

GUIDED READING PROGRAM

Fiction Focus

2nd Edition



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

- **Achoo!**
- **The Midnight Fox**
- **Julian Rodriguez, Episode One: Trash Crisis on Earth**
- **More Than Anything Else**
- **Pocahontas and the Strangers**
- **The Report Card**
- **Rules**
- **The Trumpet of the Swan**
- **Wackiest White House Pets**
- **When Marian Sang**

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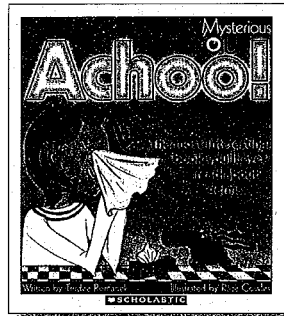
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Achoo! The most interesting book you'll ever read about germs



Summary & Standard

Short articles explain how germs make people sick and how the body fights back. Students will independently relate prior knowledge to what is read and use it to aid in comprehension.

Author: Trudee Romanek
Genre: Informational Text

Word Count: 250+
Theme/Idea: understanding germs and disease

Making Connections: Text to Self

Discuss students' experiences with being sick.
Ask: Have you ever caught a cold or the flu? Did you get the illness from someone you know? How do you think that happened?

Talk with students about what they already know about germs and illness. Together fill in the first two columns of a K-W-L chart. List in the first column what students already know, and in the second column what they would like to learn. Have them jot down interesting facts as they read, in order to fill in the last column of the chart after they finish reading.

For additional resources about children and the flu, see http://kidshealth.org/kid/ill_injure/.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: bacteria, defense, immune, infection, ingredients, microscopic, security, viruses

Related Words for Discussion: conducted, curious, experiments, observations, risks

Genre

Informational Text Remind students that an informational text gives facts about a topic.

Supportive Book Features

Text Most of the text is organized into one-page sections. A table of contents and an index offer quick topic references. The cartoon-like illustrations on every spread will keep students' interest. Simple science activities are included.

Content The author uses a humorous style to discuss a serious topic. Most students will have had colds or the flu, so they should find the topic of germs interesting.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text The fact boxes on some pages may be confusing. Remind students to read the other text on the page before they read the information in the fact boxes.

Vocabulary There is no glossary to help with difficult terms such as *transplant*, *antibiotics*, *surgical incision*, *lymphocytes*, and *macrophages*. However, context often explains words, and some pronunciations are given. Have students jot down words they do not understand and then look up their definitions in a dictionary after reading.

ELL Bridge

Have students use picture-card and word-card correspondences to identify some essential words. As a group, create a list of words from the book that are related to germs and that can be depicted graphically. Organize students into two groups. Have one group write the words from the list on index cards. Have the other group draw a picture on an index card to represent or illustrate each word. Help the group match the picture cards with the word cards.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Have students use the notes they took during reading to complete the third column of the K-W-L chart. Ask what questions students still have about germs. Encourage them to look for answers on the Internet or in other resources and report answers to the class.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students reread page 34. Ask: *What has changed in the treatment of a cold since George Washington died? What hasn't changed?* Then discuss with students ways they can apply what they learned from the book to their own lives to stay healthy.

Thinking About the Text

Discuss the book's use of humorous illustrations. Have students turn to page 6 and read the text in the fact box and study the picture of the foot. Ask: *Do mushrooms actually grow out of the foot of a person with athlete's foot? Why do you think the information is illustrated this way? How do the comic book-style illustrations in the book help the reader?* Discuss other pictures and the facts they illustrate.

Understanding Cause and Effect

Remind students that an effect is something that happens. A cause is what makes it happen. Point out that germs are a cause, and illness is the effect.

- Ask: *Before Pasteur proved that germs were responsible, what things did people think caused illness?*
- Ask students to turn to page 21. Have them summarize the cause-and-effect relationships that explain how the body fights disease.

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

Silent Letters

Remind students that some letters in some words are silent. Model using the word *know*, noting that the first and last letters are silent.

- Ask students to turn to page 15 and find the word *weigh*. Have them identify the silent letters.
- Repeat with *pneumonia* on page 30.
- Encourage students to look for other words with silent letters.

Developing Fluency

Have students reread a favorite section of the book to a partner. Suggest that they reread the section until they read with ease.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Medical Researchers Lead a discussion about the personality traits of people, such as Dr. Edward Jenner and Alexander Fleming, who discovered ways to keep people healthy. Ask: *What traits do you think researchers have that help them succeed?* (They are curious, make careful observations, take risks, and experiment.)

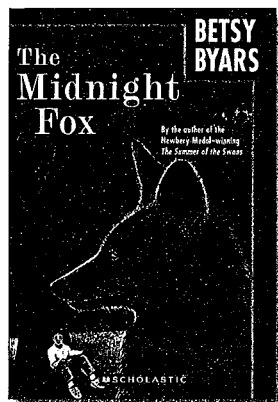
Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students write about a time that they were sick and what they did to get better. (**Expository**)
- Encourage students to write a short, humorous story about a fly that travels from house to house carrying germs. (**Narrative**)

Other Books

The First Woman Doctor by Rachel Baker
The Magic School Bus Meets the Rot Squad by Joanna Cole

The Midnight Fox



Summary & Standard

City boy Tom doesn't want to spend the summer at his Aunt Millie's farm. But when he sees a beautiful black mother fox in the woods, he's fascinated and secretly keeps watch. When the fox and her baby are threatened, Tom comes to their rescue. Students will read to better understand various aspects of the human experience.

