



Fiction Readers

Lessons and Activities

Fluent

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Implementation Guide

Fiction Readers

**Fluent/
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.

The White Owl

Small-Group Reading Lesson

1 Introduce the Text

1. Show students the front cover of the book. Read the title, author name, and illustrator name. Read the names of the chapters in the table of contents together.
2. Take a picture walk through the book with students. Have students make predictions as they think about the title and chapter names and view the illustrations.
3. Discuss two to three content and academic vocabulary words from the text with students.
4. Remind students that readers do the following: look at the images on each page; and think, talk, and ask questions about what they read.

2 Read the Text

1. Have students whisper-read pages 4–11 independently. Observe students' reading successes, struggles, and strategies.
2. Ask students to retell the section of the story, either as a group discussion or with partners. Encourage them to refer to the words and pictures as they share.
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:
 - **PARENTS'**—Remind students that apostrophes can have different jobs. They are used in contractions and to show possession. Usually, the apostrophe goes after the noun and before the *s* (*girl's* shows something belongs to one girl). If the noun is plural, though, the apostrophe goes after the *s* (*girls'* shows something belongs to more than one girl). In the text's example, the car belongs to both of Owen's parents.
 - **REALISTIC**—Write this word for all to see, and split it into syllables *re/alis/tic*. Underline the letters *e* and *i* in the word, and identify these letters together as a vowel digraph. Tell students that these letters work together to make the long *e* sound. Have students identify that the next two syllables have short vowel sounds because they are closed syllables.
 - **ALBINO**—Encourage students to sound the word out and break it into syllables *al/bi/no*. Have them identify the long vowel sounds (the *i* and *o*). Challenge them to use context clues to explain the word's meaning.

3 Discuss the Text

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

- *Why is Owen going to stay with his grandparents? How does he feel about staying with them? (extra support) Where does Owen usually go in the summer? Why can't he go this year? What is Owen looking forward to doing with his grandparents?*
- *What is special about the great horned owl in the story? (extra support) Why is an albino great horn owl a big deal?*
- *What is the meaning of the words albino and horns? (extra support) What context clues tell you more about what the words mean?*

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Research to Practice

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

► **Introduce the Strategy**

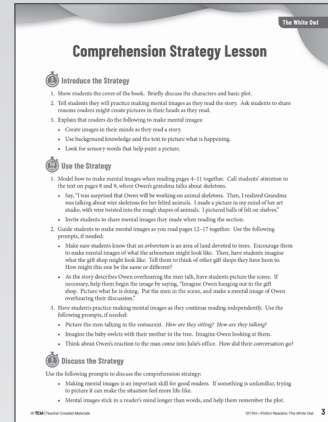
Quickly and efficiently, review the book and introduce a key comprehension strategy. In just five minutes, define the strategy and its purpose.

► **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**

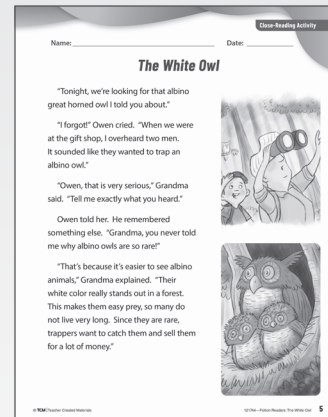
The teacher guides students to think about story elements, word choice, language, or author’s craft as they prepare to reread.

► **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: _____

The White Owl

Mom: Owen, tell us all about your time with your grandparents.

Dad: Yeah, you said it was awesome, but you didn't share many details.

Owen: Well, we spent a lot of time at the arboretum. Grandma sells her felted animals there, so we went to the gift shop to drop off her finished birds.

Dad: Was going to the gift shop really that awesome? That surprises me a little. I thought you would want more adventure than that.

Owen: Oh, well, we went hiking a lot too. There are great trails in the forest. We looked for different animals. Especially birds.

Mom: That does sound like fun! What types of animals did you two see?

Owen: Just regular forest animals, I guess. Squirrels and rabbits. A few deer. We mostly looked for great horned owls.

Dad: You know, that reminds me! When we ate breakfast at the diner before leaving your grandparents' house, I read an article in the newspaper. It said there were rumors of an albino owl in the forest.

Owen: An albino owl? Sounds unlikely.

Dad: Yes, it said there was a man who wanted to hunt it for money because it is so rare. But his plan was ruined by an undercover trapper.

Mom: Wow! I'm glad they were able to stop the man. I wonder if there really is an albino owl there. If there is, I bet it's beautiful!

Owen: Oh, it is!

Mom and Dad: What?!

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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.

The White Owl

Extension Options

Foundational Skills

Inflectional Endings

1. Write *inflectional endings* on the board. Tell students these are word endings that change the tense of a base word but not the meaning. Write the word *walk* on the board, and ask students what inflectional endings could be added. Write their answers by the word. Different forms of *walk* include *walks*, *walked*, and *walking*.
2. Share the following additional information with students:
 - Inflectional endings can also change the number of a word, such as adding an *-s* to *girl* to make the word plural: *girls*.
 - Adding an ending like *-er* to *walk* is not, strictly speaking, an inflectional ending. It does slightly change the meaning of the base word. A *walker* is a person who walks or a device used to help a person walk.
3. Distribute copies of *Inflectional Endings* (page 8), and read the directions together. Give students time to complete their work. Then, go over their responses as a class.

