

Character Puzzles

This Really Good Stuff[®] product includes:

- 8 Two-Sided Story Cards
- 32 Character Puzzles Question Cards
- 6 Character Puzzles
- 1 Two-Sided Answer Key Card
- 1 Task Card
- This Really Good Stuff Instructional Guide

Congratulations on your purchase of the Really Good Stuff[®] **Character Puzzles**—a fun game that asks students to describe characters in stories.

Meeting the Standards

The **Character Puzzles** align with the following Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. For alignment with other state standards, please refer to our website's standards match.

Craft & Structure

Anchor Standard 3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

RI.3.3 Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Analyzing characters in stories is more than just noting traits such as hair color and age. It is, rather, a process of analyzing a character's actions, emotions, personality, dialogue, and role in a story. Question-and-answer activities are a good way to spark discussion and encourage students to remember details as well as to make inferences about characters based on what happens in the story. **Character Puzzles** presents a playful setting in which students answer thought-provoking character questions.

Introducing Character Puzzles

Practice analyzing characters with your students. Read a short story and discuss one character in depth. Move from questions about that character's feelings to questions of motivation. Discuss not only the character's actions but *why* he or she makes certain choices in the story. Talk about the character's goals, both long and short term. To help students understand the concept of motivation, invite them to put themselves into the story and tell what might motivate their own actions.

The Mail MixUp Mystery



We have a strange mailbox. It's always overflowing, but it's not a mailbox or anything like that. The only way to get the mail, the letters, and the papers is to take them from the mailbox. The letters are all... but they're not really letters at all.

The mailbox was never in this neighborhood. This is really just a mailbox that's been left here for some reason. The neighbors don't know why it's there, but they don't care. It's just a mailbox, right? Well, not exactly. It's a mailbox that's been left here for some reason. The neighbors don't know why it's there, but they don't care. It's just a mailbox, right? Well, not exactly. It's a mailbox that's been left here for some reason.

There's a lot of mail in it. Some of it's letters, some of it's papers, and some of it's just plain old mail. But there's also a lot of other stuff in there. Some of it's letters, some of it's papers, and some of it's just plain old mail. But there's also a lot of other stuff in there. Some of it's letters, some of it's papers, and some of it's just plain old mail. But there's also a lot of other stuff in there.

On the first day, the mail was all letters and papers. But on the second day, there were also some letters and papers. On the third day, there were also some letters and papers. On the fourth day, there were also some letters and papers. On the fifth day, there were also some letters and papers. On the sixth day, there were also some letters and papers. On the seventh day, there were also some letters and papers. On the eighth day, there were also some letters and papers. On the ninth day, there were also some letters and papers. On the tenth day, there were also some letters and papers.

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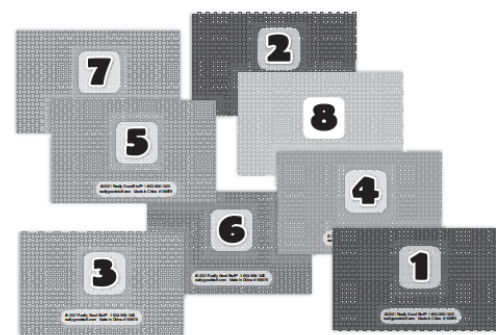
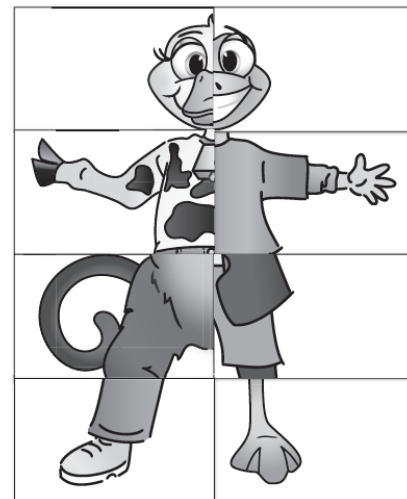
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Model the game for the students before having them play. There are eight two-sided *Story Cards*, enough for up to four students to read the story at the same time.