Author: Betsy Byars
Genre: Realistic Fiction

Word Count: 250+
Theme/Idea: finding oneself

Making Connections: Text to Self

Ask students to share experiences they have had with nature—walking through the woods, watching a bird, listening to a cricket. Ask: *What sounds and sights do you recall? What did the experience make you think about?*

Ask students whether they have ever gone somewhere alone to watch nature, as Tom does. Ask: *How does observing nature help you get in touch with your thoughts? How does observing nature help you with life's problems?*

For information about *The Midnight Fox* author Betsy Byars, see <http://www.betsybyars.com/>

Vocabulary

Essential Words: abandoned, baying, bound, capacity, headline, miserable, opportunity, perilous, quivered, sympathy

Related Words for Discussion: behavior, experience, nature, observe, reflect, solitude

Genre

Realistic Fiction Remind students that realistic fiction has characters, settings, and conflicts that may be found in real life.

Supportive Book Features

Text Point out that each chapter has a specific title that introduces the chapter's main idea. In addition, the illustrations throughout the book help to show readers how Tom is feeling.

Vocabulary Clear, concise descriptions and dialogue create smooth, easy-to-follow, readable prose.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text The text includes some sayings and phrases that some students may not be familiar with. For example, "tearing the woods apart," "my heart got stuck in my throat," "looks are deceiving," and "running nose and wet eyes." Guide students in understanding these descriptive expressions.

Content While students may relate to Tom as he resists spending his summer on a farm without his friends, they may not understand Tom's sudden fascination with the black fox. Discuss how reading about Tom's changing attitude may help a reader understand how the lives of animals can affect people.

ELL Bridge

The book is full of detailed descriptions. Have students read with partners, pausing every few pages to discuss any difficult words, phrases, or concepts. Remind students to let you know when they encounter words they don't understand so you can help them to use the dictionary, look up the word, and read its meaning.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Why didn't Tom want to spend the summer on his aunt and uncle's farm? Discuss how Tom's relationship with his aunt and uncle changed at the end of the story.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students discuss why Tom reacted so strongly the first time he saw the black fox. Ask students to compare and contrast the way Tom felt about the farm and animals at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story. Ask: *What does Tom's reversal tell about people's views on spending time with nature?*

Thinking About the Text

Discuss the structure of the story. Have students use the dialogue in the book to tell how Tom's behavior and feelings changed during the story. Ask: *How does Tom act with Petie at the beginning of the story? At the end of the story? What did you learn about Tom from his letters to Petie? How does the way Tom talks and acts with his parents change? How did Tom's feelings about staying on the farm change?*

Understanding Setting

Help students understand that setting—the place and time in which a story occurs—is an important element in stories such as *The Midnight Fox*.

- Have students describe in detail the setting of *The Midnight Fox*.
- Ask: *How does the setting influence Tom's actions?*
- Ask: *What mood does the setting help create in the story?*

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

Context Clues

Point out that context clues, or hints in the text about the meaning of difficult words, can have the same meaning (*synonym*) or have the opposite meaning (*antonym*).

- Have students read the second paragraph on page 73. Ask them what *ritual* means. (*habit*) What are the context clues? (*Every night—synonym*)
- Follow the same procedure with the last paragraph on page 121. Have students identify what *lumbering* means (*clumsy, heavy, slow*) and then identify the context clues. (*quick, light movements—antonym*)

Developing Fluency

The Midnight Fox includes funny letters from Tom and Petie. Have partners each choose a letter and read it aloud to the other with appropriate tone, phrasing, and pace.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Nature Lead a discussion about what animals in nature can teach us. Ask: *What does Tom learn about himself by observing the black fox and her cub?* Have students describe observations they have made of animal behavior and what they learned about the animals and themselves.

Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students imagine they interviewed Tom. Ask them to write a news report, detailing Tom's experience. (**Expository**)
- Have students observe an animal and write about it, describing the way it looks and its behavior. (**Descriptive**)

Other Books

Stone Fox by John Reynolds Gardiner
Listening to Crickets: A Story About Rachel Carson by Shelly O. Haas

Julian Rodriguez, Episode One: Trash Crisis on Earth



Summary & Standard

An eight-year-old boy enters the world of fantasy, assuming the role of First Officer Julian Rodriguez. He humorously relates to the Mothership the trials he survives during a school day. Students will distinguish fantasy from reality.

Author: Alexander Stadler

Genre: Fantasy

Word Count: 250+

Theme/Idea: viewing everyday activities with imagination

Making Connections: Text to Self

Students may have pretended to be different kinds of people, such as superheroes, royalty, or space aliens. Have them share their favorites with the class, and discuss how they used their imaginations to pretend.

Extend the connection by explaining that in this story Julian appears to be an eight-year-old boy. However, he uses his computer to communicate with the Mothership as First Officer Julian Rodriguez, who is in disguise on Earth. It is up to the reader to determine which parts of the story are products of Julian's imagination and which are not.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see <http://www.njcu.edu/CILL/vol2/sadow.html>.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: annihilate, comprehend, deprivation, juvenile, primitive, transmission

Related Words for Discussion: compare, contrast, fantasy worlds, imagination

Genre

Fantasy Remind students that fantasy is a made-up story that has characters and settings that could not exist in real life.

Supportive Book Features

Text Most of the text is large and easy to read. The letter on page 1 introduces the main character and his unusual style of narration.

Vocabulary Most pages of text are accompanied by humorous illustrations that help explain the space lingo Julian uses to tell the story. For example, on page 25, he refers to a *midday nutrition capsule*, and the accompanying illustration shows a lunchbox. Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text Most of the text is written as a series of typed messages between Julian and the Mothership. The Mothership responses always appear on black pages with no illustrations, but Julian's world appears as cartoonlike illustrations with actual text in speech bubbles. Point out the differences among the three types of communication.

Vocabulary For an eight-year-old, Julian uses an advanced vocabulary that students may struggle with. Encourage students to use context and illustrations to help determine the meaning of words.