Fluency Model

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

Writing about Reading

The Alphabet Game

1. Point out that the alphabet game Owen enjoys comes up several times in the story.

Call students' attention to the chapter titles, all of which are part of the game. Ask students to share any similar games they might have played.

2. Tell students they will be playing the alphabet game, too. If possible, take students on a walk through the building in search of words that begin with each letter of the alphabet. Another option is to search the classroom.
3. Distribute copies of *Alphabet Game* (page 9), and read the directions together. Take students on a walk to hunt for words. Students might enjoy working with partners as they fill in their sheets. Remind students to use proper spelling as they play the game.

Arts/Movement Connection

Owl Art

1. Remind students that Owen's grandma enjoyed felting small birds to sell in the gift shop. If possible, show students an example of something that has been felted, either online or in real life.
2. Tell students they will use craft supplies to create owls. Offer students supplies such as yarn, feathers, scraps of construction paper, cotton balls, fabric, and pipe cleaners. If necessary, let students use crayons or markers, but encourage them to use the supplies to create their owls.
3. Distribute copies of *Owl Art* (page 10), and read the directions together. Give students time to create their artwork using available supplies.

Assessment Opportunity

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

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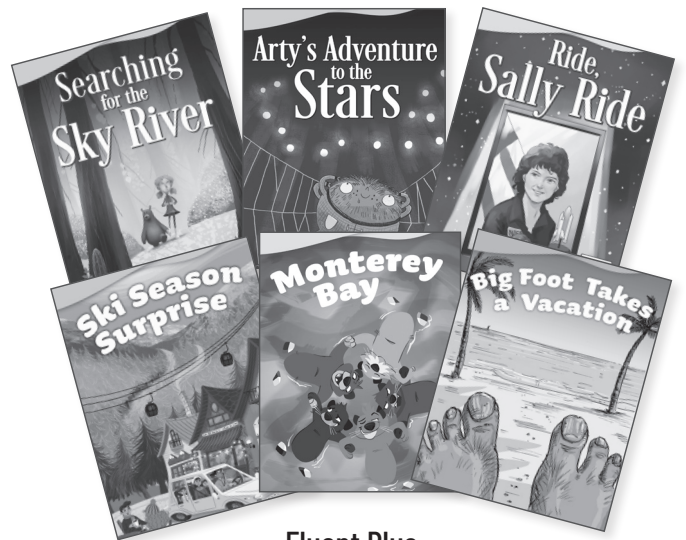
Kit Components

Book Trios

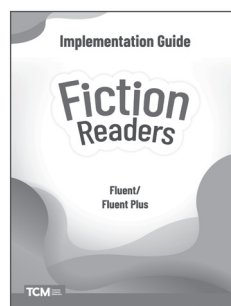
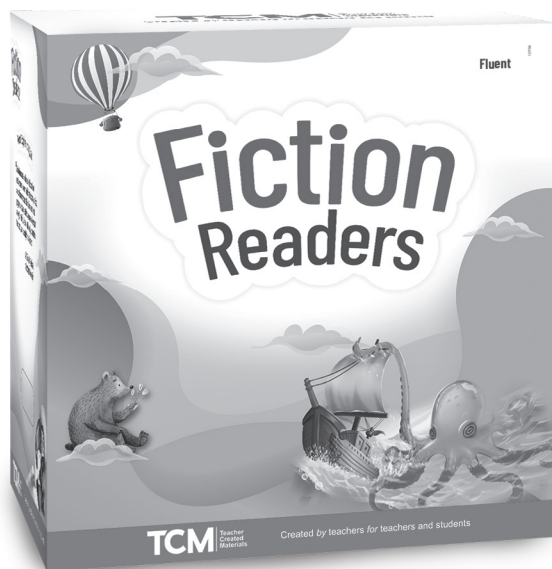
Each kit includes 15 readers with 5 trios. Each trio of full-color books offers different stories based on a common theme.



