



About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 20 Word Count: 1,750

Book Summary

Carlos's Puzzle is the story of 9-year-old Carlos's family trip to a cornfield maze. Unlike Carlos, Javier, his older and more athletic brother, is not interested in the trip. However, Javier believes his athletic ability will make him better at completing a maze, so he challenges Carlos to see who will finish the maze first. Although Javier rarely recognizes Carlos's abilities, something happens inside the giant maze that gives Javier a new impression of his younger brother.

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 the characters in the text
- Understand the use of adverbs with the suffix *-ly* and *-ily*
- Understand the use of synonyms in the text

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Carlos's Puzzle* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Prediction, analyze characters, adverbs, synonyms 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 VocabularyA-Z.com.

- Content words:

Story critical: **dilemma** (n.), **disorient** (adj.), **junction** (n.), **labyrinth** (n.), **masterpiece** (n.), **strategy** (n.)

Enrichment: **3-D** (adj.), **acres** (n.), **anticipation** (n.), **boundaries** (n.), **crossroads** (n.), **expert** (n.), **impossible** (adj.), **invigorated** (adj.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *puzzle* on the board. Ask students to explain the meaning of the word. Give students a blank piece of paper. Ask them to draw an example of a maze.
- Have students share their drawing. Have them explain the characteristics they included in their maze, such as: a beginning and end, possibly more than one way out, dead ends, and so on. Invite them to share how a maze is a type of puzzle.

- Write the word 3-D on the board. Ask students to explain the meaning of the word. Have them explain how the maze on their paper could be made three-dimensional. Ask students if they have ever been in a maze large enough for a person to walk through. Invite them to share characteristics of the maze, such as what it was made of and its level of difficulty.

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).
- Ask students to turn to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

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

- Explain to students that good readers often make predictions about what will happen in a book based on the series of events and 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 boy playing a game. It looks as if he is playing chess. I also see an illustration inside a bubble of a boy playing with a football. The boys in both illustrations appear similar. Whenever I see bubbles like this, I know that the character is thinking about something. Perhaps the boy is thinking about himself playing football instead of chess. I know that the title of the book contains the word puzzle. I wonder if he has to solve a puzzle using the chessboard before he can go outside. I'll have to read the book to confirm or revise my prediction.
- 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*. (For example: The boy has to solve a puzzle with the chessboard before he can play.)
- Discuss with students the clues used to generate the prediction on the chart. Point out to students that the reasons behind their predictions are what make their predictions valuable.
- 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 examine a character's words or thoughts. Another way is to examine the actions of the character. Explain to students that an author uses a character's words, thoughts, and actions to give the reader insight into a character's personality, relationships, motivations, and conflicts he or she may face.
- Ask the 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 his or her actions.
Think-aloud: As I read page 4, I found out that Carlos likes to solve mazes. I also found out that he is good at solving them. I know this because the text says that he has become an expert at them. Based on these clues, Carlos appears to be an intelligent problem solver. This information provides insight into Carlos's personality.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Carlos's Puzzle

- Have students identify other information on page 4 that reflects Carlos's problem-solving ability (he had discovered many of the tricks to solving mazes).
- Have students read the first two sentences on page 5: *Alf knew that Carlos would feed him because Carlos always fed him. Carlos did everything for Alf.* Discuss what these actions reflect about Carlos's personality (he is responsible, caring).
- Introduce and explain the [analyze characters worksheet](#). Have students record the information from the discussion on their worksheet.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the content vocabulary words on the board or chart paper. Have students turn to page 4. Point out the bolded word *disorient*. Ask students to explain why the word is bolded. Explain to students that certain words are bolded in the text to let readers know that they appear in the glossary.
- Ask students to explain how looking in the glossary can help them to understand the text. Have a volunteer read the meaning of *disorient* in the glossary. Then have him or her use the definition in place of the word on page 4. Ask students to explain whether the sentence makes sense. (For example: *He knew many of the tricks maze makers used to confuse people trying to find the solution to their puzzle.*)
- As time allows, have students practice identifying the definitions of the remaining content vocabulary words and using each in place of the vocabulary word in the text.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book, 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 events of the story, as well as the personality, motivations, relationships, and conflicts of the characters.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 8. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.
- **Model making, revising, and confirming a prediction.**
Think-aloud: *I predicted that the boy on the cover had to solve a puzzle using a chessboard before going outside to play. This prediction was incorrect. Carlos liked to play chess, and he was thinking about how his older brother is more interested in sports activities. I will write this information next to my prediction in the box labeled Actual. This makes me wonder whether the puzzle is the maze. I can tell from Javier's (ha-vee-EHR) reactions that he does not seem interested in the maze or how important it is to Carlos. When I think about Carlos's character, I know that Carlos is very good at solving mazes. I wonder if Carlos's brother gets lost in the maze and Carlos has to find him. I will write this new prediction on my chart under the heading, Make.*
- Review the character traits recorded on the [analyze characters worksheet](#). Ask students to identify additional story clues that support Carlos's trait of *intelligent problem solver* (he gets good grades, he is good on the computer, and so on).
- **Check for understanding:** Encourage students to use the information they've read and discussed to revise or confirm 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 their worksheet. Model for students how to think through whether or not their predictions were confirmed, and if not, why not. Help them to think about whether or not their reasons for their predictions were valid.
- Have students read to page 11. 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 what each brother plans regarding the maze (they plan to challenge each other to a contest). Ask students to explain each character's reasons for the challenge (Carlos knows a lot about mazes and thinks he will win. Javier thinks he will win because he is faster.) Ask them to explain what the brothers' actions indicate about their personalities (they are competitive). Have students record the information about each brother on their [analyze characters worksheet](#).
- 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 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

