

# GUIDED READING PROGRAM

Fiction Focus

*2nd Edition*



These are the cards that go with Level L of the Guided Reading Program: Fiction Focus, 2nd Edition. There is one card for each book in the level, as follows:

- **Alligator Baby**
- **Amelia Bedelia Under Construction**
- **Anansi the Spider: A Tale From the Ashanti**
- **Cam Jansen and the Secret Service Mystery**
- **Miss Nelson Has a Field Day**
- **Picking Apples & Pumpkins**
- **Ricky Ricotta's Mighty Robot vs. The Mecha-Monkeys From Mars**
- **The Triple Rotten Day (It's Robert!)**
- **The Worst Day of My Life (Little Bill)**
- **Young Thurgood Marshall: Fighter for Equality**

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# Alligator Baby



## Summary & Standard

When Kristen's mother is going to have a baby, the parents mistakenly drive to the zoo rather than the hospital. They keep returning home with the wrong baby—an alligator, a seal, and a gorilla. Children will distinguish fantasy from reality.

**Author:** Robert Munsch

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Fantasy

**Theme/Idea:** dealing with animal mix-ups

## Making Connections: Text to Self

Ask which children have baby sisters or brothers. Can they remember when the baby was first brought home? Ask children who do not have younger siblings to describe their experiences with babies of relatives or friends.

Extend the connection by telling children to read the title and look at the cover illustration. Ask what kind of baby the parents in this story bring home. Have children predict how the parents will deal with the mix-up.

For additional information about the author, more stories by Robert Munsch, and other resources, see [www.robertmunsch.com](http://www.robertmunsch.com).

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** alligator, bathtub, gorilla, hospital, lovely, seal

**Related Words for Discussion:** characteristics, jealous, react

## Genre

**Fantasy** Remind children that fantasy is a made-up story that could not really happen.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** Every two-page spread is illustrated with a full-page color drawing. The text is repetitive but not overly predictable.

**Content** The action of returning to the zoo, each time bringing the wrong baby home, is repeated three times. Children will find the story easy to understand and amusing.

Praise children for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** An ellipsis is used at the end of page 26 and on the last page. Explain that an ellipsis signals the reader to pause and that the sentence or thought will continue after the pause.

**Vocabulary** Sounds spelled out (onomatopoeia) appear throughout the story. Explain to children that the words in italics are sounds and that children should use their decoding skills to read them. (See also Thinking About the Text on the back of this card.)

## ELL Bridge

Use picture-word correspondence to help children understand the names of the various animals (*alligator, seal, gorilla*) mentioned in the story and their body parts (*claw, tail, flipper, whiskers, face, nose, arm, leg*). Have children point to the animal or body part in the illustration as they read each of the words.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Ask children to summarize the story. Are they able to remember in the correct order all the animal babies that the parents brought home?

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Have children revisit the predictions about the story they made in Making Connections. Did they think the parents would keep bringing the wrong baby home? Ask them to read the last page of the book. What do they think happened when Kristen's mother had twins?

#### Thinking About the Text

Have children identify examples of onomatopoeia in the story and read the sounds aloud. Ask children why they think the author included these sounds.

### Recognizing Story Pattern

Explain to children that paying attention to the pattern of words as they read can help them understand and enjoy a story. When the pattern of words repeats, readers can predict what comes next.

- Read aloud page 4. With children, identify the words that tend to repeat (e.g., *tail, people, claw, face*).
- Read aloud the last two paragraphs on page 9 and compare that text to the text at the top of page 4. Point out the repetition. Read page 11 aloud and have children identify the pattern repeated from page 4.
- Have children tell what words or sentences they think will be repeated on page 14.
- Ask children to tell how the pattern of words on page 24 is both similar to and different from the other repetitions.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Reading Words With -ed

Remind children that the verb ending *-ed* shows that the action happened in the past. The letters *-ed* can stand for the sound /d/, /t/, or /ed/.

- Refer to the first sentence on page 4. Ask what word in the first line ends in *-ed*. (*opened*) Ask what sound *-ed* stands for. (/d/)
- Write on the board *lifted, reached, yelled, and handed*. Ask children to identify the ending sounds. (/ed/, /t/, /d/, /ed/)

### Developing Fluency

Have partners take turns reading pages to each other. Encourage them to read the dialogue with expression, saying the sounds as realistically as possible.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Babies** Lead a discussion about the characteristics of the animal and human babies in the story. Ask: *How was each baby different? In what ways were all the babies the same? Why did Kristen's mother think Kristen might be jealous of their new baby?*

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

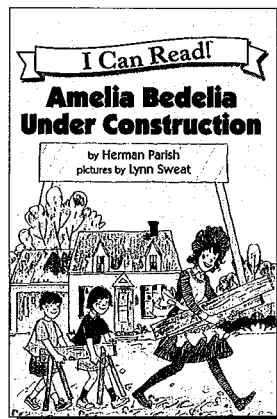
- Have children write their own fantasies about a baby animal that comes to live in their home. (**Narrative**)
- Encourage children to think of sounds that someone or something makes and to write the letters that spell the sounds. Have children illustrate the words. (**Graphic Aid**)

### Other Books

*Darcy and Gran Don't Like Babies* by Jane Cutler

*The Puppy Who Wanted a Boy* by Jane Thayer

# Amelia Bedelia Under Construction



## Summary & Standard

Although Amelia Bedelia always tries to do the right thing, she constantly gets into trouble because she misunderstands the meanings of words. Children will read grade-level-appropriate classic and contemporary literature.

**Author:** Herman Parish

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Word Count:** 250+

**Theme/Idea:** misunderstanding words and ideas

## Making Connections: Text to Self

Tell children that language has many words and sayings that can mean more than one thing. Ask: *When we say someone is “feeling blue,” does that mean they’re actually turning blue? What does it mean?* Ask if children have ever misunderstood something they heard because it could mean different things.

