

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 16 Word Count: 313

Book Summary

This informational text explains how family members are related and introduces students to vocabulary for extended family members. The text, which explains that family structures vary widely, uses a family tree to help readers understand different family configurations. The author points out that, no matter what someone's family tree looks like, every family is special. Photographs and diagrams 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
- Identify details to compare and contrast information in nonfiction text
- Identify initial *gr* blend
- Understand the use of *y* as a vowel
- Understand and use possessive nouns
- Identify and use content vocabulary

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Families* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Sticky notes and index cards
- Dictionaries
- **Family tree, compare and contrast, y as a vowel, possessive nouns 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

- High-frequency words: *before, know, many, their, your*
- Content words: *diagram, married, maternal, paternal, previous, relatives*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Invite students to talk about their family. Ask how many people are in their family and who lives with them in their home. Ask students about their extended family. Share information about your family and extended family.

Preview the Book

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 Families. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author'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,
Think-aloud: As I read this book, I am going to look at the pictures and think about what I have read. Then I will think about what I already know about families and the people in them. This is called background knowledge. After thinking about what I know, I will read the book and use my background knowledge about families to help me figure out new information in the book. I will continue reading and thinking about things I already know as I read the rest of the book.
- Have students preview the covers of the book. Ask them open-ended questions to facilitate the discussion: *Who do you think the boy on the front cover is in the center of all of the others? Who do you think all of those people might be in relation to each other? Why do you think all of their pictures are together?*
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Compare and contrast**

- Explain that one way to organize information in a book is to notice how topics are alike and different. Create a Venn diagram on the board and write the words *Writing* and *Drawing Tools* above the diagram. Label the left side *Pencil* and the right side *Marker*.
- Show students a pencil and a marker. Invite them to explain how the objects are alike and different (alike: used for writing, approximately the same length, used in art, and so on; different: the marker produces color and a pencil produces gray markings, you can erase mistakes with the pencil but not with the marker, and so on). Model how to write each response on the Venn diagram.
- Ask students how identifying ways that a pencil and a marker are alike and different helped them understand the topics of *Writing* and *Drawing Tools*.
- *Think-aloud: To understand and remember new information in a book, I can think about how information is alike and different. I know that this is one strategy that good readers use, so I'm going to compare and contrast new information as I read.*

Introduce the Vocabulary



- As students preview the book, ask them to talk about what they see in the photographs. Reinforce the vocabulary words they will encounter in the text.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Remind students to use what they know about families as they preview the pictures.
- Reinforce new vocabulary by incorporating it into the discussion of the pictures. Use language from the text. For example, from page 3, read: *Your family members are your relatives*. Continue by having students repeat the vocabulary words you use. From page 8, read: *If your mother and father have brothers, these brothers are called your uncles*. Repeat the book language to support students when they are introduced to unknown words in the text.
- Write new vocabulary on the board, pronouncing each word as you point to it. Remind students that they should check whether a word makes sense by rereading the sentence in the book that contains the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out what kinds of relatives are discussed in the book. Remind them to use what they already know to help them understand the information in the book. Also, encourage students to compare and contrast the family in the book with their own family.
- Introduce the [family tree worksheet](#). Explain that people use a family tree to chart members of their family and to show how they are related. Remind students to think about their own family as they read the book.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Ask them to place a finger on the page number in the bottom corner of page 3. Have them read to the end of page 6, using their finger to point to each word as they read. Ask them to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they connected to prior knowledge. Encourage students who finish before others to reread the text.
- **Model making connections using prior knowledge.**
Think-aloud: As I was reading page 5, I was thinking about my family. I pictured my grandparents, Edith and Gary, when the author was talking about maternal and paternal grandparents. I used background knowledge about my family to help me understand and remember the information I was reading.
- Ask open-ended questions to facilitate discussion: *What did you think about when you read page 6? How many of us know or knew our great-grandparents?*
- Ask students to share additional ways they connected to prior knowledge. Then have them identify whether the information in the text is similar to or different from their own families.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 10. Ask them to share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge as they read. Have students return to pages 8 and 9 and identify the two different titles of relatives that are introduced (aunt and uncle). Have them identify whether your mother's brother was the same title as your aunt's husband or a different one. (same: uncle).
- **Model comparing and contrasting while looking at page 10.** Draw a Venn diagram on the board and label the left-hand circle *My Family* and the right-hand circle *Family in the Book*. Label the overlapping area *Both Families*. Fill in the Venn diagram, comparing your family's aunts, uncles, nephews, and nieces to the family in the book.
-  Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to continue to think about what they know about families as they read and to identify similarities and differences between their family tree and the family tree in the book. Have students continue to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they connected to prior knowledge.
-  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

- Discuss how making connections between information read and information known about the topic keeps readers actively involved and helps them remember what they have read.
- **Think-aloud:** *As I was reading the story, I was thinking about my family, including my parents (James and Thea), and their sisters—my aunts (Rela, Mara, Diane, and Carol). These aunts*

are married to my uncles (Gene, Ray, Jim, and Matt). What did you think about as you read? Have students share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge to understand the information in the book.

- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the family tree worksheet. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill: **Compare and contrast**

- **Discussion:** Review the similarities and differences between your family tree and the book's family tree from page 10. Encourage students to think about their family and how it is like or different from the family discussed in the book.
- Invite pairs of students to share their answers, giving examples of names of family members. Have them share statements about their families. For example: *I have two great-grandparents still living—Bob and Norma. I have eighteen cousins in my family, including Devon, Sam, Bob, and Angela—to name a few!*
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **compare-and-contrast worksheet** by identifying at least two differences and two similarities between their family tree and the book's family tree.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned that many people study the history of their family. Some people spend years completing the record of their family tree—interviewing elderly family members, traveling to different countries, and researching many different sources online. Now that you know this information, do you think it is important for people to record their family tree? Why or why not?

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: **Initial gr blend**

- Explain that many words have the /gr/ sound at the beginning. Some examples from the book are *grandparents* and *grandmother*. Say the words *grape* and *green* to give students other examples of words that begin with the /gr/ sound.
- Have students reread pages 6 and 7 and read to you words that begin with the *gr* blend (*great-grandparents*, *grandparents*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students listen for the /gr/ sound at the beginning of the words as you say them. Have them give the thumbs-up sign when they hear the /gr/ sound at the beginning of a word. Say words that have the /gr/ sound at the beginning and some that do not (*great*, *fried*, *grass*, *green*, *rest*, *gross*). Observe students to see if they can distinguish the /gr/ sound.
- **Independent practice:** Have students look for additional words in the book that have the initial *gr* blend. Have them read the words aloud. Record the examples on the board as students read them aloud.

Phonics: **Y as a vowel**

- Review with students the letters that are vowels (a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y) and the letters that are consonants (all of the other letters in the alphabet). Point out that y is the only letter in the alphabet that can be either a consonant or a vowel, depending on its use within a word. Discuss that all words need at least one vowel sound.
- Have students turn to page 3. Read the first sentence aloud as students follow along. Point out the word *family*. Ask students what vowels the word uses to make the long /e/ sound. Explain that the y makes the long /e/ sound, which makes the y a vowel in this word.
- Explain that when y is used as a vowel, it also can make the long /i/ sound. Write the following words on the board: *why*, *buy*, and *my*. Read them aloud and ask students to listen for the long /i/ sound. Point out that all of these words use the letter y to make the long /i/ sound.

- Have students return to page 3. Read the second sentence aloud as students follow along. Point out the word *many*. Explain that the *y* makes the long /e/ sound and therefore is a vowel in this word.



Check for understanding: Have students work in pairs to locate all of the words on page 16 that use the letter *y* as a vowel (*many, history, family, study*). In the margins of their book, have them identify the sound (long /i/ or long /e/) that each *y* makes. Invite them to share their sentences aloud.

- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the **y as a vowel worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their responses.

Grammar and Mechanics: Possessive nouns

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Sometimes people's grandparents die before they get to know them.* Read the sentence aloud, pointing to the word *grandparents*. Ask a volunteer to explain whose grandparents the sentence is referring to (people's). Explain that the word *people's* shows that the grandparents belong to the people.
- Review or explain that words like *people's* are called *possessive nouns*. A possessive noun is formed by adding an 's to the end of a word to show ownership, or possession.
- Direct students to page 4. Have them find the possessive words on the page (*mother's* and *father's*). Ask a volunteer to read aloud the sentences containing the possessive nouns. Ask another volunteer to explain what belongs to the father (his father) and what belongs to the mother (her father).
- Remind students that a contraction using 's is not the same as a possessive. For example, *it's* is a contraction for *it is* and does not show ownership.



Check for understanding: Have students circle the possessive nouns in the book and underline the item that each one owns.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **possessive nouns worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: Content vocabulary

- Point out to students that there are many vocabulary words in this book that pertain to the concept of family. Explain that one way to remember words is to use them repeatedly. Write the following words on the board: *paternal, maternal, relatives, and married*.
- Have students find a partner to work with. Give each pair four index cards, and have them write one word from the board on each card. Ask them to use each word in a sentence and to explain what the sentence means. For example, for the word *maternal*, a student could say, "My maternal grandmother is named Edith Rose." Encourage them to define the word *maternal* by continuing, "Edith Rose is my grandmother on my mother's side of the family."
- **Check for understanding:** Have partners continue creating example sentences, using all of their index cards. Have them make new cards using different vocabulary words as time allows (*husband, step-mother, cousins, and so on*).
- **Independent practice:** Have them label the people on their family tree, writing vocabulary words such as *maternal grandmother* under the family member's name.

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. Have them compare with someone at home prior knowledge about their family tree. Encourage students to add to their family tree worksheet with the help of their family members at home.

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing Connection

Have students use their completed family tree to write a report in paragraph form. Require students to translate the information on the worksheet into sentences. Have them type out their final paragraph and attach it to their family tree worksheet. Encourage them to add photographs or illustrations to their work.

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

Social Studies Connection

Have students interview family members to learn more about their family's history, including their family's cultural background and traditions, and stories of family members from long ago. Have them create a poster about their family. Encourage students to include a family tree in their poster.

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 strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand nonfiction text during discussion
- accurately identify similarities and differences between information in nonfiction text during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify the *gr* blend at the beginning of words
- understand the use of *y* as a vowel during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify possessive nouns in text and use them correctly in discussion and on a worksheet
- define and use content vocabulary in discussion

Comprehension Checks

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