

# THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

Readers'  
Theater Script  
and Directions  
Included!

Comprehension  
Questions  
Included!

Handouts to  
Teach Theme  
Included!



Handouts to Teach  
How to Answer  
Open-Ended  
Response Questions  
Included!



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Thank you for purchasing this teaching unit. We hope you love it, and we look forward to your feedback!

Tammy and Shannon



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(Except for your own classroom)



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By Shannon Temple and Tammy Lewis

ELA Core Plans

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## Included in this teaching unit...

- Readers' Theater- There is a script that you can print and distribute for a fun and effective way to read the story. Plus, directions are included for different ways to read the script. You have the option of reading together as a class or in small groups.
- Comprehension check – There are five basic comprehension questions that you can give after the initial reading.
- Irony in the story – This handout defines the types of irony and has students identify two of the types which are at work in the story.
- Theme – There are several handouts included to guide students in determining the theme of this story, including a handout with important tips when finding the theme.
- Plot diagram – A handout is provided which explains the parts of plot and gives tips on figuring out the parts. Plus, there is a handout so students can map out the parts of plot for *The Emperor's New Clothes*.
- Constructive Response Questions – A handout is included giving tips on how to correctly answer a constructive response question. A very useful handout is provided that shows correct and incorrect ways to answer a constructive response question. Then, of course, there are constructive response questions based on the story for students to answer.
- A fun poetry activity is included as well!
- Answer keys are provided!

## Using Readers' Theater In the Classroom

Students build fluency through reading out loud, and in the upper level elementary and middle school classrooms, what better way to allow this than with readers' theater! If you want to get your students' attention, read the beginning of this story with a monotone voice until they stop you and ask you why you are doing this. Explain that when reading aloud, you should always read with expression. Next, reread the section changing your voice to match each character.

Option 1: Number each part, and read around the room.

Go around the room allowing students to read the lines in order. For example, the student in desk 1 reads line 1, the student in desk 2 reads line 2, student in desk 3 reads line 3, and so on until the entire story is complete. You will have to have your students read more than one line each, but this way students will not play a particular "part". Before starting, allow the students to find the lines that they will read and read them to themselves silently. Tell them that there are a few hard words and that they should raise their hands if they need help pronouncing one before you begin. That way, you can discreetly go to a child's desk to help him/her with the word. Also, this makes all students feel comfortable with reading out loud. Another option, is to have the students read the entire play for homework the day before reading it out loud in class.

Option 2: Whole class read

There are 15 parts, so you could assign parts to students and allow them to read their parts out loud as a class. Give some time for students to highlight their parts and read them to themselves before reading out loud. Tell them to raise their hands if they see a word that they do not know. This will help students tremendously!

Option 3: Allow students to read the story in groups.

Divide your class into groups. There are fifteen speaking parts, but several parts can be combined. For example, one student could read all three narrator parts, one could read all of the attendants' parts, and one could read all of the swindlers' parts. This would cut it down to 9 parts. Some of the other parts could be read by the same person. For example, the same student who reads the "People" part could also read the "Master of Ceremonies" part. Use the chart that has the parts listed to make your reading plan for groups.

After assigning parts in each group, allow some quiet time before beginning so that students can read over their parts and ask for help with words they may not know how to pronounce. Encourage them to read with expression! Have the groups read through the script. If a group finishes early, have them read it again, perhaps switching up the parts. Once each group has read through the script once, stop the class. If you want, you could randomly pick one group to perform for the class.

Most students greatly enjoy readers' theater. The key is making sure they feel comfortable with the part that they will be reading. If you have struggling readers, you may want to give them the script the day before the reading and let them practice reading it at home.

Have fun!

The Emperor's New Clothes  
Readers' Theater

Part	Number of Lines	Read By
Narrator 1	12	
Narrator 2	10	
Narrator 3	10	
Emperor	7	
Minister	3	
Swindler 1	4	
Swindler 2	2	
Honest Official	3	
Attendant 1	5	
Attendant 2	5	
Attendant 3	5	
Master of Ceremonies	1	
People	1	
Child	1	
Child's Father	1	

## Readers' Theater

**Narrator 1:** Many years ago there lived an Emperor who was so fond of new clothes that he spent all his money on them. He did not care for his soldiers, or for the theater, or for driving in the woods, except to show off his new clothes.

