

## About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Concept Page Count: 10 Word Count: 129

### Book Summary

In *Friends in the Stars*, a mother dog and her pup play a game with the stars while sitting in the backyard. Students will enjoy connecting the dots (stars) on each page to reveal the different pictures Momma and Puppy are seeing in the stars. Along with creative illustrations, early readers are supported by high-frequency words and a repeated phrase throughout the story.

## About the Lesson

### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Visualize

### Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of visualizing to understand text
- Categorize parts of the story into reality and fantasy
- Demonstrate how to blend phonemes
- Name words that contain the s-blends
- Identify and create interrogative sentences
- Recognize and use high-frequency words

### Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Friends in the Stars* (copy for each student)
- Dry erase board or interactive white board
- Reality/fantasy, S-blends, question words, interrogative sentence 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: *an, at, away, down, from, I, little, look, me, pretty, see, what, white, with, you*
- Content words: *stars*

## Before Reading

### Build Background

- Write the word *stars* 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 where they can see stars and what time of day it must be in order to do so.
- Gather students into a circle on the floor. Have them close their eyes and visualize the following scene: *You are in your backyard. It's dark outside. The sky is pitch black. The air temperature is just right. It is warm enough that you don't even need a sweater or light jacket. Every once in a while a warm breeze flows through the yard. You and members of your family place a blanket on the ground right in the middle of your backyard. All of you lie on your backs on the blanket and look up into the dark sky. What do you see?* (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## Friends in the Stars

- Encourage students to be as descriptive as possible. As students describe what they saw, make a list on the board or chart paper (which will be returned to later). During the discussion, ask them to describe other things in the sky they see throughout the day, not only at night. Add these to the list.

### Book Walk

#### 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 *Friends in the Stars*. (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).
- Write the following repetitive sentences on the board: *Momma Dog, Momma Dog, what do you see? I see a \_\_\_\_\_ at me. Puppy Dog, Puppy Dog, what do you see? I see a \_\_\_\_\_ at me.* Read the sentences aloud, pointing to the words as you read them to students. Have students read them aloud. Explain that these words repeat throughout the book.

#### Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Visualize**

- Explain to students that good readers often make pictures in their mind, or visualize, as they read. Readers often use what they already know about a topic to make the pictures in their mind.
- Model how to visualize using the picture on the cover.  
*Think-aloud: When I read the title on the cover, it reminds me of the time when I stayed in a cabin with my friends. When it became dark, we took night walks and looked up at the sky. I can visualize the path we took and the trees all around us. There were so many stars shining in the inky, dark sky that we couldn't even begin to count them. The full moon was like a bright light guiding us along the pathway. Many times we stopped walking and just gazed up in awe at the sky, feeling peaceful and very small. It was such a happy event.*
- Invite students to share what they visualized based on the covers and title page of the book.
- Explain that during the reading of this book, students should be aware of how they are visualizing the scenes in the story. They should also pay attention to other details that appear in their mind that are not shown on the pages.
- 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/fantasy**

- Explain to students that books can be about real things or about things in our imagination. Read the title again to students. Explain that the title often provides clues that let us know if the book is about facts, information, and real things, or if the book is about made-up things that we would only imagine in our mind. When something is made up and imagined only in our mind, it is called *fantasy* or *make-believe*. Tell students that it is important to understand and recognize 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: In order to pick out details in the story that are real, I ask myself, Can this really happen? I look at where the story takes place and the details of the story, and I identify the things that exist in the real world. To identify details that are fantasy I ask myself, Can this really happen? Is it silly? Does it only happen in my imagination?*

#### Introduce the Vocabulary

- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words students will encounter.

- Write the following words and phrases on the board: *looking down, breathing fire, slithering, hunting, waving, and ruling*. As you write each one, point out the *-ing* at the end of many of the words. The *-ing* indicates that it is a “doing” word—someone or something is doing this action.
- Ask students to stand up. Point to each word or phrase on the board, one at a time, and read it aloud. Have students repeat the word or phrase. Then give them a few seconds to think about how they can act out this movement or action.
- Say to students: *One, two, three, please show me*. Explain that this is the signal for students to act out the vocabulary word or phrase. Ask students what person or other animal they think might do this action. Keep the words on the board for students to refer back to while they are reading the story.
- Remind students to look at the picture and the letters with which a word begins or ends to figure out a difficult word.
- Remind students that they will be connecting the dots on each page to reveal what the mother dog and puppy are seeing in the stars. Along with using this visual, they also need to look at the beginning and ending letters of unfamiliar words to help them identify the words.
- Another strategy to use when reading an unfamiliar word is to think about what a character in a story could possibly be doing in the picture. Remind students to think back to the movements they just acted out to remember some new words.

