



Fiction Readers

Lessons and Activities

Early Fluent Plus

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Implementation Guide

Fiction Readers

**Early Fluent/
Early Fluent Plus**

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Research to Practice

Fiction Readers instruction begins with a simple 20-minute small-group reading lesson:

► Introduce the Text

Quickly and efficiently introduce the book and prepare students to read. In just five minutes, present the elements of the book cover, identify the genre and/or establish a purpose for reading, and review reading behaviors.

► Read the Text

Students read the passage aloud independently. Observe as students explore the story, experience appropriate struggle, and apply strategies to draw meaning from the text. After the passage has been read once, prompt students to share their initial understandings of the selection and their experiences with the act of reading. Respond with praise and problem-solving support. Lastly, guide the group through a targeted reread under teacher guidance.

► Discuss the Text

For the last five minutes of the lesson, use targeted questions and prompts to lead students to consider the text again and build a more complete understanding of what they have read.

Pablo's Haircut

Small-Group Reading Lesson

5 Introduce the Text

1. Display the front cover of the book. Read the title, author name, and illustrator name.
2. Take a picture walk through the book with students. Have students make predictions as they think about the title and illustrations.
3. Discuss 2–3 content and academic vocabulary words from the text with students.
4. Remind students that readers do the following: read words left to right, top to bottom, and page to page; look at the images from page to page; and think and talk about what they read.

10 Read the Text

1. Have each student whisper-read the book independently. Observe each student's reading successes, struggles, and strategies. Encourage students to track words with their fingers and to give appropriate time and attention to each page.
2. Ask students to tell you about the story. Encourage them to refer to the words and pictures as they retell the story.
3. Ask students to tell you about the words in the book. Acknowledge the words or word parts students were able to recognize accurately. Use the following ideas to address words that caused struggles or inaccuracies:
 - **SQUEALED**—Point out the *-ed* at the end of the word. Remind students that this inflectional ending can be added to the end of base words. Cover the *-ed* and identify the long *e* sound spelled with *ea*.
 - **MOTION**—Write the word on the board, and underline *-tion* at the end of the word. Explain this spelling pattern is pronounced /shan/. Tell students the *o* has a long vowel sound. Run your finger under the word as you sound out the parts.
 - **MATCHING**—Identify *match* as the base word in this word with an *-ing* ending. Point out to students that the *ch* is spelled with the pattern *-ich* because it comes after a short vowel. Practice reading other words with this spelling pattern: *catch*, *hatch*, and *witch*.

5 Discuss the Text

Use the following prompts to discuss the words and pictures that tell the story:

- Describe Pablo's problem at the beginning of the story.
(extra support) Why is Pablo worried about getting sheared?
- How does Pablo overcome his fear of shearing?
(extra support) How does Esteban help Pablo feel better about getting his hair cut?
- What does the author want us to learn from the story?
(extra support) What does Pablo learn in this story?

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Research to Practice

Fiction Readers instruction includes a simple 20-minute comprehension strategy lesson:

► **Introduce the Strategy**

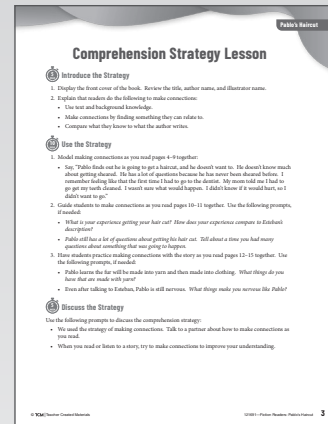
Quickly and efficiently, review the book and introduce a key comprehension strategy. In just five minutes, define the strategy and its purpose.

► **Use the Strategy**

Return to the story to model using the strategy to better understand the story. Students follow the model to use the strategy, with support, as they continue to reread the story.

► **Discuss the Strategy**

For the last five minutes of the lesson, guide students to restate the strategy and to identify when and how they will use the strategy with other books and reading tasks.



Fiction Readers instruction includes a simple 20-minute close-reading activity:

► **Set a Purpose for Rereading**

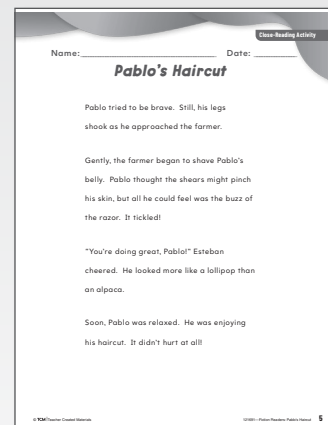
The teacher guides students to think about story elements, word choice, language, or author’s craft as they prepare to reread.

► **Reread an Excerpt**

Students reread a rich, complex passage from the book. As they read, they look for layers of meaning and tools used by the author to communicate meaning.

► **Annotate and Discuss Specific Tools Used by the Author**

Students find and explore specific examples to support and expand their ideas about the text and the author.



Research to Practice

Fiction Readers instruction includes three options for fluency instruction and practice:

► **Focused Fluency Activity**

Define and model one aspect of expressive reading that fits well with the story. You may highlight the best way to read dialogue or how a reader's cadence changes when reading long sentences. Students then read the book with strong expression to partners or groups.