**Narrator 2:** He had an outfit for every hour of the day, and just as they say of a king, "He is in the council chamber," so they always said of him, "The Emperor is in his dressing room."

**Narrator 3:** The great city where he lived was very lively, and every day many strangers came there. One day two swindlers came. They claimed that they were weavers and said they could weave the finest cloth imaginable. Their colors and patterns, they said, were not only exceptionally beautiful, but the clothes made of this material possessed the wonderful quality of being invisible to any man who was unfit for his office, or who was hopelessly stupid.

**Emperor:** (Thinking out loud to himself) Those must be wonderful clothes. If I wore them, I should be able to find out which men in my empire were unfit for their posts, and I could tell the clever from the stupid. Yes, I must have this cloth woven for me without delay.

**Narrator 1:** So the emperor gave a lot of money to the two swindlers in advance, so that they could set to work at once.

**Narrator 2:** They set up two looms and pretended to be very hard at work, but they had nothing on the looms. They asked for the finest silk and the most precious gold, all of which they put into their own bags, and worked at the empty looms till late into the night.

**Emperor:** (Thinking out loud to himself) I should very much like to know how they are getting on with the cloth.

**Narrator 3:** The emperor felt rather uneasy when he remembered that whoever was not fit for his office could not see it. He believed, of course, that he had nothing to fear for himself, yet he thought he would send somebody else first to see how things were progressing.

**Narrator 1:** Everybody in the town knew what a wonderful property the cloth possessed, and all were anxious to see how bad or stupid their neighbors were.

**Emperor:** (Thinking out loud to himself) I will send my honest old minister to the weavers. He can judge best how the cloth looks, for he is intelligent, and nobody is better fitted for his office than he.

**Narrator 2:** So the good old minister went into the room where the two swindlers sat working at the empty looms.

**Minister:** (Thinking to himself out loud) Heaven help us! (Opening his eyes wide) Why, I cannot see anything at all.

**Narrator 3:** The minister thought these things, but he was careful not to say them out loud.

**Narrator 1:** Both swindlers bade him be so good as to step closer and asked him if he did not admire the exquisite pattern and the beautiful colors. They pointed to the empty looms, and the poor old minister opened his eyes even wider, but he could see nothing, for there was nothing to be seen.

**Emperor:** (Thinking out loud to himself) Good Lord! Can I be so stupid? I should never have thought so, and nobody must know it! Is it possible that I am not fit for my office? No, no, I must not tell anyone that I couldn't see the cloth.

**Swindler 1:** Well, have you got nothing to say?

**Minister:** (Peering through his glasses) Oh, it is very pretty – quite enchanting! What a pattern, and what colors! I shall tell the Emperor that I am very much pleased with it.

**Swindler 2:** Well, we are glad of that.

**Narrator 2:** The weavers described the colors to him and explained the curious pattern. The old minister listened carefully, so that he might tell the Emperor what they said.

**Narrator 3:** Now the swindlers asked for more money, more silk, and more gold, which they required for weaving. They kept it all for themselves, and not a thread came near the looms, but they continued, as before, working at the empty looms.

**Narrator 1:** Soon afterward, the Emperor sent another honest official to the weavers to see how they were getting on and if the cloth was nearly finished. Like the old minister, he looked and looked but could see nothing, as there was nothing to be seen.

**Swindler 1:** Is it not a beautiful piece of cloth?

**Narrator 2:** The swindlers explained the magnificent pattern, which, however, was not there at all.

**Honest official:** (Thinking out loud to himself) I am not stupid, so it must be that I am unfit for my high post. It is ludicrous, but I must not let anyone know it.

**Narrator 3:** So, like the minister, this official praised the cloth, which he did not see, and expressed his pleasure at the beautiful colors and the fine pattern.

**Honest official:** (to the emperor) Yes, it is quite enchanting.

**Narrator 1:** Everybody in the whole town was talking about the beautiful cloth. At last the Emperor wished to see it himself while it was still on the loom. With a whole company of chosen courtiers, including the two honest councilors who had already been there, he went to the two clever swindlers, who were now weaving away as hard as they could but without using any thread.

**Honest official**: Is it not magnificent? Look, Your Majesty, what a pattern!

**Minister**: What colors!

**Narrator 2**: The two pointed to the empty looms, for they imagined the others could see the cloth.

**Emperor**: (Thinking out loud to himself) What is this? I do not see anything at all. This is terrible! Am I stupid? Am I unfit to be Emperor? That would indeed be the most dreadful thing that could happen to me!