Once they've read the story, the players take turns choosing eight puzzle pieces numbered 1 through 8 and spreading them face down in a pile. There are six different puzzles, depicting both people and animals. Each puzzle has a different-color backing. Players can select the eight pieces from just one of these puzzles or from any combination of the six puzzles, as long as they choose one piece of each number. Combining puzzles can lead to the creation of some funny creatures:



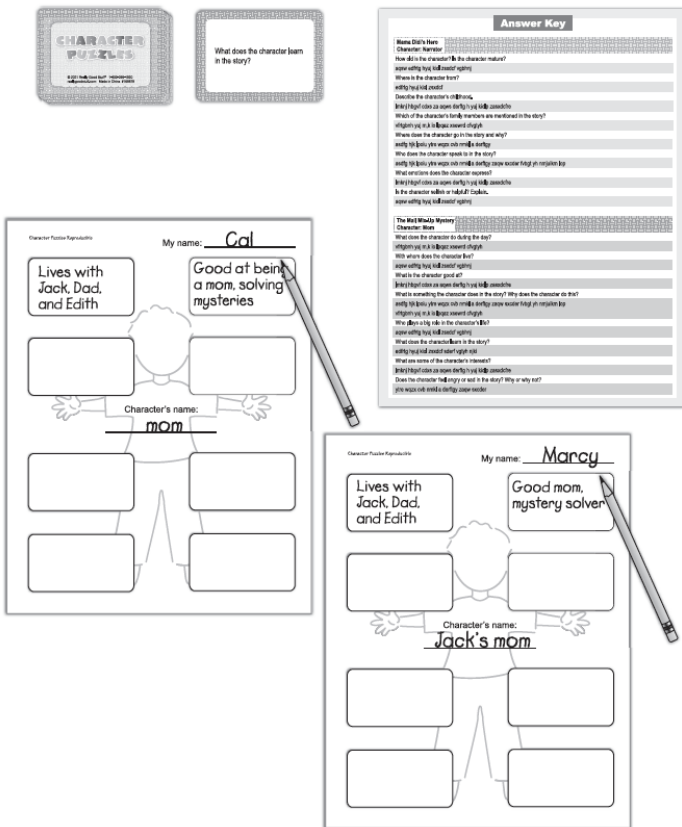
Next, a player shuffles the *Character Puzzles Question Cards* and places them face down in a stack. The *Questions Cards* provide valuable questions for the stories in *Character Puzzles* or any other story.

Players decide on the order of play, using the roll of a die or a coin flip. They take turns drawing a *Question Card*, reading the question aloud, and answering. If their answer is correct, the card goes in a discard pile and all

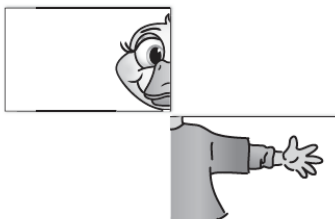
All instructional guides can be found online.

Character Puzzles

players record the information on their *Character Puzzles Reproducibles*. Players check the *Answer Key Card* if necessary.



If a player answers correctly, he or she gets to place any one of the *Puzzle Pieces* in the appropriate spot in the *Character Puzzle*.



If a player answers incorrectly, the *Question Card* is placed at the bottom of the deck, and the next player takes a turn. The player who puts down the eighth and last piece gives a summary description of the character based on all the information he or she has recorded on the reproducible. If any important points about the character are overlooked, the other players may contribute to the description.

Task Card

Post this at the literacy center in a visible position. A student or a helper can refer to the *Task Card* for instructions. Refer to the shaded section at the top of the card for center preparation, including needed materials.

Character Puzzles

2 to 4 students

Object: Describe characters and their actions in a story

Materials: matching-colored *Story Cards* (1 for each player) and matching colored *Question Cards* (8), *Answer Key Card*, *Character Puzzles Pieces*, *Character Puzzles Reproducible* and pencil for each player

Directions:

1. Read the *Story Card*.
2. Players take turns selecting *Puzzle Pieces* numbered 1 through 8 and placing them face down in a drawing pile until there is one of each number.
3. Shuffle the *Question Cards* and place them face down in a stack. Decide on the order of play.
4. Players take turns drawing a *Question Card*, reading the question aloud, and answering. If the answer is correct, the card goes in a discard pile and all players record the answer on their *Character Puzzles Reproducibles*. (Check the *Answer Key Card* for correct answers.)
5. When a player answers correctly, he or she places one of the *Puzzle Pieces* in the character puzzle. When a player answers incorrectly, the *Question Card* is placed at the bottom of the deck.
6. The player who puts down the last piece gives a summary description of the character based on all the traits recorded on the reproducible.

My name: _____