Fluent

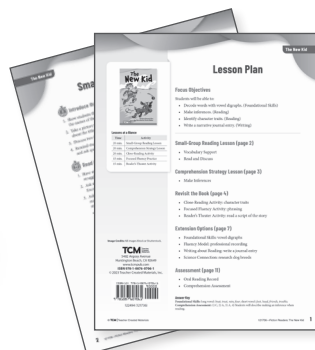


Fluent Plus



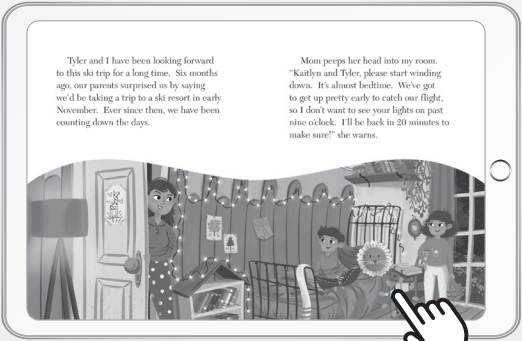
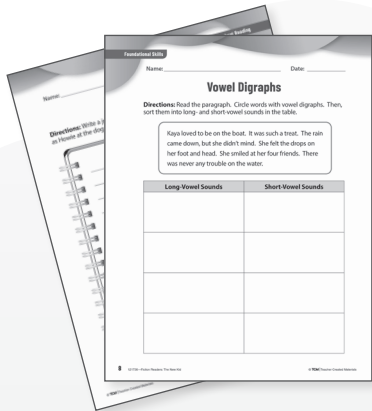
Implementation Guide

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				

Fluent 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>It's About Time!</i>	<i>I Woke Up with a Superpower</i>	<i>The New Kid</i>	<i>Quest to New Orleans</i>	<i>Treasure Hunt in the City</i>	<i>A Kiwi in Texas</i>	<i>Clear for Takeoff</i>	<i>Derby Dilemma</i>	<i>Help! My Spaceship Is Broken</i>	<i>The Giant Footprint</i>	<i>The White Owl</i>	<i>The Lying Lion</i>	<i>Building Bridges</i>	<i>Cupcake Conundrum</i>	<i>Camp Whatchamacallit</i>
Reading Comprehension Strategies															
Establish a purpose for reading.									X						
Generate questions.				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			X										X	
Content-Area Connections															
Mathematics				X				X						X	X
Science			X				X			X			X		
Social Studies	X				X							X			
Arts/Movement		X				X			X		X				

Lesson Plan



Lessons at a Glance

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

Focus Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify and use synonyms. (Word Study)
- Summarize and evaluate details. (Reading)
- Discover word meaning. (Reading)
- Write a personal narrative. (Writing)

Small-Group Reading Lesson (page 2)

- Vocabulary Support
- Read and Discuss

Comprehension Strategy Lesson (page 3)

- Summarize and Evaluate Details

Revisit the Book (page 4)

- Close-Reading Activity: word meaning
- Focused Fluency Activity: integration
- Reader's Theater Activity: read a script of the story

Extension Options (page 7)

- Word Study: synonyms
- Fluency Model: professional recording
- Writing about Reading: personal narrative
- Science Connection: make paper airplanes

Assessment (page 11)

- Oral Reading Record
- Comprehension Assessment

Answer Key

Word Study: 1) C, 2) B, 3) C, 4) A, 5) synonym for *nice*, such as *kind* 6) synonym for *mess*, such as *clutter* 7) synonym for *smart*, such as *intelligent*; **Comprehension Assessment:** 1) A, 2) B, 3) C, 4) Students will give an example of evaluating details.

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Small-Group Reading Lesson



Introduce the Text

1. Show students the front cover of the book. Read the title, author name, and illustrator name. Read the names of the chapters in the table of contents together.
2. Have students think of questions that 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: look at the images on each page; and think, talk, and ask questions about what they read.



Read the Text

1. Have students whisper-read pages 4–10 independently. Observe students’ reading successes, struggles, and strategies.
2. Ask students to retell the section of the story, either as a group discussion or with partners. Encourage them to refer to the words and pictures as they share.
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:
 - **WARBLED**—Discuss this word with students, as it might be unfamiliar. Point out the *-ed* inflected ending and the base word *warble*. Encourage students to use context clues or their best guess to determine the meaning of the word (“singing in an uneven, quavering voice”).
 - **FLIGHT**—Have students identify the *gh* as silent letters and that the word has a long *i* sound. Challenge students to think of other words with the *-ght* ending, such as *might*, *night*, *knight*, *fight*, *sight*, and *delight*.
 - **CONVERSATION**—Help students break this long word into syllables to make it easier to read and pronounce. Pronounce the word several times while students clap the syllables: *con/ver/sa/tion*. Remind students each syllable must have a vowel sound.



Discuss the Text

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

- *What genre is this story? Why do you think so?*
(extra support) *What clues show this story is fantasy?*
- *How can you tell Abbie really wants to fly?*
(extra support) *How does the author show Abbie wants to be a pilot?*
- *How does Waldo help Abbie?*
(extra support) *What advice does Waldo give Abbie about flying?*

Comprehension Strategy Lesson



Introduce the Strategy

1. Show students the cover of the book. Briefly discuss the characters and basic plot.
2. Tell students that readers summarize and evaluate details. Discuss the meaning of the word *evaluate* (“to judge something in a thoughtful way”). Explain that readers do the following to evaluate details:
 - Think about what they are reading to make predictions and inferences.
 - Look at illustrations and details that support the plot of the story.
 - Look for important or unfamiliar words.
 - Use context clues to figure out meaning.