ELL Bridge

Reading with partners, have students pause every four pages or as needed to discuss words and identify objects that are described in Julian's space lingo, such as *education center* for school and *maternal unit* for mom. Make sure students understand that Julian is describing normal activities and things in language that is not normal.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

As they read, have students keep a sequential list of the events in Julian's day, using everyday language. For example: *His dad woke him up. He ate breakfast. He threw away his lunch on the way to school.*

Thinking Beyond the Text

Discuss how the ordinary events of Julian's day are transformed into outrageous injustices by imagination and exaggeration. Have students suggest how everyday classroom events of the past week could be exaggerated into extraordinary events.

Thinking About the Text

Point out to students that the author also illustrated the book. Discuss how the author's humorous style comes through in both the text and illustrations.

Understanding Point of View

Explain that stories can be told in the first-person point of view. Tell students that the narrator uses the pronouns *I*, *me*, *us*, and *we* when using first-person voice. Point out that first-person point of view is more limited than third-person point of view, which offers more than one narrator—and viewpoint—in a story. Then read pages 13–15 of this book.

- Have students identify the pronouns Julian uses to refer to himself on these pages (*I* and *me*). Ask: *What point of view is used in Julian Rodriguez? How do you know?*
- Discuss how a story could change depending on its point of view. Ask: *How would the book Julian Rodriguez, be different if it were told by a different character, such as the mother?*

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

Suffixes

Remind students that a suffix is a word part added to the end of a word that changes the meaning of the word.

- Tell students that the suffix *-ous* means "having the quality of" and the suffix *-ment* means "the act of." Ask students to find three words on pages 11–13 that have these suffixes (*outrageous, treatment, judgment*) and tell what they mean.
- As students continue to read, have them find other words with suffixes.

Developing Fluency

Model reading with different voices the narrative and the speech bubbles on pages 22–25. Have partners repeat and practice using different voices for the different parts.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Using Our Imaginations Lead a discussion of how students and authors use their imaginations to create other worlds.

Ask: *What are some other worlds authors have created that you enjoyed? How are these worlds like ours? How are they different?*

Extending Meaning Through Writing

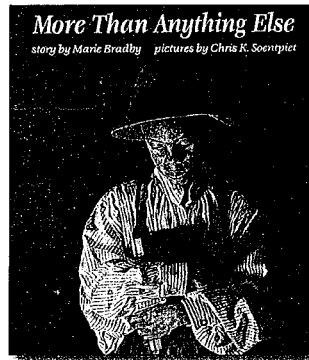
- Ask students to decide whether Julian is a boy with an active imagination or an officer of the Federation. Have them write a paragraph stating why they believe what they believe. (**Expository**)
- Have students create lists of made-up words and definitions that they could use in a fantasy story. (**List**)

Other Books

Help! I'm Trapped in an Alien's Body by Todd Strasser

Tomorrow's Wizard by Patricia MacLachlan

More Than Anything Else



Summary & Standard

In this fictionalized story about the childhood of Booker T. Washington, an actual historical figure, young Booker will not rest until he is given the help he needs to learn how to read. Students will read literature from and about a wide range of historical periods and perspectives.

Author: Marie Bradby
Genre: Historical Fiction

Word Count: 250+
Theme/Idea: the importance of working to achieve a goal

Making Connections: Text to Self

Learning to read is an important skill for anyone to master, but it was especially critical for newly freed African Americans after the Civil War. Discuss with students what they know about this time period and the life and accomplishments of Booker T. Washington. Talk about why it is important to learn to read so that you can get a good education. Ask: *What is something that you really wanted to learn how to do? When you finally learned this skill, how did knowing how to do it change your life?*

For additional teaching ideas and resources about Booker T. Washington and his life, see <http://www.nps.gov/bowa/historyculture/the-great-educator.htm>.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: baptized, lantern, linger

Related Words for Discussion: education, emancipation, literacy, slavery

Genre

Historical Fiction Remind students that a work of historical fiction is a made-up story set in a period of history.

Supportive Book Features

Text The text is broken into small blocks on each page. There is a strong correspondence between the illustrations and the events described in the narrative.

Vocabulary Context and illustrations can help students determine the meaning of historical terms (*saltworks, cooper*, and so on).

Praise students for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text Preview difficult punctuation, such as dashes that introduce or enclose phrases with additional information. There is a section of unassigned dialogue on page 17, where students must identify that it is Papa speaking.

(Note: Because book pages are not numbered, page numbers have been assigned. Page 5 begins with: *Before light—while the stars still twinkle . . .*)

Content Some historical background may be needed. Discuss the end of the Civil War, how the Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery, and how Booker T. Washington later became an important leader.

ELL Bridge

This book is full of imagery that, while beautiful, can be confusing if taken literally. Select some examples, such as *The road hugs the ridge* (page 3) and *I hold that thought in my hands* (page 15). Have students work in pairs to discuss what the author is actually saying in each case. Personification will be discussed in more depth in the Developing Phonics and Word-Strategies section on the reverse side of the card.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Have students explain what it is that Booker wants “more than anything else” and identify the actions he takes to reach his goal.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Ask students what they think Booker means when he says he has *jumped into another world* after the newspaper man teaches him to read the alphabet. Ask: *How does this new “world” compare to the real place where Booker lives now as described on page 12? How do you think learning to read will affect the rest of Booker’s life?*

Thinking About the Text

Point out to students that the author uses a metaphor, equating “book learning” and Booker’s thoughts to a slippery frog to express how Booker feels about mastering reading and writing. Ask them to trace the development of this metaphor across the course of the book.

Understanding Character

Remind students that to understand a story character, it is important to look at what he or she thinks, does, and says. Then ask students how they would describe Booker. Have them cite examples from the text to support their opinions.

Point out that although the events described in this story did not happen in exactly this way in real life, the character of Booker is based on the real-life Booker T. Washington.

