



### About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 6 Word Count: 651

#### Book Summary

*First Day of School* follows Sarah and her thoughts as she prepares for the first day of school in a new town. She experiences a mix of emotions, from apprehension and nervousness to reluctance. The book describes Sarah's morning as she dresses, eats breakfast, walks to school, and enters the classroom. Not until the last sentence do readers find out that Sarah is actually the teacher. Illustrations support the text.

### About the Lesson

#### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

#### Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand text
- Make inferences
- Identify and use contractions
- Identify and understand the meaning of compound words

#### Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*First Day of School* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Dictionaries
- [Make inferences, contractions, compound words 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:** *adjustments, anxiously, apprehensive, banter, energetic, flutter, mock, nervousness, reciting, reluctance, retrieved, subtle, threadbare, trudged*

### Before Reading

#### Build Background

- Talk to students about how they feel about the first day of a new school year. As emotions are shared, write them on the board. Ask students how they feel about school as the first day approaches and how they feel on the night before or the morning of their first day of school.
- Ask students whether they have ever moved to a new town. Ask volunteers to share how they felt about meeting new students and teachers in their new school. Ask how they felt about their new house and their new school compared to their old one.

#### Preview the Book

##### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back cover and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what kind of book this is (genre, text type, fiction or nonfiction, 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, illustrator's name).

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

- Explain that good readers use what they already know about a topic to understand and remember new information as they read a nonfiction book.
- Model connecting to prior knowledge using the information on the covers.  
*Think-aloud: On the front cover I see a young woman looking into a mirror. From the look on her face, she appears to be a little nervous. Since the title of the book is First Day of School, I think she must be nervous about her first day of school. This reminds me of the first day of a new school year. Although I am excited, I am also a little nervous because everything is new and I have to get used to new ways of doing things.*
- Have students preview the covers of the book. Ask them to make connections to prior knowledge and to discuss the illustrations. Ask open-ended questions to facilitate the discussion, such as: *Why might some people be nervous about the first day of school? What might the character on the front cover be thinking as she looks into the mirror? What do you do to prepare for your first day of school? What else do you see in the illustrations?*

## Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Make inferences**

- Explain that not all information in a book is directly stated. Sometimes readers need to make inferences by using prior knowledge and the details in the story to understand ideas or events in the book. Explain that an *inference* is a conclusion drawn by connecting clues in text to information that a person already knows. Making inferences allows readers to understand the text on a deeper level.
- Write the following sentences on the board: *I sit with my friend, Meg, every day at lunch. We both bring our lunches from home. We bring different types of food each day: sandwiches, soups, salads, vegetables, and fruits. However, I notice that Meg always brings juice to drink. Whenever I offer to trade my milk for her juice, she always makes a face and says "no thank you."*
- Create a two-column chart on the board with the headings *Text* and *Prior Knowledge*. Model making inferences.  
*Think-aloud: I know that authors do not directly state all the ideas in a story and that I must make inferences to understand the story completely. In the story on the board, Meg always brings juice for lunch. Whenever her friend offers to trade her milk for the juice, Meg says no. She also makes a face at the offer of milk. I know that when I make a face at something, it is generally because I do not like it. If I do not like something, I would not want it if it were offered to me. Based on these clues from the story and what I know, I infer that Meg does not bring milk for lunch because she doesn't like it.*
- Ask students to identify information from the sentences on the board that supports the inference. Write this information under the heading *Text* on the chart. Ask students to identify information from prior knowledge shared during the discussion that supports the inference. Write this information under the heading *Prior Knowledge* on the chart.

## Introduce the Vocabulary

- Introduce the following words from the content vocabulary: *anxiously*, *apprehensive*, *nervousness*, *energetic*, and *reluctance*. Draw a large rectangle on the top of the board and label it *Emotions*.
- Review that the dictionary contains the vocabulary words, along with their definitions. Have students work in pairs to find the page in the dictionary containing the word *apprehension*, and ask a volunteer to read aloud the definition. Ask other volunteers to act out the emotion *apprehension* based on the dictionary definition.
- Remind students that they should always check whether a word makes sense by rereading the sentence in which it occurs. Have students follow along as you read the first sentence on page 3 to confirm the meaning of *apprehension*. Point out that the dictionary gives definitions for base words, and that the actual vocabulary word in the book is *apprehensive*.


- Repeat this activity with the remaining vocabulary words: *nervousness*, *energetic*, *reluctant*, and *anxious*. Remind students to look for base words in the dictionary.

### Set the Purpose

- Have students think about what they already know about the topic as they read the book to find out more about what happens to the character on the first day of school.