(Out loud so others can hear him) Yes, it is very beautiful. It has our highest approval.

**Narrator 3**: The Emperor nodded contentedly and gazed at the empty loom, for he did not want to say that he could see nothing. All the attendants who were with him looked and looked, and although they could not see anything more than the others, they said, just like the Emperor...

**Attendants 1, 2, & 3**: Yes, it is very fine.

**Narrator 1**: They all advised him to wear the new magnificent clothes at a great procession that was soon to take place.

**Attendant 1**: It is magnificent!

**Attendant 2**: Beautiful!

**Attendant 3**: Excellent!

**Narrator 2**: The Emperor rewarded each of the swindlers the cross of the order of knighthood to be worn in their buttonholes, and the title of Imperial Court Weavers.

**Narrator 3**: Throughout the night preceding the procession, the swindlers were up working, and they had more than sixteen candles burning. People could see how busy they were, getting the Emperor's new clothes ready.

**Narrator 1**: They pretended to take the cloth from the loom, they snipped the air with big scissors, they sewed with needles without any thread, and at last, one of the swindlers said:

**Swindler 1**: Now the Emperor's new clothes are ready!

**Narrator 2**: The Emperor, followed by all his noblest courtiers, then came in. Both the swindlers held up one arm as if they held something.

**Swindler 2**: See, here are the trousers! Here is the coat! Here is the cloak! They are all as light as a cobweb! They make one feel as if one had nothing on at all, but that is just the beauty of it.

**Attendants 1, 2, and 3**: Yes!



**Narrator 3**: The attendants said Yes, but they could not see anything, for there was nothing to see.

**Swindler 1**: Will it please Your Majesty graciously to take off your clothes? Then we may help Your Majesty into the new clothes before the large mirror!

**Narrator 1**: So the Emperor took off all his clothes, and the swindlers pretended to put on the new clothes, one piece after another. Then the Emperor looked at himself in the glass from every angle.

**Attendants 1, 2, 3**: Oh, how well they look! How well they fit!

**Attendant 1**: What a pattern!

**Attendant 2**: What a pattern!

**Attendant 3**: What Colors! Magnificent indeed!

**Master of Ceremonies**: They are waiting outside with the canopy which is to be borne over Your Majesty in the procession.

**Emperor**: Well, I am quite ready. Doesn't my suit fit me beautifully?

**Narrator 2**: The Emperor turned once more to the mirror so that people would think he was admiring his garments.

**Narrator 3**: The chamberlains, who were to carry the train, fumbled with their hands on the ground as if they were lifting up a train. Then they pretended to hold something up in their hands. They didn't dare let people know that they could not see anything.

**Narrator 1**: And so the Emperor marched in the procession under the beautiful canopy, and all who saw him in the street and out of the windows yelled out their praise.

**People**: How marvelous the Emperor's new suit is! What a long train he has! How well it fits him!

**Narrator 1**: Nobody would let the others know that he saw nothing, for then he would have been shown to be unfit for his office or too stupid. None of the Emperor's clothes had ever been such a success.

**Little child**: But, he has nothing on at all.

**Child's father**: Good heavens! Hear what the innocent child says!

**Narrator 2**: Each person began to whisper to the other what the child had said.

**Attendant 1**: He has nothing on – a little child says he has nothing on at all!

**Attendant 2**: He has nothing on at all!

**Attendant 3**: The child says he has nothing on at all!

**Narrator 3**: And the Emperor too was feeling very worried, for it seemed to him that they were right.

**Emperor**: (Thinking out loud to himself so no one could hear him) All the same, I must go through with the procession.

**Narrator 1**: And the Emperor held himself stiffer than ever, and the chamberlains walked on, holding up the train which was not there at all.

# The Emperor's New Clothes

## Comprehension Questions

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do the swindlers do to the Emperor?
  - a. They steal all of his fine clothes and replace them with rags.
  - b. They trick him by making "invisible" clothes.
  - c. They make up a rumor about the Emperor and spread it throughout the city.
  - d. They sew his hats together so that he cannot wear them any longer.
  