Tell children they will read a story about Amelia Bedelia, a person who often misunderstands things. Ask if they have read other books in the series. If so, have them share what they know about the character.

For information about English idioms, see [www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/daily/p/daily/p048.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/daily/p/daily/p048.shtml).

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** arrive, construction, deserve, expecting, sense

**Related Words for Discussion:** confuse, humorous, language, meaning, misunderstand

## Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind children that realistic fiction is a made-up story that could happen in real life.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** The print is large and lines are widely spaced. Illustrations on almost every page support the story.

**Content** Children will likely be able to relate to the situation of having a busy babysitter. They will appreciate the humorous antics—such as making marble countertops and sanding the deck—that follow.

Praise children for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** The text has no paragraphing, so it can be difficult to follow the dialogue and know who is speaking. Tell children to pay close attention to each dialogue tag (for example, “said Amelia”) and keep that name in mind until they read a new tag.

**Vocabulary** For children to understand and enjoy the story, they must understand the idioms, homophones, and multiple-meaning words that confuse Amelia. See the ELL Bridge below and activities on the back of the card for help in preparing children.

## ELL Bridge

Help children understand idioms. On a chart or on the board, list idioms from the story (e.g., *play house*, page 11; *taking a cab*, page 40; *hit the nail on the head*, page 41). Explain that an idiom is a common saying that means something different from the meanings of the individual words that it contains. Talk about the literal and figurative meaning of each idiom.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have children discuss the events in the story by asking: *Why does Amelia Bedelia come to the Hardy's house at the beginning of the story? What happens during the middle of the story? What do Mr. and Mrs. Hardy decide to do at the end?*

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Discuss the character of Amelia Bedelia. Ask: *What kind of person is Amelia? Would you like to have Amelia babysit for you? Why or why not?*

#### Thinking About the Text

Discuss how the author created humor in the story. Ask: *How did the author use language to make us laugh? Which misunderstanding do you think was the funniest?*

### Understanding Illustrations

Remind children that the illustrations in a book can help them understand the story.

- Refer children to the illustrations on pages 20 and 21. Ask: *What does Amelia think a half bath is? How can you tell that the picture on page 21 shows what Amelia is thinking?*
- Refer to the illustration on page 39. Ask: *How does Amelia make a picture window?*
- Refer to the illustration on page 55. Ask: *Why does Mr. Hardy yell, "Whoa!"?*

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Homophones

Remind children that homophones are words that sound alike but are spelled differently and have different meanings.

- Read aloud page 7. Have children name the homophones that Amelia confuses. (*board, bored*) Ask what each means and have children use each in a sentence. Repeat with *stakes* and *steaks* (page 62).
- Challenge children to think of other homophones (e.g., *dear, deer*).

#### Developing Fluency

Model reading aloud five to ten lines from the story, emphasizing phrasing and pace. Then have children repeat after you.

#### Oral Language/Conversation

##### Talk About Language and Misunderstanding

Mention that there are many words in the English language that have multiple meanings. Talk about how and why Amelia was confused by the words *sand, coats, and marble*. Discuss the different meanings of each word. Have children use the words in sentences.

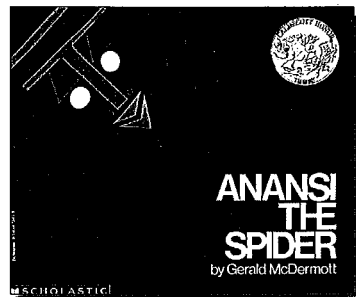
#### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have children make a picture dictionary of homophones. Write sets of homophones on a chart or on the board. Have children copy the words and draw a picture of each. Have children write a sentence for each word. (**Expository**)
- Have children write a paragraph of something funny that happened in the story. (**Narrative**)

#### Other Books

*Teach Us, Amelia Bedelia* by Peggy Parish  
*What Kind of Babysitter Is This?* by Dolores Johnson

# Anansi the Spider: A Tale From the Ashanti



## Summary & Standard

This folktale tells about Anansi the Spider, who gets into trouble. His six sons work together to rescue him, and Anansi rewards them with a globe of light that becomes the moon. Children will read to refine their understanding of how texts work across a variety of genres.

**Author:** Gerald McDermott  
**Genre:** Traditional Literature

**Word Count:** 100+  
**Theme/Idea:** working together

## Making Connections: Text to Text

Children probably have heard folktales such as Paul Bunyan. Discuss folktales and how they differ from fiction and nonfiction.

Talk about the origins of folktales and mention that they were often told to help explain unusual events. They are handed down from generation to generation and usually convey a message. They may involve trickster characters like Anansi. Though tricksters often play tricks on others for their own gain, in this story, Anansi is too busy getting in trouble to trick anyone.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/search?query=folktales>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** danger, decide, deserves, mysterious, rescued

**Related Words for Discussion:** result, rewarding, skill, team, together

## Genre

**Traditional Literature** Traditional literature can be fables, fairy tales, folktales, or myths. The stories have been passed down over the years by word of mouth.

## ELL Bridge

Draw a circular moon on the board, with four stars around the moon to create a word web. In the moon, write the word *folktale*. Help children understand the genre by filling in the web with some characteristics of a folktale: *animals as characters; a problem to solve; a message to the reader; story ending*. Discuss a folktale's characteristics as they apply to *Anansi the Spider*: What kind of animals are Anansi and his sons? What is Anansi's problem? What is the message of the story? What is the ending and how did it come about? Point out that many, but not all, folktales end happily.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** The text is written in short sentences with plenty of space between them, making them easy to read. Colorful pages and illustrations support the text.

**Content** Children should be familiar with the theme of working together with friends or family to accomplish something or to help someone in need. This background knowledge will help readers follow the story.

Praise children for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** Some sentences are incomplete or are grammatically incorrect. Some pages require the reader to use the illustrations to tie events from one page to the next. Read the prologue aloud to prepare the class for the text.