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

Personification

Explain to students that personification is a figure of speech that gives an idea or object the characteristics of a person. For example, on page 9 the author writes, *[the mountain of salt] refuses to grow smaller*, when of course the salt itself cannot “refuse” to do anything. Point out that in this case, the author personifies the salt to emphasize that the task of shoveling salt seems to the narrator one that will never end.

Have students find other examples of personification in the book, such as *[b]ook learning swims freely* . . . on page 12, and . . . *hunger racing fast as my heart* on page 18. Discuss why the author might have used personification.

Developing Fluency

Pick a section of the text that contains dashes and model how to read it aloud with proper punctuation, phrasing, and pace. Have partners practice reading the same section aloud.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Literacy Lead a discussion about why being literate and getting a good education are so important in life. Discuss how education would make the lives of freed slaves better.

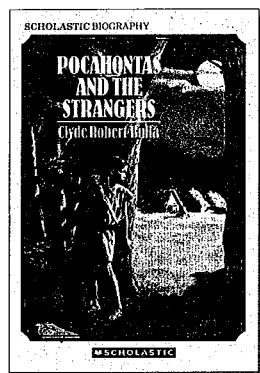
Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Booker values the skills of reading and writing. Ask students to write a paragraph describing their own feelings about reading and writing. **(Descriptive)**
- Have students write a scene narrating what happens the first time Booker teaches another child to read. **(Narrative)**

Other Books

Freedom Crossing by Margaret Goff Clark
Two Tickets to Freedom: The True Story of Ellen and William Craft, Fugitive Slaves by Florence B. Freedman

Pocahontas and the Strangers



Summary & Standard

This novel tells the story of Pocahontas and her interactions with European settlers. Students will read literature from and about a wide range of historical periods and perspectives.

Author: Clyde Robert Bulla

Word Count: 250+

Genre: Fictional Biography

Theme/Idea: meetings between two cultures

Making Connections: Text to World

Many students will have some familiarity with Pocahontas and the Jamestown settlers. Ask students what they know about these historical figures, and give more background, if needed.

Extend the real-world connection by discussing ways in which cultures can be different. Explain that culture includes the arts, beliefs, and customs of a group of people. Point out that the culture of the Native Americans was quite different from that of the settlers.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see <http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/all/pocahonta>.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: council, custom, tribe, village

Related Words for Discussion: colonize, conflict, convert, negotiate, settlement

Genre

Fictional Biography Remind students that although works of fictional biography are based on the lives of real people, often sections of their lives are not known, so authors try to fill in the gaps.

Supportive Book Features

Text Like many novels, this book is split into numbered and titled chapters. The author has also divided the book into Part One and Part Two. A few black-and-white illustrations offer glimpses of the characters and their world.

Vocabulary Students will be able to understand most of the narrator's words. The meaning of unfamiliar terms can be inferred from context.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text Some students may find it difficult to read page after page of text with very few illustrations. Have these students cover the page they are not reading with a sheet of blank paper so they are not overwhelmed. Also, guide students in identifying an em dash. Explain that it may tell the reader that the words following it offer an explanation, or it may indicate dialogue being interrupted or cut off.

Content Some historical background may be needed. Discuss briefly this period in American history, including the actions of the historical Pocahontas and Captain John Smith.

ELL Bridge

Have students talk about character traits. Define the word *trait* as "a quality or characteristic of a person." Then invite students to describe some traits of Pocahontas and Captain John Smith. Write their names on the board and list the traits below each. Have students write a few sentences describing either Pocahontas or Captain John Smith, using their traits as a catalyst. Invite students to share their sentences.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Prompt students to summarize the most important events in this narrative. *In what ways did Pocahontas help the settlers, and what were the most significant things that happened to her over the course of her life?*

Thinking Beyond the Text

Point out to students that the English and the Native American cultures were very different. Ask: *What were some challenges the settlers in America faced as a result of these differences? What were some challenges Pocahontas encountered when she visited England?*

Thinking About the Text

Have students discuss why the author chose to split this book into Part One and Part Two where he did. Ask: *Why divide the story at all? How do the two parts differ?*

Understanding Compare and Contrast

Discuss that comparing and contrasting information is an important strategy that good readers use to help them understand what they are reading.

- Remind students that the society of the Native Americans and the society of the English were different in many ways. Have students identify some of the similarities and differences between these two groups.
- Ask students to compare Pocahontas in Part One of the book with Pocahontas in Part Two. In what ways does she change?

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 Suffixes

Remind students that a suffix is a word part at the end of a word that alters the meaning of the base word. For example, in *slowly*, the suffix *-ly* means "in a ___ manner"; *slowly* means "in a slow manner." In *longest*, the suffix *-est* means "the most"; *longest* means "the most long."

- Turn to page 10 and discuss how the suffix *-ly* alters the meaning of *tight* and the suffix *-est* alters the meaning of *large*.
- Invite students to find and discuss the meanings of other words with suffixes.

Developing Fluency

Model reading with expressive characterization a section of the text that has dialogue (for example, p. 50). Read the chosen passage aloud, and have students echo-read after you.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Colonization Point out to students that the English were settling on Native American land. As a result, there were conflicts between the two groups. Pocahontas helped improve relations for part of the time. Discuss some reasons for conflict between the groups and how Pocahontas helped them get along.

