



About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 14 Word Count: 214

Book Summary

If you've ever looked forward to a big holiday event and had it canceled due to weather, you'll relate to this realistic fiction book. At the start of the story, Maria is reminiscing about past Thanksgivings. She remembers relatives gathering at her home, the foods that family members brought, and the activities that everyone shared. Then a big snowstorm prevents the traditional family gathering. At first, Maria and her neighbors fear that Thanksgiving is ruined. Then Maria comes up with a plan that honors the true meaning of Thanksgiving.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of connecting life experiences and using prior knowledge to understand realistic fiction
- Sequence story events
- Blend segmented sounds into words
- Identify and read words that contain long /e/ vowel digraphs
- Understand and read the possessive form of words
- Locate and read compound words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Maria's Thanksgiving* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- [Sequencing, compound words worksheets](#)
- [Discussion cards](#)



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

- High-frequency words: *brought, come, have, her, made, was*
- Content words: *beans, dinner, family, holiday, neighbors, pasta, pie, pumpkins, rice, stuffing, sweet potatoes, tamales, thankful, Thanksgiving, turkey*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Encourage students to talk about what they eat for Thanksgiving dinner and what activities they share with family and friends during the holiday. Record students' responses on the board.
- Involve students in a discussion about the meaning of Thanksgiving. Ask why people have a Thanksgiving feast and what it means to be thankful.

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 *Maria's Thanksgiving*. (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). Tell students that the girl on the cover is named Maria. Explain that Maria is the main character in the story.
- Ask students to predict what might happen to Maria on Thanksgiving Day.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Connect to prior knowledge**

- Explain to students that good readers make connections between what they already know and new information they read. Remind students that thinking about what they already know about the topic of the book will help them understand what they read.
- Model how good readers use prior knowledge to help them read and understand text.
Think-aloud: When I read a book, I try to think about what I already know about the topic of the book before I read the story. When I read the title, I know that this book is about Thanksgiving. I know a lot about Thanksgiving. My family celebrates with a big feast at a family member's house. We eat turkey, dressing, and pumpkin pie. Before dinner we all help with the cooking, during dinner we talk about what we are thankful for, and after dinner we play games and talk. I predict that Maria's Thanksgiving is going to be similar to the one my family celebrates. I predict that her family and friends are going to gather for a big feast.
- Have students turn to a partner and share what they think Maria's Thanksgiving might be like. Encourage them to connect their predictions to their own holiday traditions. Add their ideas to the earlier responses on the board.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Guide students through each page of the book. Ask them to talk about what they see in the pictures. Use the Thanksgiving content vocabulary and the names of characters they will encounter in the text during your discussion of the pictures. For example, on page 3, ask: *What foods do you think Maria's mother and other family members might cook for Thanksgiving?* Encourage students to confirm their predictions by looking for the food words in the text on each page. For instance, if students predict that someone is going to make turkey, ask them to think about what letters are at the beginning of the word *turkey* and then locate the word in the text.
- Write each of the following high-frequency words on the board: *was, her, have, brought, made*. Have students say, write, and spell each of the words. Put each of the high-frequency words on a card. Have students take turns selecting a word, reading it, and finding it in the book.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out if Maria's Thanksgiving is similar to the one they celebrate.


During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Have them put a sticky note on page 10 and read to the end of that page. Tell students to reread the pages if they finish before everyone else.
- Model connecting to prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: Before I read the story, I thought about my family's Thanksgiving. I used my experiences to predict what Maria would experience in the story. When I read the first half of the book, I realized that many of my family's Thanksgiving traditions are similar to the ones that Maria and her family have. Maria's family and neighbors eat turkey, stuffing, and pumpkin pie

on Thanksgiving, and so does my family. However, there are some foods that Maria's family and neighbors have for Thanksgiving that my family does not have. My family does not have tamales, black beans, sweet potato pie, sticky rice, or pasta on Thanksgiving.

- Allow time for students to discuss how Maria's Thanksgiving traditions are similar and different from theirs. Refer to the responses on the board created during the Before Reading section.
- Have students finish reading the book independently to find out if Thanksgiving continues to be ruined because of the snowstorm.

