

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Historical Page Count: 20 Word Count: 1,552

Book Summary

Sally's Secret Ambition is a story set in 1862 during the American Civil War. Sally is a young girl whose secret ambition is to become a surgeon like her father. Unfortunately in the late 1800s, a surgeon was not a typical profession held by women. However, Sally secretly learns the profession by watching her father and reading books on the subject. One day, Sally gets her chance to help a wounded soldier, and her secret is revealed. Illustrations support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Make, revise, and confirm predictions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions to better understand text
- Analyze characters in the text
- Understand and use singular possessive nouns
- Recognize and use the suffix *-ly* for adverbs

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Sally's Secret Ambition* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Prediction, analyze characters, possessive nouns, adverbs 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

- Content words:

Story critical: *ambition (n.)*, *deceived (v.)*, *injured (adj.)*, *noble (adj.)*, *surgeon (n.)*, *tending (v.)*

Enrichment: *bandages (n.)*, *Civil War (n.)*, *field hospital (n.)*, *lead (n.)*, *operation (n.)*, *suitable (adj.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students to share what they know about the American Civil War. Record their ideas on the board.
- Explain that the Civil War was a war between the states. Show students the map on page 3 of the book. Ask them to identify how the country was divided by the war and the names of the two sides involved (Union, Confederate).

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers of the book 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 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).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Make, revise, and confirm predictions**

- Explain that good readers often make predictions about what will happen in a book based on what the characters say, do, and think in the story. As they read the story, readers revise or confirm their predictions based on what they learn from reading. Before reading a book, readers can use the title and illustrations as the basis for making predictions.
- Model using the title and cover illustrations to make a prediction as you preview the book.
Think-aloud: Let's look at the front cover. I see a young girl and boy. The boy seems to have on a uniform and is carrying a rifle. I know from our "Build Background" discussion that the setting is the Civil War, so the boy might be a soldier. The title of the book is Sally's Secret Ambition. The girl on the cover might be Sally. It looks as if she is standing next to a pile of clothes. She also looks as though she is trying to talk to the soldier. Maybe her secret is that she wants to be a soldier and she is asking the boy if she can go with him. I'll have to read the book to find out what happens.
- Create a four-column chart on the board with the headings *Make, Revise, Confirm, and Actual*. Model writing a prediction in the first column (*Make*).
- Introduce and explain the [prediction worksheet](#). Have students preview all the illustrations in the story. Invite them to make a prediction before they begin reading and record it on their worksheet.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Analyze characters**

- Explain that there are many ways to learn about a character in a story. One way is to look at the character's words or thoughts. Another way is to look for things the character does. Explain to students that an author uses a character's words, thoughts, and actions to let readers get to know the character and form an opinion about him or her.
- Ask students to turn to page 4. Read the first page of the story aloud while they follow along silently.
- Model how to analyze a character based on the character's thoughts.
Think-aloud: On page 4, Sally is thinking about how her family had not been torn apart by the war. She also thinks about how her family has enough to eat when she knows others do not. Based on these events, how might she be feeling? (lucky, thankful, grateful, and so on)
- On the board, create a two-column chart with the first column labeled *Traits* and the second column labeled *Clues*. Write Sally's feelings (lucky, thankful, grateful, and so on) in the *Traits* column. Write examples from the text that support these feelings in the *Clues* column (they had enough to eat, many families had already lost sons and brothers).

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following vocabulary words on the board: *tending, bandaging, field hospital, surgeon*.
- Divide students into small groups. Ask them to explain what happens when people get injured (they need a doctor or other medical assistance). Explain that during a war, such as the Civil War, people were injured on the battlefield.
- Show students the illustration on page 11. Point out the injured men in the foreground and background of the picture. Ask students to explain what the man in the center of the picture is doing (checking the injured man's pulse). Explain that the doctor in the picture is tending to the injured people. Point to the word *tending* on the board and ask students what they think this word means (to give special attention to something or someone). Ask students to explain how doctors and nurses tend to injured people.


