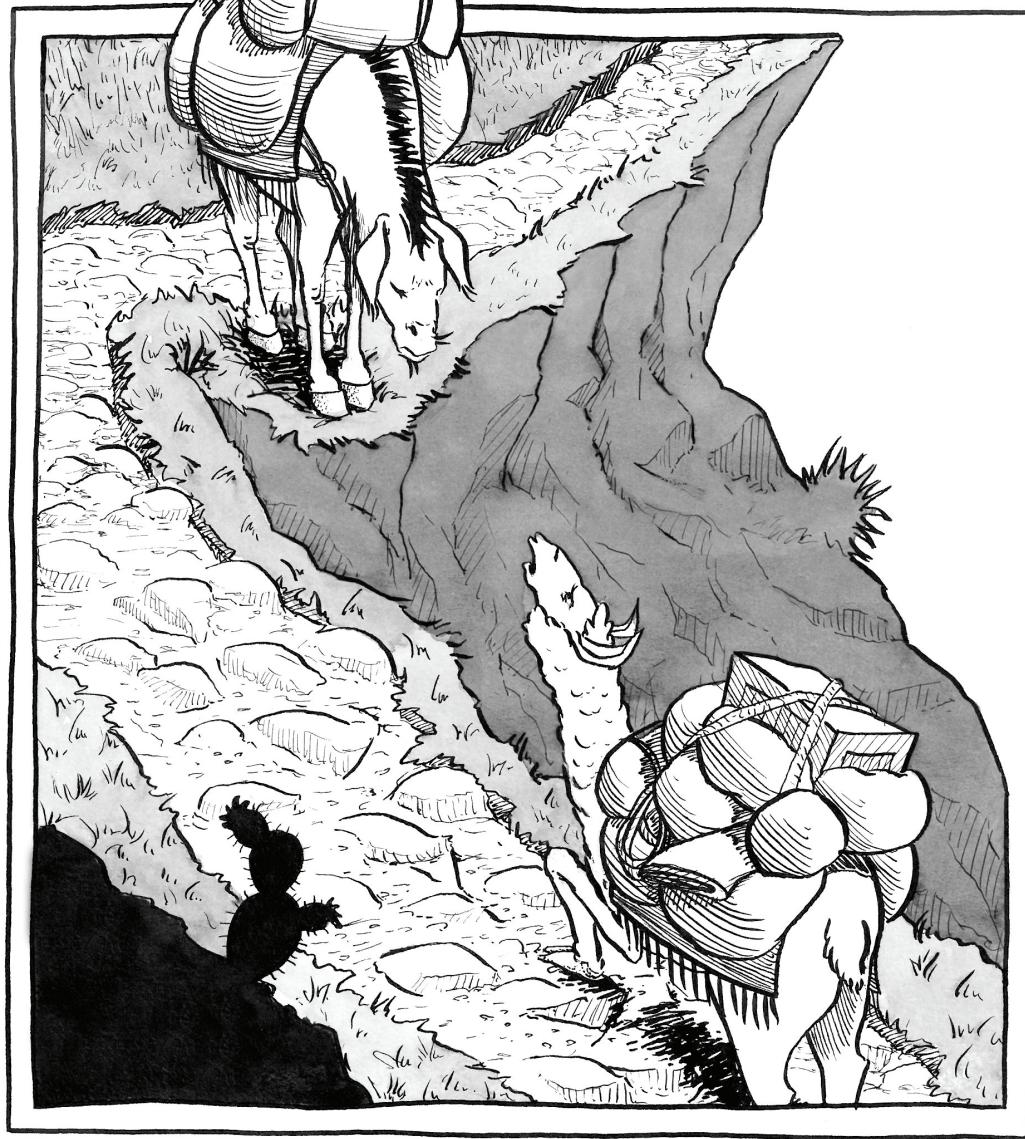
“I thought talking about the market might ease our work,” Llama replied. “We could think about the olives and the grass and the water. Then our packs would not seem so heavy, just like thinking about the wind and the sights and the smells made the desert seem not so hot.”

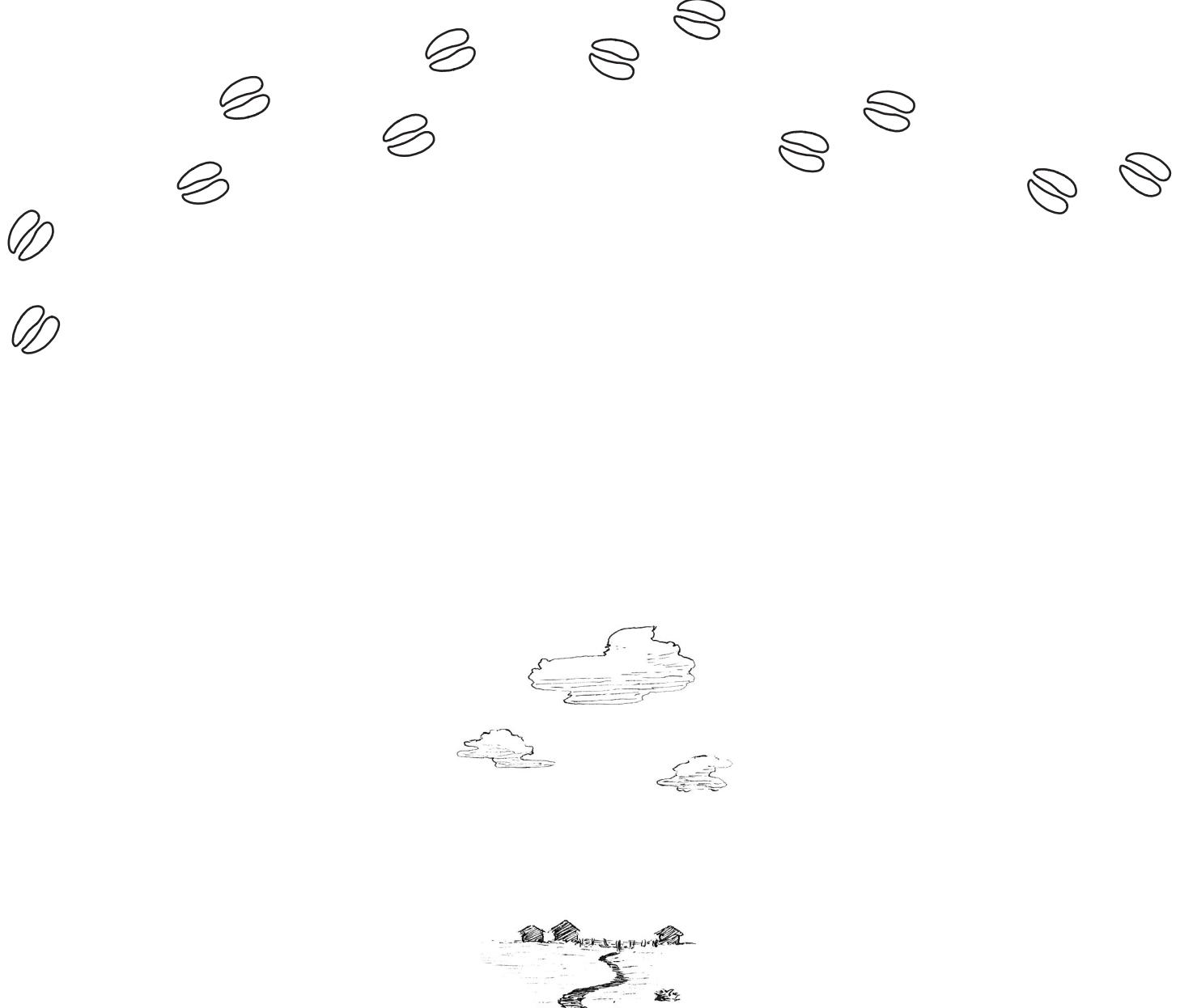
“The packs are still heavy,” Mule complained. “The desert was still hot. The path will still be steep.”