## During Reading

### Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 3. Remind them to look for details in the book that provide more information about the emotions that the character is feeling about the first day of school. Encourage students who finish before everyone else to go back and reread.
  - When they have finished reading, have students share the emotions of the main character that they have identified so far.
  - Model making connections to prior knowledge.  
*Think-aloud:* *When I read about how Sarah was criticizing her outfit, it made me remember how I sometimes react when I am going to a special occasion that I am nervous about. I think more about how I look because I want to make a good impression. So, it might take me a little longer to get ready.*
  - Ask students to share how they connected to prior knowledge as they read the page.
  - Ask students to use information in the text and their prior knowledge to infer how Sarah feels about her appearance (unsure). Have students identify information from the text that supports their inference. (She hoped no one would notice the stain on her shirt; she scolded herself for not buying a new outfit; she thought about how the cuffs of her shirt were threadbare.) Have them share information from their prior knowledge that supports their inference. (When someone criticizes something, he or she is usually unhappy or unsure about it.)
  - Introduce and explain the [make inferences worksheet](#). Have students write the information from the discussion on their worksheet.
  - **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 4. Encourage them to share how they connected to prior knowledge as they read. (Accept all answers that show students understand how to connect to prior knowledge.)
  - Based on the information in the book and their prior knowledge, ask students what they can infer about how Sarah feels about Kent and write it on their [make inferences worksheet](#) (she relies on him, she respects him).
  - Have students identify information from the text and prior knowledge that supports their inference and write this information on their worksheet. (Text: She was disappointed that Kent was not there to banter with. Kent usually calmed her down. Prior knowledge: When someone is nervous, it helps to have a person or activity (such as taking a walk) to calm him/her down. In order to be calmed down, you have to believe in or respect the person or thing that you rely on for help.)
  - Discuss the information students wrote on their [make inferences worksheet](#). Allow students to make corrections to their worksheet as necessary.
  - Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to look for answers to their questions and to use the information they learned to make inferences.
-  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 each word and figure out its 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


- Discuss how making connections between information students read and what they already know about the topic keeps them actively involved and helps them remember what they have read.
- **Think-aloud:** *When I read about Sarah being in a new town, I thought about when I moved to a new town. I remembered that I felt uncomfortable at first, but that I eventually made friends. Sarah might have felt a lot like how I felt when I moved to a new town. I know that connecting my experiences with Sarah's made me more interested in the story and helped me understand it better because I recognized that I had been through a similar situation. I know that I will remember more about this book because I used this strategy while I read.*
- Have students share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge to understand the information in the book.

### Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review with students the inferences they wrote on their worksheet. Remind them that inferences are based on both text clues and prior knowledge.
- **Independent practice:** Have students turn to page 5. Ask them what they can infer about Sarah's experience with being new in town. Have them complete the final section of the [make inferences worksheet](#). When students have finished, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you read about Sarah's emotions on the first day of school. In the end, you learned that Sarah was the teacher, yet she still felt apprehensive, nervous, and anxious. Now that you know that teachers can feel these things too, how does it change the way you think about your teachers?

## Build Skills

### Grammar and Mechanics: Contractions

- Review or explain that a *contraction* is a word formed by joining two words, and that an apostrophe shows where one or more letters have been left out.
  - Direct students to page 5 and read the last sentence. Ask them to identify the contraction in the text (*you're*). Ask which two words were joined together to make the new word (*you* and *are*). Write both the contraction and the two words on the board. Ask which letter was dropped to make the contraction (the *a* in *are*).
  - Ask a volunteer to read aloud the sentence with the contraction, substituting *you are* for *you're* to check whether his/her answer makes sense. (*They just assume you are going somewhere else.*)
  - Direct students to the first paragraph on page 4. Ask them to identify two contractions in the text (*didn't* and *He'd*). Ask which two words were joined together to make each new word (*did* and *not*, *He* and *had*). Write each contraction and the two words that were joined together on the board. Ask which letter was dropped to make the contraction *didn't* (the *o* in *not*). Ask which letters were dropped to make the contraction *He'd* (the *h* and *a* in *had*).
  - Ask volunteers to read aloud the sentences with the contractions to check whether their answers make sense, substituting *did not* for *didn't* and *He had* for *He'd*. (*...so Sarah did not have anyone to banter with. He had been picking on her for a whole week.*)
  - Review or explain that an 's that shows possession is not a contraction, such as in the following sentence: *Sarah's last name is Parker*. The 's after *Sarah* is not short for *is* but instead shows possession—the last name belonging to Sarah. Point out that if students were to read the sentence aloud, substituting *is* for 's, the sentence would not make sense: *Sarah is last name is Parker*.
-  **Check for understanding:** Have students circle all of the contractions in the book and write the two words that were joined together next to each contraction. When they have finished, discuss their answers.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [contractions worksheet](#). When students have finished, discuss their answers aloud.

**Word Work: Compound words**

- Write the word *threadbare* on the board. Ask students which two words were joined together in the word *threadbare* (*thread* and *bare*). Explain that this word is called a *compound word*. A compound word contains two words that together create one word meaning.
- Explain that the definitions of the two separate words can help students figure out the meaning of the bigger word (something that is bare of threads; threads were worn away).
- Have students share other compound words they know. Write these words on the board. Have volunteers circle each word within the compound words. Use the definitions of each individual word to define the entire word with students.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following sentence on the board: *She put the bowl in the dishwasher.* Have students read the sentence and identify the compound word (*dishwasher*). Ask them which two words are joined together in the word *dishwasher* (*dish* and *washer*). Have students use the definitions of the two separate words to figure out the meaning of the bigger word (something that washes dishes).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compound words worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

**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 discuss with someone at home their prior knowledge about the first day of school and/or being new in town.

**Extend the Reading**
**Realistic Fiction Writing Connection**

Have students write a story about a character who meets someone for the first time. If time allows, invite them to illustrate their stories and read them aloud.

Visit [Writing A–Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on realistic fiction writing.

**Science Connection**

Have students research the link between emotions and a body's physical responses (nervousness/sweaty palms, anxiety/nausea, and so on). Facilitate a discussion in which students share their findings and talk about their experiences with different emotions.

**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:**

- use the reading strategy of making connections to prior knowledge
- use context clues and prior knowledge to make inferences while reading and on a worksheet
- recognize contractions in text; identify the two words that are joined to make each contraction in discussion and on a worksheet
- identify and form compound words during discussion and on a worksheet

**Comprehension Checks**

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