► **Reader's Theater Activity**

Students work together to prepare a performance of the story. They read a script of the story several times, concluding in a performative read aloud. Teachers may choose to assign roles or allow students to choose them. Each script includes roles for advanced, on-grade level, and striving readers.

► **Fluency Model**

Students listen to the professional recording of the story.

Reader's Theater Script

Name: _____ Date: _____

Pablo's Haircut

Esteban: Hola Pablo! Your haircut looks wonderful! Would you like to go rock climbing today? Michael and Raj invited me.

Pablo: Rock climbing sounds scary. I've never climbed a mountain. I'm just a little alpaca.

Esteban: Yes, but there is no need to worry, Pablo. We're alpacas. Alpacas love to climb mountains. Come on and I'll show you how, just like I showed you how to get a haircut!

Pablo: I'm still afraid that I will fall and hurt myself.

Raj: All you have to do is give it a try, Pablo. If you take it one step at a time, it will become much easier for you.

Pablo: So, how do you know what to do first when you have never climbed a mountain?

Michael: Well, in this case, the first thing is the first step. Look around and figure out where you will put your foot.

Pablo: I guess I'll place my foot right there. That looks like a flat landing. I won't slip and fall.

Esteban: Now, figure out where your next step will be. Find a place that is flat and stable.

Pablo: I see another rock that looks like it won't move. I can get my foot over there next.

Raj: You're doing a fabulous job, Pablo. Keep going!

Pablo: Yes, climbing isn't so difficult when you just take it one step at a time!

Michael: Yes, and now that you understand, I'll race you to the top of the mountain!

Pablo: You got it! On your mark...get set...go!

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Research to Practice

Fiction Readers instruction includes four options for extending each lesson:

► Foundational Skills or Word Study

Lessons focus on a word pattern that is found in the story and can be widely generalized to other texts students will encounter. In the lower levels of the program, instruction includes phonemic awareness, phonics, basic decoding, and some vocabulary strategies and parts of speech. In the upper levels, more sophisticated aspects of decoding are taught along with morphemes and vocabulary strategies. Each lesson includes a brief mini-lesson and student activity page.

► Fluency Model

Students listen to the professional recording of the story. They can listen to the audio alone as they follow along in the print book or listen to the audio embedded in the read-along ebook.

► Writing about Reading

The writing activity prompts students to write about what they have read. They are encouraged to draw upon the story and the discussions around the text to complete the activity. A reproducible activity page is included.

► Content-Area Connection

The content-area connection links the topic and vocabulary from the story to mathematics, science, social studies, or the arts and movement. Most activities can be completed independently. A reproducible activity page is included.

Pablo's Haircut

Extension Options

Foundational Skills

Inflectional Endings—ing and -ed

- Discuss with students that verbs can either have endings on them to show the past tense or to say that an action is happening. Explain that we call the complete word the *base word* and the ending added to it an *inflectional ending*.
- Write the following base words from the reader on the board: *shout, laugh, shout*.
 - Add the inflectional ending *-ing* to the end of each word. Practice reading the words. Review that when *-ing* is added to the end of a verb, it shows the action is happening now. Ask students to use these words in sentences.
 - Erase the *-ing* ending and add an *-ed* ending to each base word. Practice reading the words with this inflectional ending. Explain that when *-ed* is added to the end of a verb, it shows the past tense, or that the action has already happened. Ask students to use these words in sentences.
- Distribute *Inflectional Endings* (page 8) to students. Have them add the inflectional endings *-ing* and *-ed* to the end of each base word in the chart and read each word.

Fluency Model

- Have students listen to the professional recording of the book (provided in the Digital Resources).

Assessment Opportunity

Use the *Comprehension Assessment* (page 12) to assess students' understanding of the story.

Writing about Reading

Personal Narrative

- Remind students that in *Pablo's Haircut*, Pablo did something for the first time. *What was it?* Ask students to think about times they did something new. Discuss what they did and how they felt about it (*excited, scared, wonder*, etc.).
- Distribute copies of *My First* (page 9). Have students write personal narratives about times they did something new.
 - Remind students that each narrative should include a beginning, middle, and end. Encourage students to share their feelings about what happened in the writing. Remind them to include descriptive language, such as sensory words or precise words.
- Have students read their narratives to partners and provide peer feedback to each other as a means for improving their writing (e.g., *Two Stars and a Wish*). Allow time for revisions.

Arts/Movement Connection

Fuzzy Alpaca

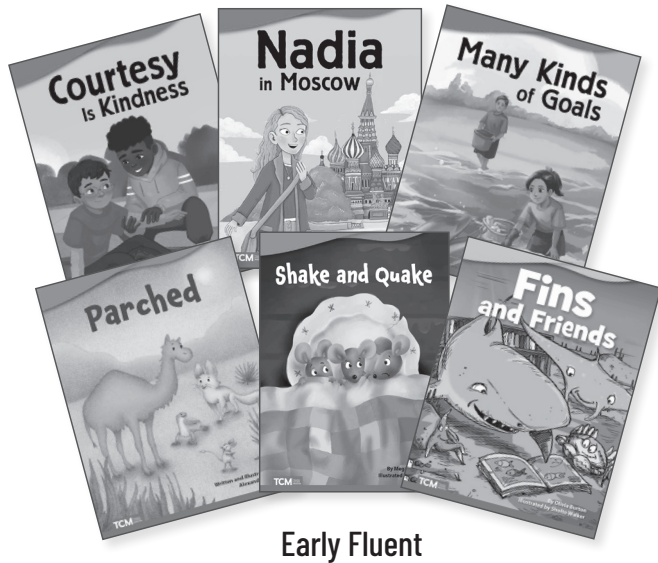
- Students will use small pieces of yarn to create fuzzy alpaca art projects.
- Distribute *A Fuzzy Alpaca* (page 10) to students, and have them cut out the patterns.
- Provide students with yarn color choices.
 - Model how to draw lines of glue around the edges of the pattern and place the yarn on the glue lines to outline the shape. Make new lines of glue next to the yarn that is already placed on the pattern until the entire alpaca pattern is covered with yarn.