2. Anyone who could not see the clothes were either unfit for his office or \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. very stupid
  - b. blind
  - c. ugly
  - d. unfaithful
  
3. The swindlers asked for more \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. thread
  - b. rain
  - c. clothes
  - d. money
  
4. True or false? The Emperor really could see the cloth.
  - a. true
  - b. false
  
5. Who finally announces the truth in the story?
  - a. the minister
  - b. the swindlers
  - c. a friend of the Emperor's mother
  - d. a small child

# The Emperor's New Clothes

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Date \_\_\_\_\_

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There are three types of irony:  
verbal, situational, and dramatic

- ❖ Verbal irony is like sarcasm. It is the use of words meaning something different than what they appear to mean.
  - ❖ Example: If someone makes an *F* on a paper, and you say, "Way to go, genius."
- ❖ Dramatic irony occurs when the reader is aware of something that one or more of the characters are not aware of. Dramatic irony creates suspense.
- ❖ Situational irony occurs when the exact opposite of what you expect to happen happens.
  - ❖ Example: A fire station burns down.

How is dramatic irony at work in this story?

How is situational irony at work in this story?

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- ❖ Situational irony occurs when the exact opposite of what you expect to happen happens.
  - ❖ Example: A fire station burns down.

How is dramatic irony at work in this story?

The reader is aware from the beginning of the story that the weavers were really swindlers and that the cloth never existed. The characters do not learn what the reader knows until the end.

How is situational irony at work in this story?

It is ironic that a man who has so many clothes (*He had an outfit for every hour of the day*) ends up without any clothes on and naked in the street in front of everyone.

# Notes to Give

If you prefer to have your students write the things to remember about theme, pass out the first handout and have them take the following notes.

## Things to Remember About Theme:

- Theme is what the author wants you to remember most.
- Occasionally the theme is stated directly in the story, play, novel/passage.
- Most often, the theme is unstated and is revealed to the reader gradually throughout the story.
- Theme is written as a statement, not just a word.
- Different readers can have completely different theme statements. This is fine as long as each reader can support his/her idea with evidence from the story.



Some Things To Remember About Theme



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## Finding a Theme

### A Partial List of Common Universal Themes

When first trying to determine a theme, consider common universal themes like the ones listed below. Once you have chosen a few words that match the story or novel, expand one or more of the words into a message about life.

- Fear
- Acceptance
- Greed
- Beauty
- Honesty
- Death
- Heroism
- Escape
- Love
- Foolishness
- Patriotism
- Hope
- Betrayal
- Power
- Family
- Friendship
- Duty
- Survival
- Conformity
- Deception
- Loss
- Pride
- Suffering