**Vocabulary** Several words contain difficult phonic elements which may be challenging for some readers. Preview some of these words in context as children read. (*Anansi, cushion, mysterious, Nyame, swallowed*)



## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have children discuss what they learned about Anansi's sons. Ask: *How does each of them help Anansi when he is in trouble? What is their reward for saving him?*

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Remind children that folktales are passed down from generation to generation and usually carry a message. Ask children what messages can be taken away from this story. Discuss how the sons work together to save their father.

#### Thinking About the Text

Remind children that because a folktale is handed down orally, the language may seem awkward or old-fashioned. If necessary, reword sentences to help explain their meaning. For example, on page 27, the line *They were very happy, that spider family* could be *The spider family was very happy.*

### Using Illustrations

Help children understand that illustrations can give readers a lot of information. Point out that illustrations help readers imagine how the characters look, the setting, and what happens.

- Have children turn to pages 6–7 and read the text aloud.
- Then have children look at the illustration on pages 8–9 and ask them to describe the trouble Anansi falls into.
- Remind children that illustrations can help readers comprehend the text.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Words With Long o

Remind children that words like *globe*, *road*, and *know* share the long-o vowel sound but have different spelling patterns.

- Read aloud with children the text on page 32. Ask: *What vowel sound do you hear in the word globe? Write globe on the board. Blend the word aloud as you run your finger under each letter. Point out the long-vowel sound and the silent-e ending.*
- Repeat with the words *know* and *own*. Explain that the letters *ow* sometimes stand for the long-o vowel sound.
- Have children find other words with the long-o vowel sound.

### Developing Fluency

Do an echo reading of the book, in which you read a page and have children repeat it after you. When completed, have children reread the book with a partner.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Working Together** Lead a discussion about how each of Anansi's sons helped Anansi by using a special skill he had. Ask children what special skills they have used when they worked together with friends or family to accomplish a task.

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

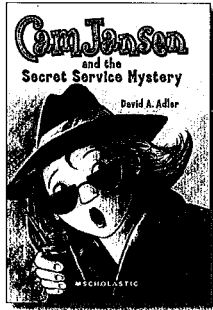
- Have children list the skill that each of Anansi's sons had. Have them briefly tell how each son's skill helped Anansi. **(List)**
- Have children imagine there was a seventh son and write what his name would be and what skill he would have. **(Narrative)**

### Other Books

*The Magic Fish* by Freya Littledale  
*The Three Little Pigs* retold by James Marshall



# Cam Jansen and the Secret Service Mystery



## Summary & Standard

Cam is a bright student with a photographic memory. When a pearl necklace is stolen, it's up to Cam to figure out who has stolen it. Children will comprehend basic plots of a variety of fiction genres.

**Author:** David A. Adler

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction/Mystery

**Word Count:** 250+

**Theme/Idea:** solving a mystery through observation

## Making Connections: Text to Text

Have children tell you what they know about mysteries. Ask: *What makes a story a mystery? What kinds of characters are usually in a mystery? What does it take to solve a mystery?*

Have children discuss mysteries they have read or know about, including other Cam Jansen books. Encourage children to tell what the mystery was and how it was eventually solved.

For online mysteries that children can read and solve, see <http://kids.mysterynet.com>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** amazing, microphone, photographic, president, service, several

**Related Words for Discussion:** determined, observe, patience, remember

## Genre

**Realistic Fiction/Mystery** Remind children that a mystery is a story about a puzzling event and the clues that help explain it.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** Detailed illustrations help communicate the plot of the story. Most paragraphs are fairly short, and dialogue is used extensively.

**Vocabulary** Because much of the story is told in dialogue, vocabulary is largely conversational and easy to understand. Terms such as *principal*, *governor*, *agents*, and *police officers* refer to people and can be previewed and easily understood by children.

Praise children for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** Chapters are numbered but not titled. Some spreads have no illustrations. Tell children to refer back or forward to illustrations to help them understand what is happening in the story.

**Content** Children may be unfamiliar with the concept of a photographic memory. Read and discuss with children the explanation on page 5. Then invite them to try the memory game on the last page of the book.

## ELL Bridge

Have pairs work together to retell the story using the illustrations. Children should take turns explaining what is happening in each picture, using as many descriptive details as they can. Then have children write down any clues from the pictures that will help Cam solve the mystery in the end. (page 3, there are four secret service officers; page 10, a man has a crooked beard; page 23, books land on their side; page 34, Mrs. Pearl's necklace is missing; page 44, the beard is fake)

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Discuss why Cam's photographic memory is so valuable. Ask children to name the crime in this mystery, who committed it, and how the mystery was solved.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Have children compare this book with other mystery stories they have read. How are they alike? How are they different? Ask: *What makes Cam unlike other mystery detectives?*

#### Thinking About the Text

Refer children to page 28. Ask if they had noticed the lowercase *p* in the statement *It may be the pearls*. Ask: *Why do they think the author chose the name Pearls for the couple and pearls for the woman's necklace? Did this cause any confusion in the story?*

### Understanding Plot

Explain to children that plot is an important part of any mystery. Keeping careful track of key events will help them understand how the mystery is solved. Ask:

- *What happened in the library that made everyone drop to the floor? (Everyone heard a loud bang.)*
- *How did Cam realize that the pearl necklace was stolen? (Cam used her photographic memory.)*
- *What did Mrs. Adams do that helped police catch the thieves? (Mrs. Adams wrote down the license-plate number of the car the thieves were driving.)*

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Action Verbs

Remind children that an action verb tells what someone or something does. Demonstrate by clapping your hands. Tell children that the word *clap* tells what you did.

- Have children turn to page 1. Read the following sentence from the story: *The other children in the classroom turned and looked at Danny*. Ask children to name the action verbs in the sentence. (*turned, looked*)
- Ask children to find other action verbs on the page. (*stood, spread, shouted*) Then have them identify other action verbs in the rest of the story.

