

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Folktale Page Count: 22 Word Count: 1,107

Book Summary

Tari the Spider Monkey was born asking questions about everything. One day he asks a question only the Namer can answer. Tari and his friend Balam Iguana travel to the other world beyond the forest to ask the Namer how she thought of their names. Illustrations support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Summarize

Objectives

- Summarize to understand text
- Analyze characters
- Identify open vowel y
- Recognize and use question marks
- Understand the suffix *-ion*

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Spider Monkey's Question* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Analyze character, question marks, suffix *-ion* 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: *canopy* (n.), *generation* (n.), *landscape* (n.), *mysteries* (n.), *permission* (n.), *resemble* (v.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Discuss with students what they know about spider monkeys and the rainforest.
- Ask students to tell what they know about folktales. Make connections to other folktales that students may have read (*Anansi the Spider*, *The Pied Piper*, and so on). Discuss how a folktale is different from other narrative stories. Ask: *What is a folktale* (a traditional story that centers around the beliefs or legends of a culture, often telling the origins of things in the world around us)?

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students a copy of the book and have them preview the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers and offer ideas as to what kind of book this is and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Talk about the information that is written on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Summarize**

- Reinforce how stopping to summarize what is happening in the book while reading is a strategy that good readers use to make sense of text.
- **Think-aloud:** *To summarize what I've read, I need to decide what's important and what isn't. Then, in my mind, I organize the important information into a few sentences and think about them for a couple of moments. If I need to write a summary, I'll put the information in my own words. Since I haven't read the book yet, it's difficult to decide what's important and what isn't at this point, but as I read, I will think about what is important and what isn't.*
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out the word. They can look for base words and prefixes and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words. Model how to apply word-attack strategies.
- Direct students to page 6. Have them locate the vocabulary word *landscape*. Model how they can use context clues to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Explain that the two sentences following the sentence with the unfamiliar word ask questions about parts of the rainforest. Explain to students that the word *landscape* is a compound word. You can usually figure out the meaning of a compound word by looking at the individual words that make up the word. The word *land* means *the solid part of the earth* and *scape* means *a view or picture of a scene*. Therefore we can figure out the meaning of *landscape* by combining these two definitions: *a picture of the earth*. Have students follow along as you reread the sentence on the page to confirm the meaning of the word.
- Remind students that they can check whether words make sense by rereading the sentence.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out what happens to the characters in the folktale, stopping after every few pages to summarize in their minds what is happening in the story.


During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 11. Encourage them to pay attention to what happens to the characters during the spider monkey's journey. If they finish before everyone else, they can go back and reread.
- When they have finished reading, have students tell what questions the spider monkey asked so far (Why is the sky blue? Why does Jaguar have spots? Why do ants live underground?, and so on). Ask students what question Tari asked that sent him on his journey (Why are we called spider monkeys?).

- Model summarizing the story.

Think-aloud: *I stopped after the first three pages to summarize what I'd read so far. First, I decided what was important and what wasn't. Then, in my mind, I organized the important information into a few sentences and thought about them for a couple of moments. For example, I thought about Tari and his parents in the rainforest. I remembered that his first word was "why?" and that he had been asking questions ever since.*

 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

- Have students share any other questions they had while they were reading. Reinforce how summarizing the important information in the text keeps them actively involved in the reading process and helps them understand and remember what they have read.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Analyze characters**

- **Discussion:** Ask students to name the characters in the story (Tari, the mother and father, Balam, the Namer) and tell what they know about them from the illustrations. Ask students how they get to know the characters of Tari and Balam (through their words to the other characters). Ask how they think the story might sound if Balam or Tari were telling the story.
- **Introduce and model:** Explain that there are many ways to learn about a character in a story. One way is to look at a character's words. Another way is to look for things the character does. Explain to students that a character's words, thoughts, and actions are how the author lets the reader get to know the character and form an opinion about him or her.
- Read pages 5 and 6. Ask students what Tari's words tell about him. (Tari's first word was "why?" and he asks questions about everything he sees. This shows that Tari is very curious and also sometimes annoying.)
- Read page 5 again. Ask students what Tari's parents' actions tell about them (they are very patient and wise).
- **Check for understanding:** Read page 12. Ask students what Balam's actions tell about her (she is adventurous and curious).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **analyze character worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

 **Extend the discussion:** Discuss the Namer's answers to Tari's questions and whether or not students think they are believable and why. Instruct students to use the last page of the book to write their opinion. Have students read their responses to the group.