Llama sighed, but he continued up the mountain path until he stumbled again. “Please, Mule,” he asked, “will you slow down so I can climb safely?”

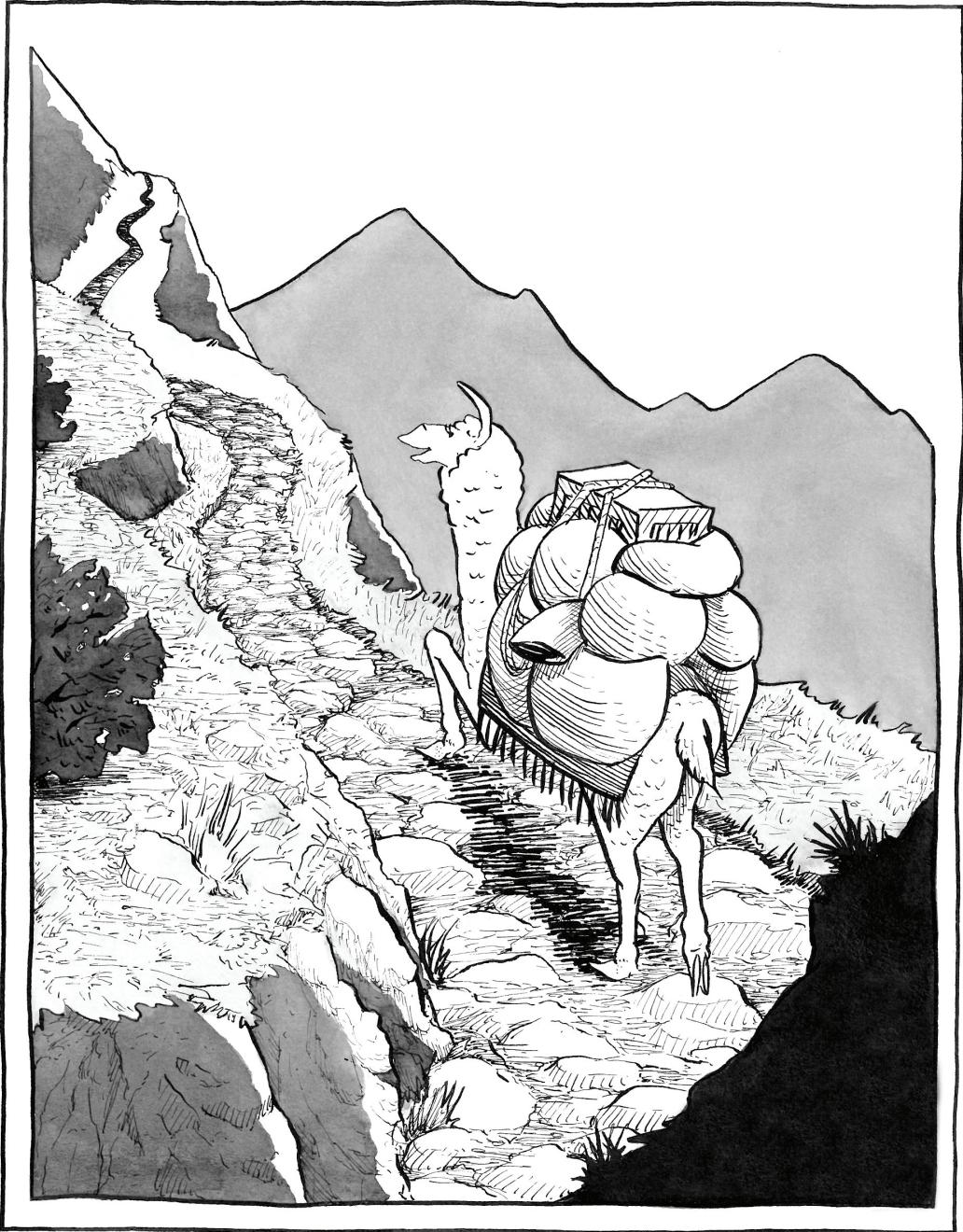
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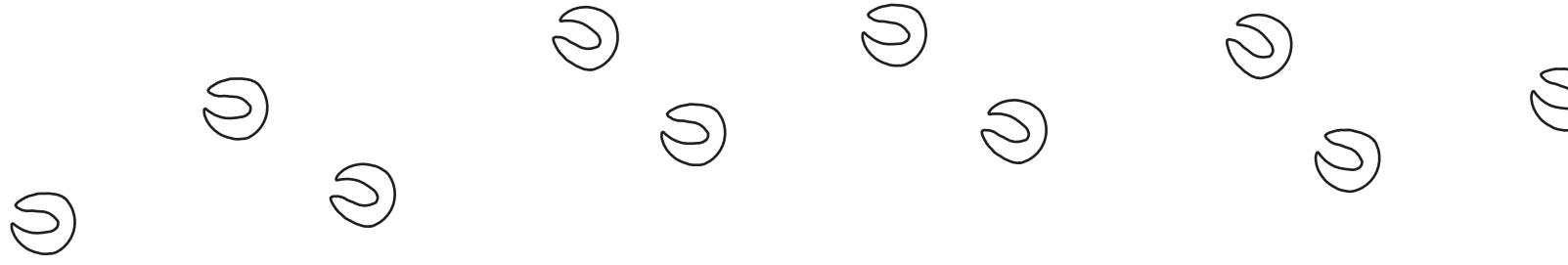
“If I go slower,” Mule grumbled,  
“I’ll have to carry this heavy pack  
even longer.” Mule huffed at Llama  
and climbed even faster.