Use the Strategy

1. Model how to evaluate details when reading pages 4–9 together.
 - Say, “I am reading several details about Abbie—she sings about flying on the way home from school, hops from side to side, and loves it when her mom drives fast over hills on the road. These details show me that learning to fly is very important to Abbie.”
 - Say, “On page 9, Abbie has a conversation with her parrot, Waldo. I noticed Waldo is speaking to her as a person would. This detail leads me to believe this story is a fantasy because I know birds cannot do that in real life.”
2. Guide students to evaluate details as you read pages 10–17 together. Use the following prompts, if needed:
 - *What strategies does Abbie attempt to learn to fly? What evaluation can you make about Abbie from them?*
 - *What details do you notice about Waldo? How would you describe his character traits?*
3. Have students practice evaluating details as they read the books independently. Use the following prompts, if needed:
 - *When Abbie reads the encyclopedia, what prediction could you make?*
 - *What details show this story is fantasy?*
 - *What details do you notice about Abbie’s and Waldo’s personalities when she takes off in the plane?*



Discuss the Strategy

Use the following prompts to discuss the comprehension strategy:

- Evaluating details is an important strategy to become a better reader. Stories are full of details, and when the reader thinks about them, they will have a better understanding of the text.
- Any time you read or listen to a story, look for meaningful details and use them to make predictions/inferences, figure out unfamiliar words, and think about the story.

Revisit the Book



Close-Reading Activity

Word Meaning

1. Have students share strategies and suggestions describing what they do when they do not know a word when reading. Their ideas might include: rereading the text, looking at pictures and captions, using context clues, looking the word up in a dictionary or glossary, and asking another person.
2. Tell students they will be closely reading a section of the text that has a few words that some people might consider tricky.
3. Distribute copies of *Close-Reading Activity* (page 5). Say, “Listen and follow along as I read.”
 - Read each sentence with students. Work together to underline words or phrases that are unfamiliar or unknown to students.
 - Have students work with partners to try and figure out the meanings of the words. As a class, discuss which words students underlined and what they learned about the words’ meanings.



Focused Fluency Activity

Read with Expression: Integration

1. Remind students that they have focused on several different strategies to improve reading with expression. They have practiced their tone, stressing certain words and phrases, pausing in appropriate places, and using the appropriate rate of speaking. Review and practice these fluency strategies as necessary.
2. Tell students they will be integrating all the skills to read with expression. Use the following sentences from the story as practice for students. Before they read aloud, have students read the sentences to themselves and decide how they could best be read with expression.
 - “But she didn’t just want to play video games—she wanted to really fly.” (page 7)
 - “Waldo kept count as she practiced. ‘10...11...That looks hard. Do your arms feel stronger?’” (page 12)
 - “Abbie sighed. She had tried everything she could think of, and she was no closer to getting off the ground.” (page 17)



Reader’s Theater Activity

- Have students read the *Reader’s Theater Script* (page 6).
- Encourage students to integrate the skills of tone, stress, pausing, and rate to read with expression.
- 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: _____

Clear for Takeoff

“You admire my feathers because they’re beautiful and also aerodynamic,” Waldo said. “They’re sleek and streamlined, so I can fly faster. If my feathers were ruffled, then the air would get caught in them. I would be very slow. I’m not sure I could even fly then.”

Abbie ran her hand through her hair. “That gives me a new idea!” She took off running toward the house. “I can shave my head!” she shouted back toward Waldo.

“SQUAWK!” Waldo was suddenly flapping his wings frantically.

Abbie nearly ran into his flailing body. “What’s the deal?” she asked as she spit a loose feather out of her mouth.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Clear for Takeoff

- Narrator:** Abbie and Waldo had grand adventures all over the world. They visited Egypt, Greenland, France, and Japan. But Waldo had one more place he wanted to stop.
- Waldo:** Abbie, before we head home, can I make a request?
- Abbie:** Of course! You know I will fly us wherever you want to go.
- Waldo:** I've always wanted to go to Brazil because my great-great grandmother was from there. It's too far for me to fly there, but I know you could get there in your plane.
- Abbie:** What a great idea! Yes, let's go to Brazil right now.
- Narrator:** Abbie turned the plane so they were flying west. They were heading straight toward South America. After a few hours, they landed in a thick jungle.
- Abbie:** Are we in the right place? I can barely see through these trees.
- Waldo:** SQUAWK! This is definitely the right place. I can feel it in my wings. Look at how beautiful it is.
- Narrator:** The friends looked at the green leaves high in the trees. Colorful flowers peeked out from bushes, and they heard animals scampering on the forest floor.
- Abbie:** What do you want to do while we're here?
- Waldo:** I want to fly high in the treetops. Maybe I can meet another parrot while we're here.
- Abbie:** I'll wait down here while you fly around. Don't be long, though, because we need to head home soon. Everyone will wonder where we are.
- Narrator:** Waldo flew through the trees. He flew through the canopy at the top and soared in the blue sky. He chatted with a few parrots he saw along the way. Then, he flew back to Abbie.
- Waldo:** Mission accomplished. I talked with a few parrots. They love it here, but it's not for me. I like our home better.
- Abbie:** I agree. All this flying around was fun, but I'm ready to be home.