Build Skills

Phonics: **Open vowel y**

- Write the words *family* and *why* on the board. Say the words aloud and have students repeat them with you.
- Underline the letter y in each word. Read the words again with students, emphasizing the sound the letter y makes. Ask students to explain the difference between the sounds.
- Explain that the letter y at the end of a word can stand for more than one sound. Discuss that the letter y can make the long /e/ vowel sound as in *family* or the long /i/ vowel sound as in the word *why*.

Lesson Plan (*continued*)

Spider Monkey's Question

- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board and say them one at a time with the students: *canopy, try, sky, monkey, my, and curiosity*. Have students give the thumbs-up signal when they hear the long /e/ vowel sound and the thumbs-down signal if they hear the long /i/ vowel sound when you read the words ending in the letter y.

Grammar and Mechanics: Question marks

- Review or explain that a *question mark* (?) is used at the end of an asking or interrogative sentence. Interrogative sentences begin with the words *who, what, when, where, why, or how*.
- Write the following sentence from page 6 on the board: *Why is the sky blue?* Explain to students that this is an example of an interrogative sentence. Point out the punctuation mark at the end (?).
- Review or explain to students the other kinds of punctuation marks they might find at the end of sentences: a period (.) or an exclamation point (!).
- Write the following sentences on the board and ask students to tell which ones need a question mark:
My favorite animal is a sloth
Who bumped me
Why is the sky blue
Tari's curiosity was truly endless
Why is corn yellow
- Ask students how they know when to use a question mark (the sentence is asking a question and begins with *who, what, when, where, why, or how*).



- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 7 and find the questions asked (Why is it tall? Why does it have leaves? Why are bananas tasty? Why is corn yellow?). Have students circle the question marks and the asking word that begins each sentence. Repeat the exercise with page 4 (Who bumped me? Did you do it in your sleep? Why do we move in our sleep?).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [question marks worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Suffix -ion

- Review or explain that a *suffix* is a word part added to the end of a base word to change the meaning of the word. Explain to students that one suffix is *-ion*.
- Write the word *quest* on the board. Ask a volunteer to tell the meaning of the word or look it up in the dictionary (a journey for adventure). Write the word *question* on the board. Explain that the suffix *-ion* has been added to make a new word. Ask a volunteer to tell the meaning of the new word (something asked). Explain that the suffix *-ion* means *an act, result of an act, or a state or condition*.
- Write the word *operate*. Have a volunteer tell the meaning of the word or look it up in the dictionary (to be in action). Write the word *operation* on the board. Explain that the spelling of the word must be changed before the suffix *-ion* can be added to make a new word with a new meaning. Ask a volunteer to tell how the spelling of the base word was changed (the e was dropped before adding the suffix). Ask a student to tell the meaning of the new word (a surgical procedure).
- Remind students that when the *-ion* suffix is added, sometimes the spelling of the base word may need to be changed.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the words *elevate* and *adopt* on the board. Have students tell whether or not a spelling change is needed when the suffix is added.
- For additional practice give students the [suffix -ion worksheet](#). Discuss the words students make.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, allow partners to 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.

Extend the Reading

Realistic Fiction Writing Connection

Have students interview their parents or caregivers to find out how they were named. Then have them write the story of how they got their name. Alternatively, they may make up a story about the meaning of their name.

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

Math Connection

Have students create a class graph showing the number of letters in each of their first and last names. Students can write their name on graph paper strips, one letter per square, cutting off any unused squares at the end. Then have them group the names by counting how many squares each name fills. On a piece of chart paper, write the numbers 1 through 15 across the bottom. Ask students to add their name strip to the corresponding number.

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 use the strategy of summarizing as they read to remember and understand text
- accurately analyze the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the book's characters during discussion and on a worksheet
- read and identify open vowel y words during discussion
- accurately recognize and use question marks
- consistently understand the use of the suffix *-ion* and apply it in writing

Comprehension Checks

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