 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 page 11, I thought about the times when my family could not make it to Thanksgiving dinner at my grandmother's house. We often had friends and neighbors over to help celebrate the occasion.*
- Ask students to explain how thinking about what they already knew helped them to understand and remember the story.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Sequence events**

- **Discussion:** Ask students to share their ideas about the true meaning of Thanksgiving.
- **Introduce and model:** Explain to students that good readers think about the order of events in a story to help them remember what they read. Explain that this skill is called sequencing. Model sequencing for students.
Think-aloud: *Thinking about what happens first, second, next, and last in a story helps me remember and understand what I read. In this story, for example, the first thing that happens is that Maria remembers past Thanksgivings.*
- **Check for understanding:** Have students reflect on the story and tell what happens to Maria after she remembers past Thanksgivings. Encourage students to use sequencing words such as *first*, *second*, *next*, and *last* (*next*, a big snow storm keeps Maria's family away for Thanksgiving; *then*, Maria and her family go outside and see everyone else is disappointed, too; and *last*, Maria's mother invites the neighbors to have Thanksgiving dinner at their house).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [sequencing worksheet](#). Discuss their responses after everyone has finished working independently.

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: **Segmenting and blending**

- Use a rubber band to show students how you can segment and blend sounds into words. Tell students that you are going to say a word from the story (*turkey*) by slowly stretching out the sounds. Stretch the sounds, and tell students that you are going to blend the sounds together to say the word *turkey*. Repeat this same activity one more time while students listen carefully.
- Explain that you will stretch out the individual sounds of several words and that you want them to blend the sounds together to say the words. Say each sound for each word one at a time, slowly and distinctly. Have students blend the sounds together to say the words: (*men*) /m/ /e/ /n/; (*games*) /g/ /a/ /m/ /s/; (*home*) /h/ /o/ /m/; (*miss*) /m/ /i/ /s/; (*she*) /s/ /h/ /e/.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to stretch and say content words.

Phonics: Long /e/ vowel digraphs

- Write the word *treat* on the board. Explain that when you read the word *treat*, you hear the long /e/ vowel sound in the middle. Explain that when the *ea* are together as in the word *treat*, the letters make the long /e/ sound.
- Have students turn to pages 3 and 4 in the book. Have them locate the two words on these pages that contain the *ea* vowel combination (*eat*, *beans*).
- Guide students to page 4 to find another word with the long /e/ sound (*sweet*). Explain that two vowels together (*ee*) also make the long /e/ sound.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *beans*, *eat*, *seal*, and *seat*. Have individual students come up and circle the two letters that make the long /e/ sound in each word.

Grammar and Mechanics: Possessive nouns

- Read the first sentence on page 8. Point out the word *son's*. Tell students that the apostrophe and the *s* at the end of *son's* show *possession*, or that something belongs to someone or something. In this case, the sentence tells that the house belongs to Mr. Lee's son.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read the first sentence on page 9. Have them find the word that contains an apostrophe (*sister's*) and explain what belongs to whom (house).
- **Independent practice:** On a separate sheet of paper, have students write a sentence that states something that belongs to a family member. For example: *Jenny's dog loves to jump on the furniture*. Then have them illustrate their sentence.

Word Work: Compound words

- Point to the word *grandmother* on page 4. Tell students that *grandmother* is two smaller words put together: *grand* and *mother*. Explain that this type of word is called a *compound word*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students look on page 5 to locate and read the compound word (*football*). Explain what the two smaller words are that make up the compound word (*foot* and *ball*).



Independent practice: Have students locate and circle other compound words in the book and then complete the [compound words worksheet](#). Review worksheets with students when they have 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 read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have them sequence the events of the story with someone at home.

Extend the Reading
Reality Writing and Art Connection

Lead a discussion with students about what they are thankful for. Have them write the sentence *I am thankful for _____* on a sheet of paper. Have them fill in words to complete the sentence and create an illustration to match their writing. Post papers on a bulletin board to make a *Wall of Thanks*.

Math Connection

Have students draw a picture of their favorite Thanksgiving food. Create a picture graph of students' different food choices. Write statements under the graph to summarize the results.

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 connect life experiences and prior knowledge to understand realistic fiction
- sequence story events by using the words *first*, *second*, *next*, and *last* in discussion and on a worksheet
- blend individual phonemes together to form one-syllable words during discussion
- locate and read words that contain the *ea* and *ee* vowel digraphs that make the long /e/ sound during discussion
- identify and read possessive forms of words during discussion and on a separate sheet of paper
- recognize and read compound words on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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