

Focus Question:

What are the benefits of a school bus system?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

The school bus system is one of the most important and complex mass transit systems in the United States. With 26 million students relying on school buses daily, the American school bus fleet has more than twice as many vehicles as all the other mass transit systems in the country combined. *The Super School Bus System* provides students with a comprehensive explanation of the history, influence, and necessity of this remarkable system of transportation. The book can also be used to teach students how to determine an author's purpose and to effectively ask and answer questions.

The book and lesson are also available for levels U and X.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to understand text
- ☐ Determine author's purpose
- ☐ Describe information provided by graphics
- ☐ Recognize and use adverbs
- ☐ Identify and use content vocabulary

Materials

- ☐ Book: *The Super School Bus System* (copy for each student)
- ☐ KWLS / ask and answer questions, author's purpose, adverbs, content vocabulary worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *discriminated* (v.), *integration* (n.), *mass transit* (n.), *rural* (adj.), *school districts* (n.), *transportation* (n.)

Enrichment: *segregated* (adj.), *sparsely* (adv.), *Supreme Court* (n.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *complex* (adj.), *important* (adj.), *option* (n.), *route* (n.), *support* (v.), *value* (n.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the phrase *mass transit* on the board and read it aloud with students. Discuss with students the meaning of mass transit and explain that it is a form of transportation that moves large numbers of people using buses, subways, or trains. Have students work in small groups to discuss their experiences with mass transportation. Take a poll of how many students used mass transit to get to school. Explain that the school bus system in the United States is the largest form of mass transit in the country.
- Create a KWLS chart on the board. Introduce and explain the **KWLS / ask-and-answer-questions worksheet**. Review or explain that the **K** stands for knowledge we know, the **W** stands for information we want to know, the **L** stands for information we learned, and the **S** stands for what we still want to know about the topic. As a class, fill in the **K** section of the chart with students' prior knowledge about the school bus system. Have students complete the same section on their worksheet.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *The Super School Bus System*. Guide them to the front and back covers 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 (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, authors' names).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy:

Ask and answer questions

Explain to students that engaged readers pause to ask and answer questions about the text in order to better understand and enjoy what they are reading. Invite students to review the table of contents on page 3 and use the section titles to develop questions about the school bus system. Have them add any additional questions to the *W* section of the KWLS / ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Record shared questions on the class KWLS chart.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Author's purpose

- Explain to students that when authors write about a topic, they often express their attitude and opinion about a subject while simultaneously writing to inform, persuade, and/or entertain the reader. Remind students that *to inform* means to provide information, *to entertain* means to amuse, and *to persuade* means to convince. Point out that the reason an author writes a book is called the *author's purpose*. Explain that often an author will have more than one purpose for writing and that details and clues in the book, including graphics and captions, will help the reader understand this purpose.
- Create large signs with the following labels: *Inform, Persuade, Entertain, More Than One Purpose*. Hang one sign in each corner of the classroom. Explain to students that you will give a brief description of a book, story, advertisement, newspaper article, and so on. Upon hearing the description, students will quickly walk to the corner of the room that they believe expresses the author's purpose. For example, if describing a newspaper article about the importance of recycling, students could argue that the author has more than one purpose: to inform and persuade. Once students arrive in a corner after each example, invite them to turn to a partner to justify their response. Discuss each example as a class before continuing.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about the school bus system. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- 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 a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *In what ways does it take thousands of people to keep the school bus system up and running?* (level 1) page 5
- *Why is the school bus system so large?* (level 2) pages 6 and 7
- *Why did schools start using horse-drawn wagons to help students get to school?* (level 1) page 8
- *What was the effect of the school bus system on ending segregation?* (level 2) pages 10 and 11
- *In what ways are school buses safer than private vehicles?* (level 2) page 12
- *How does the school bus system help the environment?* (level 2) pages 13 and 14
- *How has the school bus system helped provide education for all?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *Why is the American school bus system one of the most important and complex mass transit systems in the country?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Graphics

Have students turn to page 14. Point out that the authors provided this graphic to expand on and clarify the text. Ask a volunteer to explain what information the authors are conveying through this graphic. Have students discuss the following questions with their partner: *How does this graphic help you better understand the text? What information is included in the graphic that is not included in the text? Why did the authors include the illustration and caption with the graph?* Have students share their discussions with the class.

Skill Review

- Model for students how to answer questions on the KWLS chart using details from the text. Have students discuss what they learned about the American school bus system in each section of the book. As they read, have students write the answers to their questions in the *L* section of their worksheet. Ask students to share with the class what they added. Invite students to fill in the *S* section of the worksheet with the information they would still

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

like to know about the school bus system. Discuss with students what resources they could use to find answers to these lingering questions.

- Review with students that an author of a nonfiction book expresses a purpose or multiple purposes for his or her writing. Point out that details and clues in the text help the reader determine the author's purpose or purposes.

- Model evaluating details to determine the author's purpose.

Think-aloud: *As I read a nonfiction book, I pause often to consider the details and clues in the text that help me determine the author's purpose or purposes. Many of the sections in this book present facts about the school bus system. For example, the authors address the relationship between taxes and the funding of the bus system. These kinds of facts reveal that one of the authors' purposes for writing this book is to inform the reader. In the section "Taxes to Transportation," the authors state that the school bus system is one of the most important mass transit systems in the country. Because I know that this is how the authors feel about the bus system, I will look closely at the details in the text to determine if the authors are also trying to persuade me to agree with their point of view.*

- Model how to complete the **author's purpose worksheet**.

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.

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: **Author's purpose**

Review the author's purpose worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided to be used for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary but may include the following information: *There are many benefits to the school bus system, including making school accessible to all students, creating a safe way for students to travel to and from school, and cutting down on pollution by replacing private vehicles.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Adverbs**

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Sarah quickly jumped into her seat on the school bus.* Ask students to identify the verb (*jumped*). Then have a volunteer identify the word that modifies the word *jumped* (*quickly*). Circle the word *quickly* and explain that it is an adverb. Explain that an adverb is a word that describes, modifies, or gives more information about a verb, or an action word. In this example, the word *quickly* is describing the verb and explaining how Sarah jumped. Point out that adverbs often, but not always, end in the suffix *-ly*.
- Point out that adverbs can often be confused with adjectives. Explain that an adjective describes a noun or pronoun (*a person, place, or thing*) while an adverb describes a verb. Write the following sentences on the board: *Sarah caught the fast bus. Sarah ran fast to catch the bus.* Circle the word *fast* in each sentence. Invite students to work in small groups to discuss which sentence contains an adverb and which sentence contains an adjective.
- **Check for understanding:** Invite students to reread page 9, including the text box, to circle the adverbs and underline the verbs they describe or modify. Review students' responses as a class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **adverbs worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Content vocabulary**

- Have students turn to page 10 and locate the word *segregated*. Point out that the word is in boldface print because the authors feel that it is important for the reader to understand the meaning of the word *segregated*. Have students determine if the definition of *segregated* is included within the text.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words and phrases on small slips of paper: *discriminated, integration, mass transit, rural, school districts, transportation, segregated, sparsely, Supreme Court*. Explain to students that they will be playing Vocabulary Charades. Review the definition of each word before beginning the game. Place students into groups of three or four. Have each group choose one word. Invite each group to act out their vocabulary word and allow the rest of the class to guess at the correct answer. Repeat this process with the remaining words.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **content vocabulary worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.