### Set the Purpose

- Review everything students have done so far to get ready to read this story. As they read, remind them to visualize the story in their mind along with looking at the pictures. Have them also think about which parts of the story are real and fantasy.


### During Reading

#### Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Have them turn to page 3 and ask them to place a finger on the page number in the bottom corner of the page. 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.
- Explain to students to read each page and, before moving on to the next page, to connect the dots to see what the dogs are seeing in the sky. Make sure they check the words and compare the words to the image they drew when they connected the dots.
- Model visualizing.  
**Think-aloud:** *On page 3, I read all the words. When I connected the dots, I reread the words on the page to see if the image I constructed with the dots fit the words I read. I saw that the connected dots made an eagle. Before I moved on to the next page, I visualized an image of a real eagle in my mind. I pictured it soaring in the sky and looking down to the ground with sharp eyes while moving its head from side to side. Then I pictured the view it was seeing, which was the two dogs looking up at it.* Invite students to share how they visualized the first page of the book.
- Have students reread page 4. Say: *On page 4, some parts could be real and other parts are fantasy. Looking at the picture on the page, I can ask myself, Is this real? I know real constellations exist. I know that they were named for animals or people they look like. I know that dragons are not real. Dragons only happen in storybooks and movies. I think that the constellation is real, but I think the puppy is imagining the dragon since dragons are fantasy.*
- Read page 5 aloud to students. Ask for volunteers to tell what parts of the page could be real (the constellation, dogs in a backyard, snakes) and what parts are fantasy (snake slithering at the dog from the sky, talking dogs).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 8. Invite volunteers to explain what they pictured in their mind when they read about the fox hunting eagles. Have them explain how

they visualized the setting where the fox hunts or the eagle flies. Have volunteers share how they are picturing the other events as they read the other pages.

- Ask students why the pictures we make in our mind are different from each other. Inquire as to why they think it is important to visualize while they read and in what ways visualizing can be helpful.
- Read page 8 aloud to students. Have students discuss what parts of this page might be real and what parts might be fantasy.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to pay attention to how they are visualizing the details on each page.

 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

- Ask students to turn to page 10 in the book. Have them share examples of how they visualized how the little bear might be making friends with Puppy.
- Invite students to explain how visualizing helped them better understand what they read.
- **Think-aloud:** *As I read the story, I continued to create pictures in my mind of the things the dogs were seeing in the stars. This is important because it helps me to understand what I am reading, and it makes the reading more enjoyable.*

### Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Ask students for examples from the story of things that were real and fantasy. Have them explain the reasons why they think their examples are real and fantasy. Draw a two-column chart on the board. Label one side *Reality* and the other side *Fantasy*. Have individual students give one example for each side of the chart. Write their responses on the chart.
- **Independent practice:** Hand out the [reality/fantasy worksheet](#). Explain that students will look at pictures and decide on which side of the chart each one belongs (reality side or fantasy side).
- Allow time for students to cut and paste the pictures onto the reality or fantasy side of the chart. If time allows, discuss their responses. Enlarge the same pictures, and as the worksheet is discussed, tape the clip art onto the large chart on the board. If students have any other ideas from the book, add those (using words) onto the chart.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this story, Momma Dog and Puppy Dog spend some special time together looking up at the stars. How does this make you think about the time you spend with people you care about? Do you have any special memories that involve someone in your family or someone close to you?

### Build Skills

#### Phonological Awareness: Blend phonemes

- Write the word *star* on the board and read it by segmenting it into its sounds: /s/ /t/ /a/ /r/. Model how to blend the sounds together to say the word.
- Write the following words on the board: *an, at, from, little, look, me, pretty, see*. Model how to blend the sounds together. Pause after saying each word and have students blend the sounds together to say each word.

#### Phonics: S-Blends

- Write the word *star* on the board. Ask students to find this word in the story (title page). Explain that this word begins with an s-blend.

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## Friends in the Stars

- Tell students that in a blend, two or three consonants are grouped, or clustered, together in a word, with each letter keeping its own sound. S-blends are a type of consonant cluster. (Others clusters include *r*-blends and *l*-blends.)



Give students time to look through the story and underline all the *s*-blends. Tell them that there are three of them in the story (page 5: *snake, slithering*; page 9: *swan*).

- Hand out individual white boards. Hang a piece of chart paper on the front board. Draw an outline of a star centered at the top of the chart with the following letters: *st, sm, sn, sl, sc, sk, sp, and sw*.
- Ask students to think of words that contain *s*-blends. Write the words on the chart as students say them. Write the *s*-blend with a different colored marker. After writing each word, help students sound it out. Draw a picture next to the word. Have students write each word on their individual boards and say each word aloud.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce and explain the [s-blends worksheet](#). Have students practice reading the words independently or with a partner as they pull the word strip through the star on the worksheet. If time allows, discuss their answers.

