

Focus Question:

What makes the dragonfly an amazing insect?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

Dragonflies are insects. They live near water, are agile fliers, and can be found around the world. *Dragonflies!* provides students a comprehensive look at these amazing insects. The book can also be used to teach students how to determine an author's purpose for writing and the proper use of plural nouns.

The book and lesson are also available for levels I and O.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Visualize to understand text
- ☐ Determine author's purpose
- ☐ Describe information provided by labels
- ☐ Identify vowel digraph *ai*
- ☐ Identify and use plural nouns
- ☐ Recognize and use onomatopoeia

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Dragonflies!* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Author's purpose, vowel digraph *ai*, plural nouns worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *directions* (n.), *habitat* (n.), *insects* (n.), *life cycle* (n.), *pairs* (n.), *shed* (v.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *cycle* (n.), *entire* (adj.), *pairs* (n.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Place on the board a photograph of various insects, including dragonflies. Ask students to work with a partner to identify all the insects they can find. Have students point to the dragonfly in the picture.
- Discuss with students what makes an animal an insect. Have students draw on a separate piece of paper a picture of an insect, real or imaginary. Invite volunteers to share their picture with the rest of the class and explain the characteristics that make it an insect.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Dragonflies!* 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, 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 engaged readers visualize, or create pictures in their minds, as they read. Explain that readers make visual images using information from the text and what they already know about the subject. Point out that the photographs in a book can also provide information to add to visualizations. Have students close their eyes as you read page 4 aloud. Ask students to draw a representation of what they visualized. Have students share their visualization with a partner. Discuss with students how their pictures compare to the photograph in the book.



Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Author's purpose

- Remind students that authors have a purpose, or reason, for what they write. Write the words *inform*, *entertain*, and *persuade* on the board. Explain to students that to inform means to provide information, to entertain means to amuse, and to persuade means to convince another to act or feel a certain way.
- Have students work in groups to discuss a book the class has previously read, and have groups determine the author's purpose for it. Call on groups to share their book and the author's purpose. Have other students give a thumbs-up signal if they agree. Have students work with a partner to predict the author's purpose for *Dragonflies!*

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point to the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have students include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about dragonflies. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer.
- Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *What makes a dragonfly an insect?* (level 1) page 5
- *How would you describe a dragonfly's life cycle?* (level 1) pages 6–8
- *What special skills do dragonflies have?* (level 2) pages 9–12
- *What is a dragonfly's place in the food chain?* (level 2) pages 12 and 13

- *What sets a dragonfly apart from other insects?* (level 2) multiple pages
- *Do dragonflies need safe places like the ones described in the book?* (level 3) page 15
- *Why did the author write this book about dragonflies?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Labels

Explain that labels clarify images by identifying specific parts of photographs or illustrations. Have students work with a partner to review the illustration on page 5 and its labels. Ask students: *How do the labels in the illustration support the main idea of this section? How do labels clarify visual information? Why are labels an important tool for classifying objects?* Have students review the photographs in the book and discuss with a partner where they would add labels and why. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you create visual images as you read, and direct them to stop at several points during the reading to draw a representation of what they visualize. Invite volunteers to share their visualizations with the rest of the class. Discuss with students how their pictures compare with the photographs in the book.
- Have students work in groups to periodically review the details they have read and discuss their effect on the reader. Have groups discuss their opinion on the author's purpose for writing each time they convene.
- Model evaluating details to determine the author's purpose.
Think-aloud: *The book is providing me with many details about dragonflies' lives: their life cycles, their amazing eyesight, their insect characteristics, and so on. All of these facts give me new information on the topic, so I believe the author's purpose is to inform. Still, I will read to the end of the book, examining each detail, to see if she has a different main purpose or more than one.*
- Model how to complete the **author's purpose worksheet**. Have students choose details from the book and record them on their worksheet. Then, have students discuss the details with a partner and determine the author's purpose for the book. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the purpose they chose.

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.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: **Author's purpose**

Have students point to the purpose on the board that best describes the book. Review the author's purpose worksheet, and invite volunteers to share details they recorded. Invite volunteers to explain how they know the author's purpose is to inform.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided to be used for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Reasons should include characteristics that make dragonflies amazing insects. Samples: *Dragonflies have amazing eyesight because they can see in all directions at once. They have amazing flying skills; they can fly forward, backward, and upside down.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonics: **Vowel digraph ai**

- Write the word *pair* on the board and read it aloud with students.
- Have students say the long /a/ sound aloud. Ask students to identify which letters represent the long /a/ sound in the word *pair*.
- Explain to students that some letter combinations create an entirely new sound. Point out that the vowel digraph *ai* creates the long /a/ sound, instead of the individual short vowel sounds blended together.
- Discuss with students other methods of creating the long /a/ sound in words, such as using the VCe pattern. Have students work in groups and brainstorm to generate a list of words containing the long /a/ sound. Call on students to share words and record a list on the board. Invite volunteers to come to the board and circle words containing the vowel digraph *ai*.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *hail, main, paid, pail, and train*. Say each word, one at a time, and have students repeat. Ask students to point to the vowel digraph *ai*. Call on students to come to the board and circle the vowel digraph *ai* in each word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **vowel-digraph-ai worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Plural nouns**

- Have students find and point to one noun on page 13. Review with students that **nouns** are words that name *people, places, and things*. Write the word *bird* on the board, and ask students to draw a picture of a bird on their desk with their finger.
- Write the word *birds* on the board. Have students point to the noun that means more than one. Point out that adding the letter *Ss* to the end of a noun changes it to a plural form. Explain to students that **plural nouns are words that name more than one person, place, or thing**.
- Point out to students that when a noun ends in the letter *y*, they need to change the *y* to an *i* before adding the letters *es*. Demonstrate with the word *dragonfly*, and have students work with a partner to change the words *baby* and *lady*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students look through the book to locate and circle plural nouns. Ask them to share with a partner five nouns they circled. Call on students to share a word with the rest of the class, and have other students give a thumbs-up signal if they agree the word is a plural noun.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **plural nouns worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Onomatopoeia**

- Have students follow along as you read the first paragraph of the book, emphasizing the words *bzzt* and *zoom*. Ask students to say the words aloud, and have them discuss with a partner why the author chose to use those words.
- Explain to students that sometimes authors use words that sound like the noises they are describing. When an insect flies quickly past, a person hears a noise similar to the word *zoom*. Invite students to share with the rest of the class what noise the word *bzzt* is imitating.
- Explain to students that these special words are called **onomatopoeia**. Point out that onomatopoeia works like sound effects in a book.
- Write several examples of onomatopoeia on the board, such as the following: *bang, clang, rustle, and vroom*. Have students read the words aloud to their partner, and discuss as a class where they might hear such sounds. Guide students in brainstorming to generate a list of words that use onomatopoeia.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to create three oral sentences, using onomatopoeia in each one. Invite students to share a sentence with the rest of the class, and have other students give a thumbs-up signal if it uses onomatopoeia.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.