### Developing Fluency

Have partners take turns reading the pages of a chapter to each other. Encourage them to read the dialogue with expression, as the characters would say the words.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Detectives** Lead a discussion about the qualities of a good detective. Ask: *What good detective qualities does Cam have? What qualities do detectives have in other mysteries that you have read or seen?*

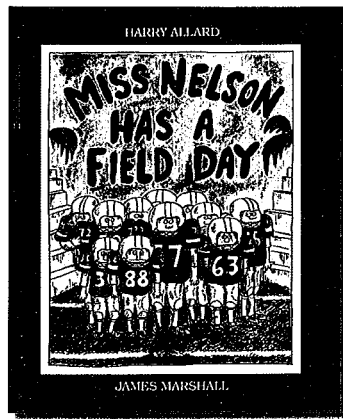
### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have children write about how clues helped Cam solve the mystery. (**Expository**)
- Have children study one of the pictures in the book. Then have them close the book and write a list of things they saw. Children can then open the book and compare their list to the picture. (**List**)

### Other Books

*The Schoolyard Mystery* by Elizabeth Levy  
*Parents' Night Fright* by Elizabeth Levy

# Miss Nelson Has a Field Day



## Summary & Standard

The Smedley Tornadoes are the worst football team in the state. No one knows what to do until mean Viola Swamp arrives to whip the team into shape for the big game. Children will use pictures and context to assist their comprehension.

**Author:** Harry Allard  
**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Word Count:** 250+  
**Theme/Idea:** hard work makes a winning team

## Making Connections: Text to World

Children will likely be familiar with the game of American football. Discuss with children what they know about the game.

Continue the discussion by telling children that in a football game each team has 11 players on the field. The team with the ball tries to run the ball down the field into the other team's end zone. The other team tries to stop them. A team that practices hard and works together has the greatest chance of winning games.

For additional information about football, see [www.ducksters.com/sports/footballrules.php](http://www.ducksters.com/sports/footballrules.php).

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** expert, gloom, pitiful, results, substitute, tackle, tough

**Related Words for Discussion:** coach, clobbered, cooperate, practice, team

## Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind children that realistic fiction is a made-up story that could happen in real life.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** There are only a few sentences on each page and the book is short, so children should be able to read the story in one sitting. Text is well supported by illustrations.

**Content** The story is set in a school and focuses on a sports team and the familiar game of football, so children should be able to understand the humor of a school team that is called *the worst in the state*.

Praise children for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** Children may miss reading text on some pages where text is separated by a large illustration. Remind children to look from the top to the bottom of a page to see and read all of the text.

**Vocabulary** The use of idioms (*down in the dumps, horsing around, give the business, cracked up, pipe down*) may confuse children. Provide meanings, and have children use context and illustrations to aid understanding.

## ELL Bridge

Use pictures of sporting events to help children understand some of the elements of and words about football. Ask pairs or teams of students to pantomime *passing, catching, and kicking*. Act as "coach" as the groups pantomime the terms, providing explanations to the class; for instance, explain what it means to score a touchdown. Tell children that each player on a football team has to be able to work with the other players in order for the team to win. The Oral Language/Conversation activity on the back of this card expands the concepts of teamwork and leadership.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Discuss with children why the Smedley Tornados were such a pitiful football team. Ask how and why they changed into a good football team after Viola Swamp arrived.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Ask children why they think Miss Nelson felt she had to disguise herself in order to coach the team. Have them further explain why Viola Swamp was able to improve the team, but Mr. Armstrong was not. Then ask children what the story shows them about the importance of attitude and teamwork.

#### Thinking About the Text

Have children note that the writer inserted the illustrations within the text instead of placing all of the text on a page above or below the picture. Ask them whether they like how the art has been organized or find it confusing. Then discuss how the illustrations support the text but also provide clues about things not directly stated in the story.

### Making Predictions

Explain that when readers make predictions they use clues in the story and what they know from their lives to guess what will happen next.

- Show the book cover and ask what children think the story will be about. Read the first three pages to confirm their predictions.
- Continue to read the story with children. At the end of page 12, ask children what they think will happen next.
- At the end of the story, ask if children predicted who Viola Swamp was. Discuss clues that led them to guess Miss Nelson. Ask children about the big surprise that no one could have predicted but which confirmed Viola's identity.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Contractions

Review with children that a contraction is a short way to write two words, such as *don't* for *do not*. Point out that an apostrophe is used in place of the letters left out when the two words are combined into one word.

- Turn to page 8. What two words does the contraction *we're* replace? (*we are*) Find two more contractions on this page. What words do they replace? (*they'll*, *they will*; *what's*, *what is*)
- What two words on page 11 could be made into a contraction? (*who will*; *who'll*)

### Developing Fluency

Model fluent reading of a few pages of the book. Then have partners take turns reading pages from the book as you listen for appropriate intonation and phrasing.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Teamwork** Discuss with children the importance of teamwork and why a team needs to practice. Ask children what makes a good team player and a good coach.

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

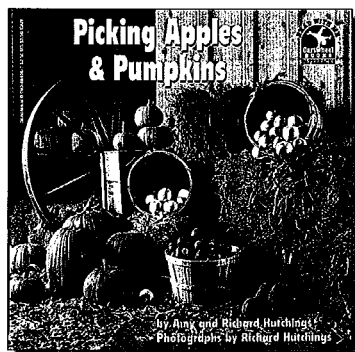
- Have children imagine that they are in the stands watching the Tornados clobber the Werewolves. Have them write what they would say to the person next to them about how the Tornados are playing. (**Descriptive**)
- Review the format of a letter. Then have children write a letter to Mr. Blandsworth telling who Viola Swamp really is and how they figured out her identity. (**Expository**)

### Other Books

*Football Friends* by Jean, Dan, and Dave Marzollo

*Franklin Plays the Game* by Paulette Bourgeois

# Picking Apples & Pumpkins



This nonfiction book tells about a family outing to pick apples and pumpkins and about the many food items that are made from each. Children will independently relate prior knowledge to what is read and will use it to aid in comprehension.