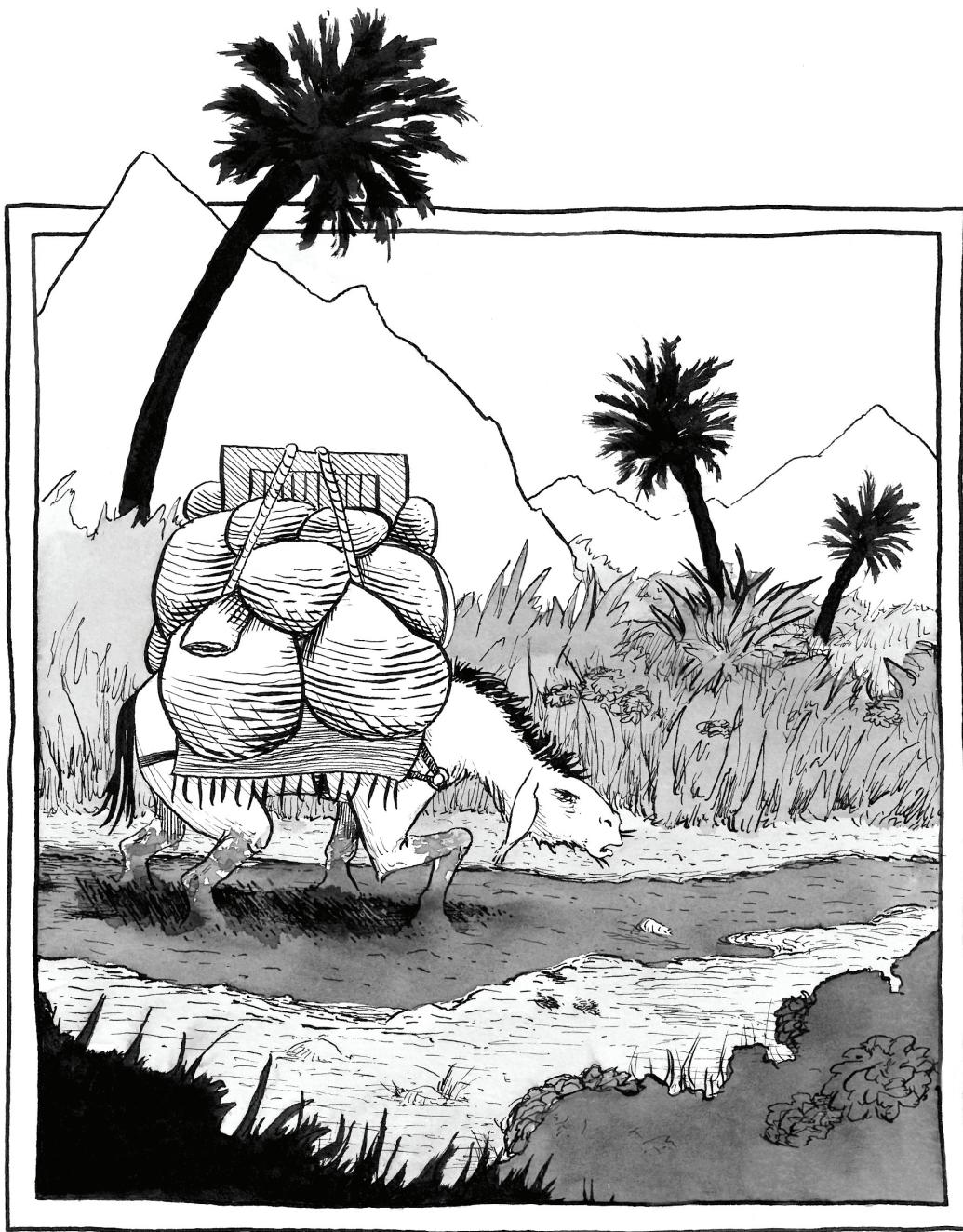


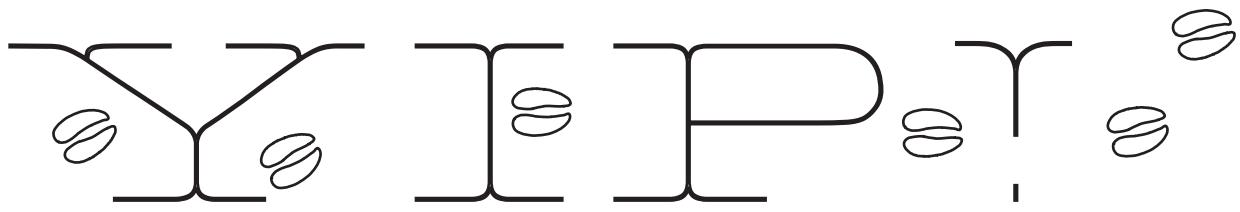
Before long, Llama was alone on the trail.  
He continued slowly but surely up the steep path,  
quietly singing a song about all the lovely things he  
had heard about the market. Singing always helped  
Llama stay cheerful.





