

Lesson Skill: Prior knowledge and purpose

Strand Reading — fiction

SOL K.9

1.9

2.8

Materials

- Fiction book with cover illustrations
- Crayons, markers
- Pencils, paper
- Chart paper

Lesson

1. Hold up the book so all students can easily see it. Ask what can be found on the cover of a book, then read the title and the author's and illustrator's names. Have students talk about the picture on the cover with a classmate, and ask the pair to discuss what they think the book will be about, based on all of the information presented.
2. Reinforce that good readers do what they just did—use information from the cover to gain insight into the book (applying prior knowledge).
3. Engage students in a think-aloud by using the following sample statements:
 - "The title of the book is _____."
 - "When I look at both the title and illustrations on the cover, I predict that this book will be about _____."
 - "The information on the cover also tells me that this book is fiction because _____." (cats don't wear dresses, for example)
 - "Let me see what I know about _____." (the topic)
 - Relate the topic to past experiences. For example, "One time I saw _____."
 - "It was _____." (Tailor your think-aloud to fit your book and your students' needs.)
 - Talk to the class and say, "I wonder what your experiences with cats in dresses have been."
4. Instruct students to draw and write for two minutes everything they know about the topic. Then, have students share their illustrations and writing with their partners. Select several students to share their illustrations and writing with the class.
5. Ask students to think about why they read—is it for more than one purpose? Incorporate their responses to include that people may read for information and for pleasure, telling them you are going to read a book to them for their pleasure and so they can learn new words.
6. Prior to reading the book, present the new vocabulary words related to the story by
 - listing each word on chart paper (easy to review and display)
 - discussing the pronunciation of each new word

- displaying the book and showing how the word is used in the story
 - providing a definition that students understand and giving examples in other contexts
 - having students practice saying the word
 - using the same procedure for each vocabulary word
7. To familiarize students with the new vocabulary words, have them say the new words three times in unison. Show them what you mean by reading a line from the book that contains one of the vocabulary words. Stop at the word, read the word, and then repeat the word three times.
 8. Review vocabulary words written on the chart paper. Read the book, making sure students recognize and say the vocabulary words. Once students become proficient at listening for the vocabulary words, read at a natural pace to avoid interfering with the flow of the story. After reading the book, for added reinforcement, ask students to reread the vocabulary words listed on the chart. Ask students if they not only enjoyed the book but learned new words. Allow time for them to discuss with their partners why they liked or disliked the book, then follow up with a class discussion.
 9. Display the vocabulary words for review and reference.

Strategies for Differentiation

- Divide into three individual lessons: purpose for reading the book, initiating prior knowledge, and vocabulary development.
- Define *prediction*, and extend the meaning of *purpose*. Use a simple simulation to show how to make predictions and use purpose everyday. Ask, “Why do we listen to the weather forecast? What is the purpose?” (The weather forecast helps us predict what to wear that day.)
- List and discuss various purposes for reading:
 - Making a connection to life
 - Gaining an understanding of a person
 - Understanding that being different or unique can be a good thing
 - Recognizing that everyone has obstacles to overcome
- Clarify the word *purpose* by showing examples from a textbook or trade book that children already know, and ask, “Why do you think the author wrote this?”
- Work with students to develop a KWL chart.
- Limit or expand the number of vocabulary words as appropriate.
- Show pictures of the vocabulary words, and discuss them to develop students’ prior knowledge. Provide examples of vocabulary words in the context of a sentence.