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Kit Components

Book Trios

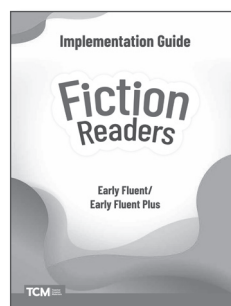
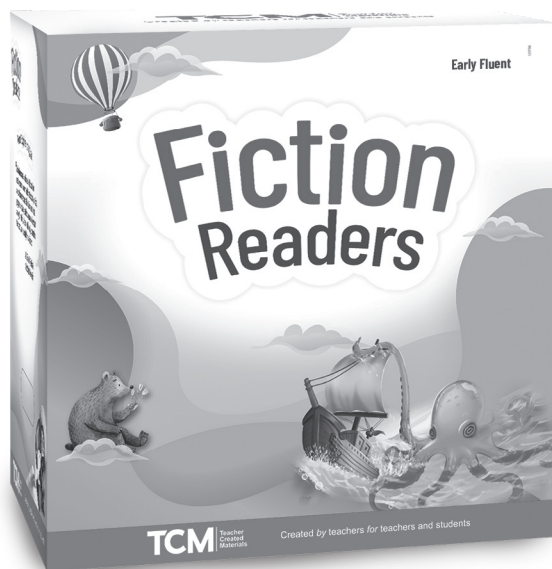
Each kit includes 15 readers with 5 trios. Each trio of full-color books offers different stories based on a common theme.



Early Fluent

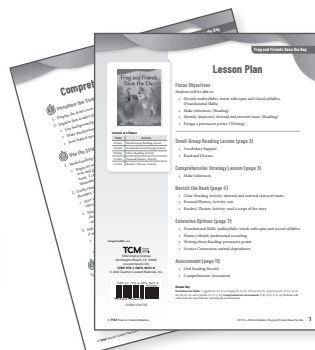


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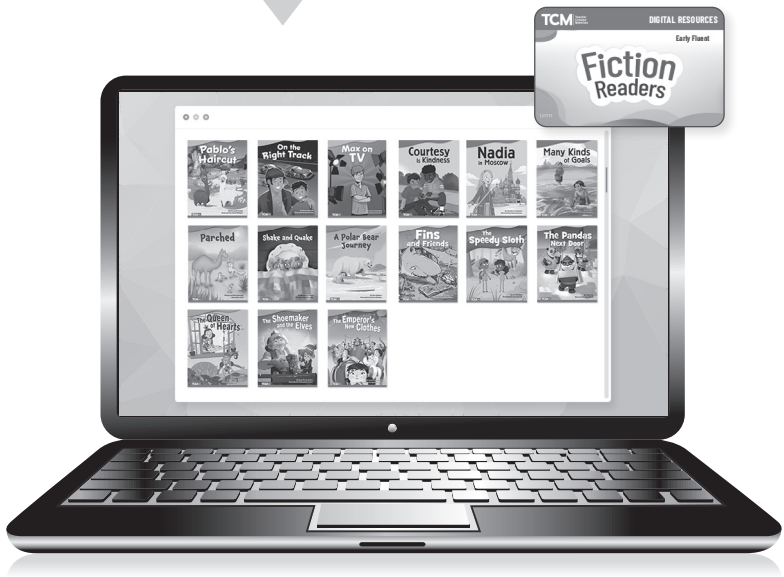
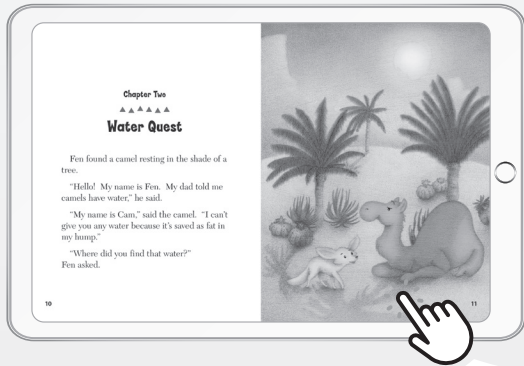
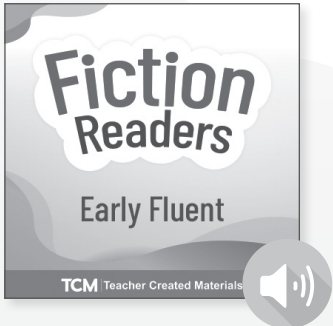
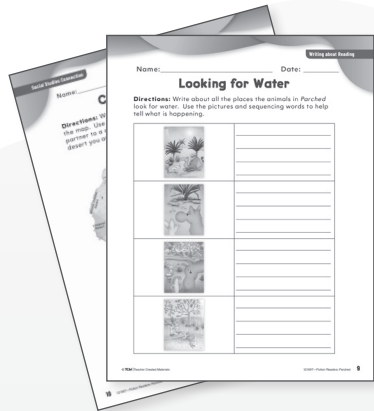
Implementation Guide

This teacher resource supports best practices for literacy instruction.