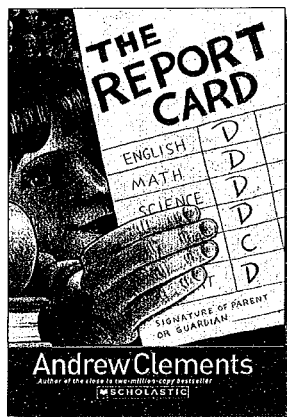
Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students write a paragraph about the episode when Pocahontas saved John Smith's life. Remind them to include only the most important details. **(Narrative)**
- Have students write a paragraph explaining how Pocahontas helped resolve the conflict between the two cultures. **(Expository)**

Other Books

The Girl Who Chased Away Sorrow: The Diary of Sarah Nita, a Navajo Girl by Ann Turner
If You Lived With the Sioux Indians by Ann McGovern

The Report Card



Summary & Standard

Nora thinks grades and test scores don't always show a person's abilities or intelligence. In her attempt to make others realize this, she shows just how smart she really is. Nora has to persuade her parents and teachers to allow her to use her talents as she prefers. Students will independently relate prior knowledge to what is read and use it to aid in comprehension.

Author: Andrew Clements

Genre: Fiction

Word Count: 250+

Theme/Idea: intelligence vs. test scores

Making Connections: Text to Self

Students will have had experience with different kinds of assessment during their school careers. With students, make a list of ways their academic progress has been evaluated and charted in the past, such as quizzes, tests, projects, portfolios, presentations, and report cards.

Ask students whether they think academic progress can be measured in other ways. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each suggestion.

For additional resources about test stress, see <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/school/teststress/index.html>.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: competition, expectation, genius, intelligence, potential, pressure

Related Words for Discussion: achievement, assessment, excellence, hinder, impact, influence

Genre

Fiction Remind students that fiction is a made-up story with characters who often have a problem to solve.

Supportive Book Features

Text The story is split into numbered chapters, each with a descriptive title. Sections of quoted dialogue break up Nora's narration. Note that when Nora's direct thoughts are quoted, they are set in italics.

Vocabulary Although the story is narrated by a child genius, the majority of the vocabulary is conversational and often informal and slangy, making it easy to read and understand.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text Identify examples where ellipses and em dashes are used in the story. Point out that these punctuation marks often indicate pauses in dialogue or changes in a train of thought.

Vocabulary At times Nora uses specialized academic language to discuss testing systems (*Connecticut Mastery Testing* on pages 24-25), or material relating to different content areas (*Ming Dynasty* on page 41). Remind students to use context clues to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words.

ELL Bridge

Build comprehension by asking simple questions about story elements. For example, read, on pages 72-74, Nora's explanation of what she hopes to accomplish. Ask: *Why does Nora not like the current system of grading?* Unknown terms or vocabulary may interfere with students' comprehension. As they read, encourage them to write down any terms they find difficult or confusing, and to ask about the terms during class.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Have students describe the evolution of Nora's plan during the story. Ask them to identify her main goal and to explain when, how, and why her plan has to change to help meet this goal.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Ask students to relate their own experiences with testing to those of Nora and Stephen. How might students feel before taking an important test? What are some ways that test results might affect their emotions afterward?

Thinking About the Text

Have students evaluate how the author builds suspense by not revealing Nora's whole plan at the very beginning of the story. Ask them to identify some instances when the author teases the audience with bits of information about the plan. Discuss the effect this strategy has on the reader as the story progresses.

Understanding Theme

Remind students that the theme of a story is its main idea or message. Once students have identified the details of this story's plot, help them recognize and consider its theme.

- Begin by asking students what they think "work to your full potential" means. Then ask: *How might Nora define working to her full potential?*
- End by inviting students to share their opinions about this theme. Ask: *Do you think Nora is wasting her potential being "normal," or do you support her right to be free to choose how to use her talents?*

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

Recognizing Synonyms

Remind students that synonyms are words with similar meanings. Sometimes synonyms are interchangeable. At other times, one word has a meaning that is more suited to a particular situation.

- Ask students to examine how the author uses the words *thinking* and *analyzing* on page 7. Ask: *Are these words interchangeable here? How are they different? (Analyzing is a kind of thinking that requires figuring out how things are connected.) What does the word analyzing tell you about Nora?*
- Repeat with *gifted* (p. 27) and *special* (p. 27), and *scores* (p. 53) and *performance* (p. 55).

Developing Fluency

Model how to read with expression a section of the text. Stress words in italics, pause at ellipses and em dashes, and read with emotion. Then have students read softly to themselves.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Grades On page 47, Nora says, "A bad grade for a kid is a bad grade for everyone." Discuss with students whether they agree with Nora's statement. Ask them to give examples to support their opinions.

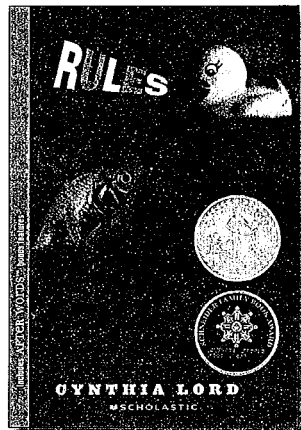
Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students write a short essay that discusses the pros and cons of using standardized testing. (**Expository**)
- Have students suppose they are taking a difficult test, such as a quiz on state capitals. Ask them to write a few paragraphs that tell what they are thinking as they take the test. (**Narrative**)

Other Books

The Library Card by Jerry Spinelli
Oh, Brother by Johnnie M. Wilson

Rules



Summary & Standard

Twelve-year-old Catherine deals with her brother's autism by teaching him rules to follow. She begins to evaluate her own rules for living, however, after befriendng her new neighbor and a boy she meets at her brother's therapy clinic. Students will accurately identify the theme or author's message in a grade-level-appropriate text.

Author: Cynthia Lord
Genre: Realistic Fiction

Word Count: 250+
Theme/Idea: understanding ways people communicate

Making Connections: Text to Self

Students may not know anyone with autism. Explain that autism is a condition that causes difficulty in interactions with others. Some people with autism have difficulty communicating. Ask: *What is communication? Why is it important?*

Extend the connection by having students name different ways to communicate. Encourage them to include nonverbal types, such as facial expressions, actions, and pointing. Ask: *When might you use nonverbal communication? How could you get an idea across without speaking?*

For additional teaching ideas and resources about autism, see <http://www.autismsource.org/>.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: communication, conversation, occupational, therapy

Related Words for Discussion: connection, interaction, nonverbal, relationship, verbal

Genre

Realistic Fiction Realistic fiction is a made-up story that features characters who are like real people and situations that could really happen.