- **Think-aloud:** *I predicted that Javier would get lost in the maze and Carlos would have to find him. My prediction did not turn out to be entirely correct, since Javier got hurt rather than got lost in the maze. However, Carlos did go back into the maze to find and help his brother. I will write this information next to my prediction under the heading Actual.*
- 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 using story events and prior knowledge to make predictions, and not predicting correctly, is the purpose of this reading strategy.
- Ask students to explain how the strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions helped them understand and enjoy the story.
- **Independent practice:** Have students finish filling in their [prediction worksheet](#). Invite them to share their predictions, reasoning, and revisions, and to tell how their predictions related to the actual outcome of the story.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review how Carlos and Javier revealed their character traits as the story unfolded. Discuss the traits and information from the story that supports each trait. Review Carlos's decision at the end of the story (he decides to go back into the maze to find his brother). Ask students to identify whether this action relates to any of Carlos's character traits already listed on their worksheet (responsible, caring). Have students record this action under the trait *responsible and caring*.
- Direct students to chapter 4, "The Maze." Ask them to identify Carlos's words and actions regarding the maze (he had a strategy, he took his time, he thought about other mazes he'd seen, and so on). Have students record these clues on their worksheet. Then ask them to identify a character trait supported by these clues and record it on their worksheet (clever, resourceful, and so on). Invite students to share their conclusion.
- **Independent practice:** Have students use the back of their [analyze characters worksheet](#) to identify two character traits and supporting clues for Javier (athletic, proud, egocentric, and so on). If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** Javier teases his younger brother Carlos because his talents are not athletic. However, Carlos uses his talents to rescue Javier. Now that you know this information, what do you think of people whose talents are different from yours?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Adverbs with the suffixes *-ly* and *-ily*

- Have students turn to page 8 and read the last sentence: *"We're all going," his father said firmly, and the boys knew that was that.* Point to the word *said* and ask students to identify the part of speech (verb).
- Ask students to identify the word that describes how the father said the statement (*firmly*). Underline the word *firmly*.
- Review or explain that *adverbs* are words that describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. Like adjectives, adverbs add a lot of descriptiveness to a sentence.
- Explain how adverbs can be formed from adjectives by adding *-ly* to an adjective. Ask students to identify the root word of *firmly* (*firm*) and use it in a sentence. Point out that adjectives that do not end in *-y* are changed to adverbs by adding *-ly*.
- Have students turn to page 12 and read the last sentence: *Alf panted heavily in anticipation.* Ask students to identify the verb (*panted*). Then ask a volunteer to identify the adverb that describes the verb (*heavily*).
- Ask students to identify the root word of *heavily* (*heavy*) and use it in a sentence. Have them identify how the suffix of the adjective changed to turn the word into an adverb. Point out that adjectives ending in *-y* are changed to adverbs by adding *-ily*.



Check for understanding: Have students identify and circle the remaining adverbs in the book, writing the root word next to each adverb. Then have them underline the verb, adjective, or adverb that each adverb describes.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [adverbs worksheet](#).

Word Work: Synonyms

- Have the students turn to page 15. Read the following sentence aloud: *Carlos raised his arms in victory and started to jog to the finish feeling much like Sylvester Stallone in Rocky.*
- Circle the word *victory*. Ask students to explain what the word means (triumph or success).
- On the same page, read the following sentence aloud: *His big brother would have to respect his win, and Javier would be doing his chores for a whole month.* Circle the word *win*. Ask students to explain what the word means (triumph or success).
- Explain that two words that have the same meaning are called synonyms. Ask students to explain the reason why authors use them (it makes the writing more interesting, it prevents the same word from being repeated many times, and so on).
- Model how to use a thesaurus to identify synonyms for a word. Locate the words *victory* and *win* in the thesaurus. Write the synonyms for each word on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students use a thesaurus to identify synonyms for each of the root words identified in the "Check for Understanding" section of the grammar lesson. Have them use the original word and the synonym each in a sentence on a separate piece of paper.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [synonyms 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 share with someone at home their analyses of the characters in the story.

Extend the Reading

Writing and Art Connection

Have students write a personal narrative about a time when they were challenged in some way by a sibling or peer. Students should reveal their feelings about the challenge and the personal growth that occurred as a result of the experience.

Social Studies Connection

Have students use the Internet to learn more about mazes. Have them answer questions such as: Where do mazes come from? How long have they been in existence? What types of mazes are there? Have students share their findings in 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:

- consistently make reasonable predictions and then modify and/or confirm those predictions during discussion and on a worksheet
- analyze the characters in the story by examining their thoughts, words, and actions during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify, form, and correctly use adverbs made by adding the suffix *-ly* or *-ily* to an adjective during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify and correctly use synonyms during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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