Extension Options

Word Study

Synonyms

1. Write the word *synonym* on the board, and let students share what they know about it. Make sure students understand that synonyms are words that have close to the same meaning. Give students the word *friend*, and have them brainstorm synonyms for it (*buddy, ally, companion, etc.*).
2. Ask students where they can find synonyms. They might know some examples in their heads, but tell students there is a resource book called a *thesaurus*. Explain it is like a dictionary but has synonyms instead of definitions. If possible, show students a thesaurus, or look up one online. Ask students how using synonyms could improve their word choice and help them become stronger writers.
3. Distribute copies of *Synonyms* (page 8), and read the directions together. Give students time to complete their work. Encourage students to use synonyms to improve their word choice when they write.

Fluency Model

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

Writing about Reading

Personal Narrative

1. Discuss with students that getting to fly a plane was a dream of Abbie's, and she got to experience it. Have students think about something they really wanted to do and they were able to do it. If necessary, brainstorm together as a class, or have students talk with partners. Encourage them to think about places they wanted to visit; goals they wanted to accomplish in school, sports, or activities; or anything else they can think of.
2. Distribute copies of *Follow Your Dreams* (page 9), and read the directions together. Give students time to write their personal narratives. Have them share their writing with partners or the class as time permits.

Science Connection

Paper Airplane Competition

1. Discuss the concept of flying in an airplane with students. Talk about the science involved in taking flight. Tell students they will be making paper airplanes and competing to see whose plane can travel the farthest distance.
2. Distribute copies of *Paper Airplane Competition* (page 10) to students. Discuss the terms *lift, draft, thrust, and gravity*. Distribute sheets of paper to students to practice folding different types of paper airplanes.
3. Have students throw their airplanes and measure the distances. Declare the winner of the classroom competition!

Assessment Opportunity

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

Name: _____

Date: _____

Synonyms

Directions: Circle the synonym for each word. Then, rewrite each sentence, replacing the underlined word with a synonym.

1. small

A. interesting

B. huge

C. tiny

3. laugh

D. cry

E. yell

F. chuckle

2. hot

G. cold

H. scorching

I. sunshine

4. mistake

J. error

K. correct

L. problem

1. Mrs. Chern is such a nice teacher.

2. His bedroom was such a mess.

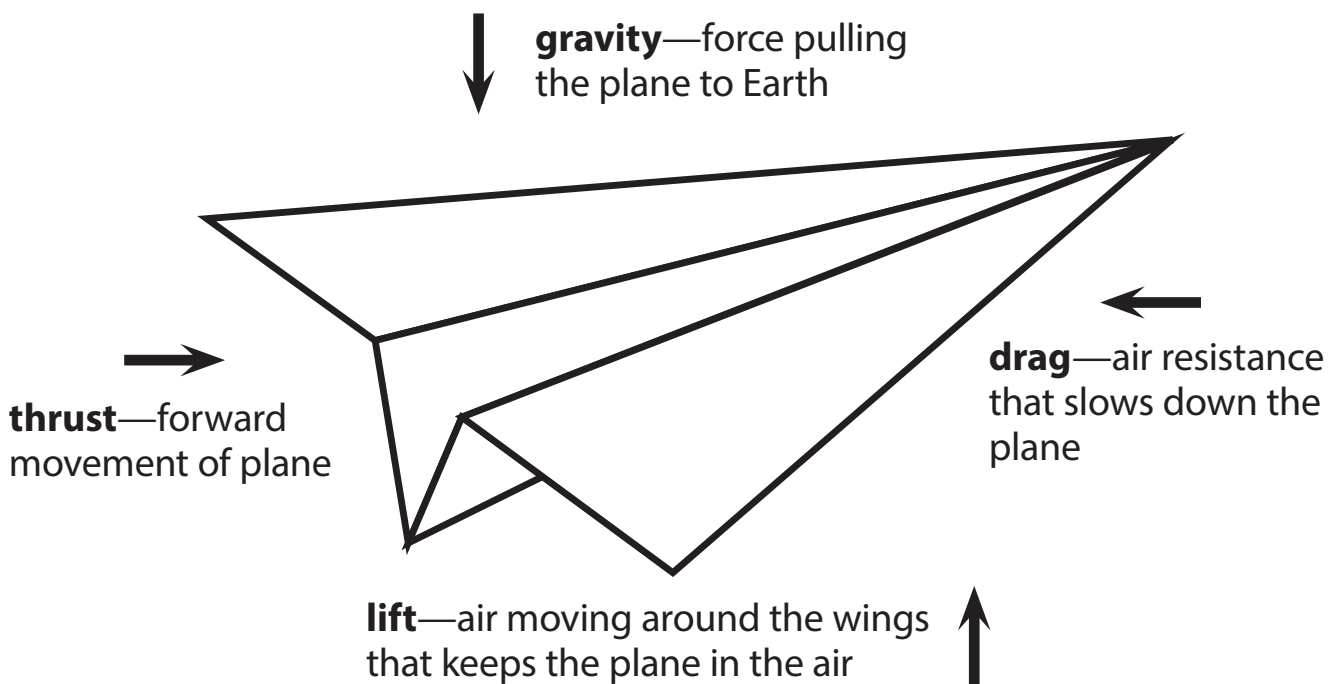
3. The scientist was very smart.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Paper Airplane Competition

Directions: Look at the diagram showing different concepts of flight. Use that information to create a paper airplane. Throw your airplane and measure the distance it flies. Compare it to the paper planes your classmates make. The farthest distance wins!