Supportive Book Features

Text The story is divided into chapters, each relating to one of David's rules and titled accordingly. Catherine's voice uses informal language and is easy to read.

Vocabulary Students should be able to define any unfamiliar terms by using context.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text Students may have difficulty reading sections in which the author uses creative punctuation and capitalization, such as when Jason's therapist talks to him loudly and slowly (page 23). Point out the special typefaces used to depict David's rules (page 4) or Jason's communication with his word cards (page 46).

Content While students will relate to many of Catherine's concerns, many will not have the experience of living with a brother with autism or befriendng someone with a disability. Discuss how reading about the experiences described in the book may help the reader understand challenges that others may face.

ELL Bridge

To prepare students for reading, preview some content-related words such as *autism*, *clinic*, *communication*, *appointment*, and *therapy*. Demonstrate using a dictionary. Help students pronounce each word and say its meaning. Have them copy the words and definitions on a piece of paper, then write and read sentences using several of the words together. Encourage them to keep their word list handy while reading so they can add words to look up later.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Have students trace how Catherine's relationships with Jason, Kristi, and David develop over the course of the book. Ask them to cite specific evidence from the text.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Remind students that one of Catherine's rules is *Some people think they know who you are, when really they don't*. Ask students what they think she means. Ask: *Do you agree with Catherine? Why or why not?* Point out that one important way people get to know who you are is through communication. Ask students how people can communicate to others who they really are.

Thinking About the Text

Ask students to identify different methods the author uses to convey how people (and guinea pigs) communicate in this book. For example, Catherine's thoughts and the thoughts she imagines her guinea pigs have are in italics, and Jason's dialogue is set in a different font and conveyed through different combinations of card text. The things Jason's therapist says to him are set in parentheses and all caps to depict that she is shouting and gesturing.

Making Predictions

Explain to students that they can often predict what will happen next in a story by paying attention to foreshadowing, or clues the author gives about future events. For example, the reader may be able to guess how Jason feels about Catherine because he changes his shirt (page 67) and gets his hair cut (page 114). Ask students to identify other examples of foreshadowing in this book, such as Catherine's lying about inviting the neighbors to the cookout (page 65), foreshadowing the fact that she tries to hide David's problems from them. 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

Personification

Remind students that personification is a figure of speech that gives an idea or object the characteristics of a person.

- Point out that Catherine often personifies letters and words. For example, she says *'why not' is pushier—like 'why' with a fist on its hip* (page 76), and on page 158 she personifies each letter of the word *dance*.
- Ask students to identify other examples of personification as they read.

Developing Fluency

Model reading page 53, using punctuation for proper phrasing and emphasizing text within quotation marks. Then invite groups to take turns rereading the section aloud.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Communication Point out that communication is one way human beings connect with each other. Have students discuss forms of communication mentioned in this book, such as Jason's communication book, flashlight Morse Code, jokes, sticky notes, music, rules, facial expressions, drawings, and giving gifts. List additional forms, such as sign language, books, and mass media.

Extending Meaning Through Writing

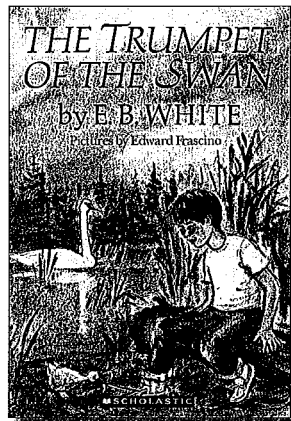
- Have students describe the top five words or phrases they would want in a "communication book" and explain why they chose these particular words and/or phrases. **(Expository)**
- Have students write a scene describing Catherine's and Kristi's next meeting that reveals where their friendship stands. **(Narrative)**

Other Books

Against the Odds by Joe Layden

Oh, Brother by Johnnie Marshall Wilson

The Trumpet of the Swan



Summary & Standard

Lewis is a trumpeter swan without a voice. Through the love and support of his parents and a boy named Sam, Lewis develops his own unique voice and has many adventures along the way. Students will distinguish fantasy from reality.

Author: E. B. White

Genre: Fantasy

Word Count: 250+

Theme/Idea: finding your own voice

Making Connections: Text to Text

Many students will be familiar with E. B. White's story *Charlotte's Web* from the book or a movie adaptation. Discuss with students what they remember and liked best about that story.

Extend the text and author connection by telling students that E. B. White also wrote *Stuart Little* and *The Trumpet of the Swan*. Explain that all of these stories in some way touch on individuality, loyalty, love, friendship, and self-sacrifice.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see <http://www.webenglishteacher.com/white.html>.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: ambition, communicate, defective, devotion, freedom, honor, sacrifice

Related Words for Discussion: attitude, confidence, dignity, disability, triumphant

Genre

Fantasy Remind students that a fantasy is a made-up story that has characters, such as talking animals, and settings that do not seem real.

Supportive Book Features

Text Each chapter has a title, as shown in a table of contents. Further support is provided by illustrations, as well as letters, telegrams, and bars of musical notation set off from the text in a different font.

Content The narrative is sequential, but the point of view changes among the characters. Encourage students to ask themselves through whose eyes and thoughts the story is being told when the point of view changes.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text The setting shifts frequently. Have students take notes on where the characters are in each chapter. Use a map of North America to show the places that Lewis visits.

Vocabulary Some students may find multisyllabic words challenging, especially when Lewis's father speaks, using words such as *responsibilities* on page 27 and *exhibition* on page 47. Have students use context clues and what they know about syllabication to help them decode new words.