Lesson Plans

The 12-page lesson plan provides a consistent lesson format for every book. Plans include the lesson, assessments, extension options, and student activity pages.



Digital Resources

All student and teacher materials are provided digitally to support flexible planning and implementation.

Pacing Options

Each *Fiction Readers* lesson is designed to provide one week of instruction. As you guide students through the small-group activities, other students complete additional activities in centers. The following pacing options represent a typical implementation. Customize these pacing plans according to students' needs.

Option 1

15 weeks, 5 days per week, 20 minutes per day

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Small-Group Reading Lesson	Comprehension Strategy Lesson	Revisit the Book (Close Reading/ Fluency)	Extension Options	Assessment
Centers: Fluency Practice, Additional Activities				

Option 2

15 weeks, 3 days per week, 20 minutes per day

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Small-Group Reading Lesson	Comprehension Strategy Lesson	Revisit the Book (Close Reading/ Fluency) Assessment
Centers: Fluency Practice, Extension Activities, Additional Activities		

Option 3

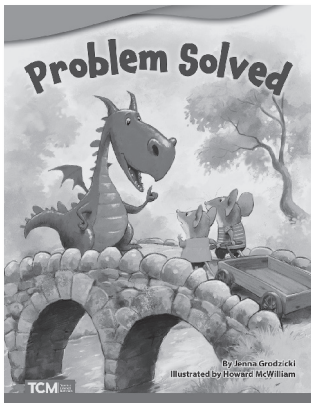
5 weeks, 5 days per week, 40 minutes per day

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Book 1 Small-Group Reading Lesson or Comprehension Strategy Lesson and Revisit the Book (Close Reading/ Fluency)	Book 2 Small-Group Reading Lesson or Comprehension Strategy Lesson and Revisit the Book (Close Reading/ Fluency)	Book 3 Small-Group Reading Lesson or Comprehension Strategy Lesson and Revisit the Book (Close Reading/ Fluency)	Books 1–3 Extension Options Assessment	Books 1–3 Extension Options Assessment
Centers: Fluency Practice, Extension Activities, Additional Activities				

Early Fluent Plus Scope and Sequence

The grid below lists the specific **reading comprehension strategy** and **content-area connection** included in the lesson for each book. These lesson objectives are in addition to the general skills listed on page 63.

Objectives	<i>Frog and Friends Save the Day</i>	<i>Sand and Snow</i>	<i>Home Safari</i>	<i>Body Bots</i>	<i>Skeleton Picnic</i>	<i>Let's Talk</i>	<i>He Cried Wolf</i>	<i>Old Mother Hubbard</i>	<i>The Muffin Man</i>	<i>Problem Solved</i>	<i>Brain Freeze</i>	<i>The X Factor</i>	<i>Ting's Subway Mystery</i>	<i>The Secrets of Room 209</i>	<i>The Case of the Mysterious Notes</i>
Reading Comprehension Strategies															
Establish a purpose for reading.									X					X	
Generate questions.											X				X
Make and confirm predictions.						X				X					
Summarize and evaluate details.			X				X								
Synthesize elements.								X							
Make connections.				X									X		
Make inferences.	X											X			
Make mental images.					X										
Monitor comprehension.		X													
Content-Area Connections															
Mathematics								X		X	X		X		
Science	X				X									X	
Social Studies			X						X						X
Arts/Movement		X				X	X					X			



Lessons at a Glance

Time	Activity
20 min.	Small-Group Reading Lesson
20 min.	Comprehension Strategy Lesson
20 min.	Close-Reading Activity
15 min.	Focused Fluency Activity
15 min.	Reader's Theater Activity

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Lesson Plan

Focus Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Create comparison words using *-er* and *-est*. (Word Study)
- Make and confirm predictions. (Reading)
- Identify first- and third-person narration. (Reading)
- Draft a friendly invitation. (Writing)

Small-Group Reading Lesson (page 2)

- Vocabulary Support
- Read and Discuss

Comprehension Strategy Lesson (page 3)

- Make and Confirm Predictions

Revisit the Book (page 4)

- Close-Reading Activity: first- and third-person narration
- Focused Fluency Activity: intonation
- Reader's Theater Activity: read a script of the story

Extension Options (page 7)

- Word Study: comparisons using *-er* and *-est*
- Fluency Model: professional recording
- Writing about Reading: friendly invitation
- Mathematics Connection: creative problem solving

Assessment (page 11)

- Oral Reading Record
- Comprehension Assessment

Answer Key

Word Study: 1) two: Acorns are more easy to get than sticks., 2) more than two: We want to build on the most flat land., 3) more than two: The rocks are the most strong material., 4) two: Is this spot more sunny than the one before?; **Comprehension Assessment:** 1) A, 2) B, 3) C, 4) Students will explain why they think Blaze asks the mice to figure out how many of each supply they need.

