



## The Cricket

retold by Joe Hayes

This is a story about two men who were *amigos*, which means they were friends.

One man was very rich. He had a fine ranch with many cattle. And he had a mule that was his pride and joy. It was a prize-winning mule.

His *amigo* was very poor. And he was lazy. He never worked, and he never paid his bills on time. And he was always talking and talking and talking. The people gave him a nickname. They called him *El Grillo*, which is Spanish for "The Cricket." They called him The Cricket because he was never quiet, just as a cricket won't be quiet when you're trying to fall asleep at night.

One of the foolish



things that The Cricket said was that he was *un adivino*, a seer. A seer is a person who can see into the future. So The Cricket said that he was a seer. He said that he could solve mysteries and find things that were lost. He used that idea to play a trick on his rich *amigo*.

Whenever The Cricket got far behind in his bills and owed a lot of money, he would go out to his rich *amigo's* ranch. He would catch that prize-winning mule. Then he would hide it.

The rich man would look all over his ranch for the mule. Then he would go to see The Cricket. "Can you help me?" the rich man would ask. "My mule is lost. I can't find him anywhere on the ranch. Could you use your powers as a seer to find my mule?"

The Cricket would say, "Oh, that doesn't sound too hard to do. I think I can solve this mystery. I think I can find your mule. But, you know, I need some help too. Could you pay off a few of my bills?"

The rich man would pay The Cricket's bills. Then the poor man would go back to the mountains. He would get the mule and lead it home. He played this trick on his *amigo* over and over. But his mischief almost caught up with him.

One day the rich man was in Santa Fe. He was visiting the Governor of New Mexico. The Governor was upset. He sighed, "I have lost a ring. I have had it ever since I was a child. I can't find it anywhere in the palace."

The rich man told him, "I can help you. I have an *amigo* who is a seer. He can solve mysteries. He can find things that are lost. I'll tell him to come here to find the ring."

So the next day The Cricket had to go to the Governor's palace to find the ring. Now The Cricket was in trouble. He would have to find something that *really* was lost. So he tried to get out of doing it.

The Governor said, "I understand that you are *un adivino*. I understand that you can find things that are lost."

"Oh, no, Your Honor," The Cricket said. "Sometimes I have been lucky. Now and then I have found things that were lost. But I wouldn't say I'm a seer. And I wouldn't say that I have any special powers."

When he heard that, the Governor became suspicious. He thought, "I

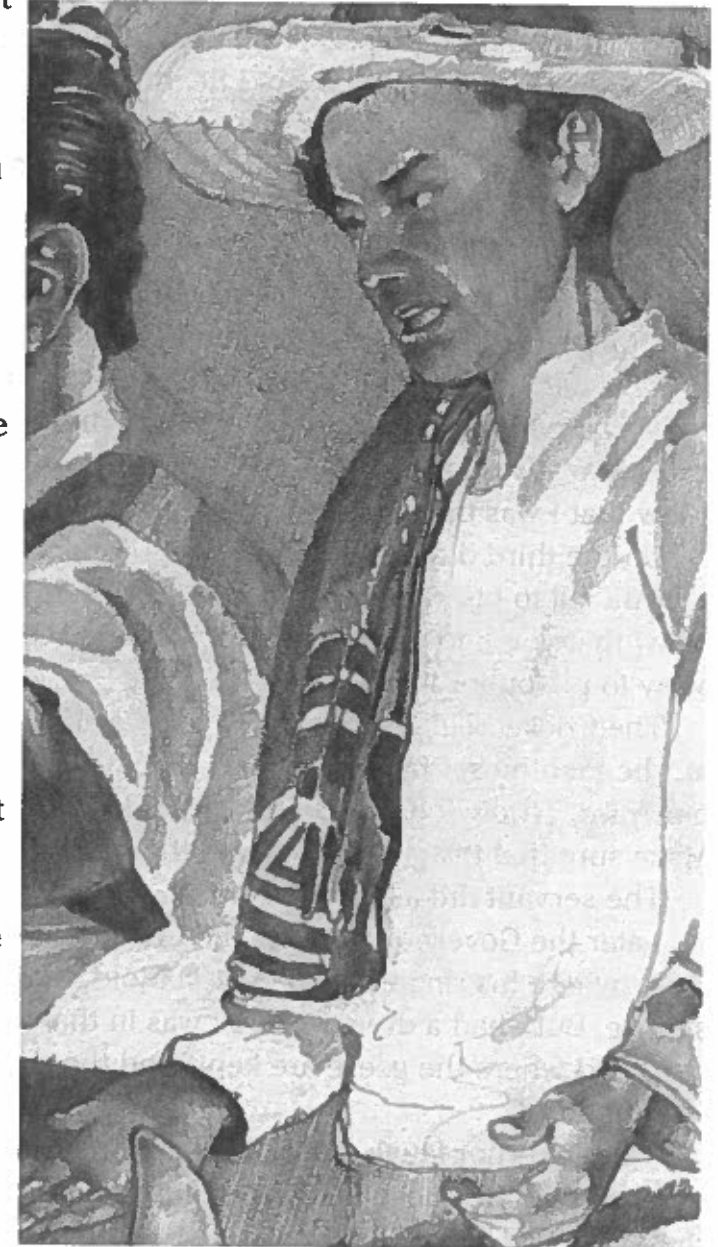
don't trust this man. He sounds like a **cheat**."