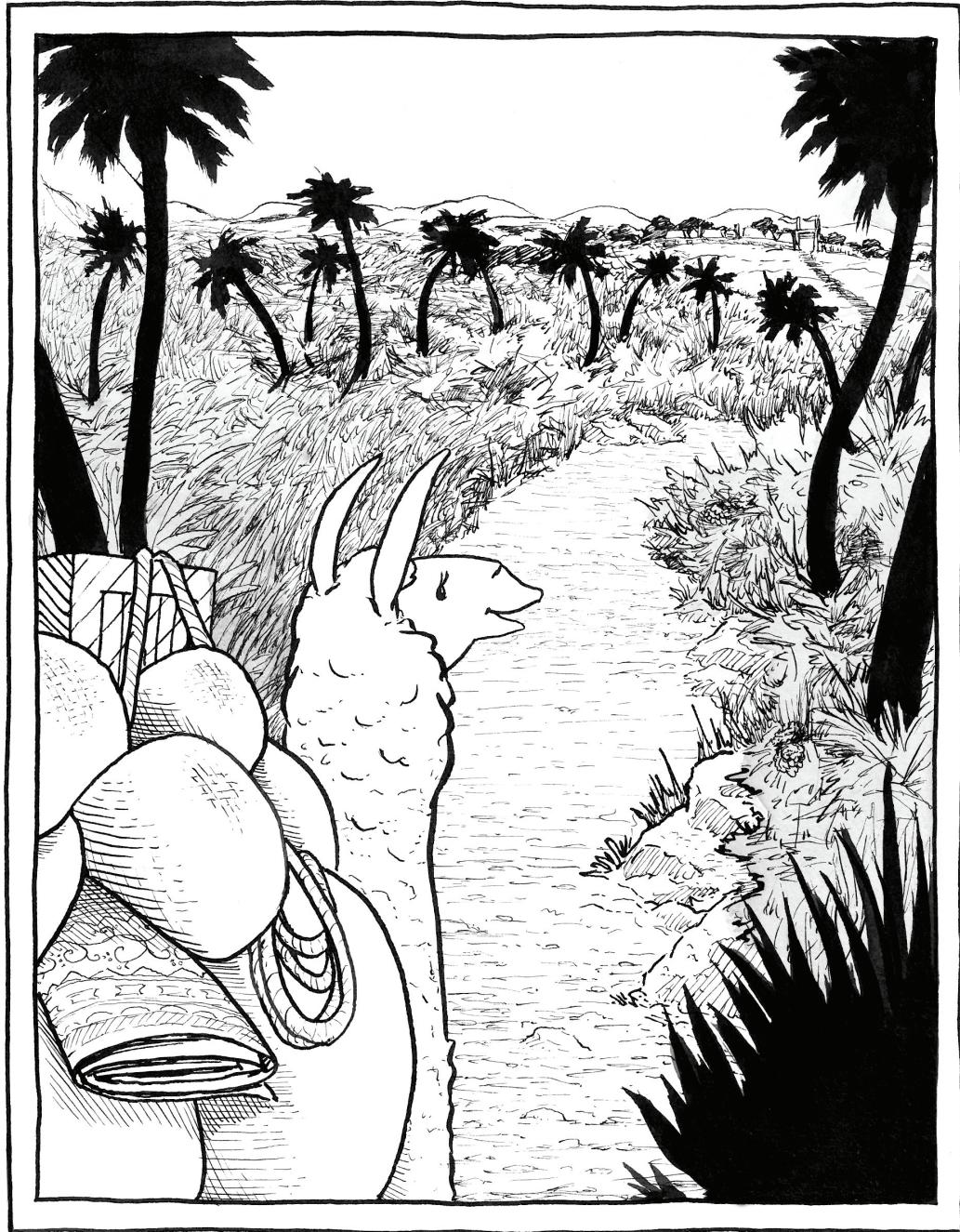
Up ahead, Mule had already reached the valley. Although the desert had been hot, and the mountain path had been steep, the journey across the wide valley felt harder than all that had come before. The heavy pack strained his back and shoulders. Thick mud covered parts of the trail and nearly glued his feet to the ground. And now he didn't even have Llama to keep him company. Mule's steps became **SLOW AND HEAVY.**





When Llama finally reached the wide, green valley, he gave a yip of joy. Surely crossing the open fields would be easier than climbing the mountain, and now they were almost to the market.

Llama skipped into the valley and called out for his friend. "Mule! Where are you? We are nearly there!" Even though Mule had been grumpy, Llama enjoyed his company. And Llama felt sure he could keep up with Mule in the valley.

