

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 20 Word Count: 1,190

Book Summary

My Earth Day Birthday tells the story of Tara and her passion for the environment. Born on April 22, she has a special interest in Earth Day, since it falls on her birthday. On a beach in Mexico two years earlier, Tara found a dead sea turtle that had choked on a plastic bag. Saddened but inspired by the experience, she develops an interest in environmental causes and becomes a leader among her peers while planning their class Earth Day celebration. She leads a very successful Earth Day fair that educates others on different aspects of helping our planet.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand text
- Understand and identify cause-and-effect relationships
- Recognize and understand the use of bulleted lists in text
- Arrange words in alphabetical order

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*My Earth Day Birthday* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Dictionaries
- Prior knowledge, cause and effect, bulleted list, alphabetical order worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on Vocabulary a-z.com.

Content words:

Story critical: *environment (n.)*, *fair (n.)*, *pollution (n.)*, *renewable (adj.)*, *reusable (adj.)*, *wildlife (n.)*

Enrichment: *brainstorming (n.)*, *brochures (n.)*, *climate change (n.)*, *marine (adj.)*, *recycling (n.)*, *resources (n.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the words *Earth Day* on the board. Have students share what they know about the subject. Ask them why our planet is important and why we should protect it. Encourage students to share ideas about what a day dedicated to Earth would look like. Explain that people all over the world celebrate Earth Day every year in the spring.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, fiction or nonfiction, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Connect to prior knowledge**

- Explain that good readers use what they already know about a topic to understand and remember new information as they read a book.
- Model connecting to prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: As I read this book, I am going to look at the illustrations and think about what I have read. Then I will think about what I already know about Earth Day. This is called background knowledge. After thinking about what I know, I will read the story and use my background knowledge about Earth Day to help me figure out new information in the book. I will continue reading and thinking about things I already know as I read the rest of the book.
- Have students preview the covers of the book. Ask them open-ended questions to facilitate the discussion: *What do you see? What do you think might be happening? Why do you think this illustration is on the front of the book?*
- Introduce and explain the **prior knowledge worksheet**. Have students read the sentences and write "Yes" or "No" to complete the column on the left.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Cause and effect**

- Review or explain that one way to understand information in a story is to think about what happened and why it happened. A *cause* is an event that makes something happen, and the *effect* is what happens because of, or as a result of, the event. Create a two-column chart on the board with the headings *Cause* and *Effect*. Write the following sentence on the board under the *Cause* heading: *I lost a library book.*
- Model identifying a series of cause-and-effect relationships.
Think-aloud: If I lost the library book that I checked out, the librarian might require me to pay to replace the book. If I had to pay for the book, I would have to take money out of my savings. If I had to take money out of my savings, I wouldn't have enough money to buy the item I was saving money for. Sometimes a cause and its effect cause other events to happen in turn.
- Retell the series of cause-and-effect relationships about the library book. Ask students to identify the causes and effects. Write each cause and its effect on the chart on the board. When finished, point out how each cause-and-effect relationship leads to other cause-and-effect relationships.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following words from the content vocabulary on the board: *environment*, *pollution*, *renewable*, and *reusable*.
- Point out that these four words can be found in the story, and that knowing what these words mean will help students understand what's happening in the story. Give groups of students four pieces of blank paper. For each word, have them write or draw what they know about the word. Create a definition for each word using students' prior knowledge.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

My Earth Day Birthday

- Point out the glossary at the back of the book. Review or explain that a glossary and a dictionary contain lists of words and their definitions. Ask students to compare and contrast the two sources (glossaries only contain definitions for vocabulary words in that particular story; dictionaries contain longer and sometimes multiple definitions, and so on).
- Model how students can use a dictionary to find a word's meaning. Have them locate the word *environment* in the dictionary. Invite a volunteer read the definition for *environment*. Have students compare the dictionary definition with the glossary definition. Have them compare these with their prior knowledge of the word.
- Have students follow along on page 4 as you read the sentence in which the word *environment* is found to confirm the meaning of the word. Repeat the exercise with the remaining vocabulary words.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out more about Earth Day. Remind them to think about what they already know about Earth Day as they read and to look for cause-and-effect relationships.

During Reading

Student Reading




Guide the reading: Have students read from page 4 to the end of page 8. Ask them to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they connected to prior knowledge. Encourage students who finish before everyone else to go back and reread.

- Model making connections using prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: *I read that Earth Day is on April 22 and that Tara's birthday is the same date. She led the class in a brainstorming session about Earth Day activities, such as selling things made from renewable materials and selling reusable bags. I remember celebrating Earth Day when I was a student in school. Our teacher taught us about recycling at home. I remember talking to my family about the things that I learned, and we started recycling more at home after our Earth Day celebration. I know that our city collects recyclable materials in a different truck than garbage and then takes it to a special plant where the materials are sorted and moved on to other places where new products are made from old materials.*
- Ask questions to facilitate discussion: *What do you know about recycling? Why do you think recycling is important? What types of renewable materials can you think of? Why are reusable bags good for Earth?* Ask students to share additional ways they connected to prior knowledge.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 12. Ask them to share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge.
- Create a cause-and-effect chain on the board. Write *Tara saw a dead sea turtle on the beach* under the *Cause* heading. Ask students to use the text and think-aloud discussion to identify the effect of this cause (*she became passionate about helping the environment*). Write this information on the chart under the *Effect* heading.
- Introduce and explain the **cause-and-effect worksheet**. Ask students to write the information from the board on their worksheet. Have them identify and write on their worksheet a cause-and-effect relationship that happened as a result of Tara being passionate about helping the environment. (*Cause:* She took charge of her class's Earth Day celebration; *Effect:* She organized who would work on each project and oversaw their progress.) Point out how the chain connects the first cause-and-effect relationship with the second (the effect, *she became passionate about helping the environment*, is connected to the next cause, *she took charge of her class's Earth Day celebration*).



Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about what they know about Earth Day as they read. Have them continue to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they connected with prior knowledge.

 Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Have students complete the prior knowledge worksheet and compare what they knew before they read the book with what they know after reading it.
- Discuss how making connections between information read and information known about the topic keeps readers actively involved and helps them remember what they have read.
Think-aloud: When I read page 12, I thought about conserving water. It reminded me of my mother telling me to turn off the faucet when I brushed my teeth. I remembered her putting a bucket under the faucet one night when I was brushing my teeth. She caught so much unused water as I was brushing. I remembered thinking about how much good water was being wasted, and that image made me remember to turn off the faucet whenever I brushed my teeth after that. Thinking about what I know helped me to understand and remember the information from this part of the book.
- Have students share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge to understand the information in the book.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Discuss with students the information on their cause-and-effect worksheet. Point out the last effect in the chain. (*She organized who would work on each project and oversaw their progress.*) Have students reread page 17 to identify the cause-and-effect relationship that happened as a result of Tara organizing the Earth Day fair. (*Cause:* Ms. Gonzales told the news reporter that Tara helped organize the fair; *Effect:* Tara was interviewed by the reporter.)
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the cause-and-effect worksheet. Discuss their answers aloud after they are finished.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you read about a very motivated girl who channeled her passion for the environment into a successful event. She helped teach others about Earth Day and all the things people can do to make a difference on behalf of our planet. Now that you know this, why is it important to take initiative and stand up for something you believe in?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Bulleted lists

- Have students turn to page 7. Ask them to tell how the text is different on this page from that in the rest of the book (parts of the text are words written in a list).
- Review or explain that the small dot in front of each line on the list is called a *bullet* and that part of the text is presented as a *bulleted list*. Explain that some computers make bulleted or numbered lists automatically, when the writer performs a specific function. Bullets allow a writer to simplify information and present it in a format that is easy for the reader to grasp.
- Explain that bulleted lists need to follow a pattern so the reader's eye can easily recall the items in the list. Items in the list should start with the same part of speech (such as a noun or verb), use the same verb tense (past, present, or future), and use the same sentence type (statement, exclamation, or question). Point out that putting information in a bulleted list is a strategy used to make sure the reader knows that those words are special and need to stand apart from the rest of the text.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

My Earth Day Birthday

- **Check for understanding:** Have students scan the bulleted list on page 7. Have them identify the pattern (every item starts with a present-tense verb). Ask if there are any bulleted listed items that don't fit the pattern. Ask why they think the author chose to use a bulleted list (to make the points stand out and be easy to grasp).
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the [bulleted list worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud after they are finished.

Word Work: **Alphabetical order**

- Review or explain the process of putting a list of words in alphabetical order. Remind students that if the first letter of two words is the same, they must compare the next two letters instead.
- Write the words *pollution* and *marine* on the board. Have a volunteer explain which word would appear first in alphabetical order (*marine*) and why (because *m* comes before *p* in the alphabet).
- Write the words *Earth* and *environment* on the board. Point out that the words begin with the same letter (*e*). Ask a volunteer to tell which word would appear first in alphabetical order and to explain his or her thinking (*Earth*, because the second letter, *a*, in *Earth* comes before the second letter, *n*, in *environment*).
- Write the words *brochures* and *brainstorming* on the board. Have a volunteer explain which word would appear first in alphabetical order and to explain his or her thinking (*brainstorming*, because the third letter, *a*, in *brainstorming* comes before the third letter, *o*, in *brochures*).
- **Check for understanding:** Write the words *recycling* and *renewable* on the board. Have students write the words in alphabetical order and explain their thinking on a separate piece of paper.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [alphabetical order worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud after they are finished.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students practice connecting to prior knowledge with someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Realistic Fiction Writing Connection

Have students write a fictional piece in which their character leads his or her peers in organizing some type of activity. Explain to students that the character could lead a group in anything (such as a weekend basketball tournament, a fund-raiser to help feed homeless people, or a tree-planting afternoon). Remind students to keep the characters and events believable since they are writing a piece of realistic fiction. Have students share their finished stories aloud in small groups.

Visit [Writing A–Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on narrative writing.

Social Studies Connection

Supply books and links to Internet websites for students to learn more about different activities that can be done on Earth Day. Have them organize their own fair, as Tara and her classmates did. Encourage pairs of students to come up with their own ideas for booths. Observe their brainstorming process, help facilitate their creations, and allow time for their ideas to take shape. Host an Earth Day celebration in which students are able to share their knowledge with others, inspiring them to make a change in the world.

Skill Review

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment**Monitor students to determine if they can:**

- use the strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand nonfiction text during discussion and on a worksheet
- understand and identify cause-and-effect relationships in the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- recognize and understand the use of bulleted lists during discussion and on a worksheet
- understand the process of arranging words in alphabetical order during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- **Book Quiz**
- **Retelling Rubric**