**Authors:** Amy and Richard Hutchings

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Informational Text

**Theme/Idea:** harvesting food

Children and their families may have visited farms or farmers' markets to select fruits or vegetables at certain times of the year. Ask them to tell about their purchases and describe other activities that were a part of the day.

Extend the real-world connection by explaining that pumpkins ripen in autumn. Discuss the "seasons" for other fruits and vegetables. Point out that some produce is available year round because it is grown in different parts of the world and shipped here.

For additional teaching ideas about seasonally available produce, see

**Essential Words:** autumn, bruised, collapsed, dough, patch

**Related Words for Discussion:** crops, gardener, harvest, produce, soil, till

**Informational Text** Remind children that informational stories usually give information about a specific topic.

**Text** Colorful, high-interest photographs feature scenes that support the text and allow children to follow the sequence of events.

**Vocabulary** Most of the words in the story will be familiar to children. Many are high-frequency words. Most of the text consists of easily decodable one- or two-syllable words.

Praise children for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

**Text** Some children may have difficulty with the lengthy sentences and complex sentence structures. Dialogue embedded in the text may also be confusing. Have children pay attention to punctuation to help them read complex sentences.

**Content** The information about picking apples from trees is detailed, but the information about pumpkins is vague. Children may not understand the kind of plant pumpkins grow on or how people know when to harvest them. Explain to children that pumpkins grow all season long on green vines that turn brown at the end of the season.

Model how to use visuals to ask and answer questions about content. Turn to page 8. After reading together, ask about the photographs: *What is Grandma pointing at? What does she want the girls to do?* Answer: *I read that Grandma is telling the girls to look up. She is pointing at something—maybe at the boy climbing the tree.* Write on the board: *Who, What, Where, When, Why, How.* Ask partners to take turns asking and answering questions about details in other photographs. (Note: Because the book pages are not numbered, page numbers have been assigned. The first page of text is page 3.)

### Thinking Within the Text

Have children review the activities the children and adults participate in over the course of the day. Invite children to categorize these activities, for example by *apple picking* and *pumpkin picking*, or by *picking apples and pumpkins* and *using apples and pumpkins*.

### Thinking Beyond the Text

Ask children to identify the month in which the story most likely takes place. Have them point out the evidence in the text and photographs. Ask: *How can you tell this story does not take place in June? If it did take place then, what might it have been about?*

### Thinking About the Text

Have children identify how the author uses the idea of working together throughout the story. Ask them to note which jobs needed to be completed through teamwork.

## Understanding Compare and Contrast

Explain to children that when they read, they should think about how people, places, events, and things are alike and different. Comparing and contrasting can help children understand a topic better. Set a purpose before reading by explaining Venn diagrams to them.

Draw a Venn diagram. Label one side *Apples* and the other *Pumpkins*. Explain that you will write how each is different.

Label the overlapping area *Both*. Explain that this part is for noting ways in which apples and pumpkins are alike.

After reading, have children glance back through and note information that can be added to the diagram. Then have them summarize what they have learned.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Compound Words

Note that a compound word (*snowball*) is made up of two or more smaller words. Point out that the smaller words often give clues to the meaning of the compound word.

Have children look through the book for compound words. Discuss the meanings of the smaller words and how they relate to the meaning of the compound word. Start with the following words: *Applegate*, *Battleview* (page 3); *grandmother*, *hayride* (page 5); *everyone* (page 10).

Point out *old-fashioned* on page 5. Explain that a compound word can be hyphenated. Read the sentence aloud. Have a volunteer explain the meaning of *old-fashioned*.

Echo-read several pages of the book together, reading each sentence and having children repeat it after you. Model expert reading with proper phrasing, intonation, and pace.

## Talk About Gardens and Farms

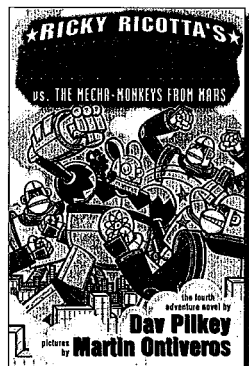
Lead a discussion about fruits or vegetables. Ask: *Where does your family get fruits and vegetables? Why might people choose to grow their own food? If you had a garden or farm, what would you like to grow? Why?*

Have children write about their favorite fruit or vegetable, stating why it is their favorite, where it comes from, the time of year it is available, and some of the dishes made from it. **(Expository)**

Have children imagine they are in the story. Ask them to write about their favorite part of the day. **(Narrative)**

*An Earthworm's Life* by John Himmelman  
*Everybody Cooks Rice* by Norah Dooley

# Ricky Ricotta's Mighty Robot vs. the Mecha-Monkeys From Mars



## Summary & Standard

Ricky Ricotta, a likeable little mouse, and his best friend Mighty Robot battle against the evil Major Monkey from Mars, who tries to take over planet Earth. The duo battle not only with the Major Monkey, but also with his wicked Mecha-Monkeys in an action-packed adventure. Children will distinguish fantasy from reality.

**Author:** Dav Pilkey

**Genre:** Science Fiction

**Word Count:** 250+

**Theme/Idea:** good triumphs over evil

## Making Connections: Text to Text

As children preview the text and illustrations, talk about the details they recognize as involving technology or appearing “scientific.”

To extend the connection, lead a discussion about science fiction and superheroes. Ask children what traits a story must have for it to be considered science fiction. *Do all science fiction stories have a superhero? Are all superhero stories science fiction?* Ask them what other superheroes remind them of Mighty Robot as pictured in the illustrations.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** accident, emergency, enormous, enough, finally, instead, notice, through

**Related Words for Discussion:** attack, destroy, escape, evil, power, rescue, superhero, triumph, villains

## Genre

**Science Fiction** Remind children that science fiction is a made-up story dealing with scientific subject matter and may be set in the future.

