

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy Page Count: 12 Word Count: 155

Book Summary

It's the queen ant's birthday! What a big day for the ant nest. The ants have many jobs to do before the queen ant wakes up from her nap. Everyone will have to work together to be ready for the party. Will the queen ant be surprised? Students will have the opportunity to practice visualizing and distinguishing fantasy from reality as they read this story. Detailed illustrations support readers.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Visualize


Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of visualizing to understand text
- Distinguish between reality and fantasy
- Segment syllables
- Identify short /i/ sound
- Recognize and use verbs
- Place words in alphabetical order

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*The Queen Ant's Birthday* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Visualize, short /i/, verbs 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 Vocabulary a-z.com.

- High-frequency words: *have, make, many, they, what*
- Content words:
 Story critical: *guard (v.), jaws (n.), nest (n.), queen (n.), surprise (v.), tasty (adj.)*
 Enrichment: *neat (adj.), workers (n.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *ant* on the board and point to it as you read it aloud to students. Repeat the process and have students say the word aloud.
- Ask students to close their eyes and visualize an ant. Have them share the picture they created in their mind. Make a chart and record the discussion using the following questions as headings:
What might ants eat? What do ants look like? What are some things ants might do?

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Show students the front and back covers of the book and read the title with them. Ask what they think they might read about in a book called *The Queen Ant's Birthday*. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Visualize**

- Explain to students that good readers often visualize, or create pictures in their mind, while reading. Visualizing is based on the words used in the story and what a person already knows about the topic. Pictures in stories also help readers create their own mental images.
- Read page 3 aloud to students. Model how to visualize.
Think-aloud: On page 3, the author says that it is a big day at the ant nest because it is the queen's birthday. When I read this page, I imagined the worker ants running around to get ready for the big day. Some were cleaning up, and others were getting food ready. I imagined everyone being busy except for the queen. She was resting quietly as everyone else worked. I created a picture in my mind using the author's words and the things that I already know about getting ready for a big day, like a birthday.
- Reread page 3 aloud to students and ask them to describe what the author's words led them to visualize. Have students draw a picture of what they imagined and share it with the group.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Reality and fantasy**

- Explain to students that stories can be about reality—things that are real—or about fantasy—things that are imaginary. Remind students that when something is made up and imagined only in their mind, it is called *fantasy* or *make-believe*. Explain that sometimes the title and cover pictures of a book can give clues that let the reader know if the book will be about real or make-believe things.
- Explain to students that it is important to understand and be able to tell the difference between what is real and what is fantasy, especially when they are reading a book, playing a game, or watching a television program. Invite students to share predictions about this book, based on the cover and title.
- Model how to identify reality and fantasy.
Think-aloud: To decide whether a story or details in a story are reality or fantasy, I ask myself the question: Can this really happen? I look at the setting and think about the characters and what is happening. I try to look for things that happen in the real world. To decide if I am reading fantasy, I ask, Can this really happen? Is it impossible? Does it only happen in my imagination?

Introduce the Vocabulary

- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words that students will encounter. For example, while looking at the picture on page 3, you might say: *It looks as though it is a big day at the ant nest. It is the queen ant's birthday.*
- Remind students to look at the picture and the letters with which a word begins or ends to figure out a difficult word. For example, point to the word *neat* on page 5 and say: *I am going to check the picture and think about what would make sense to figure out this word. The picture shows some of the worker ants cleaning and moving rocks to make the rooms tidy. When I look at the first part of the word, it starts with /n/. However, the word tidy starts with the /t/ sound, so this can't be the word. I know that another word that means almost the same as tidy is neat. The word neat starts with the /n/ sound. The sentence makes sense with this word. The word must be neat.*

