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## George Selden

**T**he Cricket in Times Square was written by American author **George Selden** in 1960. Selden was born on May 14th, 1929 in Connecticut USA. Just like the characters in his story, he also lived in New York City for a short time.

Selden got the idea for the story coming home from work one day. He was riding on the subway when he heard a cricket chirping in the station at Times Square. He started thinking: "How would a cricket end up in Times Square?" The story grew in his imagination right away. The story won the 1961 Newbery Honor Award. In 1973, it was made into an animated movie.

Selden wrote 7 books in the series about Chester, the cricket. He wrote 16 children's books and two plays in all. Selden said that he did not like his writing in the first two books. He continued to write and improve his craft. He wrote *Tucker's Countryside* as a follow-up to *The Cricket in Times Square*, and he said that this was his favorite book.



The books in the series in order are: *The Cricket in Times Square*, *Tucker's Countryside*, *Harry Cat's Pet Puppy*, *Chester Cricket's Pigeon Ride*, *Chester Cricket's New Home*, and *Harry Kitten and Tucker Mouse*.

### Did You Know?

- He has a Bachelor of Arts from Yale University.
- While attending Yale, he was a member of the Elizabethan Club, and contributed to the literary magazine.
- Spent three summer semesters at Columbia University, then studied for a year in Rome on a Fulbright Scholarship.



## Chapter Nine

Answer each question with a complete sentence or short paragraph.

1. Is Harry the Cat a good friend for Tucker and Chester? Why did you think this?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. If you had a pet and it was eating strange foods, what would you do?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Where can Mario go to get help with his pet?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Vocabulary

With a straight line, connect each word on the left with its meaning on the right.

1

solemn

a diner where you can buy cheap meals

A

2

exclaimed

tiny fruits a bit like oranges that you can eat the peel and all

B

3

deduction

a leafy tree

C

4

diet

he looked very serious

D

5

kumquats

he cried out

E

6

automat

he figured it out

F

7

mulberry

what food you eat each day

G



## Chapter Nine

1. Put a check mark (✓) next to the answer that is most correct.

a) Why did Mario go to Chinatown the first time?

- ☐ A To have Chinese food.
- ☐ B To buy a cage.
- ☐ C To meet Sai Fong.
- ☐ D So Chester could see Chinatown.

b) Why did Mario go to Chinatown this time?

- ☐ A To find out what Crickets eat.
- ☐ B To have Chinese food.
- ☐ C To read Chinese stories.
- ☐ D To meet Sai Fong's friend.

2. Collect facts about Mario's trip to Chinatown from this Chapter. Put the details in the right space below to describe what Mario saw, heard, did, ate, said and thought about.

What Mario Saw	What Mario Heard
What Mario Did	What Mario Ate
What Mario Said	What Mario Thought



## Chapter Nine

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. Why does Mario go back to Sai Fong in Chinatown?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why do you think the Chinese men got all dressed up for dinner?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What did Sai Fong tell Mario to feed Chester?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Literary Lesson: In this Chapter, the author uses different words to represent sounds. Go back through the Chapter and find all the words that were used to represent sounds. Then, list the words and explain what sounds they represent.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Journaling Prompt

Write about a special meal that you have had. Describe what you wore, what you ate, who was there, how it made you feel, and why it was special.



## Chapters 1 to 3

### Write a Post Card Home

Chester is writing to his friend the bullfrog back home on a post card. He has only space for 5 sentences. What is the most important thing that happened in the story that he would write about on his post card? Where did it happen? Put a picture of the place on the front of the postcard. On the back of the picture, write a 5 sentence note to the bullfrog back home about what important event happened in New York City.

Mr. Bullfrog  
3 Marsh Place  
Connecticut, MA  
USA



## Chapter 6

### A Word of Advice

Imagine Chester had a cousin who is coming to visit him. If you were Chester, what advice would you give to his cousin who is coming to Times Square, New York City? What would Chester tell him to bring, and why? What would Chester tell him to be careful about and why? What would Chester tell him that he should see and do and why? Now, write Chester's cousin a letter telling him all your good advice.



## Word Search Puzzle

Find the following words from the story. The words are written horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and some are even backwards.

aria	muffle	subway	bass	opera
editor	purring	tenor	enchanted	recital
frantic	solo	conductor	hymns	soot
encores	chirp	jinx	fold	melancholy
Orpheus	rummaged	soprano	perfect pitch	shuttle

c	o	n	d	u	c	t	o	r	n	f	t
h	r	p	a	d	f	w	o	e	c	x	s
i	p	u	e	g	f	t	x	c	n	l	h
r	h	r	v	r	i	e	f	i	h	s	u
p	e	r	q	d	a	n	j	t	s	f	t
o	u	i	e	d	l	o	f	a	e	r	t
n	s	n	z	n	x	r	b	l	n	a	l
a	m	g	n	t	n	a	h	c	n	e	
r	u	s	u	b	w	a	y	s	o	t	s
p	f	a	e	g	a	m	m	u	r	i	o
o	f	c	p	a	n	t	t	b	e	c	o
s	l	g	i	s	o	l	o	q	s	a	t
p	e	r	f	e	c	t	p	i	t	c	h
f	a	m	e	l	a	n	c	h	o	l	y



## Comprehension Quiz

Answer each question in a complete sentence.