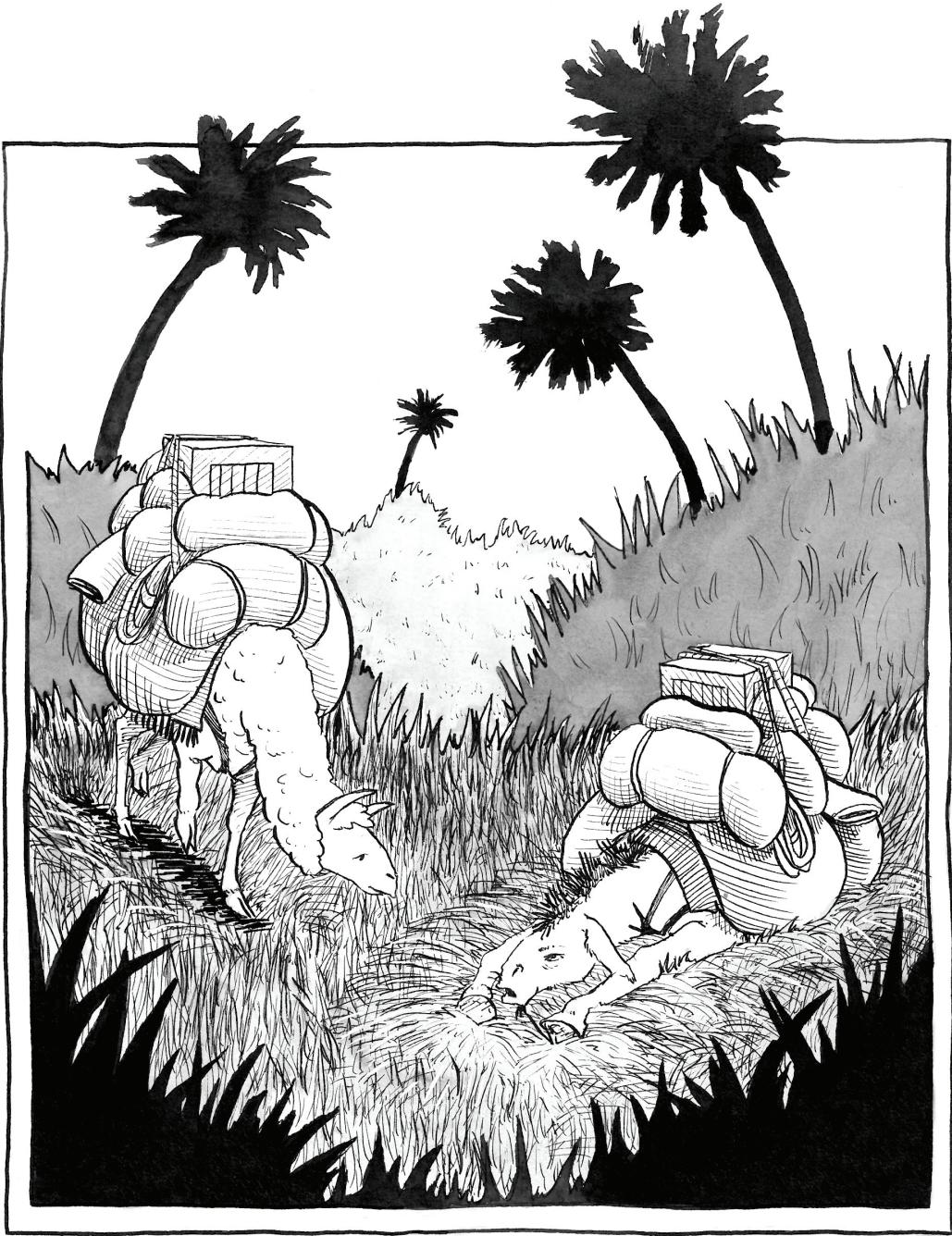


As Llama rounded a curve in the path, he heard a low groan. It sounded like Mule. Llama hurried ahead. He found Mule on his knees in the tall grass next to the trail.

“Mule!” cried Llama, rushing to his side.  
“What happened? Are you hurt?”

Mule growled, “I’m too exhausted to go any further. I’ll never make it to the market again. The journey is too long. I am too old.”

Llama encouraged his friend. “You are a strong and sturdy traveler. You have made this journey many times before, and you can do it this time, too. You just need a rest.” Llama unloaded some bundles from Mule’s pack, and added them to his own.



“The pack is still too heavy,” Mule complained.  
“I can’t go on.”

Llama lay next to Mule and said, “I’ll stay with you and rest a while.”

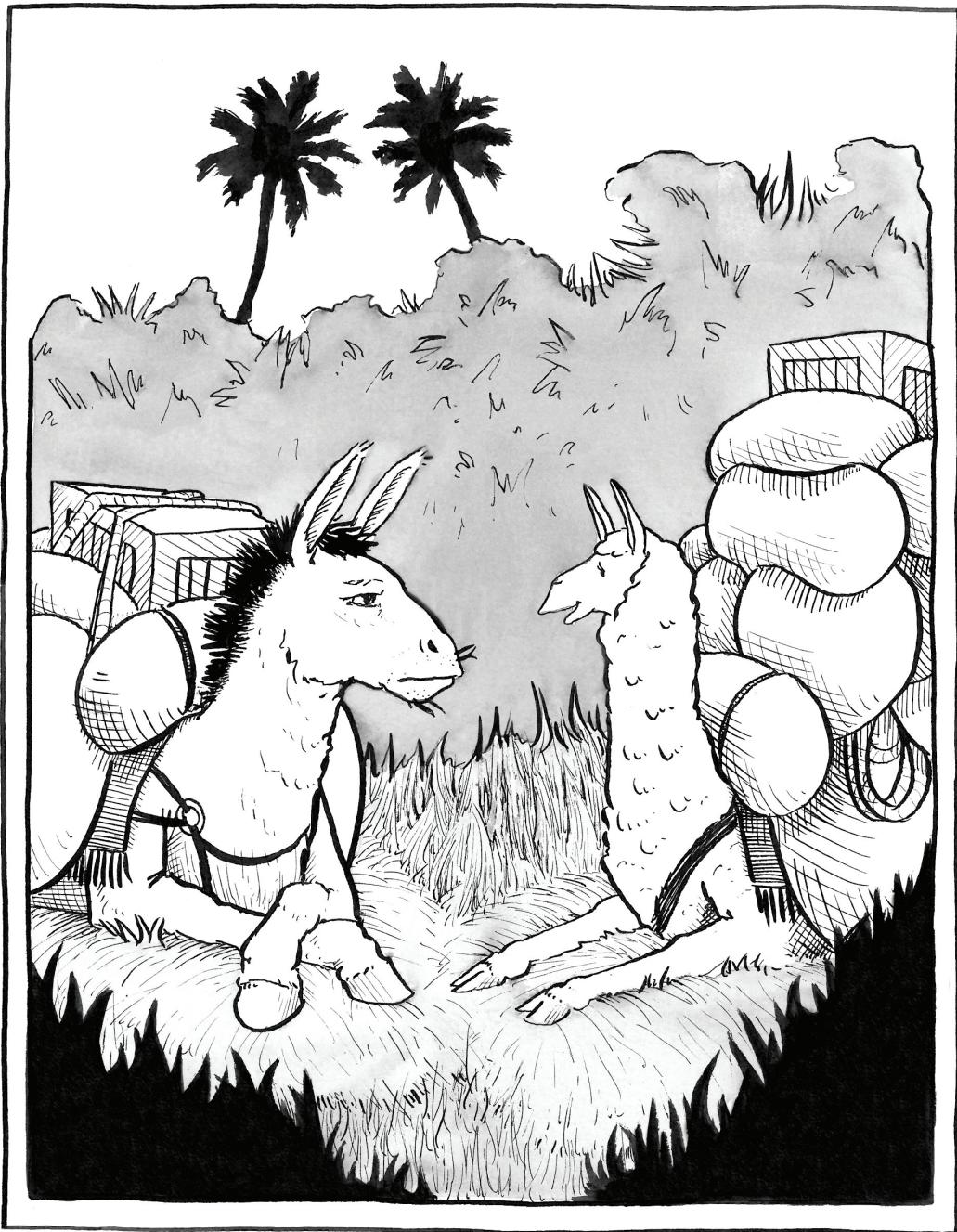
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“When you are ready,  
we will go together.”