The Governor told The Cricket, "I am going to lock you in a room for three days. If you can tell me where the ring is at the end of that time, you'll get a rich reward. But if you fail, I'll know that you have been lying to the people. Then I'll see to it that you are punished. You will be very sorry that you lied."

So The Cricket was locked in a room. And of course he had no idea where the ring was. And he had no idea how he could find it.

Now the truth was that three of the Governor's servants had stolen the ring. On the evening of the first day, one of those servants was sent to The Cricket's room. The servant was sent there to serve the **prisoner** his dinner.

The servant entered. He put the food on the table. When The Cricket saw his evening meal, he thought to himself, "I have only three days to find the ring. It is already dinnertime, the end of the first day!"



So as the servant was leaving the room, The Cricket shook his head. Then he said softly, "Ai! Of the three, there goes the first!"

He meant the first of the three *days*. But when the servant heard him, he thought that The Cricket knew that he was one of the three thieves. He ran back to the other servants. "That man in the room!" he said. "He really is a seer! As I was leaving the room I heard him say, 'Of the three, there goes the first.' He knew that I was one of the thieves!"

"We can't be sure of that," the other two said. "Tomorrow a different one of us will take him his food. We'll see what he says then."

The next day a second servant took the evening meal to The Cricket's room. The Cricket looked at his dinner. He realized that he had only three days to save himself, and the second day was almost gone. As the servant was leaving, The Cricket sighed, "Ai! Of the three, there goes the second!"

The servant ran back to his friends. "There is no doubt about it! He knows! As I was leaving he said, 'Of the three, there goes the second.' He knew that I was one of the thieves too."

On the third day, the third servant brought The Cricket his food. The servant fell to his knees and **pleaded**, "Please don't tell the Governor! We know that you know about us. But if you tell the Governor, he'll send us away to prison for life!"

The Cricket realized what the man was talking about. "I won't turn you in," he told the servant, "if you do exactly as I say. Take the ring out to the barnyard. Throw the ring on the ground in front of the fattest goose there. Make sure that the goose swallows the ring."

The servant did as he was told.

Later the Governor sent for The Cricket. The Governor **demanded** to know where his ring was. The Cricket told him, "Your Honor, this is very strange. But I had a dream while I was in that room. In the dream I saw your barnyard where the geese are kept. And the ring was in the belly of the fattest goose!"

The Governor laughed. "How would my ring get there?" he said. But he ordered that the goose be cooked for dinner. And there in its stomach was the ring!

The Governor was very pleased. "This man really is a seer," he said. He thanked The Cricket and sent him home with gold.

