**LEARNING FOCUS**
RL.4.1*
Students will ask and answer questions to demonstrate an understanding of the text using character quotes and/or a series of actions and events as a basis for their answers.

**PREVIEWING THE TEXT**
Let’s read the title together. . . . As we read the text, we’ll remember the first of the three focuses that we’ve been using to analyze fiction throughout this theme. Who’ll remind us what that focus is?

**CLOSE READING OF THE TEXT**
Let’s read the first two exchanges of dialogue together: Gretchen’s first speech and Peter’s reply. Our job is to ask and answer questions that help us find meanings in this short play. Notice the questions that form in your mind as you read, and notice questions that you think of as we talk about the play. Who’s got a question about a character or event so far?

That’s a question we can find the answer to in the words that Peter says. Can someone quote from his dialogue to give us an answer?

As we continue, I think we’ll find more events, actions, and character details to ask and answer questions about. Let’s read to the end of the page. . . . Who has another question to share?

To answer that question, let’s look at what Gretchen says. Who’ll read aloud some dialogue of Gretchen’s that might help us answer this question?

**DISCUSSING THE TEXT**
I want to have a good discussion about this selection and all selections we read. One way to make sure we do this is to agree upon rules from the start. Who would like to remind us of what some good rules for discussions are?

Let’s follow those rules as we continue our discussion. I have another question to ask: How does Peter feel about his unselfish action? Who can find dialogue in the play that helps us answer this question?
Here’s a little word that has a very specific meaning and is related to the plot and setting of this drama. It’s not a word we use very much today. I think we can use context clues to figure out its meaning, though. Remember that when I say “context,” I mean the words nearby and also bigger things, such as the topic and setting and plot of the work. Based on those things, who’d like to tell us what a dike is? And please tell us what clues in the text helped you discover the meaning.

When we ask and answer questions about a narrative, we’re filling in the holes where we don’t understand something—just like Peter fills a hole in the dike! We look for specific words and sentences that characters say. Who can explain why we do that?

When we ask and answer questions about an event or action, we mention specifics. We say, for example, “Peter put his finger into the dike” instead of just “Peter helped keep the land from flooding.” Who sees why we do that?

Who’d like to share a way that this learning focus helped them understand the play?
**LEARNING FOCUSES**

RL.4.1*, RL.4.5*, RL.4.9*  
Students will compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes, topics, characters, or plots of two stories. They continue to identify how the author describes characters, sets up major events across the story, and uses events to establish the overall plot. They also continue to ask and answer questions to demonstrate an understanding of the text using character quotes and/or a series of actions and events as a basis for their answers.

**RETURNING TO THE TEXT**  
3 minutes  
We’ll reread “The Hole in the Dike” today. Before we begin, who’d like to remind us what it’s about?

**CLOSE READING OF THE TEXT**  
7 minutes  
We’ll read the first half of the play together, and we’ll get started by asking and answering a question about characters or events. . . . Who has a question that hasn’t been asked before?

To answer that, let’s look at Jacob’s dialogue. He has only one line. Will someone please read it aloud and then try expressing what the line shows about Jacob?

Let’s look at an action of Jacob’s. What does he do in this play, and what do you think it shows about him? Who has an idea?

You might not think that a play this short has a plot structure, but it does. The plot develops from the characters’ actions. Like most plots, it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Who can summarize the plot in two or three sentences?

Who can explain how Peter’s act of unselfishness is similar to and different from other characters’ unselfish acts in other stories we’ve read?

**DISCUSSING THE TEXT**  
10 minutes  
You’re now experts on asking and answering questions to help you understand plot and character. If someone were about to read the selections in this theme, how would you advise him or her to use the learning focuses?