- Write the word *bandage* on the board. Ask students to explain what they know about the use of bandages (to stop bleeding, to cover wounds, to prevent infection, and so on). Based on this understanding, have them explain what *bandaging* means (putting bandages on a wound).
- Discuss what people might need if they are injured beyond the use of bandages (operation). Ask students where a person who needed an operation would go (to the hospital). Point to the words *field hospital* and *surgeon* on the board. Explain that a type of temporary hospital in a tent near a battlefield is called a *field hospital*. Discuss why it is important to have field hospitals near the battlefield. Explain that a *surgeon* is the name of the doctor who performs the operations, or surgery, in the hospital.
- Have volunteers use the words *tending*, *bandaging*, *field hospital*, and *surgeon* to predict the events that might happen in the story. Invite students to add these predictions to their [prediction worksheet](#).

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out Sally's secret, making predictions about what will happen in the story based on what the characters say, do, and think. Remind them to revise or confirm their predictions as they learn more about the characters and events of the story, and to write these predictions on their worksheet.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 7. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.
 - **Model making, revising, and confirming a prediction.**
Think-aloud: *I predicted that Sally's secret was that she wanted to be a soldier. This prediction was not correct. As I read, I learned that her secret dream, or ambition, was to become a surgeon, helping soldiers who were hurt while fighting in the war, just as her father did. I also read that she had watched her father closely and practiced bandaging her dolls. She was angry about having to keep her dream a secret. Based on this new information, my revised prediction is that Sally disguises herself as a doctor in order to help soldiers who are injured. I will write this on the chart next to my original prediction.*
 - **Check for understanding:** Encourage students to use the information they've read and discussed to revise their prediction. Have them write their new prediction under the heading *Revise* on their worksheet. Remind them that if their first prediction has been confirmed or has not yet been proven, they may write another prediction in the *Make* section of the worksheet. Then have students read to page 10. When they have finished reading, have them share their predictions and the outcome of their predictions. Remind them to revise or confirm their predictions and write what actually happened.
 - Discuss Sally's actions toward fulfilling her dream (secretly reading her father's books, watching her father work, and keeping a notebook). Ask students to explain why these actions were done in secret (it was not a common job for women during that time period, her parents would not approve). Discuss how even though her parents would not approve of Sally's ambition to become a surgeon, she found ways to learn the profession. Ask students to explain what Sally's actions indicate about her personality (she is independent, resourceful, determined, and so on). Ask students to explain how Sally's ambition might create a problem.
 - Invite students to read the remainder of the book. Encourage them to continue to make, revise, and confirm their predictions as they read the rest of the story.
-  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 the words and figure out their 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

- **Think-aloud:** *I predicted that Sally would disguise herself as a doctor so she could help wounded soldiers. As I read, I learned that an injured soldier came up to Sally asking for help. Sally knew just what to do from watching her father and reading his books. She helped the soldier and his friend, but she didn't disguise herself. I will write this information next to my prediction under the heading Actual.*
- Ask students to share their thoughts about Sally joining her father in the field. Read the last sentence of the book: *There were changes going on in their country, and changes at home as well.* Discuss what that sentence means, and ask students to identify the changes in the country, as well as the changes that have taken place for women in the battlefield and at home.
- Ask students to share their predictions about what they thought might happen in the story. Ask them to compare their predictions with what actually happened in the story and to share any predictions that were confirmed. Reassure students by explaining that predicting correctly is not the purpose of this reading strategy. Making, revising, and confirming predictions are ways to organize information in order to understand and remember what has been read.
- Ask students to explain how the strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions helped them understand and enjoy the story.
- **Independent practice:** Have students fill out the last column of their worksheet, *Actual*, for each prediction to explain the events that actually happened in the book.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review the character traits of the main character (Sally) that were identified from the first chapter (lucky, thankful). Discuss the information from the story that students wrote on their chart that supports these traits. Discuss how although she is thankful for certain events in her life, Sally still took action to pursue her dream. Review the character traits that can be associated with these actions (independent, resourceful, and so on). Ask volunteers to read examples from the text that support the traits they identified.
- Direct students to page 18. Ask them to identify changes in Sally's parents' feelings toward her decision to be a surgeon (from negative and protective to positive and supportive). Ask volunteers to read examples from the text that provide evidence of her parents' feelings. (*"Sally, would you like to come to the field hospital with me?" She loved her daughter too much to build a fence around her dream.*) Discuss what it means to "build a fence around a dream" and how this statement was important to Sally and her ambition.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [analyze characters worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss students' responses.



