

Lesson Skill: Comprehension of fictional texts I

Strand Reading — fiction

SOL 1.9

2.8

Materials

- A children’s picture book with a strong main character
- Chart paper

Lesson

1. Prior to reading the story aloud, discuss and define story elements: *events*, *character*, and *setting*. The events are what happen in the story. The characters are the people or animals in the story. The setting is where (location) and when (time period, the time of year/day) the story takes place. Different characters have different character traits (qualities, characteristics).
2. Ask students to describe themselves. Provide a list of descriptive words such as brave, shy, energetic, funny, kind, honest, hardworking, etc. Explain that the words used to describe themselves are called character traits.
3. Explain that the class will be reading a story with a main character named _____. Students are to raise their hands when they think of a word that describes that character. Record the responses on a character traits chart.
4. Tell students that the story events are important, and at the end of the story they will be asked to recall some of the events that take place. Ask them to also pay attention to the setting of the story. Read the story, and afterward, call on students to add words to the character traits chart. You may need to help them, making sure students include strong, descriptive words. Review the words on the chart that describe the main character. Ask students to recall the important events in the story. Ask them how they know which events are important, as opposed to those that are not as important.
5. Finally, ask students what the setting was. To get them thinking about why the setting matters, ask them if the story would be the same if the setting were on a boat. On a farm? At night? Ask them to explain why the setting was important to this particular story.

Strategies for Differentiation

- Use pictures of characters in settings, and ask students to describe the setting. Ask students if the characters’ actions might change if the setting changed.
- Use story felt boards, an interactive whiteboard, or characters in a children’s magazine portrayed in different settings, and discuss how the character acts differently in each setting.

- Relate the events in a story to students' own lives by having them list the events that occurred before they came to school. Ask them how the events in a story are important to understanding the characters.