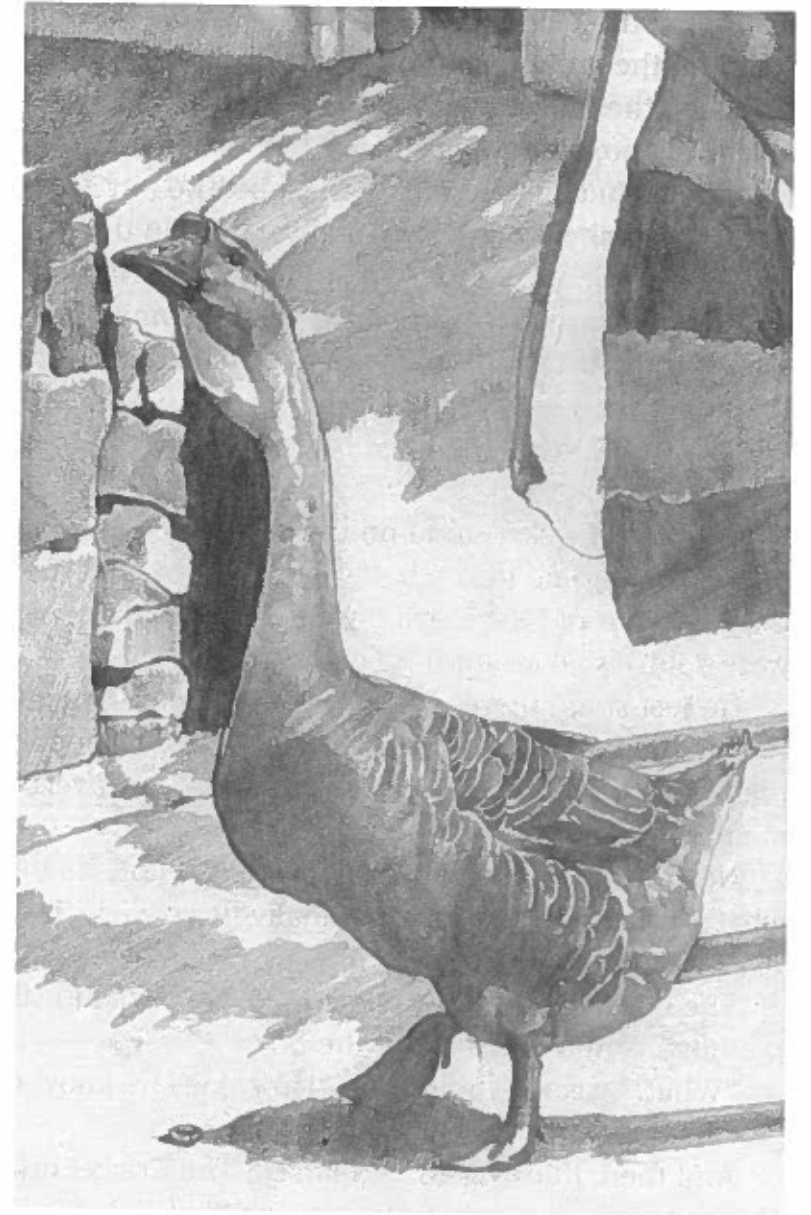
The Cricket was glad to get away with that. He promised himself, "I'll never call myself a seer again!" But it wasn't that easy.

A few weeks later, the Mayor of Santa Fe was visiting the Governor at the palace. The Governor said, "There is a man who lives near here. This man is *un adivino*. He can solve mysteries and find things that are lost. He can tell you what is hidden in some secret place."

The Mayor laughed, "*Adivino*, indeed! There's no such thing."

The two men started to argue. And before long they made a bet. They bet a thousand dollars.

They agreed that the Mayor would hide something in a box. Then they





would put the box on the roof of the palace. The Cricket would have to stand on the ground and tell what was inside the box.

When the morning of the bet came, the Mayor had a clever idea. He got a very big box and put a smaller box inside it. Then he put a smaller box inside that, and so on, until the last box he put in was very tiny.

"He'll think there's something very big in this large box," the Mayor laughed. "I'll get something very small to put in this tiny box."

He went out to the garden to look for something small. Just then a little cricket went hopping across the path. The Mayor caught it. He put it in the smallest box. He closed all the boxes and put them inside each other. Then he had a guard take the large box to the roof of the palace. Another guard went to get The Cricket.

The poor Cricket stood on the ground. He looked up at the roof of the palace. He had no idea what was in the box. But the Mayor of Santa Fe and the Governor of New Mexico were standing there next to him. And there were soldiers all around. He couldn't run.

He just stood there. An hour passed, and then another.

Finally the Mayor started to laugh. "This man doesn't know what is in the box. It is just as I said!" He turned to the Governor and told him, "Pay me the money."

Now the Governor grew angry. "Speak up!" he told The Cricket. "Tell us what's in the box! Speak up!" Finally he roared, "I warn you! Speak up! What's in the box?"

The Cricket had to say something. He began to stutter, "In the box . . . in the box . . . in the box . . . in the box . . ."

"What?" gasped the Mayor. "How does he know there's a box inside a box inside a box!"

And then, thinking about himself, The Cricket cried out, "Oh, no! They've got you this time, you poor little Cricket!"

The Mayor was amazed. "He knows it's a cricket! If I hadn't heard it with my own ears, I never would have believed it!" He took out his wallet. He gave a thousand dollars to the Governor of New Mexico.

The Governor gave five hundred of those dollars to The Cricket. The

Governor shook his hand and slapped him on the back. "Well done again!" he said. And he sent him home.

That was too close a call for The Cricket. He said, "Never again in my whole life will I tell anyone that I have special powers."

But the boys on his street often made fun of The Cricket. Earlier that day,



they had filled a big bag with garbage. And as The Cricket walked down the street, they ran out to meet him.

They waved the bag in front of him. "Adivino!" they yelled. "Use your special powers. Tell us what's inside this bag."

"Don't call me *adivino*," The Cricket said angrily. "I don't believe in that anymore. It's nothing but a bunch of garbage!"

The boys stared at him, shocked. "How did he know it was garbage? He *really* is a seer! We thought he was just a fool."

