

## Goethe and the Sorcerer's Apprentice

### 5<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts Standard V: Fluency

Students develop reading fluency to read aloud grade level text effortlessly without hesitation.

### 5<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts Standard VII: Comprehension

Students understand, interpret, and analyze narrative and informational grade level text.

#### Objective 2: Apply strategies to comprehend text.

- f. Identify theme/topic/main idea from text; note details.

#### Guiding Questions:

- Who was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and why is he important?
- What are some of the writings of Goethe and how have they impacted our entertainment today?

#### Support Materials:

- Class laptops (15 for 30 students)
- Copy of *Der Zauberlehrling* and its translation *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* for each student
- Each student's vocabulary/writing journal
- DVD - Disney's "Fantasia"
- Map of Germany and bordering countries - <http://www.mapsofworld.com/germany/germany-political-map.html>
- Map of Germany - <http://www.hudsoncity.net/culture/german/germanymap.gif>
- Blackline map of Germany
- Websites as listed in the lesson

#### Background:

*The Sorcerer's Apprentice* is based on a ballad (poem) by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe called *The Apprentice Magician*. Goethe (1749-1832) was Germany's most famous writer, thinker, and scientific theorist, and is considered one of the greatest literary geniuses of all time because of his extraordinary imagination.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was born on August 28, 1749 in the German city of Frankfurt, to an influential family. He had a comfortable childhood. Educated at home, he was greatly influenced by his mother, an artistic woman who encouraged his love of literature. When he was 16, Goethe went to Leipzig University. He lived for many years in Weimar, Germany the focal point of the German Enlightenment. Weimar was where writers Goethe and Schiller developed the literary movement of Weimar Classicism.

Goethe's most famous work was *Faust*, the story of a man who sells his soul to the devil. The *Faust* story inspired operas by several composers and even a Broadway musical -*Damn Yankees* (1955). Many of Goethe's other writings were also set to music or used as the basis for songs, operas, and program pieces.

In *The Apprentice Magician*, Goethe writes a poem about a magician's lazy helper who gets in trouble while his master is away. Before leaving the workshop, the magician tells the apprentice to bring in some water from the well. Not wanting to do the work, the apprentice uses the incantations he has learned to bring a broom to life and make it carry the water for him. Soon, the broom divides into several brooms and they keep bringing buckets of water. The poor apprentice cannot remember how to reverse the spell or get the brooms to stop. Soon the magician's workshop is overflowing with water. Upon his return, the master must use his powers to curtail the floods and needless to say, he is not happy with his apprentice.

([http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1694482/lesson\\_plan\\_for\\_general\\_music\\_meet.html?cat=4](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1694482/lesson_plan_for_general_music_meet.html?cat=4))

### “The Big Picture”

Students will gain an understanding of who Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was and where he lived. They will also read one of his poems which is the basis for the program music “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” by Paul Dukas who was a French composer born in Paris in 1865.

### The Lesson

#### **Introduction:**

- Ask students if anyone can remember what an **apprentice** is from our unit on Colonial America or Benjamin Franklin. Explain that an apprentice is a person who works for another in order to learn a trade.
- Write the word **sorcerer** on the board and have the students work in pairs to find one or more synonyms for the word. Have them share the words they found online with the class.
- Explain to the class that they will be reading a poem which later was made famous by Mickey Mouse.

#### **Guided Instruction:**

- Show the students the maps of Germany on the classroom screen/Smartboard. Have students identify the country of Germany and the bordering countries after identifying the continent of Europe on the globe.
- Pass out the blank map of Germany and have the students label the bordering countries as well as the cities of Frankfurt, Weimar, and Berlin (the capital of Germany).
- Optional – show the students photographs of each of these cities from the TOP tour and explain the significance of each as you discuss Goethe and his life.

