

Lesson Plan *for*  
Marvelous  
Middle Grade  
Reads

# The Season of Styx Malone

Written by Kekla Magoon

**Yearling**

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304 pages | \$7.99 | Lexile 510L

**LESSON FOCUS**

Examining character qualities

**OVERVIEW & PURPOSE**

Students evaluate people and classmates daily. They have inner voices which guide them to determine who is a friend and who they should most likely stay away from. In this lesson, students evaluate fictional characters using information presented to them by the author. They will determine what type of person the fictional character is by examining what the character says, how they act, their inner thoughts, and how they are described.

**LEARNING TARGETS**

1. Students draw character conclusions based on the author's presentation: what is said, actions, inner thoughts, and descriptions.
2. Students will defend character claims using evidence and personal experience.
3. Students will revise initial claims if conflicting information is introduced.

**SUMMARY**

Caleb Franklin and his big brother Bobby Gene are excited to have adventures in the woods behind their house. But Caleb dreams of venturing beyond their ordinary small town.

Then Caleb and Bobby Gene meet new neighbor Styx Malone. Styx is sixteen and oozes cool. Styx promises the brothers that together, the three of them can pull off the Great Escalator Trade – exchanging one small thing for something better until they achieve their wildest dream. But as the trades get bigger, the brothers soon find themselves in over their heads. Styx has secrets – secrets so big they could ruin everything.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

1. *The Season of Styx Malone* by Kekla Magoon
2. Character Analysis Sheet
  - a. **Styx** ([tiny.cc/StyxMalone](http://tiny.cc/StyxMalone))
  - b. **Mr. Franklin/ Dad** ([tiny.cc/MrFranklin](http://tiny.cc/MrFranklin))
  - c. **Caleb** ([tiny.cc/Caleb](http://tiny.cc/Caleb))
  - d. **Bobby Gene** ([tiny.cc/BobbyGene](http://tiny.cc/BobbyGene))

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION**

- Step 1:** Introduce *The Season of Styx Malone* by Kekla Magoon by showing the cover only and stating it's a story about friendship.
- Step 2:** Continue by explaining that students are going to evaluate characters by analyzing information provided by the author: analyzing what they say, how they act, their inner thoughts, and how they are described by others.
- Step 3:** Character Analysis Sheet
- Select one of the characters and work through what information is being described. Think aloud about what it makes you assume about that character.
  - Scaffold with the students as necessary, gradually releasing ownership to students.

**CHARACTER ANALYSIS SHEET: BOBBY GENE**

What are your initial thoughts about this character? You will base your claim on what the character says, how they act, their inner thoughts, and how they are described. Drawing conclusions will depend on you synthesizing what is provided and your personal experience. Use additional paper to analyze the other characters.

<p><b>Character Says:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Isn't this trespassing? This feels wrong."</li> <li>• "Dude, that was close. We almost got grounded or something in there."</li> <li>• "No way, we just stole from someone!"</li> </ul>	<p><b>Character Acts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleared dinner dishes and put them in the dishwasher.</li> <li>• Blurts out without thinking.</li> <li>• Plays Legos with his brother.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inner Thoughts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skeptical of Styx, he didn't trust his schemes.</li> <li>• Not sure what Caleb is up to; he is putting him in danger to keep up with Styx.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Character Description by Others:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't know any better than to put his foot in it.</li> <li>• Named after his father.</li> <li>• Brother thinks he is too practical.</li> <li>• Physically bigger than his brother.</li> </ul>

My initial thoughts about Bobby Gene:



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