Enduring understanding: During the story, Sally took action on an issue she strongly believed in (becoming a surgeon). Now that you know this information, how will this affect whether or not you choose to take action on something you believe in?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Possessive nouns**

- Direct students to the title page. Read the title aloud, pointing to the word *Ambition*. Ask a volunteer to explain whose ambition the title is referring to (Sally's). Explain that the word *Sally's* shows that the ambition belongs to Sally.
- Review or explain that words like *Sally's* are called *possessive nouns*. A possessive noun is formed by adding an 's to the end of a word to show ownership, or possession.

- Direct students to page 8. Have them find the possessive word in the second sentence on the page (*father's*). Ask a volunteer to explain what belongs to the father (the study).
- Write the following sentence from page 7 on the board: *The boy's not ill, Virginia*. Point to the word *boy's*. Ask students to explain whether something belongs to the boy (no). Have students identify which two words the word *boy's* stands for (*boy, is*). Review or explain that the word *boy's* is an example of a *contraction*. Point out that a contraction using 's is not the same as a possessive.



Check for understanding: Have students circle the possessive nouns in the book and underline the object that belongs to each noun.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **possessive nouns worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: **Adverbs with the -ly suffix**

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Sally had been secretly watching her father*. Underline the word *secretly*. Ask students to identify the part of speech of the word *secretly* (adverb). Have them identify the verb it describes (*watching*).
- Ask students to identify the root word of the word *secretly* (*secret*). Have students use the word *secret* in a sentence. (For example, *Sally has a secret*.) Discuss the difference in meaning between the two sentences.
- Ask students to identify the part of speech of the word *secret* (noun). Explain that the part of speech and meaning of the word *secret* are changed when the *-ly* suffix is added to the end of the word.
- Have students turn to page 5 to look for an adverb with the *-ly* suffix (*closely*). Ask them what verb the adverb describes (*watched*). Have students identify the root word of *closely* (*close*). Have students use the word in a sentence on a separate piece of paper or at the bottom of page 5. Ask them to identify the part of speech for the word *close*.



Check for understanding: Have students underline the remaining adverbs in the book that have the *-ly* suffix and circle the words they describe. Next to each adverb, have them write the root word. At the bottom of the page, have them use the root word in a sentence and identify the part of speech of the root word.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **adverbs worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their responses.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently or with a partner. Encourage repeated timed readings of a specific section of the book.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students also take home their prediction sheets and explain to someone at home the process of making, revising, and confirming predictions.

Extend the Reading

Writing and Art Connection

Have students review their completed analyze characters worksheet for Sally's character traits identified from the reading. Have students choose the trait they find most admirable. Instruct them to write a paragraph relating this trait to someone they know, explaining how that person possesses the trait.

Social Studies Connection

Have students use the Internet to research information about the American Civil War. Have them identify information such as: when it started/ended, why the war began, the war's outcome, and the changes in the United States that resulted from the war. Have students organize the information into an oral presentation.

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:

- make logical predictions based on available pictures and text; revise and/or confirm predictions as they preview and read the book
- analyze the words, thoughts, and actions of the book's main character during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify possessive nouns in text and use them correctly during discussion and on a worksheet; discriminate between possessive nouns and contractions during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify adverbs with the suffix *-ly* and the words they describe; accurately explain how the *-ly* suffix alters the meaning of a word

Comprehension Checks

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