**What is the theme from this story?**



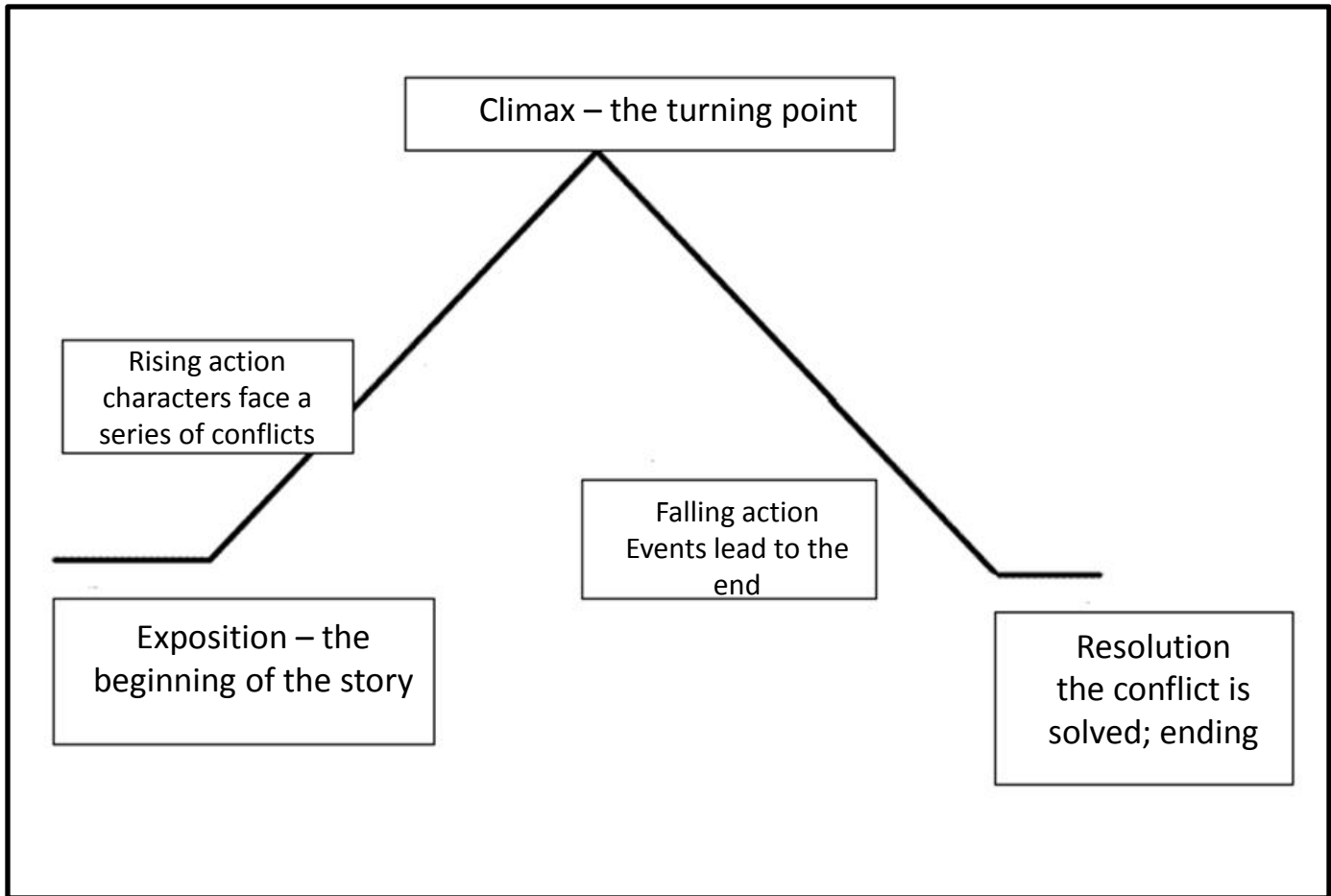
**How is this theme true for the main characters in this story?**



**How is this theme true for life in general?**



## Plot Diagram



### Helpful Tips

- When analyzing the plot, it is helpful to figure out the climax first. Once you have it figured out, it is easy to determine the exposition, rising action, falling action, and resolution.
- The climax of a story will never be near the beginning because the only parts left after it are the falling action and resolution.
- The climax is the turning point. This means things change.
- After the climax, there is only the falling action and the resolution, so it will be an important event near the end of the story.

# Plot

Exposition

Rising Action

Climax

Falling Action

Resolution

# Answer Key

## Parts of Plot

**Exposition** – The Emperor loved clothes and did not care about much else. He lived in a big city and one day is visited by two swindlers.

**Rising Action** – The swindlers claimed that they could weave the best cloth imaginable and that it would be invisible to anyone who was unfit for his office or stupid. The Swindlers pretended to make clothes but actually made nothing. The Emperor sent two men to judge the work. These two men could not see the cloth but did not tell anyone. The Emperor himself goes to see the clothes and pretends to see them, too afraid to admit that he did not.

**Climax** – The Emperor marched in the procession without any clothes on.

**Falling Action** – A boy announces that “he has nothing on at all.” People begin to whisper what the child has said.

**Resolution** – The Emperor becomes worried but continues to go on with the procession.

## **Constructive Response Question Tips:**

- Read through the question two times.
- Underline all of the things the question is asking you to do.
- When you begin your answer, reword the question.
- As you write your answer, make sure that you answer every part of the question.
- Support your answer by “pulling out” something from the text.
- Provide a wrap-up sentence at the end to conclude your response.

## **Textual Evidence Sentence Starters**

On page \_\_\_\_\_, the story states...

The author wrote...

The author states...

An example is...

According to the story...

The passage \_\_\_\_\_ proves \_\_\_\_\_

One example that shows this is...

Another example from the text is...

The author shows this by...

# Practice

## Defending Your Answers with Text

Often you will be required to return to the text to find a passage that “supports your answer”. When doing this, you must be careful in choosing the passage, and make sure it actually supports your answer.

**Sample Question:** The climax of a story is the story’s most interesting moment. It is the turning point of the story and a point at which the conflict will soon be resolved. What do you consider to be the climax of *The Emperor’s New Clothes*? Cite evidence that indicates that this is the climax.