- Chester came to Times Square by accident. Describe how Chester ended up in Times Square, New York. Make sure to name 3 things that happened to bring him there.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Mario said Chester was a 'lucky bug.' Name two things Chester and his friends do that are bad luck for the Bellinis.  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
- What did Mario give Chester to sleep in?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What two games did Mario and Chester play?  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Sai Fong tells Mario the story of the first cricket. How is Chester similar to the first cricket?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Chester is 'noble' and honorable. He does the right thing, even when it is a hard thing to do. Give 2 examples of when Chester acts honorably.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What is the biggest problem the Bellinis have? How does Chester help them solve this problem?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SUBTOTAL: /13

## What a Character!

What does Tucker think about? What does he love? What does he treasure? What are his weaknesses?... Using the drawing of a mouse below, find facts from the book that tell you about Tucker.

What does he listen to?

What does he like to watch?

What does he own?

What does he love to eat/drink?

What does he like to do?

What is he really good at?

What or who keeps him going, safe, and on good behaviour?

What and who does he love?

Where does he go?

What is his weakness?

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

After You Read 



## Chapter One

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. Mario says: "Mama and Papa are picking me up on the way home. They went to visit some friends. Saturday's the only chance they have." Why would Saturday be the only chance they have?

2. Mario yells: "Hey wait!" .... "It's only twenty-five cents. You've got a quarter coming." Why does he do this?

3. Paul, the conductor, pays too much for the newspaper. Why does he do this?

4. Read the last paragraph of Chapter One. Write the correct word from the last paragraph of Chapter One to complete each sentence.

a) He had heard the \_\_\_\_\_ of the subway trains and the \_\_\_\_\_ their iron wheels make when they go around a corner.

b) From above, through the iron grilles that open onto the streets, he heard the \_\_\_\_\_ of the rubber tires of automobiles, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of their horns, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of their brakes.

c) And he had heard the \_\_\_\_\_ of voices when the station was full of human beings, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the dogs that some of them had on leashes.

d) Birds, the pigeons of New York, the cats and even the high \_\_\_\_\_ of airplanes above the city Tucker had heard.

### Journaling Prompt

Write like an author. Take a moment to write about all the sounds you hear at one time during the day. Try to use as many different words that you can to describe the sounds you hear.

1.

They work many hours and didn't have much free time. Mario was able to work late on Saturday nights.

2.

Answers may vary. Paul had paid him too much, and Mario is an honest boy.

3.

Answers may vary. Paul feels bad for Mario and his family, and he is generous.

4.

a) shriek, rumble

b) screeching, hooting, howling

c) babble, barking

d) purring

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1.

Answers may vary. Students should suggest the chirping of a cricket, based upon the title of the book.

2.

Answers will vary.

### Vocabulary

1. B

2. H

3. F

4. J

5. C

6. D

7. A

8. G

9. I

10. E

14

1.

a) cricket

b) matchbox

c) chocolate

d) Bellini

e) newsstand

2.

a) lucky

b) screens

c) temperature

d) said

15

1.

Sentences may vary; page numbers will vary; Chapter 2 "Mario"; "He was a peaceful man and always tried to head off arguments."

2.

Chester is sad and frightened or nervous. Reasons will vary, but may include: "wistfully"; "I'm a country cricket"; "I've been lying over there for 3 days not knowing what to do."

3.

Three days.

4.

Hiding in the corner, trying to figure out what to do. Reasons will vary.

5.

Answers may vary. Tucker is a very friendly animal.

6.

Predictions will vary, but may include: the cat will attack Tucker (due to own knowledge of cats and mice); the cat is friends with Tucker (due to impressions of cover art).

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EASY

## The Cricket in Times Square

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- **RSL.3.1** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **RSL.3.2** Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- **RSL.3.3** Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- **RSL.3.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from non-literal language.
- **RSL.3.5** Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
- **RSL.3.6** Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.
- **RSL.3.7** Explain how specific aspects of a text’s illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story.
- **RSL.3.10** By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **RSL.4.1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **RSL.4.2** Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- **RSL.4.3** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.
- **RSL.4.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology.
- **RSL.4.6** Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.
- **RSL.4.10** By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- **RSFS.3.3** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. **A)** Identify and know the meaning of the most common prefixes and derivational suffixes. **B)** Decode words with common Latin suffixes. **C)** Decode multi-syllable words. **d.** Read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.
- **RSFS.3.4** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. **A)** Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. **B)** Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings **C)** Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
- **RSFS.4.3** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. **A)** Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.
- **RSFS.4.4** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. **A)** Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. **B)** Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. **C)** Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
- **WS.3.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. **A)** Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons. **B)** Provide reasons that support the opinion. **C)** Use linking words and phrases to connect opinion and reasons. **D)** Provide a concluding statement or section.
- **WS.3.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. **A)** Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension. **B)** Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details. **C)** Use linking words and phrases to connect ideas within categories of information. **D)** Provide a concluding statement or section.
- **WS.3.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. **A)** Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. **B)** Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations. **C)** Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order. **D)** Provide a sense of closure.
- **WS.3.4** With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.
- **WS.3.7** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
- **WS.3.8** Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
- **WS.4.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. **A)** Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose. **B)** Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details. **C)** Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases. **D)** Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.
- **WS.4.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. **A)** Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. **B)** Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations. **C)** Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events. **D)** Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely. **E)** Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
- **WS.4.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **WS.4.7** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **WS.4.8** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
- **WS.4.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. **A)** Apply *grade 4 Reading standards* to literature. **B)** Apply *grade 4 Reading standards* to informational texts.