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out what the ants do to surprise the queen ant on her birthday. Remind them to visualize as they read the words in the story and think about which things are real and which are make-believe.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Have a volunteer point to the first word on page 3 (*Today*). Point out to students where to begin reading on each page. Remind them to read the words from left to right.
- Ask students to place a finger on the page number in the bottom corner of page 3. Have them read to the end of page 5, using their finger to point to each word as they read. Encourage students who finish before others to reread the text.
- Model visualizing.
Think-aloud: On page 5, after reading about the ants and looking at the pictures, I imagine the queen ant resting peacefully as the workers are busy cleaning the nest. I see them sweeping and carrying items in and out of the nest. Some of the ants are fixing things and making the nest look perfect for the party. Everyone is working hard to make the queen's birthday special.
- Introduce and explain the [visualize worksheet](#). Have students draw and write what they have visualized on each page so far.
- Have students read to the end of page 8. Review the pictures and the things the author says about the ants. Ask students if these things could really happen or if they are make-believe. Say: *On page 7, the workers go out to look for food. They find seeds, leaves, and flies. Could those things really happen?*
- Invite students to share examples of fantasy and reality that they have read about so far in the story.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 10. Invite them to share other examples of fantasy and reality they discovered as they read. (Accept all answers that show students understand the difference between fantasy and reality.)
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to use the author's words, the pictures, and what they already know to help them visualize as they read.
- Have students complete the visualize worksheet by drawing and writing what they visualized on each page listed.



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 the discussion that follows.

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

- **Think-aloud:** *When I read pages 11 and 12, I thought about the queen waking up from her nap to see her surprise. I imagined her with a surprised and happy look on her face. She was happy because of all the work her children had done. She was amazed that they found her favorite picnic foods. She was also pleased to know that her children were clever enough to spell out the words Happy Birthday with the food they found.*
- Invite students to share and discuss their responses from their visualize worksheet.
- Ask students to explain how visualizing helped them to understand and remember the story.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review the characteristics of reality and fantasy. Invite students to share examples of reality and fantasy from the story.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you read about the ants working hard to prepare a surprise party for the queen. They cleaned, gathered food, and prepared to guard the nest. Now that have read and thought about this story, why do you think it's important to do nice things for others, even if it involves hard work?

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Segment syllables

- Tell students that every word contains one or more parts. Explain that these parts are called *syllables*.
- Show students how to count syllables by clapping as they say a word. Demonstrate with the word *birthday*. Clap each time you say a syllable (two claps).
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words that contain the short /i/ sound on the board, leaving out the letter *i* in each word: *bit*, *hill*, *dip*. Say each word, one at a time, and have volunteers come to the board and add the *i* to each word.

Phonics: Identify short /i/ vowel

- Write the word *six* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the short /i/ sound aloud. Then run your finger under the letters in the word *six* as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letter represents the short /i/ sound in *six*.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words that contain the short /i/ sound on the board, leaving out the letter *i* in each word: *bit*, *hill*, *dip*. Say each word, one at a time, and have volunteers come to the board and add the *i* to each word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [short /i/ vowel worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Grammar and Mechanics: Verbs

- Review or explain that some words name actions. These words are called *verbs*. Have students name action words they know and then act them out.
- Have students turn to page 4 in their book. Read the second sentence aloud together. Ask students to name the word that identifies an action (*work*).
- Write the following sentence on the board: *Some ants clean the nest*. Have a volunteer come to the board and underline the verb in the sentence. Ask another volunteer to act out the underlined verb.



- **Check for understanding:** Ask students to search the story to locate other action words and underline them. Have them work with a partner to make a list of action words. Invite pairs of students to share their list and act out one verb on their list.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [verbs worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: Alphabetical order

- Review or explain the process of putting a list of words in alphabetical order.
- Write the words *queen* and *worker* on the board. Have a volunteer explain which word would appear first in alphabetical order (*queen*) and why (because *q* comes before *w* in the alphabet).
- Write the words *six* and *dig* on the board. Ask a volunteer to tell which word would appear first in alphabetical order and to explain his or her thinking (*dig*, because *d* comes before *s* in the alphabet).

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

The Queen Ant's Birthday

- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *nest, wakes, party, legs, rooms, cookies, surprised*. Have students write the words in alphabetical order and explain their thinking on a separate piece of paper.

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 them identify the things in the book that are real and make-believe to someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Fantasy Fiction Writing and Art Connection

Have students draw a picture of one thing from the story that is make-believe, or fantasy. Have them write a sentence to tell about their picture.

Social Studies Connection

Provide students with informational books (*Ant, Ants, Ants* is a nonfiction book about ants on Reading A-Z) and Internet resources about ants. Discuss the information from the story that is true about ants. Put together a book of ant facts as a class.

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:

- correctly understand and use visualization to understand text
- accurately identify reality and fantasy during discussion
- accurately segment syllables during discussion
- identify and write the letter symbol that represents the short /i/ sound during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly understand and use verbs during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately place words in alphabetical order during discussion and on a separate piece of paper

Comprehension Checks

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