

Lesson 14

What Are Plays Made Of?



Learning Target



Describing how each scene of a drama builds on the one before it will help you understand what you read.

- ▶ **Read** A **drama**, or **play**, is a story that is performed by actors on a stage. Most plays are divided into parts, called **scenes**. The events and actions build from one scene to the next to tell the story.

The pictures below show four scenes from a play about Cinderella. How do the four scenes build on each other?

You can't go to the ball!
You don't have nice clothes!



Now your dress is pretty!
But at midnight, it will turn
back to a regular dress.



Oh no! Time's up!
I have to go!



At last! The shoe fits! But
please know—I don't care
what your clothes look like.



► **Think** Look again at the scenes from *Cinderella*. Complete the chart by describing each scene.

Scenes from <i>Cinderella</i>	
Scene 1	• <i>Cinderella is dressed in rags and washing the floor.</i>
Scene 2	
Scene 3	
Scene 4	

► **Talk** Using the information in your chart, take turns with your partner describing how each scene builds on the one before it.



Academic Talk

Use these words to talk about the text.

- **scenes**
- **drama**
- **play**

Danger in DeepSpace

by Annika Pedersen

Scene 1: *The deck of a spaceship. A young woman, Commander Lyla, is standing at the control panel, talking to the pilot. A robot-like figure enters and walks to her side.*

Lyla: *(to robot)* Well, Sam, I hope we don't have any trouble getting to Planet Juno. The people there are desperate for our help.

Sam: Yes. We must get the medicine to them as soon as possible.

(Just then an alarm sounds, and a red light flashes over the control panel.)

Lyla: *(looking at controls)* There's someone—or something—in the cargo bay! Come on, Sam. We need to make sure that medicine is safe.



Scene 2: *Lyla and Sam slowly enter the cargo bay of the spaceship.*

Sam: *(to Lyla)* If there's trouble, let's hope our plan works. *(Just then a huge creature enters. It has an octopus-like head and six arms. It wears a white lab coat.)*

Creature: I am Dr. Blurg from the Planet Mord, and I will be taking your precious supplies. But first, I will put you to sleep.

(Dr. Blurg sprays a green smoke toward Lyla, who falls to the floor. Then he pulls a handful of wires from Sam's back. Sam falls next to Lyla.)

Close Reader Habits

Underline key events in Scene 1 and one in Scene 2.

Explore

How does the second scene of *Danger in Deep Space* build on the first scene?



The beginning of a play usually shows where the story takes place. It also introduces the main characters and a problem. The scenes that follow build on that problem.

Think

- 1 Complete the chart with details from each scene of the play that help you understand the situation on the spaceship.

Details from <i>Danger in Deep Space</i>	
Scene 1	
Scene 2	

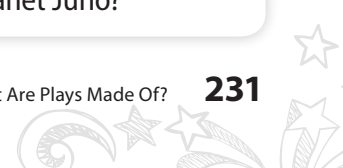
Talk

- 2 Think about the text. Talk to your partner about what problems Lyla and Sam will have to solve.

Write

- 3 **Short Response** How could the events in Scene 2 affect the mission that was described in Scene 1? Use the space provided on page 234 to write your answer.

HINT Why are supplies needed on Planet Juno?



Danger in DeepSpace Continued

Scene 3: *Back on the deck of the spaceship. Dr. Blurg is at the spaceship's controls, all six arms working at once.*

Dr. Blurg: My plan is working perfectly! I'll dump Lyla and her helpless robot on some safe planet. Then I will return to my own planet with the medicine. I'll be a hero! *(Sam enters. Then Lyla appears, makes an impossible leap through the air, and lands next to Dr. Blurg.)*

Sam: I think there's been a change of plans, Dr. Blurg.

Dr. Blurg: But this is impossible! *(He looks to Lyla.)* My secret sleeping gas should have put you to sleep for at least 24 Earth hours! *(Dr. Blurg sprays Lyla again with the green gas. She fakes a yawn. Then she jumps ten feet in the air, lands, and shrugs.)*

Dr. Blurg: And you, robot. I cut your power supply! How . . . ?