### **Cooperative Activity:**

- Pass out a copy of the *Sorcerer's Apprentice* to each student. Have the students get into pairs to read through the poem in English. Looking at the original German, ask them to identify any words they may be able to identify. What about words that are repeated in the poem? What is the German word for water?
- Have the students pair up with the other two students at their table to read the poem aloud. What kind of expression should be used in each stanza? How does the mood of the apprentice change as the poem progresses?

### **Drawing Conclusions:**

Read the poem out loud together as a class. Have the students share what German vocabulary they found while analyzing the original text. Discuss as a class the inherent problems in translating a poem into another language.

The "Zauberlehrling" is extremely well-known in the German-speaking world. The lines in which the apprentice implores the returning sorcerer to help him with the mess he has created has attained the status of a proverb, especially the line "Die Geister, die ich rief" ("The spirits that I called"). "Die Geister, die ich rief" is often used to describe a situation where somebody summons help or uses allies that he cannot control, especially in politics.

[\(http://dictionary.sensagent.com/the+sorcerer%27s+apprentice/en-en/\)](http://dictionary.sensagent.com/the+sorcerer%27s+apprentice/en-en/)

### **Lesson Conclusion:**

Show the students *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* from the DVD *Fantasia*. How closely does the cartoon follow the poem? What similarities are there? Are there any differences? Pay attention to the end of the sequence. How does the music help tell the story?

### **Assessment Products:**

**Reflection:** Have the students reflect in their journal about what they have learned. Writing prompt: What do you think the message of Goethe's poem is? What kind of lessons can we gain from this poem? What kind of "magic" do we possess that might get out of control? How should we deal with this possibility?

**Fantasy Writing:** Have the students imagine a situation when "magic" or power gets out of control. Have them write a short story with well defined characters, setting, plot, and a problem/solution.

**Evaluation:** Reflection in vocabulary/writing journal, Map of Germany, fantasy story.

## Goethe-Gedichte

Selected German verse by J.W. Goethe  
in a dual-language format

*A Goethe poem in the original German with a  
line-by-line poetic translation in English.*

### Der Zauberlehrling

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Hat der alte Hexenmeister  
sich doch einmal wegbegeben!  
Und nun sollen seine Geister  
auch nach meinem Willen leben!  
Seine Wort' und Werke  
merkt' ich, und den Brauch,  
und mit Geistesstärke  
tu ich Wunder auch.

Walle, walle,  
manche Strecke,  
dass zum Zwecke  
Wasser fliesse,  
und mit reichem, vollem Schwall  
zu dem Bade sich ergiesse!

Und nun komm, du alter Besen!  
Nimm die schlechten Lumpenhüllen  
Bist schon lange Knecht gewesen:  
nun erfülle meinen Willen!  
Auf zwei Beinen stehe,  
oben sei der Kopf,  
eile nun, und gehe  
mit dem Wassertopf!

Walle, walle,  
manche Strecke,  
dass zum Zwecke  
Wasser fliesse,  
und mit reichem, vollem Schwall  
zu dem Bade sich ergiesse.

### The Sorcerer's Apprentice

Translation by Brigitte Dubiel

Good! The sorcerer, my old master  
left me here alone today!  
Now his spirits, for a change,  
my own wishes shall obey!  
Having memorized  
what to say and do,  
with my powers of will I can  
do some witching, too!

Go, I say,  
Go on your way,  
do not tarry,  
water carry,  
let it flow abundantly,  
and prepare a bath for me!

Come on now, old broom, get dressed,  
these old rags will do just fine!  
You're a slave in any case,  
and today you will be mine!  
May you have two legs,  
and a head on top,  
take the bucket, quick  
hurry, do not stop!

Go, I say,  
Go on your way,  
do not tarry,  
water carry,  
let it flow abundantly,  
and prepare a bath for me.

Seht, er läuft zum Ufer nieder!  
Wahrlich! ist schon an dem Flusse,  
und mit Blitzesschnelle wieder  
ist er hier mit raschem Gusse.  
Schon zum zweiten Male!  
Wie das Becken schwillt!  
Wie sich jede Schale  
voll mit Wasser füllt!