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Mule closed his eyes. They lay quietly side-by-side for some time. Then Llama began to sing his market song.

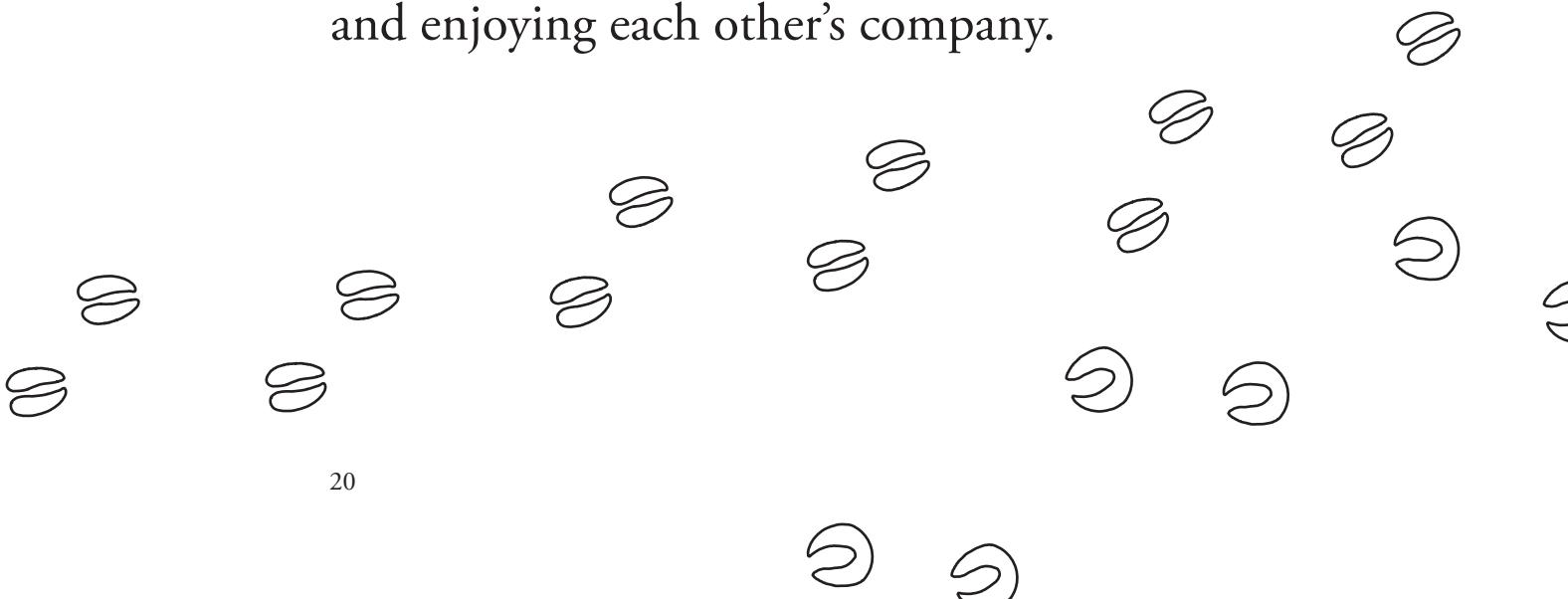
Mule sucked in a chest of air, ready to let out his grumpiest grumble. But then, memories of the market’s shady grove of olive trees, sweet grass, and cool water drifted into his mind. The pack lightened. His legs strengthened.