Sam: Things are not what they seem, Dr. Blurg. *(Sam takes off his "head," which is more like a space helmet.)* You see, you've got things backwards. I'm the human. And Lyla, she's the most amazing "machine" in space.

Dr. Blurg: Why, she's hardly more than a girl! I'll take care of her. *(He goes after Lyla, who grabs Dr. Blurg and lifts him over her head with one hand. Dr. Blurg shouts.)* You tricked me!

Sam: The spies we have on your planet told us that you might try something like this. We were ready for you.

Dr. Blurg: But my poor planet! We won't survive without your special medicine.

Sam: If you're willing to make peace, we will get medicine to your people. Now let's take this ship to your Planet Mord. *(Lyla sets Dr. Blurg down and gently brushes him off.)*



Close Reader Habits

How do the events in Scene 3 build on Scenes 1 and 2 to solve the problem? **Underline** events that help solve the problem. **Draw a box** around the sentence that describes the solution.



To see how events in a play build on each other, look for the problem and then the solution.

Think

- 1** This question has two parts. Answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

How do the events in Scene 3 build on the events from Scene 2 in *Danger in Deep Space*?

- A** Scene 2 shows that Lyla and Sam are afraid of Dr. Blurg, but Scene 3 shows them finding the courage to fight back.
- B** Scene 2 shows that Lyla and Sam were not prepared for a problem, and Scene 3 shows the result of that mistake.
- C** Scene 2 describes the plan Lyla and Sam have ready, and Scene 3 shows them putting that plan into action.
- D** Scene 2 makes it seem that Dr. Blurg has overcome Lyla and Sam, but Scene 3 shows that they actually had tricked him.

Part B

Which **two** details from the play **best** support the answer to Part A?

- A** "Lyla and Sam slowly enter the cargo bay of the spaceship." (Scene 2)
- B** "If there's trouble, let's hope our plan works." (Scene 2)
- C** "Dr. Blurg sprays a green smoke toward Lyla, who falls to the floor." (Scene 2)
- D** "Then I will return to my own planet with the medicine." (Scene 3)
- E** "The spies we have on your planet told us that you might try something like this." (Scene 3)
- F** "If you're willing to make peace, we will get medicine to your people." (Scene 3)

Talk

- 2** Talk to your partner about what surprised you in Scene 3. What details in earlier scenes caused you to feel that way?



Write

- 3 Short Response** How do Lyla and Sam trick Dr. Blurg? Show how details in Scene 2 lead to Dr. Blurg being fooled. Use the space provided on page 235 to write your answer.

HINT What does Dr. Blurg say in Scene 3 after Sam and Lyla enter the room?



Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 231.

Danger in DeepSpace

3 Short Response How could the events in Scene 2 affect the mission that was described in Scene 1?

HINT Why are supplies needed on Planet Juno?



Don't forget to check your writing.

Read

WORDS TO KNOW

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- groomed
- glossy
- loped
- slunk

from **HOW THE ANIMALS GOT THEIR BEAUTIFUL COATS**

a play based on a Zulu folktale, retold by Pat Betteley

Characters: Storyteller, Tortoise, Leopard, Zebra, and Hyena

ACT 1, SCENE 1

- 1 **Storyteller:** Sakubona, visitors. Welcome to our village. Sit down by the fire, and I will tell you a story. You all know that Zulus are very careful about their looks. Even the animals in this land are well groomed. But this was not always so. In the beginning, all animals in Africa were a dull brown color. Hyena was not only drab but also mean. He liked to play tricks on smaller animals. One day he knotted a piece of vine around one of Tortoise's feet and hung him from a high branch. Then Hyena ran away, laughing.
- 2 **Tortoise:** Help, someone! Please, help me!
- 3 **Leopard:** Calm down, little one. I'll help you.
- 4 **Tortoise:** Mr. Leopard, please hurry. I don't want to die!
- 5 **Storyteller:** Leopard quickly lowered Tortoise and untied him.
- 6 **Tortoise:** Thank you, friend Leopard. You could have made a meal of me, but instead you saved my life. Please let me do something for you in return.
- 7 **Leopard:** (*chuckling*) What can a little tortoise like you do for a big leopard like me?
- 8 **Tortoise:** I can make you beautiful.
- 9 **Leopard:** (*smiling*) Very well. I accept your offer.

