

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Persuasive Page Count: 16 Word Count: 666

Book Summary

Critter Crossings is a persuasive nonfiction book in which the author describes the dangers that animals face when trying to cross roads to find food or water, to migrate, or to find a mate. The book includes information on solutions that have been adopted in different parts of North America. A persuasive point is made: although these animal crossings are expensive, the number of lives saved—both of humans and other animals—makes the crossings worth the cost. Will you agree or disagree? Photographs and a chart support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Visualize

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of visualizing to understand text
- Problem and solution
- Identify open vowel y
- Recognize adjectives and the nouns they describe
- Arrange words in alphabetical order

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website.

- Book—*Critter Crossings* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Highlighters
- Visualize, problem and solution, adjectives, alphabetical order worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting 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 VocabularyA-Z.com.

- Content words:

Story critical: *collisions* (n.), *endangered* (adj.), *extinction* (n.), *habitats* (n.), *migrate* (v.), *vehicles* (n.)

Enrichment: *mate* (n.), *roam* (v.), *species* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the phrase *animal crossing* on the board. Have students share what they know about the subject. Encourage them to explain what they know about what animal crossings are used for and where they might be found. Ask students if they have ever seen an animal crossing or read about one in a book.

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).
- 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, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Visualize**

- Explain to students that good readers often visualize, or create pictures in their mind, while reading. Visualizing is on the basis of what a person already knows about a topic. Explain that one way to visualize is to draw a picture. Read aloud to the end of page 4.
- Model how to visualize as you preview the book.
Think-aloud: Whenever I read a book, I always pause after a few pages to create a picture in my mind of the information I've read. This helps me organize the important information and understand the ideas in the book. For example, on page 4, the author asks readers to imagine they are a turtle stuck on one side of a six-lane freeway. I imagined being very low to the ground and feeling scared, standing on the hot pavement, and watching humongous metal monsters race by. I imagined the hot wind hitting my face as the loud vehicles rushed by. When I imagined this, I thought about how scared a turtle must feel when facing this common problem.
- Introduce and explain the **visualize worksheet**. Have students draw what they visualized from page 4 on their worksheet. Invite students to share their drawings.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Problem and solution**

- Explain that writers have reasons for what they write. Write the following words on the board: *problem* and *possible solutions*. Review or explain that a *problem* is something that is difficult to deal with or hard to understand and must be worked out or solved (such as not being able to cross a street). A *solution* is an act or a process of solving the problem (such as figuring out a new route).
- Tell students that in nonfiction writing, an author often discloses a problem, and a resolution is explained before the end of the book. Explain that in fiction writing, the author typically poses a problem to one or more characters, and the rest of the story evolves around solving the problem. Ask students whether they think this book is fiction or nonfiction.
- Read to the end of page 4. Write the headings *Problem*, *Possible Solutions*, and *Consequences* on the board. Discuss with students the turtle's problem (it couldn't safely cross the busy street). Write this information on the board under the *Problem* heading. Discuss the possible solutions to the turtle's problem, and list them on the board under *Possible Solutions*. Have students also consider a positive and a negative consequence for each of their solutions, and record them on the board under the *Consequences* heading. Circle the possible solution that the class thinks is best. Have students look for the solution that the turtle is presented with as they read.
- Explain to students that good readers look for problems and solutions as they read.
- *Think-aloud: I know that I will learn about more problems that the turtle or other animals might face as I continue to read the book. I know that it is also necessary to continue reading to learn about the solutions. I learned that good readers do this, so I'm going to look for problems and solutions in this book as I read.*

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out a word. They can look for base words within words, prefixes, and suffixes. They can also use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Point out the story-critical word *vehicles* on page 6. Model how students can use context clues to figure out the meaning of the word. Read the sentence containing the word *vehicles* aloud. Ask students what words provide clues as to the meaning of the word *vehicles* in this text (*busy, highway*).
- Ask volunteers to share what they think *vehicles* means. Have students follow along as you read the sentence to confirm the meaning of the word. Then have students check the glossary to confirm the word's meaning.
- Remind students to check whether a word makes sense by rereading the word in the sentence in which it occurs. Repeat the activity with other story-critical words from the text.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about the animals' problems and the solutions that are mentioned. Remind them to stop after every few pages to visualize the most important information and to draw on their worksheet what they visualized about it.

During Reading


Student Reading




Guide the reading: Have students read from page 5 to the end of page 8. Ask them to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they visualized. Encourage students who finish before everyone else to go back and reread.

- Model visualizing.
Think-aloud: *When I read about the only black bear using an underpass during the first year of the Banff crossings, I pictured the immense mammal walking slowly and timidly across the metal walkway. I visualized other bears sniffing around, investigating the foreign structure and turning away, unwilling to explore further.* Have students share the pictures of what they visualized while reading.
- Invite students to share problems they have identified so far (page 4—the turtle moves much too slowly to make it across the busy six-lane freeway; page 6—the site of hundreds of collisions between animals and vehicles each year; page 7—cost millions of dollars, what if the animals didn't use them; page 8—that first year, only one black bear and one mountain lion used the crossings).
- Introduce and explain the **problem-and-solution worksheet**. Point out that the problem with the turtle was worked out aloud and written on the board. Ask students to write the problem from page 6 on their worksheet. In pairs, have students write possible solutions aloud. Have student pairs share their solutions aloud. Lead a discussion about the positive and negative consequences of each possible solution. Record students' ideas on the board under the sections for *Problem*, *Possible Solutions*, and *Consequences*. Have students complete the *Consequences* column on their worksheet. Ask them to circle the possible solution they think would be best for the animals.
- Point out the last row on their worksheets, *Evaluation*. Explain that evaluating is thinking carefully about the options and deciding if the one chosen was best. Encourage students to fill in the final row, writing their feelings about whether they think it was a good decision for Parks Canada to build animal underpasses and overpasses, and why or why not.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 10. Have them visualize the information in the text as they read. Ask them to draw what they visualized on their **visualize worksheet**. Invite students to share what they visualized.