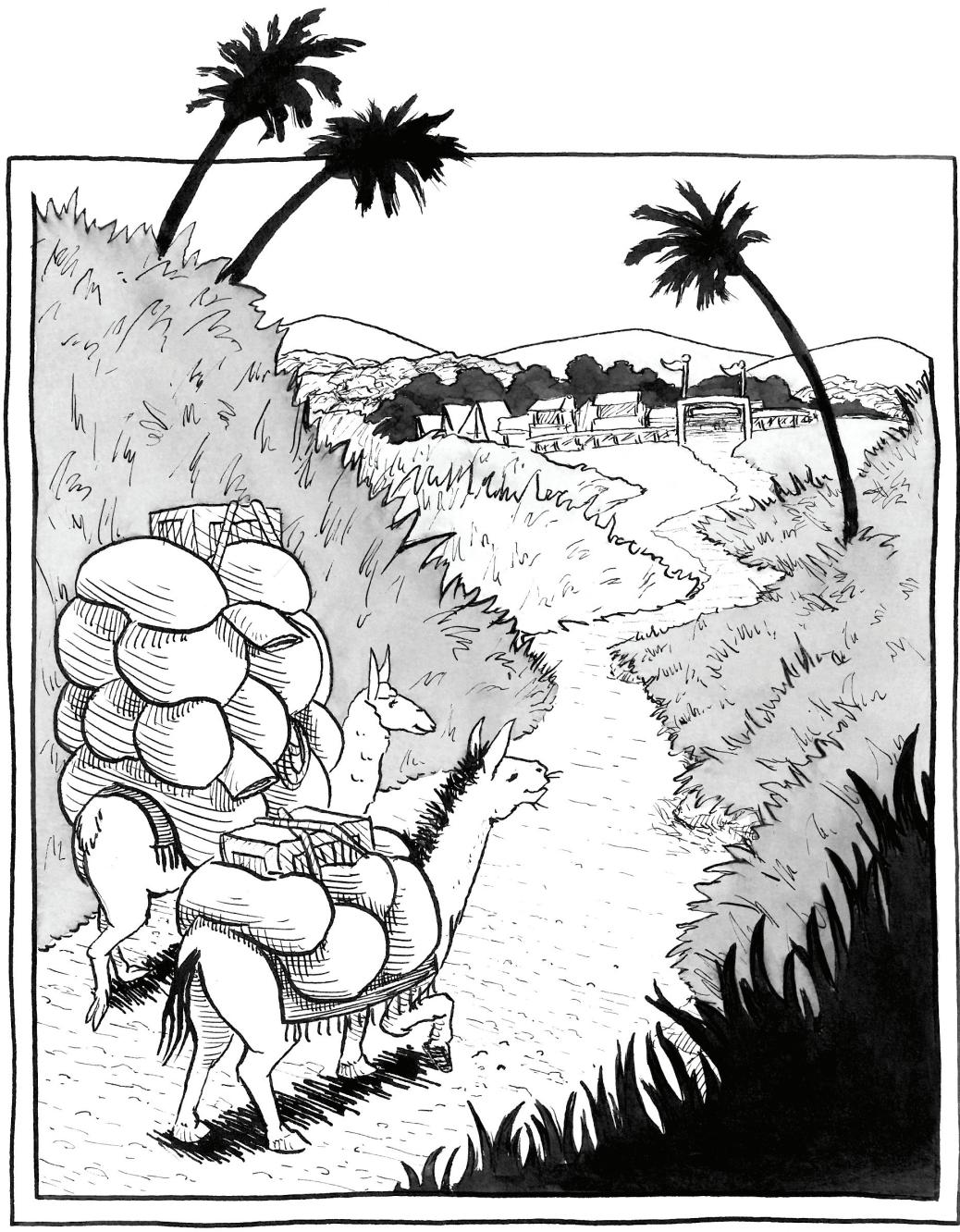


Mule stood up and agreed to continue. As they walked, Llama asked questions about the market, and Mule kindly answered. He described the taste of the olives and the grass. He shared funny memories from past visits. As he talked and laughed, Mule's feet moved a little more quickly. Now they were nearing the end of the journey, and he had more energy than when they started.

Mule thought of how grumpy and negative he had been. He felt sorry for leaving his friend behind instead of enjoying traveling together all along. Mule understood now that his bad attitude made the difficult trip even harder, and rushing made it take even longer.

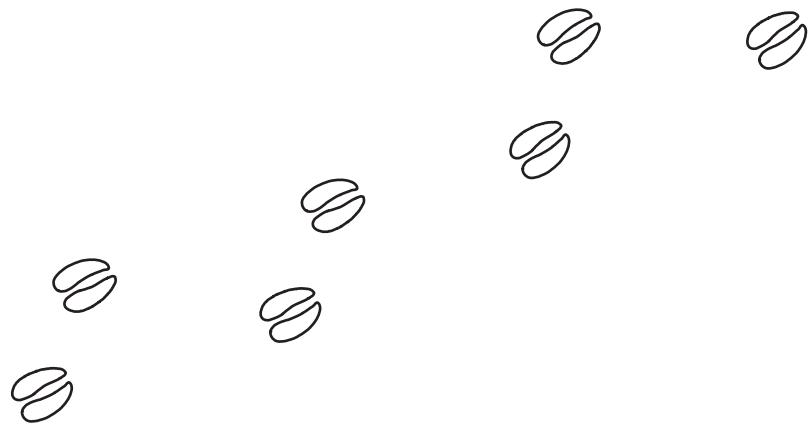
From then on, Mule and Llama made the journey **SIDE - BY - SIDE**, talking and singing and enjoying each other's company.







THE  
END



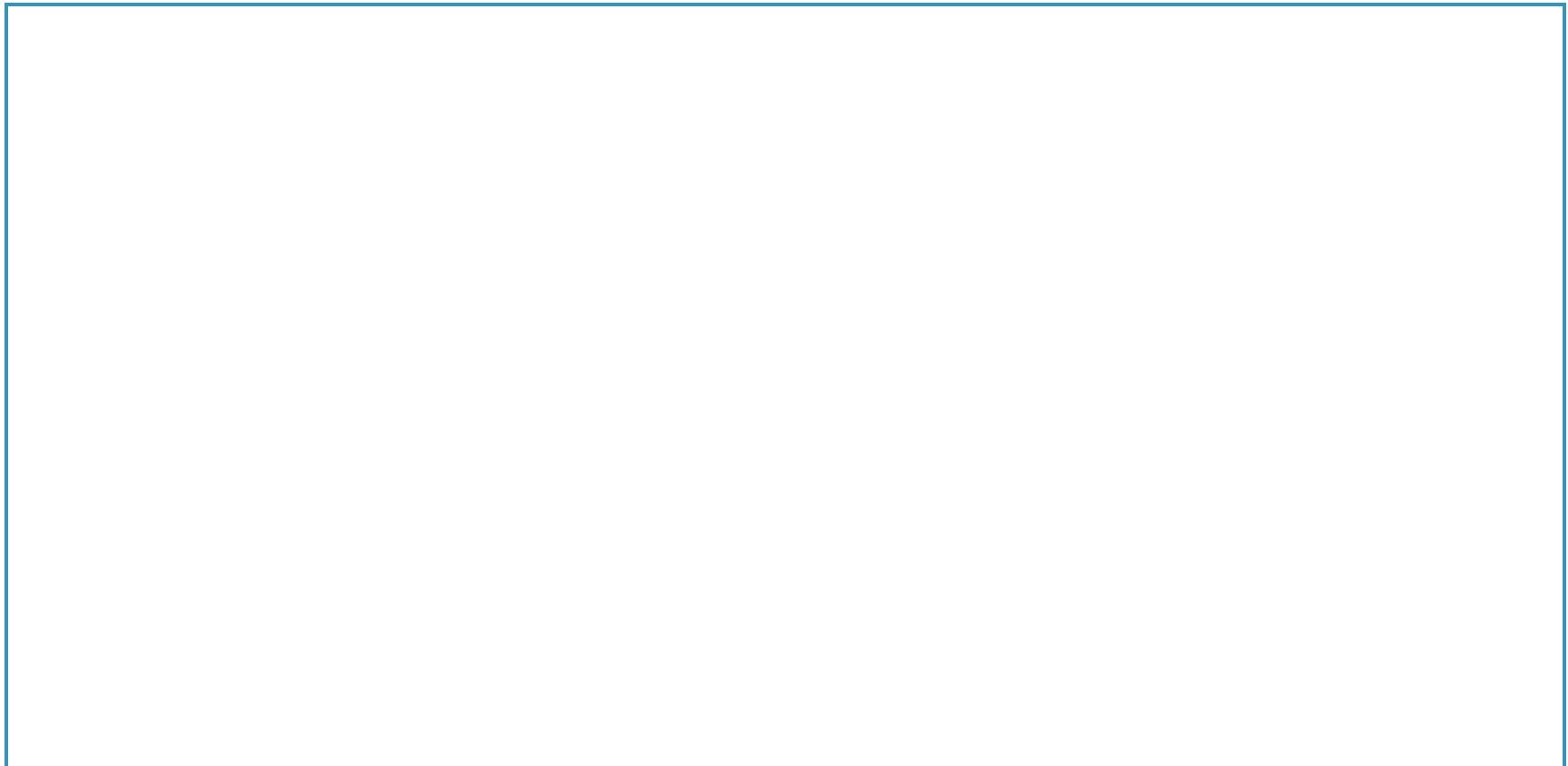
Acknowledgment: "The Llama and the Mule: A story based on an Aesop fable" by Pat Trattles, copyright © 2017 by The University of Kansas. Illustrations by Trevor Eagleman, copyright © 2017 by The University of Kansas.