ACT 1, SCENE 2

- 10 **Storyteller:** Tortoise mixed a silver-yellow color from the petals of flowers and painted Leopard's coat.



11 **Zebra:** My, my, that is the most handsome coat in the forest.

Where did you get it?

12 **Leopard:** My friend, Mr. Tortoise, made it for me.

13 **Zebra:** I must find him. Maybe he'll make one for me as well.

14 **Storyteller:** Zebra hurried down the path until he came upon Tortoise.

15 **Zebra:** Oh, Mr. Tortoise, Mr. Leopard's coat is so handsome. Please paint my coat, too.

16 **Storyteller:** Tortoise painted black and white stripes all over Zebra's coat. He finished up by painting Zebra's dainty hoofs a glossy black.

17 **Zebra:** Thank you, Tortoise. These stripes will be perfect for hiding in the tall grass.

ACT 1, SCENE 3

18 **Storyteller:** Zebra went along down the path. Soon he met Hyena.

19 **Hyena:** (*sneering*) Hey, whered you get that coat?

20 **Zebra:** From my friend, Mr. Tortoise. Do you like it?

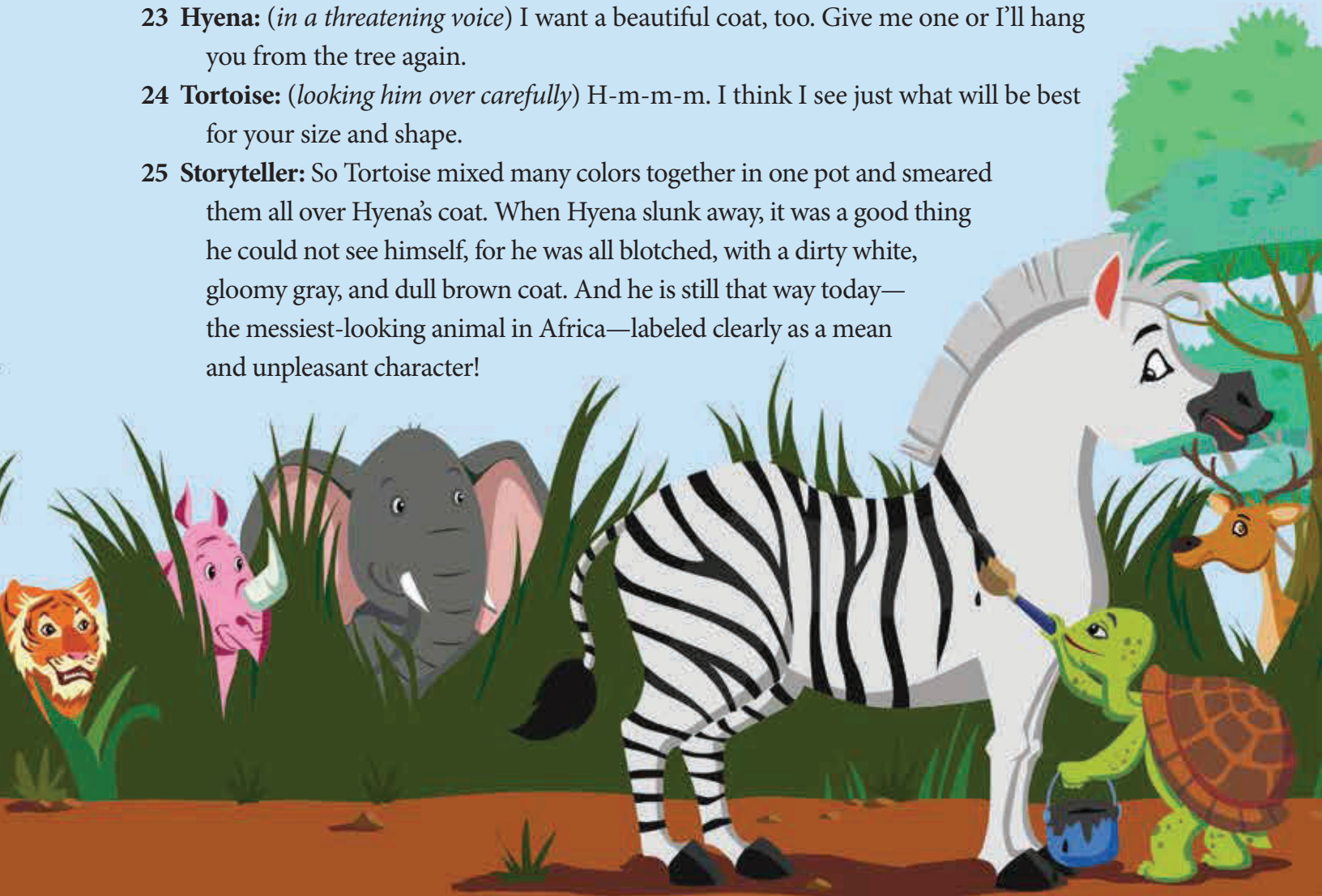
21 **Hyena:** I'd never wear it, but it fits you, I suppose. Where's Tortoise?