## ELL Bridge

Have children make puppets and use them to act out what they read. Begin by grouping children in threes and assigning each of the three a character—Ricky, Mighty Robot, or Major Monkey. Tell children to draw their characters by following the instructions at the end of the book. Direct them to cut out the characters and glue them onto craft sticks to make the puppets. Have groups practice reading the dialogue of the characters. Encourage children to take their puppets home to practice the dialogue in the book.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** Chapters with titles divide the book into readable sections. Words denoting sounds, such as *CRASH* and *KA-BOOOOOOOOOM*, are in italics and spelled with all-uppercase letters to signal that the words should be read louder and with more emphasis.

**Content** The lighthearted, funny, cartoon-like characters and the action-packed plot will help to motivate young readers. Children will want to read on to find out what happens.

Praise children for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** Chapter 12 is a departure from the regular flow of the text. It is a flip book designed to animate the action. Children may need some direction for handling this portion of the text.

**Vocabulary** There are some challenging vocabulary words. Have children try to figure out the meanings of words like *confessed*, *laboratory*, *surrender*, and *intruder* through context and illustrations. If necessary, have them use a dictionary.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Go through the story chapter by chapter and have children give a brief summary of what happens in each chapter.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Discuss with children which characters they consider good and which evil. Explain that science fiction and fantasy stories often have "good guys" and "bad guys." Ask children to tell which characters are good and which ones are evil in the stories they have read or movies they have seen (e.g., Harry Potter and Voldemort).

#### Thinking About the Text

Ask children to think about how the writer keeps up the action in the story. Ask: *What are some things that happen that made you want to keep reading? Why does an author need to keep the action going in a story like this?*

### Drawing Conclusions

Explain to children that sometimes a writer doesn't tell the reader everything directly. Readers must use information from the story and their own prior knowledge to draw conclusions. Drawing conclusions helps readers better understand the characters and what they read. Ask:

- *What do you think about the relationship between Ricky Ricotta and Mighty Robot? Why do you think that?*
- *How does Mighty Robot feel about helping others? What makes you think so?*
- *Who does Major Monkey care about most? What does he say and do to make you think so?*

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Contractions

Remind children that a contraction is a short way to write two words as one.

- On a chart, write *she'll/she will, let's/let us, they've/they have, it's/it is, don't/do not, there's/there is*. Explain that an apostrophe replaces the missing letters. Have children use both versions of each pair in sentences.
- Have children find contractions: *let's* (page 6), *we're* (page 15), *where's, he's* (page 46), *we'll* (page 84), *I've* (page 117). Have them name the two words for each contraction and use them in new sentences.

### Developing Fluency

Have children use partner reading to practice reading expressively. Encourage them to pay attention to the characters' expressions in the illustrations to help them portray the characters.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Superheroes and Villains** Guide a general discussion of the differences between superheroes and villains. What powers do superheroes have? What makes a character an "evil villain"? Ask: *Who are some of your favorite superheroes and villains? If you were a superhero, what power would you like to have?*

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have children write another adventure story about Ricky and Mighty Robot. They can use the patterns at the end of the book to create illustrations. **(Narrative)**
- Suggest that children write a newspaper ad for Ricky and Mighty Robot, listing all of their skills and abilities, for people who might want to hire them to solve a problem. **(Descriptive)**

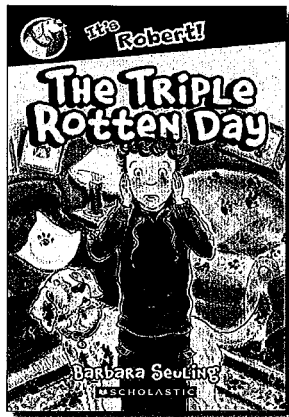
### Other Books

*A Day in Space* by Suzanne Lord and Jolie Epstein

*Stuart Goes to School* by Sara Pennypacker



# The Triple Rotten Day (It's Robert!)



## Summary & Standard

Robert's day is not going well. He loses the job of caring for the classroom snake, accidentally ruins his diorama, and gets a painful palate expander. Will things ever get better? Children will accurately identify the theme or author's message in a grade-level-appropriate text.

**Author:** Barbara Seuling

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Theme/Idea:** looking on the bright side of things

## Making Connections: Text to Self

Ask children if they have ever had what they would call a "rotten day." Ask: *What sorts of things happened on that day?* Explain the meaning of *rotten* if necessary.

Tell children that they will read a story about a boy named Robert who thinks he is having a *triple rotten* day. Ask: *What would make a day "triple rotten"?* If necessary, explain the meaning of *triple*.

For additional teaching ideas and resources about the author, see <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/contributor.jsp?id=2379>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** apologize, double, expand, hero, monitor, palate, regular, rotten, triple

**Related Words for Discussion:** attitude, outlook, positive, succeed

## Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind children that realistic fiction is a made-up story that could happen in real life.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** A table of contents lists clever chapter titles and allows children to preview the story.

**Content** Many children will likely be able to relate to at least some of Robert's troubles and his relationships with his brother and classmates.

Praise children for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** The story is not illustrated. Encourage children to visualize as they read to help them understand what is happening. Some words are broken at the ends of lines and hyphenated. Explain to children that a hyphen means the word continues on the next line.

**Vocabulary** Some unfamiliar words are used in the text, as well as terms related to orthodontics, such as *orthodontist* and *palate expander*. Preview these with children and discuss their meanings. (See also Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies on the back of this card.)

## ELL Bridge

Use pantomime to help children understand action verbs. Have partners list at least ten of the many action verbs used in the story. (e.g., *stumbled, scratched, pounded, thumped, slouched*) Have pairs show their lists to each other and take turns acting out the verbs; the partner who is guessing should point to the verb being pantomimed and read it aloud.



## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Discuss what kind of person Robert is. Ask children to name some character traits and cite examples from the story to support their opinions. Then discuss how Robert changes over the course of the story.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Discuss how Robert's reactions might have been different if Paul had been at school that day. Ask: *Would Robert have gotten so upset if he had had his friend to talk to? How might he have responded to each crisis? Ask children how they react when "rotten" things happen to them.*

#### Thinking About the Text

Ask children whether they think the author succeeded in making Robert seem realistic. Have them explain why or why not.

### Making Predictions

Explain to children that making predictions about what will happen helps readers get involved in a story and understand it better.

- Recall the title of the book. Then refer children to the table of contents. Ask: *Judging by the title of the first chapter, what do you think this chapter will be about?*
- As children finish each chapter, have them compare their predictions to what really happened. Ask: *Was the prediction accurate? Why or why not?*
- Ask children to look at the title of the next chapter and predict what it will be about.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Multisyllabic Words

Remind children that a syllable is a word part that has one vowel sound. Multisyllabic words have more than one syllable. Breaking words into syllables can make them easier to read.

- Write the multisyllabic word *refrigerator* on a chart or on the board. Break the word into syllables and help children read each one separately. (*re-FRIJ-er-a-tor*)
- Have children find other multisyllabic words in the book.

### Developing Fluency

Have partners take turns reading a chapter. Remind them to change pitch and expression as they read characters' words.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Positive Attitude** Lead a discussion about looking at the bright side of things. Talk about how Paul was able to show Robert that many "rotten" events were really positive. Ask: *What does it take to have a positive attitude? How can having a positive attitude help you?*

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

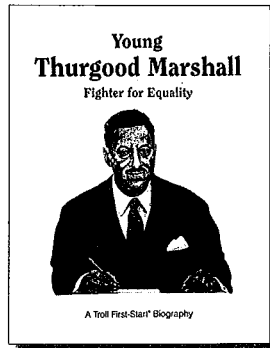
- Have children write a story about someone who has a positive attitude. The story may be fiction or a real-life anecdote. **(Narrative)**
- Have children write a letter to a friend who has had a "rotten" day, helping the friend look on the bright side of things. **(Persuasive)**

### Other Books

*The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash* by Trinka Hakes Noble

*Triplet Trouble and the Field Day Disaster* by Debbie Dadey and Marcia Thornton Jones

# Young Thurgood Marshall: Fighter for Equality



## Summary & Standard

This biography is about Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court justice, and his fight against all types of segregation and discrimination. Children will read literature from and about a wide range of historical periods and perspectives.

**Author:** Eric Carpenter

**Genre:** Biography

**Word Count:** 250+

**Theme/Idea:** making a difference

## Making Connections: Text to World

Discuss fair and equal treatment of people. Point out that sometimes people are targets of discrimination based on their race, religion, gender, or ethnic background. Briefly explain how life in the United States was different before the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Use the picture on pages 6–7 to spark the discussion. Extend the real-world connection by inviting children to discuss people who fought to end segregation, such as Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr. Point out that Thurgood Marshall was an African-American lawyer and judge who worked hard to make sure all people are treated fairly by the law.

For additional resources about *Brown v. Board of Education*, see <http://brownvboard.org/>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** appoint, deny, graduate, segregation, surgeon, transportation

**Related Words for Discussion:** belief, difference, effort, goal

## Genre

**Biography** Remind children that a biography is the story of the life of a real person.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** Colorful illustrations support the text on each page or spread. Children can use the index at the back of the book to locate key topics, people, and events.

**Vocabulary** Difficult vocabulary is defined or explained in simple terms, especially the word *segregation* (see page 6).

Praise children for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** Time passes rapidly at the beginning of the book. Help children follow the story of Marshall’s life with a time line. Begin by reading a page and calling on a child to describe the corresponding illustration. Ask: *What does the story tell us about what is happening in this picture?* Use the information they give to fill in the time line as you proceed through the story.

**Content** Children will need to be familiar with the U.S. Supreme Court, the NAACP, the U.S. Constitution, and the role of each in the struggle to end segregation. Spend extra time with children to give them a brief background.

## ELL Bridge

Children may need extra support in order to understand the U.S. Constitution and the U.S. court system. Focus first on the state court system. Read aloud pages 18–20. Then ask: *In the picture on page 18, what is Donald Murray asking Thurgood to do? In the page 19 picture, what is Thurgood telling the court? On page 20, why are Thurgood and Donald Murray shaking hands?* Use a similar process to help students understand the Supreme Court (pages 28–29) and the Constitution (pages 9, 29–31). Then work with students to create an idea web for each topic.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have children summarize the important events in Thurgood Marshall's life. Invite children to explain why they feel each event is important.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Ask children to consider how experiences people have when they are young can affect who they become as adults. Invite children to connect events from Marshall's childhood with things he chose to do as an adult. Have children speculate on why one thing may have led to another.

#### Thinking About the Text

Ask children what the author does to make the reader feel as if he or she knows or would like to know Marshall. Point out that although Marshall was a very important person and did great things, he was just like any other kid when he was young.

### Practice Summarizing

Point out that summarizing helps readers remember what they've read. Summarizing involves stating the main idea as well as important details. Guide children to look for the most important ideas and events as they read.

- Read aloud pages 4–9. Prompt children with the words *born*, *family*, *segregation*, *principal*, and *Constitution* as they summarize main ideas from these pages.
- Repeat with pages 15–20. Have children summarize what they learned on these pages, using the words *married*, *lawyer*, *graduated*, and *equal education* as clues.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Proper Nouns

Remind children that a *proper noun* names a specific person, place, or thing and begins with a capital letter. Guide children to identify proper nouns as they read.