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## THE CHARACTER STUDENT HANDOUT

Lesson 1

**Directions:** Draw a character from the story who needs to learn a lesson.



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# EVENTS AND LESSONS IN FABLES AND FOLKTALES

## INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

2.R.1.A.d, Lesson 2

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### LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students identify an event in the story that teaches a character a lesson.

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### STANDARD

**2.R.1.A.d** Develop and demonstrate reading skills in response to text by retelling a story's beginning, middle, and end and determining its central message, lesson, or moral.

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### MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▶ teacher copy of [PASSAGE: THE LLAMA AND THE MULE](#), or other story from Lesson 1
- ▶ whiteboard or chart paper
- ▶ [STUDENT HANDOUT: AN EVENT THAT TEACHES A LESSON](#)

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### IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: “I can identify an event in the story that teaches a character a lesson.”

**Reread** the story from Lesson 1.

**Tell** students: “Yesterday we talked about the positive and negative characters in the story and tried to figure out which characters needed to learn a lesson.” **Ask** students the following questions:

- ▶ Which character is positive, or has good qualities?
- ▶ What does the character do that is good?
- ▶ Which character is negative, or has bad qualities?
- ▶ What does the character do that is bad?

**Collect** student responses on chart paper or the board.

**Say**, “Today we are going to focus on what happens in the story that teaches a character a lesson. We are going to start by making a list of all the important events in the story.” **Ask** students to list events and collect student responses on chart paper or the board.

Then **ask** the following questions:

- ▶ Are these events in order?
- ▶ What happens first?
- ▶ What happens next?
- ▶ What happens last?

**Distribute** STUDENT HANDOUT: AN EVENT THAT TEACHES A LESSON. **Say**, “Draw a picture that shows an event from the story that teaches a character a lesson. Then, write a sentence about what the character learns.”

**Release** students to complete the activity, and **walk around** and collect evidence about student thinking.

### CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Determine if the student can **IDENTIFY WHAT A CHARACTER LEARNS IN A LITERARY TEXT (ELA-2721)**:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| ▶ What is the most important event in the story? | ▶ What lesson do you think readers are supposed to learn from the story? Why? | ▶ What does the character learn when that event happens? |
|--|---|--|

**Ask** students to share their pictures and describe how that event taught the character a lesson. Once several students have shared, **collect** the handouts.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the **TEACHER NOTES** for this lesson set.

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## AN EVENT THAT TEACHES A LESSON

### STUDENT HANDOUT

Lesson 2

**Directions:** Draw an event from the story that teaches a character a lesson. Then write a sentence that tells about the lesson.

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# LESSONS A CHARACTER AND I HAVE LEARNED

## INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

2.R.1.A.d, Lesson 3

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### LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students compare lessons from the fable or folktale to life lessons they have learned.

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### STANDARD

**2.R.1.A.d** Develop and demonstrate reading skills in response to text by retelling a story's beginning, middle, and end and determining its central message, lesson, or moral.

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### MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▶ teacher copy of [PASSAGE: THE LLAMA AND THE MULE](#), or other story used in previous lessons
- ▶ whiteboard or chart paper
- ▶ [STUDENT HANDOUT: MY LIFE LESSON](#)

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### IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: “I can describe what a character in the story learns and compare it to a lesson I have learned.”

**Review** the fable or folktale from the previous lessons. **Ask** students to share examples of an event that helps a character learn a lesson.

**Tell** the class, “Today we will make a connection between the lesson a character learns in the story and a time you learned a lesson in your own life. First, we will brainstorm together what we think the characters learn in the story.”

**Ask** students to share what lessons the characters learn. **Write** responses on the board or a piece of chart paper.

**Select** a lesson from the list and **ask** students which event taught the character that lesson. **Ask** students to explain their answers. Once you have heard from the majority of the class, **pass out STUDENT HANDOUT: MY LIFE LESSON**.

**Say**, “Now, we are going to compare a lesson a character learns to something you have learned in your life. You can use the words on the chart to help you think of a lesson you have learned. Draw a picture and write the lesson underneath it.”

While students are working, **circulate** and check for understanding.

### CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Determine if the student can **IDENTIFY THE LESSON OR MORAL IN A LITERARY TEXT (ELA-352)**:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| ▶ What lesson does the character learn? | ▶ How does the character's lesson compare to something you have learned? Was your lesson like the story or different? | ▶ Why is this lesson important to learn? |
|---|---|--|

**Ask** students to share their drawings and explain their lessons learned to a partner. Then **ask** students to share their lessons with the class. **Collect** the handouts.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the **TEACHER NOTES** for this lesson set.

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# MY LIFE LESSON

## STUDENT HANDOUT

Lesson 3

**Directions:** Draw a picture of a lesson you have learned that is like a character's lesson in the story. Underneath the picture, write a sentence that tells about your life lesson.



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## DETERMINING A STORY'S LESSON

### STUDENT FEEDBACK GUIDE

[2.R.1.A.d, Lesson 1-3](#)

**Directions:** For each learning goal, circle the sentence that best matches what you can do.

Learning Goal	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>Describe the good and bad characters in the story</b>	I can describe the good and bad things about one character in the story.	I can describe the good and bad things about the main characters in the story.	I can describe the good and bad things about many characters in the story.
<b>Find an event in the story that teaches a lesson to a character</b>	I can find an event in the story and explain what happens to the character.	I can find many events in the story, and I can find a lesson the story teaches.	I can find the most important event and explain how it teaches the character a lesson.
<b>Describe what a character learns in the story and compare it to a lesson I have learned</b>	I can describe a lesson a character learns in the story.	I can describe a lesson a character learns in the story, and I can explain a lesson I have learned.	I can describe a lesson a character learns in the story, and I can describe a time I learned a similar lesson.