1. What was the distance of your plane’s flight?

_____ feet

_____ meters

2. Explain how you designed your plane. What did you do to make it travel the farthest?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Clear for Takeoff

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

Word Count	Text	E	SC	Cues Used					
				E			SC		
				M	S	V	M	S	V
4	A silly voice warbled past the orange trees.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	“One day,			M	S	V	M	S	V
	I want to fly,			M	S	V	M	S	V
	In the sky,			M	S	V	M	S	V
	Up, up, up			M	S	V	M	S	V
	Above the clouds.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	If I can see the world,			M	S	V	M	S	V
	I’ll be so proud.”			M	S	V	M	S	V
	Abbie Mendez was singing the same			M	S	V	M	S	V
	song she always sang when she walked			M	S	V	M	S	V
6	home. She was the only one who knew the			M	S	V	M	S	V
	words because she made them up. School			M	S	V	M	S	V
	was fun, but Abbie had bigger dreams.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	She wanted to see what the world was			M	S	V	M	S	V
	like from above. She wanted to fly.			M	S	V	M	S	V
	Abbie gave a little hop. For as long as			M	S	V	M	S	V
	she could remember, Abbie had dreamed of			M	S	V	M	S	V
	flying. She was constantly looking up into			M	S	V	M	S	V
the sky for airplanes. She loved imagining			M	S	V	M	S	V	
how it would feel to pilot her own plane.			M	S	V	M	S	V	

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

Name: _____

Date: _____

Clear for Takeoff

Directions: Read each question. Choose the best answer.

1. Which detail shows Abbie wants to fly?

- A. She goes to flight camp.
 - B. She talks to her bird.
 - C. She does push-ups.
-

2. Why does Abbie want to shave her head?

- A. She wants to look like a pilot she admires.
 - B. She thinks it will make her aerodynamic.
 - C. She will be able to wear a helmet.
-

3. What inspires Abbie to sketch a plane?

- A. finding a paper airplane
 - B. Waldo's encouragement
 - C. reading the encyclopedia
-

4. How did you evaluate a detail in the story that helped improve your comprehension?

Clear for Takeoff

Abbie has been dreaming of flying since she first saw birds in the sky. She has tried everything from pole vaulting to inventing a floating trampoline. Nothing works until she discovers the secret of flight—and a little magic.

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DRA Level: 30
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CLEAR FOR TAKEOFF

Clear for Takeoff



BETH

By Georgia Beth
Illustrated by Brian Martin

TCM Teacher Created Materials

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CHAPTER ONE

Dreaming Big

A soft voice warbled past the orange trees.

“One day,
I want to fly,
In the sky,
Up, up, up
Above the clouds.
If I can see the world,
I’ll be so proud.”

Abbie Mendez was singing the same song she always sang when she walked home. She was the only one who knew the words because she made them up. School was fun, but Abbie had bigger dreams.



She wanted to see what the world was like from above. She wanted to fly.

Abbie gave a little hop. For as long as she could remember, Abbie had dreamed of flying. She was constantly looking up into the sky for airplanes. She loved imagining how it would feel to pilot her own plane.

She loved when her mom drove so fast it felt like they lifted off a little when they hit a bump. She went to flight camp last year and became an expert at the *Navigator 537* game. But she didn't just want to play video games—she wanted to *really* fly.





She was about to sing another verse of her flying song but was interrupted. Waldo, her pet parrot, swooped down and landed on her shoulder with a squawk. Waldo was more than a pet; he was her friend. And he could talk! He could actually *talk*—not just repeat words that Abbie taught him. Sometimes, they would have full conversations. It was weird, but it gave Abbie hope. If Waldo could talk, maybe there were other weird and amazing things out in the world. And if there were, she was determined to find them.

Waldo gave an excited squawk. “I just got back from the Empire State Building.”

Abbie’s eyes grew wide. “In New York?”

“It is beautiful this time of year,” Waldo said. “It’s my favorite place to catch up with other birds. I had a bath in a fountain, listened to music, and pecked at a bagel. You should have been there, Abbie!”

“Yes!” she agreed. “One day.”

CHAPTER TWO

Grounded

“Tell me again how you fly,” Abbie asked Waldo. She was hanging upside down from her thinking tree. It was the closest she could get to the sky.

“I just flap my wings and squawk,” said Waldo.

Abbie pulled herself back up to the branch and gave her best squawk. “It just makes me loud. It doesn’t make me fly.”

“Maybe you need to work on your arms,” Waldo suggested.



“You mean train like an athlete? I could do that.” She climbed down to the ground. “I’m going to do a thousand push-ups a day.”

