

A Letter from Halifax

Marie Hardy

Before and During Reading

1. Say the sounds

| | | | |
|-----|-----|----|------------|
| ai | ee | oa | oo (long) |
| ar | ur | ow | oo (short) |
| ear | air | er | |

2. Blend the sounds

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| dear · _ _ | Gran · . . . | Sask/a/toon · _ . . | how · _ |
| street · . . _ . | traff/ic · . . _ . . | steep · . _ . | boots · _ . . |
| spot/ed · . . _ . . . | green · . _ . | crowd · . _ . | clap/ping · . . _ . . _ |
| dark · _ . | crunch · . . . _ | Hal/i/fax · | |

Blending words with adjacent consonants?

g-r → gr-a-n → gran

s-t-r → str-ee-t → street

3. Read the tricky words

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| there _ _ _ | when _ . . . | were · _ _ | little · . . _ _ |
| one _ _ _ | out _ . . | some · . . _ _ | said · _ . . |
| what _ . . . | come · . . _ | Edmonton · | |

Point out the tricky part of the word (i.e., the “ai” in “said” sounds like /e/ and the “ou” in “out” sounds like /ow/) and then blend the rest.



Comprehension

Ask the children to read the title. Ask them if they've heard of Halifax. If necessary, tell them that Halifax is a city in the province of Nova Scotia.

Point out that the title is *A Letter from Halifax*. Talk about who the letter might be from and who they might be sending it to.

Vocabulary Check

Check that the children understand the meaning of the following words: steep, chanted, apartment, driftwood.

Reading the Book

- Listen to the children reading the book. Ask them to say the sounds and blend them in order to read words they do not recognize immediately.
- On page 5, talk to the children about the word “fort” and discuss its meaning. Look back to the picture on page 2 to see a wider view of the fort.
- On page 10, make sure children understand that the family in the book is staying in a holiday apartment during their visit to Halifax.

After Reading

Comprehension

- Have you ever been to Halifax? What did you see there? (If not, have you been to another city? What was it like?)
- Can you remember some of the things Amber did during her weekend in Halifax?
- Flip back through the book and talk about some of the sounds Amber would have heard in each scene.
- How do you think Amber felt at the end of her weekend? Why?

Remember to prompt and praise!

Follow Up

Fluent Reading

Return to the words in Before and During Reading (sections 2 and 3) and check that the children can sound out and blend these words confidently. Ask them to practise blending them until they can read them fluently.

Segmenting for Spelling

Practise this spelling routine using the words in section 2.

- Say the word in a sentence, then on its own and ask the children to repeat it.
- The children say the sounds all through the word (segment) and either write a dash or hold up a finger for each sound.
- The children select magnetic letters or write down the grapheme for each sound, saying the sound quietly as they do so.
- Model the spelling by saying each sound as you write the word for the children to see.
- The children give themselves a check mark for each grapheme in the correct place.