Small-Group Reading Lesson



Introduce the Text

1. Display the front cover of the book. Read the title, author name, and illustrator name.
2. Have students think of questions they can ask to set a purpose for reading. *What questions do you have from looking at the cover and reading the title?*
3. Discuss two to three content and academic vocabulary words from the text with students.
4. Remind students that readers do the following: read words left to right, top to bottom, and page to page; look at the images from page to page; and think and talk about what they read.



Read the Text

1. Have each student whisper-read the book independently. Observe each student's reading successes, struggles, and strategies. Encourage students to track words with their fingers and to give appropriate time and attention to each page.
2. Ask students to tell you about the story. Encourage them to refer to the words and pictures as they retell the story.
3. Ask students to tell you about the words in the story. Acknowledge the words or word parts students were able to recognize accurately. Use the following ideas to address words that caused struggles or inaccuracies:
 - **SALUTATIONS**—Tell students that this word is a synonym for *hello* or *greetings*. Write the word on the board, and work with students to create syllable breaks and determine whether short or long vowel sounds can be found in each (*/säl/ü/tā/tions*). Run your finger under the word as you sound out all the parts.
 - **SCAMPERED**—Write the word on the board. Explain to students that this word means “to move quickly and lightly.” Remind students that consonant blends combine the sounds of two or more consonants. The consonants both say their names. Underline *sc* and *mp*, asking students to say each consonant blend and listen for both consonant sounds.



Discuss the Text

Use the following prompts to discuss the words and pictures that tell the story:

- *How do the words “stacked in wobbly piles” help the reader understand the mother’s need for a bookshelf?*
(extra support) *What is the purpose of a bookshelf? Is the mother’s current system for organizing books working well?*
- *How do Blaze’s feelings about mathematics compare to his feelings about reading?*
(extra support) *What skill does Blaze use most? What does he tell Theo and Hazel about his feelings for reading and mathematics?*
- *What important lesson does the story contain about making mistakes?*
(extra support) *Do Theo and Hazel give up when they are not correct about the bundles of sticks they need? What does Hazel say to Theo following this mistake?*

Comprehension Strategy Lesson



Introduce the Strategy

1. Display the front cover of the book. Review the title, author name, and illustrator name.
2. Explain that readers do the following things to make and confirm predictions:
 - Notice patterns that help them comprehend the story.
 - Note changes in plot events.
 - Use new character details as they are introduced to help confirm predictions.



Use the Strategy

1. Model making and confirming predictions as you read pages 18 and 19 together:
 - Say, “Theo and Hazel have visited Blaze to gather supplies to build their mother a library. They have made this trip and gathered supplies twice before, so this is their third trip. I can predict that Blaze will require Theo and Hazel to solve another mathematics problem. I predict that they will get the problem right just like they did in their first two visits because they are good at figuring out problems.”
2. Guide students to make and confirm predictions as you read pages 20 and 21 together:
 - Say, “Theo and Hazel tell Blaze they need to build 12 bookshelves. Blaze then asks them how many bundles of sticks they will need. They have to solve another mathematics problem, but they don’t get this question right on the first try. I have to adjust my prediction about what may happen next. I believe that Theo and Hazel will try again.” Use the following prompts to guide students to continue this line of thought:
 - *How might Theo and Hazel adjust their thinking with the mathematics problem?*
 - *What prediction can you make about what might happen to their bookshelf project if they cannot get these supplies? Will they be able to celebrate their mother’s birthday?*
3. Have students make and confirm predictions about the story as you read pages 22 and 23 together. Use the following prompts, if needed:
 - *Do you predict that Theo and Hazel will keep their promise to visit Blaze?*
 - *How do you think Mom will feel when she sees the surprise Theo and Hazel have built for her?*



Discuss the Strategy

Use the following prompts to discuss the comprehension strategy:

- We used the strategy of making and confirming predictions. Talk to a partner about how to make and confirm predictions.
- When you read or listen to a story, you can predict upcoming events in the story to improve your understanding.

Revisit the Book



Close-Reading Activity

First- and Third-Person Narration

1. Discuss with students that rereading part of a story can help them notice important details. Readers can discover more about what the author wants them to know and find answers to their questions.
2. Say, “Today, we are reading closely to identify first- and third-person narration. The *narrator* is the person who is telling the story. In some stories, a character within the story tells it from their point of view, and that is called a *first-person narrator*. If someone outside of the story is explaining what the characters do and say, that is called a *third-person narrator*.”
3. Distribute copies of the *Close-Reading Activity* (page 5). Say, “As I read aloud, follow along.” Read aloud pages 6 and 7 in the book.
4. After reading the pages, work with students to highlight character quotes and circle narrated text.
 - Ask students to identify the type of narration they circled in the text. Differentiate this voice from the character quotes they highlighted. As a group, discuss the narrator’s voice, and determine whether it is in first or third person (*third person*). Use the following questions to guide students:
 - *Who is telling the story? Whose voices are able to be heard? Is the person speaking a character in the story?*



Focused Fluency Activity

Read with Expression: Intonation

1. Discuss with students how the tone, pitch, and volume that a reader uses should change as different characters speak. Using different tones of voice will add meaning to a story and helps to differentiate the characters. This fluency skill is called *intonation*.
2. Model reading the sentence “Are you going to eat us?” asked Hazel.” from page 8 of the book with a concerned, high-pitched tone, using inflection to show it is a question.
 - Have student pairs take turns reading selected passages in the story, using different intonation for characters.