22 **Storyteller:** Zebra pointed down the path, and Hyena loped off to find Tortoise.

23 **Hyena:** (*in a threatening voice*) I want a beautiful coat, too. Give me one or I'll hang you from the tree again.

24 **Tortoise:** (*looking him over carefully*) H-m-m-m. I think I see just what will be best for your size and shape.

25 **Storyteller:** So Tortoise mixed many colors together in one pot and smeared them all over Hyena's coat. When Hyena slunk away, it was a good thing he could not see himself, for he was all blotched, with a dirty white, gloomy gray, and dull brown coat. And he is still that way today—the messiest-looking animal in Africa—labeled clearly as a mean and unpleasant character!



 **Think and Write** Use what you learned from reading the play to respond to the following questions.

- 1 What does the storyteller say in Scene 1 that hints at what the play will be about?
 - A that the animals were once all a dull brown color
 - B that the leopard is kind to the tortoise
 - C that the tortoise will make the leopard beautiful
 - D that the hyena was both drab and mean

- 2 How do the events of Scene 2 build on the events of Scene 1?
 - A The tortoise promises to make the leopard beautiful in Scene 1, and he keeps his promise in Scene 2.
 - B The hyena plays a trick on the tortoise in Scene 1, and the tortoise makes plans to get even in Scene 2.
 - C The leopard saves the tortoise in Scene 1, and the tortoise saves the zebra in Scene 2.
 - D The tortoise makes the leopard beautiful in Scene 1, and the zebra becomes jealous of the leopard in Scene 2.

- 3 What does the word *blotched* mean as it is used in paragraph 25?
 - A coated in mud
 - B tangled in the weeds
 - C covered with patches of color
 - D wet and slimy

- 4** How do the events in Scene 3 build on the events from Scene 1?
- A** Scene 1 describes the beauty of the animals in Africa, and Scene 3 shows how they got that way.
 - B** Scene 1 shows how mean the hyena is to the tortoise, and Scene 3 shows how the tortoise makes sure the hyena's appearance matches his actions.
 - C** Scene 1 describes the kindness of the leopard, and Scene 3 shows how the tortoise repays that kindness.
 - D** Scene 1 shows how cruel the hyena is, and Scene 3 shows the hyena learning to be kinder to others.
- 5** Which quotation **best** helps the reader understand how Scene 3 relates to Scene 1?
- A** "Hey, where'd you get that coat?" (paragraph 19)
 - B** "Zebra pointed down the path, and Hyena loped off to find Tortoise." (paragraph 22)
 - C** "When Hyena slunk away, it was a good thing he could not see himself. ..." (paragraph 25)
 - D** "And he is still that way today ... labeled clearly as a mean and unpleasant character!" (paragraph 25)



Learning Target

Explain how the events in each scene of the plays helped you understand what you read. Use an example in your answer.