Waldo kept count as she practiced. “Ten...eleven...That looks hard. Do your arms feel stronger?”

“No, they feel tired.” Abbie sighed as she stopped to rest.

“Maybe I can try ballet,” Abbie said. “Dancers are insanely strong, and they’re practically flying when they jump.”

Waldo flew in a little circle over her head. “I don’t know. Dancers don’t have wings. I find wings are essential for flying. But I’m a bird, so I might be biased.”





“Well, I’m probably not going to grow wings,” Abbie said. “But maybe I could make them!” She grabbed her notebook and started sketching.

Waldo swooped down to see. “I’m not sure I would call those wings.”

“They’re better than wings! They’re like pool floaties for my arms. If my arms are wider, then when I flap, I can push more air around. I just need to figure out how to inflate them electronically...”

“Careful, Abbie! Electronics can be dangerous. And there’s more to flying than electronic pool floaties. You need lift and thrust. And what about drag? The pool floaties are going to cause a lot of drag. They also aren’t feather-like at all!”

“Wait, back up. Why haven’t you told me about this before? What is drag?” Abbie asked.

“You admire my feathers because they’re beautiful and also aerodynamic,” Waldo said. “They’re sleek and streamlined, so I can fly faster. If my feathers were ruffled, then the air would get caught in them. I would be very slow. I’m not sure I could even fly then.”

Abbie ran her hand through her hair. “That gives me a new idea!” She took off running toward the house. “I can shave my head!” she shouted back toward Waldo.

“SQUAWK!” Waldo was suddenly flapping his wings frantically.

Abbie nearly ran into his flailing body. “What’s the deal?” she asked as she spit a loose feather out of her mouth.

“Mistake!” squawked Waldo as he flapped around her head.

“It will make me aerodynamic,” Abbie said.

“No. It will make you bald.”

Abbie sighed. She had tried everything she could think of, and she was no closer to getting off the ground.



CHAPTER THREE

Aviation

The next day after school, Abbie went to the garage. It was quiet there, and she could think better. She wandered past the cars to the dusty bookshelf. It was full of old books, binders of recipes, and encyclopedias. She pulled the A encyclopedia off the shelf. She flipped through the pages, running her fingers over the diagrams.

Has anyone ever read an entire encyclopedia? she wondered. *Let's see. There's ant, Antigua (maybe I can fly there one day), ape, astronaut, aviation. Wait, aviation? That's flying!*



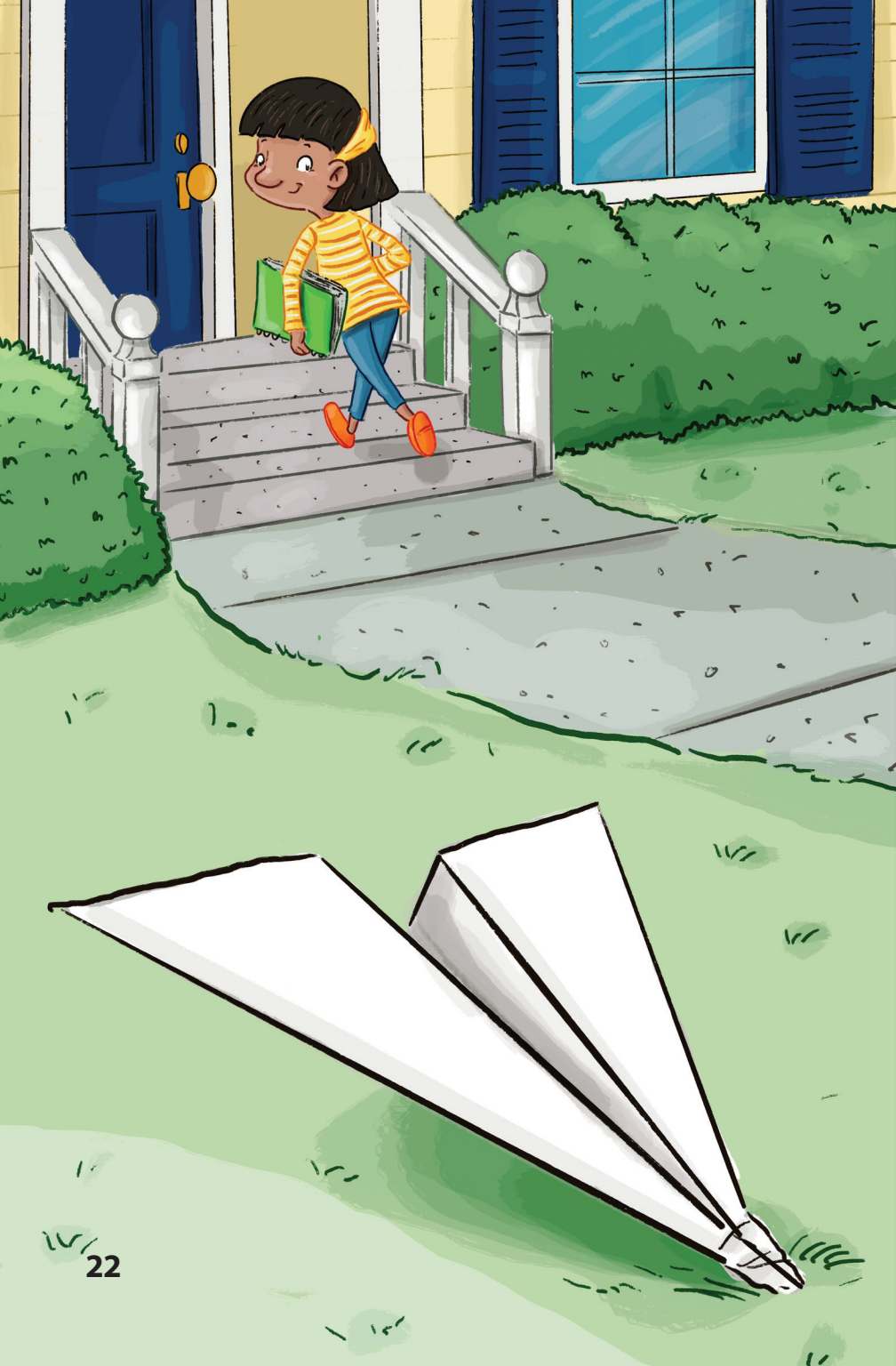
Abbie started reading aloud. “Early efforts to create flying machines failed because of a focus on copying birds. Modern airplanes depend on their ability to deflect air down. The strong wings of an airplane push air down. In turn, the air pushes the plane up.”