Reader’s Theater Activity

- Have students read the *Reader’s Theater Script* (page 6).
- Encourage students to use different voices for each story character that speaks. Encourage audience members to act out the motions within the script.
- Switch roles for repeated readings.

Assessment Opportunity

Use the *Oral Reading Record* (page 11) to assess students’ abilities to read fluently and accurately.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Problem Solved

Theo pointed to a tall oak tree. "How about over there?" he asked.

"No," said Hazel. "It's too shady."

"This spot looks nice," said Theo.

"No," said Hazel. "It's too rocky."

Theo entered a clearing near a babbling brook. "This is it!" he exclaimed.

"Yes," said Hazel. "It's perfect."

The mice got right to work. They picked weeds, raked leaves, and marked out the spot for the library.

"Now, we're ready to build," said Theo.

"Let's search for supplies," said Hazel.

Theo and Hazel roamed deeper into the forest. They followed the brook so they wouldn't lose their way.

As they walked, the brook widened. Soon, the two mice came to a bridge. On the other side were piles and piles of rocks, acorns, and sticks. It was everything they needed to build the library.

There was just one problem. A dragon was blocking the way!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Problem Solved

- Narrator:** Hazel sat smiling. She told Theo of her next big plan.
- Hazel:** I have an idea for how we can show Blaze our gratitude.
- Theo:** What did you have in mind?
- Narrator:** Hazel pulled a photo album from the shelf.
- Hazel:** I think we should make a special book for Blaze.
- Theo:** We can't write a book by ourselves, can we? Books are long and hard to write.
- Hazel:** But this is a different kind of book. It's a book that holds pictures.
- Theo:** What pictures could we give to Blaze? We don't even have a camera.
- Hazel:** We could draw pictures of Blaze to thank him for his help.
- Theo:** We could even add a picture of us! It's nice to have pictures of friends.
- Narrator:** They worked to make Blaze an album. It had many wonderful pictures and even a thank you note.
- Hazel:** This album is looking great! Blaze is going to be so happy when we give it to him.
- Narrator:** Theo and Hazel ran to the bridge to see Blaze.
- Blaze:** Hello, my friends! I am so happy to see you!
- Theo:** We have a book for you. It's a book about friends.
- Hazel:** You can see us as much as you like!
- Blaze:** This is perfect. Now, my friends will always be here.

Extension Options

Word Study

Comparisons Using *-er* and *-est*

1. Discuss how Theo and Hazel compare different locations on which to build their mother's library. Hazel could have used special adjectives to describe how some locations compared to others.
 - Ask students to consider what Hazel might mean if she says a location is *sunnier* than another. Discuss which location might be the *sunniest* of them all. Write the words *sunnier* and *sunniest* on the board. Explain that these kinds of adjectives are used to compare things. You may choose to use the words *comparative* and *superlative*.
 - When students hear adjectives that end with *-er* and *-est*, they need to understand the intensity of the comparison and how many objects are being compared. When using comparative adjectives, two objects are being compared. When using superlative adjectives, one object is at the upper or lower limit of three or more objects.
2. Using objects in the classroom and the following comparative/superlative adjectives, have students create sentences comparing one object to another as well as one object to a larger group of objects: *small* (*smaller/smallest*), *long* (*longer/longest*), *heavy* (*heavier/heaviest*).
3. Distribute copies of *Best for Bookshelves* (page 8). Students will practice identifying and explaining comparative and superlative adjectives that may use *-er* and *-est*.

Fluency Model

- Have students listen to the professional recording of the book (provided in the Digital Resources).

Writing about Reading

Friendly Invitation

1. Ask students to think of ways that Theo and Hazel might invite Blaze to celebrate their mother's birthday with them.
2. Distribute copies of *You're Invited!* (page 9). Have each student draft a letter inviting Blaze to attend the birthday party. Students should include details such as location and activities that will convince Blaze to attend.

Mathematics Connection

Creative Problem Solving

1. Ask students to imagine that Blaze wants to keep his friends Theo and Hazel around a bit longer next time they visit.
2. Discuss other ways Blaze could ask the mice to skip-count the numbers of supplies they need for their next bookshelf. Ask students which of these ways are easier, more time consuming, or more efficient.
3. Distribute copies of *A Friendly Challenge* (page 10). Have students create two new ways for Blaze to ask Theo and Hazel to group their supplies and solve how many groups they will need for each supply. Ask students to show their work with mathematical expressions or illustrations.

Assessment Opportunity

Use the *Comprehension Assessment* (page 12) to assess students' understanding of the story.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Best for Bookshelves

Directions: Help Theo and Hazel choose the best spot for their mother's next bookshelf. Below each sentence, write the comparative or superlative form of the adjective using *-er* or *-est*. Then, rewrite the sentence by replacing the adjective with the comparative or superlative form.



1. Acorns are (easy) to get than sticks.

2. We want to build on the (flat) land.

3. The rocks are the (strong) material.

4. Is this spot (sunny) than the one before?

Name: _____ Date: _____

You're Invited!

