

Focus Question:

Why are people fascinated by unsolved mysteries?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

What is the truth behind Bigfoot sightings and the Bermuda Triangle disappearances? Does anybody really know? These mysteries, among others, are described in the book *Believe It or Not?* The book can also be used to teach students how to analyze main idea and details and the proper use of adverbs.

The book and lesson are also available for levels Y and Z1.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to understand text
- ☐ Analyze main idea and details in the story
- ☐ Describe information provided by captions
- ☐ Identify and use adverbs
- ☐ Identify the meanings of suffixes -ly and -ous

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Believe It or Not* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Main idea and details, adverbs, suffixes -ly and -ous 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: *conundrums* (n.), *fractals* (n.), *hoaxes* (n.), *pharaoh* (n.), *reclusive* (adj.), *retracted* (v.)

Enrichment: *decompose* (v.), *intricate* (adj.), *microwave* (n.), *node* (n.), *plasma* (n.), *sporadic* (adj.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *believe* (v.), *determine* (v.), *reason* (n.), *report* (n.), *suggest* (v.), *whether* (conj.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- As a class, discuss what students know about mysteries. They may share ideas about books, movies, or stories they are familiar with.
- Discuss with students the definition of *hoax* (an action meant to trick someone into thinking something is real when it is not). Display different pictures of Bigfoot. Ask students to state whether they think these creatures are real or hoaxes. Explain that they will be reading a book that looks into different mysteries, including that of Bigfoot.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Believe It or Not?* 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:

Ask and answer questions

Explain to students that having prior knowledge about a topic, and asking and answering questions while reading, can help readers understand and remember information in a book. Direct students to the pictures on page 4 and model asking questions about the pictures and their captions. Have students create a KWLS chart on a piece of paper. Review the pictures and their captions with students. Have students work with a partner to write down what they already know about the pictures and their captions in the *K* column. Have students write at least one question they have while reading in the *W* column.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Main idea and details

- Explain to students that all books have a main idea, or a general topic that is the subject of a book. Explain that the extra information or descriptions that help explain the main idea are the details of the book. Explain that sometimes the amount of information about a topic is so large that it is grouped into sections and each section has its own main idea. Point out to students that the title of a book or section often provides clues about the main idea.
- Have students turn to page 13. Have them underline important details and discuss with a partner their predictions about the main idea of this section of the text. Invite students to share their predictions and the details that support their reasoning.

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 24. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out 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 them 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 why people are fascinated by unsolved mysteries. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer.
- Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in a future discussion.

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 conclusions can you draw about Bigfoot?* (level 3) pages 5–9
- *What was the sequence of events in Albert Ostman’s Bigfoot sighting?* (level 1) page 8
- *Why do crop circles remain unexplained?* (level 3) pages 10–14

- *What was strange about Carter’s canary being swallowed by a cobra?* (level 1) page 15
- *How did newspapers make an impact on the mystery of the mummy’s curse?* (level 2) pages 16–18
- *How would you summarize the Bermuda Triangle?* (level 2) pages 19–22
- *Why are the mysteries in this book still unsolved?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Captions

Explain that captions clarify photographs and illustrations by describing the details of the image. Captions may provide the reader with names, dates, and locations. Have students work with a group to review the photograph on page 16 and its caption. Ask students: *How does the caption help the reader understand the purpose of the photograph in the book? How do captions clarify visual information? Why are captions an important tool for describing images?* Have students review other images in the book and discuss in groups what the captions describe. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you ask and record questions on the KWLS chart during reading. Invite volunteers to share their questions with the rest of the class. Discuss with students how their questions help them better understand the book.
- Have students work in groups to periodically review the details they have underlined and discuss their connection to a main idea. Have groups discuss main ideas and details of the text each time they convene.
- **Check for understanding:** Invite students to share the important details they underlined on pages 19 through 22. Write these details on the board. Have groups of students work together to identify the main idea on the basis of the details and write this information on a separate piece of paper. (*The Bermuda Triangle remains a mystery, with unexplained stories of ghost ships, disappearances, and equipment failure.*) Discuss their responses as a class.
- Model how to complete the [main-idea-and-details worksheet](#). Have students identify details from the book and circle them. Then, have students discuss the details with a partner and determine the main idea for the book.

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

Worksheet: Main idea and details

Review the main-idea-and-details worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the details and main ideas they chose. Discuss with students the justification for choosing each.

Comprehension Extension

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

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Students should include details from the story to support their answer. Samples: *People are fascinated by unsolved mysteries because they can't be solved or disproved. Many people also like to think about various answers, so unsolved mysteries offer a chance for them to analyze the possibilities.*)

Comprehension Checks

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

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Adverbs

- Ask students what an adverb is. Explain to students that adverbs are words that describe verbs. Ask students to think of adverbs that describe the verb *run*. Make a list of volunteered answers.
- Have students turn to pages 10 and 11 in the book. Ask students to look for adverbs. Have students underline or highlight the adverbs they find.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students share with the class the adverbs they found. Have the class give a thumbs-up signal when they hear a correct example.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **adverbs worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Suffixes -ly and -ous

- Write the suffixes *-ous* and *-ly* on the board and discuss their meanings (*-ous: possessing or full of, -ly: having the characteristic of*). Point out that suffixes alter the meanings of words.

- Have students locate the words with the suffixes *-ous* and *-ly* on page 21 (*mysterious, suddenly, partially, finally*). Ask students to identify the root words (*mystery, sudden, partial, final*). Ask them to explain the meaning of the words *mysterious, suddenly, partially, finally* (*full of mystery, happening unexpectedly, not complete, after a long duration of time*).
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *desperately, various*. Have students identify each base word and suffix to identify the meaning of each word (*having a characteristic of being desperate, an assortment of*).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **suffixes -ly and -ous worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

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