So from that day on, all the people believed that The Cricket was a seer. He kept saying, "No! I'm not a seer. I have no special powers at all!"

But no matter how hard he tried, the people wouldn't believe him. They kept coming to his house. They kept asking him to solve mysteries and to find things.

Finally, in order to have some peace, he had to move far away. He moved to a place where they hadn't heard of *adivinos*, or seers. And if The Cricket hasn't died, he must still be living there.



**L**OOKING FOR FACTS IN THE STORY.  
How well can you find facts in a story? Put an *x* in the box next to the right answer.

1. They called the man The Cricket because he
  - a. was very small.
  - b. ate very little.
  - c. was never quiet.
2. Why did the rich man pay The Cricket's bills?
  - a. The Cricket worked on his farm.
  - b. The Cricket found his mule.
  - c. The rich man owed him money.
3. Who took the Governor's ring?
  - a. the Mayor
  - b. the rich man
  - c. the Governor's servants
4. What did the Governor give The Cricket?
  - a. a gold ring
  - b. five hundred dollars
  - c. one thousand dollars

	x 5 =	
NUMBER CORRECT		YOUR SCORE

**E**XAMINING VOCABULARY WORDS.  
Here are four vocabulary questions. Put an *x* in the box next to the right answer. The vocabulary words are printed in **boldface** in the story. You may look back at the words before you answer the questions.

1. The Governor thought he was a cheat. A **cheat**
  - a. helps people.
  - b. likes people.
  - c. tricks people.
2. The Cricket was a prisoner in a room. A **prisoner** is someone who
  - a. is locked up.
  - b. has many friends.
  - c. likes to stay indoors.
3. He pleaded, "Don't tell about us!" The word **pleaded** means
  - a. hoped.
  - b. wondered.
  - c. begged.
4. The Governor demanded that The Cricket tell him where the ring was. The word **demanded** means
  - a. tried.
  - b. ordered.
  - c. wished.

	x 5 =	
NUMBER CORRECT		YOUR SCORE

**A**DDING WORDS TO A PARAGRAPH. Complete the paragraph below. Fill in each blank with one of the words in the box. Each word appears in the story. There are five words and four blanks, so one word in the box will not be used.

At one time or another, you have probably \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> the sound of a cricket. Do you \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> how the cricket makes this sound? The \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> rubs the edges of its wings rapidly together. As it does this, it makes the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> which we sometimes call the cricket's song.

different heard cricket  
sound know

x 5 =   
NUMBER CORRECT YOUR SCORE

**R**EADING BETWEEN THE LINES. These questions will help you think critically. You will have to think about what happened in the story, and then figure out the answers. Put an *x* in the box next to the right answer.

- The Cricket knew where the mule was because he
  - a. had special powers.
  - b. knew a lot about mules.
  - c. hid the mule himself.
- The Cricket discovered who took the ring because of
  - a. a dream.
  - b. what the servant said.
  - c. something he read.
- When The Cricket cried out, "Oh, you poor little cricket," he was talking about
  - a. the cricket in the box.
  - b. a cricket in his garden.
  - c. himself.
- Why did The Cricket move far away?
  - a. He liked to travel.
  - b. People kept bothering him.
  - c. His neighbors scared him.

x 5 =   
NUMBER CORRECT YOUR SCORE

**N**OTING STORY ELEMENTS. Some story elements are **plot**, **character**, **setting**, and **mood**. Put an *x* in the box next to the right answer.

- What happened last in the *plot*?
  - a. The Mayor put a cricket into a box.
  - b. They found the ring in a goose.
  - c. Some boys waved a bag in front of The Cricket.
- The *main character* in the story is
  - a. The Cricket.
  - b. the Mayor.
  - c. the Governor.
- Which sentence best *characterizes* The Cricket?
  - a. He liked to work hard.
  - b. He paid his bills on time.
  - c. He was foolish, clever, and lucky.
- The *mood* of the story is
  - a. sad.
  - b. funny.
  - c. serious.

x 5 =   
NUMBER CORRECT YOUR SCORE

**THINKING MORE ABOUT THE STORY.** Your teacher might want you to write your answers.

- ◆ How did The Cricket find out who took the ring? Should he have told the Governor the truth? Explain.
- ◆ Suppose The Cricket had not discovered who took the ring. What do you think would have happened to him?
- ◆ Why did the people believe that The Cricket was *un adivino*? Why couldn't The Cricket change their minds?

Use the boxes below to total your scores for the exercises. Then write your score on pages 138 and 139.

+  +  +  +  +   
LOOKING FOR FACTS IN THE STORY  
EXAMINING VOCABULARY WORDS  
ADDING WORDS TO A PARAGRAPH  
READING BETWEEN THE LINES  
NOTING STORY ELEMENTS  
SCORE TOTAL: Story 7