Directions: Write a letter to Blaze from Theo and Hazel inviting him to their mother's birthday party. Include important details about when and where the party will be.

_____ ,

_____ ,

Name: _____ Date: _____

A Friendly Challenge

Directions: List two new ways of grouping the supplies that Theo and Hazel need. Show how to group the items with mathematics sentences or pictures.

<p>100 rocks</p>		
<p>40 acorns</p>		
<p>60 sticks</p>		

Name: _____ Date: _____

Problem Solved

Total Word Count	Codes				
173	E = errors	SC = self-corrections	M = meaning	S = structure	V = visual

Page	Text	E	SC	Cues Used					
				E			SC		
				M	S	V	M	S	V
4	Theo and Hazel walked into the forest.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	The two mice pulled a wagon filled with books. They were looking for something.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	They needed the perfect spot to build a library.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	Their mother’s birthday was coming up.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	Theo and Hazel wanted to do something extra special for her. Their mother loved to read, but her books were stacked in wobbly piles all over the burrow. So, the two mice decided to build her a library.			M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
6	Theo pointed to a tall oak tree. “How about over there?” he asked.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	“No,” said Hazel. “It’s too shady.”			M	S	V	M	S	V
	“This spot looks nice,” said Theo.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	“No,” said Hazel. “It’s too rocky.”			M	S	V	M	S	V
	Theo entered a clearing near a babbling brook. “This is it!” he exclaimed.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	“Yes,” said Hazel. “It’s perfect.”			M	S	V	M	S	V
	The mice got right to work. They picked weeds, raked leaves, and marked out the spot for the library.			M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
	“Now, we’re ready to build,” said Theo.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	“Let’s search for supplies,” said Hazel.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	Theo and Hazel roamed deeper into the forest. They followed the brook so they wouldn’t lose their way.			M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V
				M	S	V	M	S	V

Error Rate:		Self-Correction Rate:		Accuracy Percentage:		Time:	
-------------	--	-----------------------	--	----------------------	--	-------	--

Name: _____

Date: _____

Problem Solved

Directions: Read each question. Choose the best answer.

- 1 What strategy does Hazel use to help count how many bags of rocks they need?
- (A) She keeps track of the groups of 10 on her fingers.
 - (B) Hazel picks up each bag of rocks and counts by 10s.
 - (C) She figures it out in her head.
-

- 2 Which sentence shows first-person narration?
- (A) "Now, we're ready to build," said Theo.
 - (B) "This spot looks nice to build," I said.
 - (C) "Let's search for supplies," said Hazel.
-

- 3 Why is Blaze crying in this picture?
- (A) Blaze wants to come to the birthday party.
 - (B) He is sad that the mice took his bags of rocks.
 - (C) Blaze feels like he will not see his friends again.



- 4 Why do you think Blaze asks Theo and Hazel to figure out how much of each supply they need?
-
-

Problem Solved

Hazel and Theo want to plan a special birthday surprise for their mother. But can they find all the supplies they need?

Reading Levels
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DRA Level: 28
Lexile® Level: 520L

TCM Teacher Created Materials

120802



PROBLEM SOLVED

Problem Solved



By Jenna Grodzicki
Illustrated by Howard McWilliam

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GRODZICKI

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Chapter One

A Special Plan

Theo and Hazel walked into the forest. The two mice pulled a wagon filled with books. They were looking for something. They needed the perfect spot to build a library.

Their mother's birthday was coming up. Theo and Hazel wanted to do something extra special for her. Their mother loved to read, but her books were stacked in wobbly piles all over the burrow. So, the two mice decided to build her a library.



Theo pointed to a tall oak tree. “How about over there?” he asked.

“No,” said Hazel. “It’s too shady.”

“This spot looks nice,” said Theo.

“No,” said Hazel. “It’s too rocky.”

Theo entered a clearing near a babbling brook. “This is it!” he exclaimed.

“Yes,” said Hazel. “It’s perfect.”

The mice got right to work. They picked weeds, raked leaves, and marked out the spot for the library.

“Now, we’re ready to build,” said Theo.

“Let’s search for supplies,” said Hazel.

Theo and Hazel roamed deeper into the forest. They followed the brook so they wouldn’t lose their way.



As they walked, the brook widened. Soon, the two mice came to a bridge. On the other side were piles and piles of rocks, acorns, and sticks. It was everything they needed to build the library.

There was just one problem. A dragon was blocking the way!

Chapter Two

100 Rocks

The two mice stared. Their tiny legs trembled. Their whiskers twitched.

The dragon smiled. “Salutations,” he said. “I’m Blaze.”

“Are you going to eat us?” asked Hazel.

“Or burn us to a crisp?” asked Theo.

“Goodness, no,” said Blaze. “I love math, not mice. Now, how can I help you?”



Hazel took a deep breath. “I’m Hazel. This is my brother, Theo. We’re building a library, and we need some supplies. May we cross the bridge?”

“Sure,” said Blaze. “But you can only take what you need. To figure that out, you must first solve a math problem.”

“We can do that,” said Theo.

The siblings loved to count, add, subtract, and estimate.

“What do you need?” asked Blaze.

“One hundred rocks,” said Theo.

“The rocks come in bags of 10. If you need 100 rocks, how many bags will you need?”

“We can count by 10 to figure this out,” said Theo.