- Read aloud page 3 and point out the words *Court* and *court*. Explain that the first example refers to a specific court and is part of a name—the Supreme Court—so it is capitalized. The second (common noun) refers to all courts, so it is not capitalized.
- Read aloud page 9. Ask children to identify a proper noun for a person (*Thurgood*), a place (*United States*), and a thing (*Constitution*). Ask: *How do you know these are proper nouns?*

### Developing Fluency

Model expert reading. Then have groups of children read the book aloud together. Listen for proper phrasing, pace, and intonation.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Making a Difference** Talk about how things changed because of Marshall's efforts. Discuss issues of concern today. Ask children how they might be able to make a difference in their families or in the community.

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

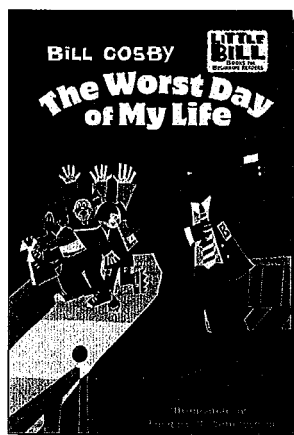
- Have children create a chain-of-events chart to show the main events in Thurgood Marshall's life. (**Graphic Aid**)
- Have children write a paragraph about why they think Marshall became a lawyer and not a dentist. Ask children to find childhood events that may have sparked his interest in the law. (**Expository**)

### Other Books

*Happy Birthday, Martin Luther King* by Jean Marzollo

*Michael Jordan* by Nick Edwards

# The Worst Day of My Life (Little Bill)



## Summary & Standard

Little Bill's parents insist that he dress up and talk to guests at a party they're having. Little Bill complains and thinks it is the worst day of his life. As the day unfolds, however, Little Bill learns an important lesson. Children will accurately identify the theme or author's message in a grade-level-appropriate text.

**Author:** Bill Cosby

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Theme/Idea:** adapting to social situations

## Making Connections: Text to Self

Most children will relate to the challenges of talking to adults they don't know well. Ask: *Do you prefer spending time with adults or with people your own age? Why? Is it sometimes hard to talk to adults? How is your behavior different around your friends than it is around grown-ups?*

Tell children they will read a story about Little Bill, whose parents expect him to attend a party they are having. Ask whether children have read other Little Bill books or seen him in cartoons on television.

For information and resources about manners at parties, in the classroom, and elsewhere, see [www.educationworld.com/a\\_curr/strategy/strategy019.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/strategy/strategy019.shtml).

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** answer, behave, gentleman, question, parents, polite, usually

**Related Words for Discussion:** behavior, canapés, manners, respect

## Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind children that realistic fiction is a made-up story that could happen in real life.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** The print is large, and the text block is narrow for easy tracking. Bright, colorful illustrations on almost every page help tell the story.

**Content** Many children will likely be able to relate to Little Bill's predicament and recognize the story's humor.

Praise children for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 91 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** Chapters are numbered but not titled. Have children pause at the end of each chapter to discuss what has happened.

**Vocabulary** Some words will be new to children, for example the word *canapés*. Help children with the pronunciation (*KAN-uh-payz*). Point out that Little Bill himself uses the context of the party to figure out the meaning of the word. Assist children in using context clues and illustrations to determine the meaning of other unfamiliar words, such as *hamper* (page 6). (Note: Because the book pages are not numbered, page numbers have been assigned. The parent letter is on page 1.)

## ELL Bridge

Help children understand compound words in the story by helping them locate and manipulate the smaller words. Write each compound word on an index card, discuss its meaning, and use it in a sentence for children to echo. Then cut the cards apart and challenge children to rebuild a compound word after you give its definition. See also the Phonics and Word-Solving Strategy on the other side of this card.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Ask why Little Bill thinks, at the beginning of the story, that this is going to be the worst day of his life. Have children summarize what happens in the rest of the story.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Discuss Little Bill's thoughts and reactions at the party. Do children agree with him when he asks, *Why do grown-ups ask such embarrassing questions? Kids don't do that.* What else about adult behavior is different from how kids act? At the end of the story, why does Little Bill decide that this isn't the worst day of his life after all? Do children agree with this ending?

#### Thinking About the Text

Discuss that the story is told as if Little Bill is talking to the reader. Ask whether children think that the grown man who wrote this story knows how kids think and feel. Why or why not?

### Understanding Plot as Problem and Solution

Explain to children that the *plot* of a story usually deals with a person's problem. As the story unfolds, readers learn how the person solves the problem. Ask:

- *What is Little Bill's main problem at the beginning of the story? How do you know that this is the main problem of the story?*
- *How does Little Bill solve his problem? When does he solve it?*
- Point out that Little Bill has many smaller problems during the story (e.g., squirting toothpaste on his nose), but these do not make up the plot, because they are not what the story is about.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Compound Words

Remind children that a compound word is made up of two or more smaller words. For example, *sunlight* is made up of *sun* and *light*. The meaning of *sunlight* combines the meanings of the two smaller words.

- Read aloud the first page of Chapter One and have children follow along. Ask them to name four compound words. (*bathroom, toothbrush, toothpaste, daydreaming*) Ask children to define each compound word and use it in a sentence.
- Ask children to look for and define other compound words in the story.

#### Developing Fluency

Have children practice reading a page of the book until they feel comfortable with it. Then have them tape-record their readings and place the tape in the classroom Listening Center.

#### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Polite Behavior** Lead a discussion about polite behavior in social situations. Discuss how Little Bill dresses and behaves at his parents' party. Ask children to give other examples of good manners. Ask them why polite behavior is important.

#### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have children write a paragraph about spending time with adults at a family party. Ask them to include both what happened and how they felt. **(Narrative)**
- Have children work in groups to list ways to dress and behave at a grown-ups' party. **(List)**

#### Other Books

*The Best Way to Play* (Little Bill) by Bill Cosby  
*Jonathan and His Mommy* by Irene Smalls