ELL Bridge

Remind students that a proper noun names a person, place, or thing. Note that all proper nouns are capitalized. Have students turn to page 93 and read the word *Ontario*. Ask: *Why is the word a proper noun? What does it name?* Have students find other proper nouns on the page and tell what they name—a person, place, or thing. (*Camp Kookooskoos, Mr. Beaver, Sam, Lewis*)

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Discuss with students why Lewis had to keep moving from job to job to earn the money he needed for the trumpet, and what led him to a particular place. Ask them who was most helpful and who posed some danger to Lewis in each location.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Ask students how the characteristics of honor, love, and honesty motivated characters' actions throughout the story. Discuss the arguments characters used to justify their actions or change someone's mind, such as the cob's decision to steal a trumpet for his son or Lewis's conversation with the Head Man at the zoo.

Thinking About the Text

Point out to students that the author wrote the story in such a way that readers would know the thoughts, feelings, and actions of many different characters. Discuss how the story would be different if told only from the point of view of Lewis.

Recognizing Compare and Contrast

Remind students that when they compare and contrast they are deciding how two things are similar and how they are different.

- Have students compare and contrast Lewis before and after he came into possession of the trumpet.
- Have students review the several places where Lewis had jobs. Ask them to compare and contrast these places. For example, students may say that each place had a lake, in both places Lewis rescued someone, and in only one place did Lewis encounter other swans.

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 Suffixes

Remind students that a suffix is an ending added to a base word that alters the meaning of the word. Write *suddenly*. Ask a volunteer to name the base word (*sudden*) and the suffix (*-ly*). Explain that *-ly* means "in a certain way," so *suddenly* means "in a sudden way."

- Turn to page 10 and discuss how the suffix *-ly* alters the meaning of *extreme*. Discuss the meanings of *perfectly* on page 55 and *swiftly* on page 77.
- Invite students to find and discuss the meanings of other words with suffixes.

Developing Fluency

Model fluent reading of a section of the book with interesting dialogue. Have small groups practice reading it together as if they are the characters speaking. Then have groups present their readings to the class.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Overcoming Difficulties Review how Lewis overcame the challenge of having no voice and became a success wherever he went. Discuss with students the importance of attitude in overcoming challenges.

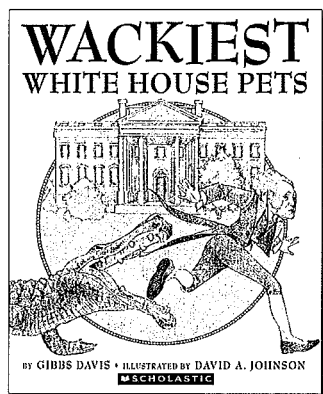
Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students write an informational paragraph about trumpeter swans, using facts from the book such as that baby swans are called cygnets. (**Expository**)
- Point out that Sam writes in his diary nightly, ending each entry with a question. Have students compose a diary entry that Lewis might write from Camp Kookooskoos, the Red Rock Lakes, Boston, or Philadelphia. (**Narrative**)

Other Books

The Message by K. A. Applegate
Pigs Might Fly by Dick King-Smith

Wackiest White House Pets



Summary & Standard

Short texts describe many of the 400 or so pets that have lived with the presidents' families in the White House. Students will read to better understand various aspects of the human experience.

Author: Kathryn Gibbs Davis

Word Count: 250+

Genre: Informational Text

Theme/Idea: having pets in the White House

Making Connections: Text to World

Ask students to share information about pets, either their own or others they know. Ask what is most unusual about each pet.

Extend the connection by explaining that U.S. presidents traditionally keep family pets while living at the White House. Before cars and grocery stores were common, farm animals were often kept as pets. Horses were once kept at the White House for transportation, and chickens and cows for eggs and milk. Point out that the White House has been home to some unusual pets—bears, alligators, and even elephants.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see www.presidentialpetmuseum.com/whitehousepets-1.htm.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: donate, foreign, formal, influential, massive, menagerie, pamper

Related Words for Discussion: console, impractical, practical, sympathetic, unconditional

Genre

Informational Text Remind students that an informational text gives facts about a topic.

Supportive Book Features

Text The author's descriptive style and the detailed, humorous illustrations will help students visualize historic people and pets. At the back of the book is a comprehensive list of interesting facts about each president and his pets.

Content The book is organized into short, two-page features with no more than one page of text. Sections are in chronological order starting with the pets of George Washington.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text The book has no table of contents or index, which would be helpful in a book with so many facts and biographical subjects. Remind students that the book follows the order in which presidents were in office; direct them to the comprehensive list at the back.

Vocabulary Words and terms that provide historical background, such as *inaugural*, *nominated*, *Revolutionary War*, and *Emancipation Proclamation*, may be unfamiliar to students. Review these terms with them as they read, or have them research independently.

ELL Bridge

Have partners take turns describing the book's illustrations to each other. For each picture, have them answer questions such as: *What animal is in the picture? What is special about this animal? Who is/are the person/people in the picture? What is happening in the picture?* Remind students to use descriptive adjectives and action verbs in their descriptions.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

As they read, have students keep a T-chart of *practical pets* and *impractical pets*. Have students write the name of each kind of pet in the correct column next to the president's name.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students reread the first two paragraphs of the introduction. Encourage them to infer why kings, queens, and foreign officials would give a president a wild, wacky pet as a gift. Invite students to express their opinion about whether a wacky pet is an appropriate gift for a president.

Thinking About the Text

Review with students the list of resources in the bibliography on page 47. Have students use the titles to hypothesize which books the author used for information about individual presidents. For example, *The First Teddy Bear* would give information about Theodore Roosevelt.