Together, the mice began to count. Hazel held up a finger to represent each bag. “10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100.” Hazel looked at her fingers.

“The answer is 10,” said the mice. “We need 10 bags.”

“That is correct,” said Blaze. “You may cross the bridge.”

Theo and Hazel scurried over the bridge. They loaded their wagon with 10 bags of rocks.

They followed the brook back to the clearing. With a heave and a ho, the mice began to build.

Soon, the wagon was empty. And the bags of rocks became the start of a library.

Chapter Three



40 Acorns

Theo and Hazel scampered back to the bridge.

“Salutations,” said Blaze. “Are you looking for more supplies?”

“Yes,” said Hazel. “We need 40 acorns to build the roof of our library, please.”

“The acorns are in piles of 5,” said Blaze. “If you want 40, how many piles will you need?”

Again, the mice began to count. “5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40!”



“The answer is 8,” Theo said. “We need 8 piles.”

“That is correct,” said Blaze. “You may cross the bridge.”



Theo and Hazel hurried across the bridge. They gathered 8 piles and placed the acorns in their wagon.

They started to head back when Blaze stopped them with a question. “Why are you building a library?”

“It’s for our mother,” said Theo. “The library is our birthday present to her.”

“That’s amazing!” said Blaze. “Reading is almost as much fun as math.”

“It sure is,” said the mice. “Goodbye!”

“Farewell!” said Blaze.

Back at the clearing, Theo and Hazel constructed the roof. They placed acorn after acorn. A little tree sap here and there held them in place.

The sturdy building was almost ready to hold their mother’s books.

Chapter Four

60 Sticks

Theo and Hazel approached the bridge.

“Hi, Blaze,” they said in unison.

“Salutations,” said Blaze.

“Our library is almost finished,” said Hazel. “We just need some strong sticks for the bookshelves.”

“Five sticks for each bookshelf,” added Theo.

“How many bookshelves are you going to build?” asked Blaze.



“We need 12 bookshelves,” said Hazel.

“The sticks come in bundles of 10,” said Blaze. “If you want to build 12 bookshelves and you need 5 sticks for each bookshelf, how many bundles will you need?”

“That’s easy,” said Theo. “We need 4 bundles.”

“No, that’s not right. I can’t allow you to cross the bridge,” said Blaze.

“Uh-oh!” said Theo. “This is a disaster!”

The mice looked at each other. Hazel’s eyes grew wide. Theo’s tail spun in circles. They couldn’t build the bookshelves without those sticks.

“Let’s try again,” said Hazel. “This time, don’t rush. Rushing leads to mistakes. And this is too important to make another mistake.”



“OK,” said Theo. “We can build 2 bookshelves per bundle. Let’s count by twos.”

“2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12!” said the mice.

“The answer is 6,” said Hazel. “We need 6 bundles.”

“That’s correct,” said Blaze. “Now, you may cross the bridge.”

The mice exhaled a sigh of relief. They grabbed the bundles of sticks and plopped them into their wagon.

When they walked back across the bridge, they heard sniffing. It was Blaze.

“What’s wrong?” asked Theo.

“Everything,” sniffed Blaze. “I didn’t have any friends until you two came along. Now, I’ll never see you again!”

Tears fell from the dragon’s eyes. He sobbed and sobbed, which caused him to hiccup little bursts of flames. Hazel stepped toward Blaze and wrapped her tiny arms partly around him.

“We like you too,” she said. “Our friendship doesn’t have to end just because we’re done gathering supplies. We’ll come back to visit.”

“We promise,” said Theo.



Chapter Five

Happy Birthday!

Back at the library, Theo and Hazel picked up their tools and got to work. When the bookshelves were ready, they filled them with books.

But the library wasn't finished yet. They added a rocking chair and a blanket. They brought in a table and chairs with a teapot and teacups. Finally, they made a sign to hang on the door.

The two mice stood back and looked at the library. Their hearts filled with pride.



The big day finally arrived. The three mice walked through the forest. When they neared the clearing, they told their mother to cover her eyes. A few steps more and...

“Happy birthday!” they shouted.

“What’s this?” asked their mother.

“Open the door and see,” said Hazel.

Everyone went inside.

“You built a library for me?” said their mother.

Theo and Hazel nodded and grinned.

“My little darlings, this is the best gift ever!”

They sat around the table and nibbled on birthday cheesecake. Theo and Hazel told their mother about Blaze.

“We couldn’t have built the library without him,” they said.

The mice spent the rest of the day reading together. When it was time to head back to the burrow, their mother gave them each a hug.

“Thank you for making this the best birthday ever,” she said.

“Let’s come back here tomorrow,” said Theo.

“Yes,” said their mother. “And let’s invite Blaze too.”



About Us

The Author

Jenna Grodzicki is the author of many fiction and nonfiction children's books. She lives on Cape Cod with her husband and two children. By day, Jenna is a library media specialist at a K–4 school. She loves to read and go skiing with her family. She would love to have her own library.

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Howard McWilliam is cover artist for *The Week* in the UK and US and has illustrated many children's books, including John Cena's Elbow Grease series and the bestselling I Need My Monster books. He left his career as a financial magazine editor and journalist in 2005 to concentrate on illustrating. He lives in Cheltenham, England, with his wife and three young sons.