

Reading Focus: Characters

► **What is a story character?** a person or an animal in a story

Guide a discussion about characters in the stories you have already read in Student Text A. Use examples such as the following:

Seth (person)	Little Bug (animal)	Philip (person)
Crow (animal)	Amber (person)	Digger (animal)

► **How do we learn about a character?** by what he looks like, what he says, and what he does

Direct the students to turn to pages 128–29 in the Student Text. Point out that this next selection in their reading book is taken from the book *A King for Brass Cobweb*.

► **Look at the picture on these pages. It is taken from the artwork on the book's cover. What kind of characters do you think will be in this story?** animals

► **The names of the characters in this story are listed in the box with the heading *Cast*. What do you think the word *Cast* means? Accept any reasonable answer, but draw the conclusion that *Cast* refers to all of the characters in the story.**

Explain that not all stories have the cast listed or all of the characters listed at the beginning. Only stories that are meant to be performed as plays or films have the cast or characters listed.

Read and discuss the names of the characters in the cast.

► **Are most of the characters people or animals?** animals

► **Which one might not be an animal?** Narrator

Explain that a narrator is not usually a character in the story. The narrator gives details and extra information about the story.

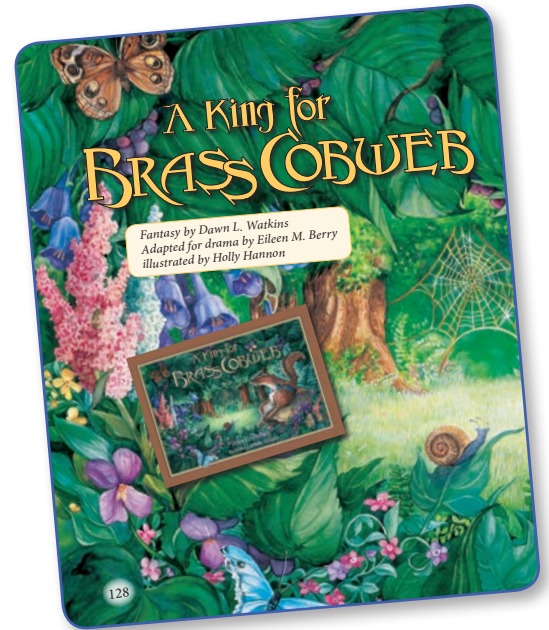
Purpose for Reading: Think as You Read

► **Look at the first few pages of this play, *A King for Brass Cobweb*. Notice how the text or the words are placed on the page. How is the text placed differently from the other stories you have read?** possible answers: divided into acts rather than parts or chapters; not written in paragraphs; separated into different characters' speaking parts; name of character and a colon come before what the character says

A story that is written to be acted out is called a *drama* or a play. Dramas or plays are often performed on a stage in front of an audience or surrounded by the audience. A written play usually includes the cast of characters at the beginning. It might also list props, or objects needed in the play. Some dramas or plays are divided into acts with several scenes in each act.

► **Do you think this play is realistic fiction or fantasy? How do you know?** fantasy; the animals are wearing clothes and walking on two feet, which could not happen in real life

► **Where do you think this story takes place?** possible answers: in a forest where there is a lake or a pond; a place called "Brass Cobweb"



You may want to highlight the authors and the illustrator of this selection. Explain that this drama was written by two authors, Dawn L. Watkins and Eileen M. Berry. Tell the students that the person who draws or illustrates the pictures for a story is called an artist or illustrator. The illustrator of this story is Holly Hannon.