Stehe! Stehe!  
Denn wir haben  
deiner Gaben  
Vollgemessen!  
Ach, ich merk' es! Wehe! Wehe!  
Hab' ich doch das Wort vergessen!

Ach, das Wort, worauf am Ende  
er das wird, was er gewesen!  
Ach, er läuft und bringt behende!  
Wärst du doch der alte Besen!  
Immer neue Güsse  
bringt er schnell herein,  
Ach, und hundert Flüsse  
stürzen auf mich ein!

Nein, nicht länger  
kann ich's lassen,  
will ihn fassen,  
das ist Tücke!  
Ach, nun wird mir immer bänger!  
Welche Miene! Welche Blicke!

O, du Ausgeburt der Hölle!  
Soll das ganze Haus ersaufen?  
Seh' ich über jede Schwelle  
doch schon Wasserströme laufen.  
Ein verruchter Besen!  
der nicht hören will!  
Stock, der du gewesen,  
steh doch wieder still!

Look, how to the bank he's running!  
and now he has reached the river,  
he returns, as quick as lightning,  
once more water to deliver.  
Look! The tub already  
is almost filled up!  
And now he is filling  
every bowl and cup!

Stop! Stand still!  
Heed my will!  
I've enough  
of the stuff!  
I've forgotten - woe is me!  
what the magic word may be.

Oh, the word to change him back  
into what he was before!  
Oh, he runs, and keeps on going!  
Wish you'd be a broom once more!  
He keeps bringing water  
quickly as can be,  
and a hundred rivers  
he pours down on me!

No, no longer  
can I let him,  
I must get him  
with some trick!  
I'm beginning to feel sick.  
What a look! - and what a face!

O, you ugly child of Hades!  
The entire house will drown!  
Everywhere I look, I see  
water, water, running down.  
Be you damned, old broom,  
why won't you obey?  
Be a stick once more,  
please, I beg you, stay!

Willst's am Ende  
gar nicht lassen?  
Will dich fassen,  
will dich halten,  
und das alte Holz behende  
mit dem scharfen Beile spalten.

Is the end  
not in sight?  
I will grab you,  
hold you tight,  
with my axe I'll split the brittle  
old wood smartly down the middle.

Seht, da kommt er schleppend wieder!  
Wie ich mich nur auf dich werfe,  
gleich, o Kobold, liegst du nieder!  
Krachend trifft die glatte Schärfe.  
Wahrlich, brav getroffen!  
Seht, er ist entzwei!  
Und nun kann ich hoffen,  
und ich atme frei!

Here he comes again with water!  
Now I'll throw myself upon you,  
and the sharpness of my axe  
I will test, o spirit, on you.  
Well, a perfect hit!  
See how he is split!  
Now there's hope for me,  
and I can breathe free!

Wehe! Wehe!  
Beide Teile  
steh'n in Eile  
schon als Knechte  
völlig fertig in die Höhe!  
Helft mir, ach ihr hohen Mächte!

Woe is me! Both pieces  
come to life anew,  
now, to do my bidding  
I have servants two!  
Help me, o great powers!  
Please, I'm begging you!

Und sie laufen! Nass und nässer  
wird's im Saal und auf den Stufen,  
Welch entsetzliches Gewässer!  
Herr und Meister, hör' mich rufen!  
Ach, da kommt der Meister!  
Herr, die Not ist groß!  
Die ich rief, die Geister,  
werd' ich nun nicht los.

And they're running! Wet and wetter  
get the stairs, the rooms, the hall!  
What a deluge! What a flood!  
Lord and master, hear my call!  
Ah, here comes the master!  
I have need of Thee!  
from the spirits that I called  
Sir, deliver me!

„In die Ecke  
Besen, Besen!  
Seids gewesen,  
denn als Geister  
ruft euch nur zu seinem Zwecke  
erst hervor der alte Meister!”

“Back now, broom,  
into the closet!  
Be thou as thou  
wert before!  
Until I, the real master  
call thee forth to serve once more!”