Visualizing

Explain that *visualizing* means forming a mental picture as you read. To visualize, readers use the author's words as well as what they already know about the topic.

- Have students reread the second and third paragraphs on page 9. Ask what words the author uses to help the reader visualize the dog Vulcan and his actions (*huge French hound, great jaws, gorged*).
- Repeat with the second paragraph on page 14.
- Encourage students to identify other sentences that help them visualize scenes and characters.

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

Diphthongs *ou, ow*

Remind students that the diphthongs *ou* and *ow* can have the same sound /ou/.

- Ask students to find the words *hound, house, and grounds* on page 9 and the words *growling, sounds, south, and allowed on* page 10. Have students read the words and name the letters that stand for the /ou/ sound.
- Explain that *ow* can also stand for the long o sound. Have students find and read the words *growing* and *owned* on page 10.

Developing Fluency

Model reading aloud with proper intonation the last three paragraphs of page 10. Explain that the tone of these three paragraphs is humorous and should be read that way. Have partners practice reading the paragraphs.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Positive Qualities of Pets Lead a discussion about how pets bring comfort to many people, including hospital patients, nursing home residents, and even presidents. Encourage students to list the qualities that make particular pets a comfort to people.

Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students pick from the book the pet that they find most interesting and write a short story about it. (**Narrative**)
- Invite students to choose a pet they would give a president. Have them explain their choices. (**Expository**)

Other Books

Back to the Day Lincoln Was Shot! by Beatrice Gormley

George Washington: A Picture Book Biography by James Cross Giblin

When Marian Sang



Summary & Standard

This inspirational biography describes the struggles Marian Anderson endured to become a magnificent singer. Students will read for personal fulfillment.

Author: Pam Muñoz Ryan

Genre: Biography

Word Count: 250+

Theme/Idea: seeking excellence and equality

Making Connections: Text to World

Ask students to share what they know about the prejudice that African Americans faced in the first half of the twentieth century.

Extend the connection by explaining that African Americans in the United States were once prevented from attending schools or riding in train cars with whites, from performing in many concert halls, and so on. Discuss some famous African Americans, such as Jackie Robinson and Martin Luther King, Jr., who helped overcome segregation. Say that this story recounts an African-American woman's struggle to become an accepted concert singer.

For additional resources about Marian Anderson, see www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/anderson.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: debut, devoted, distinct, enrage, harmony, humiliation, prejudice

Related Words for Discussion: determination, enthusiasm, patience, reaction, response

Genre

Biography Remind students that a biography tells the important details of a real person's life.

Supportive Book Features

Text Handsome illustrations and the author's direct style will help students visualize historic people, places, and events. End notes from the author and illustrator provide additional information about Marian Anderson. Other end-of-book resources are a time line of her life and a list of recordings.

Content The sequential arrangement of content and the descriptions of events in Anderson's life will help students follow her extraordinary journey from choirgirl to international celebrity. Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text Lyrics of many popular songs of the time are included in italicized text. Guide students in understanding the lyrical references.

Vocabulary Some words, such as *audition*, *contralto*, *debut*, *encore*, *libretto*, *recitals*, and *tuition*, probably will be unfamiliar to students. You may wish to preteach these words, or have students scan the text for unfamiliar words and then use a dictionary before reading.

ELL Bridge

To prepare students for reading, preview the Essential Words and any other words students will need in order to understand the story, such as *accompanist*, *applause*, *audience*, *balcony*, *choir*, *concert*, *duet*, *note*, *perform*, *segregation*, *stage*, and *tuition*. Demonstrate how to use a dictionary. Help students pronounce each word and read its meaning. When possible, use the illustrations to demonstrate or explain the words.

Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Have students discuss what they learned about the obstacles Marian faced in becoming a professional singer and what she did to overcome these obstacles.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Encourage students to compare and contrast Marian's biography with those of other people who have succeeded despite overwhelming odds. Allow students to use examples of people they know as well as famous people (e.g., Amelia Earhart, Helen Keller, Abraham Lincoln). Discuss what all these people have in common that helped them succeed.

Thinking About the Text

Invite students to discuss the purpose of the lyrics, which are set apart from the narrative with italics. Ask: *What do they contribute to Marian's story? Are lyrics placed randomly in the text, or do they say something about what is happening on the page?*

Identifying Problem and Solution

Tell students that an author writing a biography will often frame the account of a person's life in terms of a problem and the ways he or she tried to overcome or solve it.

- Have students reread page 15. Ask: *What is Marian's dream? What is the problem facing Marian? What is the solution? Is this final or temporary?* (Note: Book pages are not numbered. Page 6 begins: *No one was surprised...*)
- Have students reread page 21. Say: *Find the sentence that sums up the problem.* Ask: *How does Marian solve the problem? Why is this a good solution?*
- Continue the exercise on pages 26–28.

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

Figurative Language: Metaphor

Remind students that a metaphor compares two unlike things without using the words *like* or *as*.

- Have students read the last sentence of the first paragraph on page 17 and find the metaphor. (*opera was simply the sun and the moon*) Ask: *What comparison does the metaphor make?*
- Have students refer back to this metaphor when reading the last two paragraphs of the book.

Developing Fluency

Model reading aloud page 11 to convey the sadness Marian felt and the hope her mother gave her. Then have small groups practice reading aloud the page.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Equality Lead a discussion about equality. Ask: *What is equality? Why is it important? Are there different kinds of equality, such as economic, social, or gender equality? How do we measure it?*

Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students choose some song lyrics and explain why the lyrics are meaningful to them. (**Expository**)
- Have students imagine themselves in the audience at Marian's Lincoln Memorial performance in 1939. Ask them to write a story about that experience. (**Narrative**)

Other Books

The Story of Harriet Tubman: Conductor of the Underground Railroad by Kate McMullan
Tiger Woods, An American Master by Nicholas Edwards