**Incorrect Student Response:** The climax of “The Emperor’s New Clothes” is when the Emperor marches in the procession without any clothes. This is the climax because it is the most exciting part of the story.

**What is wrong with this response?**

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**Incorrect Student Response:** The climax of “The Emperor’s New Clothes” is when the Emperor walks in the procession without any clothes. The young boy announces the truth out loud when the Emperor walks in the procession, and then people begin to whisper. This is the most exciting part of the plot.

**What is wrong with this response?**

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**Correct Student Response:**

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# Answer Key

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**Incorrect Student Response:** The climax of “The Emperor’s New Clothes” is when the Emperor marches in the procession without any clothes. This is the climax because it is the most exciting part of the story.

**What is wrong with this response?** Answer provides no support from text.

**Incorrect Student Response:** The climax of “The Emperor’s New Clothes” is when the Emperor walks in the procession without any clothes. The young boy announces the truth out loud when the Emperor walks in the procession , and then people begin to whisper. . This is the most exciting part of the plot.

**What is wrong with this response?**

This strays from the purpose of the question, which is to explain why this part is the climax. This is more of a summary.

**Correct Student Response:** The climax of “The Emperor’s New Clothes” occurs when the Emperor walks out in front of everyone without any clothes. The reader has known all along that there were no actual clothes, but excitement is at its peak at this point because now the Emperor is parading himself for everyone to see. This part is also the turning point of the story because it is during the procession that a young boy announces “He has nothing on.” At this point, the Emperor is worried and must make a decision. The narrator states, “And the Emperor too was feeling very worried”. This is the turning point in the story because he had to make a decision of what to do. In the resolution that shortly follows, the Emperor decides to continue through the procession. He thinks to himself, “I must go through with the procession”. The Emperor marching in the procession is the climax because it is the most exciting part of the plot, because it is the turning point, and because after this, the falling action occurs and then the resolution.

# The Emperor's New Clothes

## Post-Reading Questions

Answer the following questions using the story to help you.

1. What is one word that could describe the Emperor? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

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2. What is one word that describes the swindlers? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

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3. Why does the Emperor send "two honest counselors " to see the cloth before he goes himself? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

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4. The word *swindler* means someone who profits by cheating or tricking someone else. Why does the narrator tell us early in the story that the two men who came to see the Emperor were two swindlers and not "weavers"?

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# The Emperor's New Clothes

## Post-Reading Questions **Sample Answers**

Answer the following questions using the story to help you.

1. What is one word that could describe the Emperor? Support your answer with evidence from the text. **Sample Answer**

One word to describe the Emperor is self-centered. The Emperor is consumed with himself and how he looks and does not care about others. According to the story, the Emperor "did not care for his soldiers, or for the theater, or for driving in the woods, except to show off his new clothes". This passage shows that he was consumed with himself.

2. What is one word that describes the swindlers? Support your answer with evidence from the text. **Sample Answer**

The word deceitful describes the swindlers. Their intentions from the start were to deceive the Emperor and take his money. According to the story, when the Emperor first met the swindlers "they claimed that they were weavers". They deceived him from the time they met him until the time of the procession when the Emperor walked out completely deceived.

3. Why does the Emperor send "two honest counselors " to see the cloth before he goes himself? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

The Emperor most likely sent two honest counselors ahead of him out of fear. He wanted to make sure they could see the cloth first. He probably felt that if they could see it, he would be able to see it as well. According to the story, the Emperor "felt rather uneasy when he remembered that whoever was not fit for his office could not see it." The Emperor was afraid that he may not be fit for his office.

4. The word *swindler* means someone who profits by cheating or tricking someone else. Why does the narrator tell us early in the story that the two men who came to see the Emperor were two swindlers and not "weavers"?

The author could have had the narrator reveal that the "weavers" were actually swindlers early on in the story to create suspense. This detail foreshadows that the Emperor will be deceived, and foreshadowing creates suspense.

## **Cinquain: a poem containing five lines**

Write a cinquain poem using a character or object found in the story as the basis of your poem. The cinquain format is listed below.

### Cinquain Poem Format

Line 1: a noun

Line 2: two adjectives to describe the noun in line one

Line 3: three -ing verbs

Line 4: a phrase describing the noun in line one

Line 5: a synonym for the noun in line one

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