“Deflect air? I can totally do that!” She had an idea, and this one didn’t involve shaving her head. She searched for paper to draw a sketch on.

She found a box of old supplies underneath a bench. It had crayons and a sketchbook. She started sketching a new kind of plane.

When she was done drawing, she admired her work. “This is it,” she whispered. She colored the body red. Just for fun, she added details from the surfboards in the garage onto the wings in her sketch.





It was getting late. Abbie ripped a sheet of paper from the sketchbook and folded it into a paper airplane. She was always making paper airplanes. Maybe her newest sketch would help her get off the ground. *No, not maybe*, she thought. This time, she *knew* her design could fly.

Like she had a million times before, Abbie tossed the paper airplane. It glided out the open garage and landed on the lawn. The paper seemed to shimmer as it floated through the air.

That was weird, she thought. *I'll pick that up tomorrow*. She headed inside.

CHAPTER FOUR

Flight

Abbie woke up to the sun streaming into her bedroom. She yawned and went to look out the window. There was something in the yard! At first, all Abbie saw was a giant surfboard that said “HANG TEN.” She rubbed her eyes. The surfboard was the wing of a plane. She could even see a propeller and an Abbie-sized cockpit.

“That’s my airplane! I made that!” she exclaimed.

Waldo squawked, “Well, *someone* made that. Are you sure—”



“No, *I* made it! I made a paper airplane yesterday and threw it outside. That’s where it landed. I was thinking about my new sketch as I threw it, and that’s what it looked like!”

“And now it’s real?” Waldo asked.

“Let’s find out!” Abbie raced outside with Waldo perched on her shoulder.

Abbie ran her hand over the tires and under the wings.

She even gave the propeller a little spin. “We have to try it,” she said.

Abbie climbed into the cockpit and strapped on the helmet that was sitting on the front seat. It looked like *Navigator 537* but more complicated.

“We have fuel,” she said. “It looks like there’s oil.” Abbie found the rudder pedals and the thruster. She adjusted the flaps. “Give me a squawk code, Waldo.”



“A squawk what?” Waldo asked.

“For us, it will mean ‘ready for takeoff!’”

“I’m not sure that’s a good idea.”

“It’s the best idea ever!” Abbie assured him. She taxied the plane, picking up speed. Then, she put both hands on the yoke and pulled up gently. The nose of the plane lifted up into the sky!

“We’re flying!”

“You’re flying!” Waldo flew in happy circles around her.

Abbie grinned. “Now I can see the world like you do, Waldo!”

“There’s no one I would rather have by my side.” Waldo landed on her shoulder.

Abbie flew the plane near the clouds. “We can see everything! Are we even still in the same city?”





“Who knows?” Waldo replied. “You’re as free as a bird. Where do you want to go? We can go anywhere.”

“Anywhere?”

“Anywhere there’s an adventure.”

Abbie tried to picture the maps she had spent her whole life studying. There were so many places she wanted to go. “Next stop, Greenland!”

She turned the plane north. It was definitely going to be an adventure, one she could never have had on the ground.

About Us

The Author

Georgia Beth is a writer and an editor. She lives in Massachusetts with her son and husband. She loves reading, taking walks, and learning new things.

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Brian Martin is an author and illustrator from Richmond, Virginia. As an illustrator, Martin loves to tell stories with his bright and whimsical art and has illustrated over 30 children's books. Martin is always looking for opportunities to bring stories to life for both children and adults to enjoy. When he isn't busy writing and making art, Martin loves playing with his four amazing kids.