- Ask students what new problem they read about. Have them cite examples from the text to support their findings. Have them fill out the first three columns of their worksheet, *Problem*, *Possible Solutions*, and *Consequences*, for this problem. Remind them to look for the solution that the animals are given as they read and to also fill in the *Evaluation* column.

 Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to visualize as they read, and have them continue to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they visualized.

 Have students make a small 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

- Ask students to explain or show how the strategy of visualizing helped them understand and remember important facts from the book.
- **Think-aloud:** *When I read about roads keeping animals apart and hindering their chances of finding a mate, I pictured a beautiful female bighorn sheep standing on the edge of a busy four-lane highway. I pictured a large male sheep on the other side of the highway, looking at his would-be mate. I pictured them trying numerous times to get across, only to have to turn back when a speeding car zoomed by. This helped me to understand how endangered animals have a hard time finding a mate and to remember that part of the book.*
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the [visualize worksheet](#). If time allows, have them share their pictures when finished.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Talk about any other problems mentioned in the book that the animals encounter. Invite students to identify and discuss them.
- Ask students to write another problem on their worksheet. Evaluate possible solutions aloud, discussing a positive and negative consequence of each possible solution, and recording all of their ideas on the board under the columns for *Problem*, *Possible Solutions*, and *Consequences*. Have students record the information on their worksheet.
- Talk about solutions that different countries have found for this growing problem. Ask students if they think these solutions are worthwhile and effective. Have them cite examples from the text to support their thoughts. Have students to fill in the final column, *Evaluation*, with their opinion on whether they think each one is a good solution, and why or why not.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete their [problem-and-solution worksheet](#), working with a final problem. Discuss their responses aloud once students have finished.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned that many animals face dangers in crossing roads every day, for various reasons. Now that you know this information, how does it make you feel about the importance of protecting wildlife?

Build Skills

Phonics: Open vowel y

- Write the word *many* on the board. Read it with students and challenge them to find the word in the book (page 5).
- Ask students what sound they hear at the end of the word (long /e/). Circle the letter y at the end of the word. Explain that sometimes the letter y at the end of a word makes the long /e/ sound.


Lesson Plan *(continued)*


Critter Crossings

- Ask students to find other words on page 5 ending in *y* that makes the long /e/ sound (*every, stay*). Take a word-walk and have students come to the board to list words they find in the book ending in *y* that makes the long /e/ sound.
- Read the completed list together. Challenge students to think of other words, not used in the book, that have the open vowel *y* that makes the long /e/ sound.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Adjectives**

- Review or explain that *adjectives* are words that describe nouns or pronouns. An adjective tells *which one, how many, or what kind*.
- Write the following sentences on the board.
The smaller number of collisions saves money.
Two narrow tunnels under the road now let them migrate in safety.
You are safe for one more day.
- Have individual students come to the board and circle the adjectives in each sentence (*smaller, two, narrow, safe, and one*). Then have different volunteers underline the noun that each adjective describes (*number, tunnels, you, and day*). Discuss how sometimes writers use two or three adjectives to describe one noun (for instance, *two* and *narrow* both describe *tunnels*).
- Explain that the adjective doesn't always precede the noun or pronoun, as seen in the last sentence (*safe*).
- Point to the first circled adjective in the first sentence (*smaller*). Ask students to determine whether the adjective tells which one, how many, or what kind (it describes *which* number). Repeat the exercise with the other adjectives in all three sentences.

 Have students use the inside back cover of their book to write *adjective* along with the definition of the term (a word describing a noun or pronoun that tells which one, how many, or what kind) to help them remember the terminology.

 **Check for understanding:** Give students highlighters and have them work in pairs to reread page 9. Have them highlight all of the adjectives they find. Discuss their findings as a group, identifying the noun that each adjective describes and whether the adjective is telling which one, how many, or what kind.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [adjectives worksheet](#). Discuss their answers as a group once everyone has 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 *habitats* and *vehicles* on the board. Have a volunteer explain which word would appear first in alphabetical order (*habitats*) and why (because *h* comes before *v* in the alphabet).
- Write the words *extinction* and *endangered* 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 (*endangered*, because the second letter, *n*, in *endangered* comes before the second letter, *x*, in *extinction*).
- **Check for understanding:** Write the words *migrate* and *mate* 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 visualize with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have them visualize while they read the book with someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Persuasive Writing Connection

Review or explain to students that in persuasive writing, a writer takes a position *for* or *against* an issue and writes to convince the reader to believe or do something. Have students choose their opinion regarding whether further efforts should be made to create underpasses and overpasses for animals to cross roads safely. Then have them write a persuasive paragraph convincing readers to agree with them. Require that students include at least three strong arguments to support their position. Encourage writers to read their finished paragraphs to a small group.

Visit WritingA-Z.com for a lesson and leveled materials on persuasive writing.

Social Studies Connection

Using books and Internet reference materials, have groups of students research the types of animals that benefit most from overpasses and the types of animals that benefit most from underpasses. Have students create *Critter Crossings* posters that show written and visual examples of various kinds of overpasses and underpasses, along with drawings or pictures of the animals that use them most. Post them on the bulletin board titled *Critter Crossings*, alongside their persuasive paragraphs from the Persuasive Writing Connection.

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:

- consistently use the strategy of visualizing to comprehend the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- effectively identify and analyze the problems and solutions in the book in discussion and on a worksheet
- fluently read words containing open vowel y during discussion and independently
- correctly identify the use of adjectives in the text 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](#)