### Grammar and Mechanics: **Interrogative sentences**

- Write the following sentences on the board: *Momma dog, Momma dog, what do you see? I see an eagle looking down at me.* Read the sentences aloud with students. Ask: *What do you notice about these sentences? Are there any differences between the two sentences?* To help students, write the punctuation in a different color. Ask students why these symbols are different.
- Explain that the first sentence is a *question*. When we want to know information, we ask questions. When we read, we can tell if the sentence is a question because it will have a question mark at the end. This symbol at the end of the sentence signals the reader to read it with a different tone of voice.
- Model how to read a question. Read the sentence on the board with the proper inflection. Have students repeat it after you.
- Underline the word *what*. Explain that when certain words appear at the beginning of a sentence, they signal that the sentence is a question. *What* is one of those question words. Ask students to think of one question that begins with *what*. Give each student an opportunity to share his or her question.
- Explain that other words also show that a sentence is a question. Using a different color for each word, write on the board: *who, what, when, where, why, how, and is*.
- Introduce and explain the [question words worksheet](#).
- After about 10 minutes, gather students together and ask them to count up the number of tallies they have in each row. Have students notice if any particular question word was used more often than the other words.
- **Independent practice:** For additional practice, introduce, explain, and have students complete the [interrogative sentences worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

### Word Work: **High-frequency words**

- Tell students that they are going to read some words that they will often see in books they read.
- Write the high-frequency words on the board (*an, at, away, down, from, I, little, look, me, pretty, see, what, white, with, you*). Read each word aloud and have students repeat it as you point to the word on the board.
- Using American Sign Language, teach students the sign for each high-frequency word (if possible) for a kinesthetic learning connection.



Have students choose a partner. Have pairs locate all the high-frequency words (on the sheet) in the book. When they find a word, have them highlight or circle it. After locating the word in the story, have them help each other remember it by demonstrating the word in sign language (if this was taught).



## 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 students explain to someone at home how he or she visualized the pictures in their mind as they read. Family members can also share what they visualized in their mind.

## Extend the Reading

### Concept Writing Connection

- Review the concept of visualization with students.
- Take students outside. Explain to them that they are going to look up into the sky just like Momma Dog and Puppy Dog looked at the stars. Instruct students to sit on the ground and look up into the sky. Ask them what they see. (birds, airplane, sunshine, clouds, and so on). If you do this activity on a cloudy day, have students look for images in the clouds.
- Repeat the phrase in the book that students just read, using names of individual students: *Danny, Danny, what do you see?* Have students answer in the same pattern as in the book and think of what the item could possibly be doing. (Example: *Danny, Danny, what do you see? I see an airplane flying over me* ).
- Make a list of things students see. (Be sure to put the student's name next to the thing he or she saw.)
- When the class returns to the classroom, write the following prompt on the board: *I see a/an \_\_\_\_\_ (the item they see) \_\_\_\_\_ (what the item is doing) at me.* Have them write a sentence on paper using this prompt and draw a picture to go with the sentence. Encourage students to be descriptive and creative when they write their sentence.
- Collect students' papers and make them into a class book. Bind the book and keep it in the classroom library or have students take turns taking home the book to read to family members.

### Science Connection

- Review the part of the story where Momma Dog and Puppy Dog were looking up at the stars. Provide students with print or Internet resources of constellations. Have them look at how lines are drawn to connect the stars.
- Explain to students that there is no actual line connecting one star to another star, but imagining the lines help us to visualize the pictures people long ago saw when they looked at the stars. Provide a piece of black construction paper for each student. Using a white or yellow crayon, have each student draw dots in a design that when connected, can represent anything the student wants to create (examples: tree, bird, present, cat). On a piece of handwriting paper, have each student write one sentence about his or her "constellation."
- Have each student re-create his or her "constellation" onto a mural by using a large piece of black bulletin-board paper and peel-off stickers of stars. Once the stickers are in place, students can use a white colored pencil to connect the dots. Place a sticky label underneath each "constellation" and write what it is. Hang the mural in the classroom or in the hallway and title it *What Do You See in the Stars?*

### 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.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## Friends in the Stars

- 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 visualize to understand text
- accurately identify parts of the book that are real and parts that are fantasy during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately demonstrate how to blend phonemes
- identify and list words that contain s-blends during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly understand and use questions and recognize question words during discussion and on worksheets
- correctly use and write high-frequency words

**Comprehension Checks**

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)