

Focus Question:

What is the Grand Canyon, and why is it special?

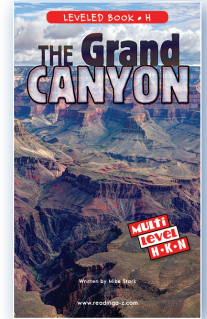
Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

In the high desert of northern Arizona is a canyon so big that we can see it from space.

The Grand Canyon provides students an introduction to this incredible wonder of the world from its formation and early explorations to the canyon as we know it today: one of the most popular national parks. The book can also be used to teach students how to discern fact or opinion and to identify synonyms and antonyms.

The book and lesson are also available for levels K and N.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to understand text
- ☐ Determine fact or opinion
- ☐ Identify information provided by captions
- ☐ Discriminate initial consonant /gr/ sound
- ☐ Identify initial consonant gr-blend
- ☐ Recognize and use proper nouns as names of places
- ☐ Identify synonyms and antonyms

Materials

- ☐ Book: *The Grand Canyon* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Fact or opinion, proper nouns: names of places, synonyms and antonyms 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.

- **High-frequency words:** *big, go, some*
- **Words to Know**
Story critical: *canyon* (n.), *erosion* (n.), *national park* (n.), *Native Americans* (n.), *protected* (adj.), *sediment* (n.)
- **Academic vocabulary:** *area* (n.), *became* (v.), *show* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the phrase *natural wonder* on the board and read it aloud to students. Invite students to work in small groups to discuss what a natural wonder is. Explain that a natural wonder is something that is beautiful or remarkable that was not made by people but rather created by the forces of nature. Provide each student with a blank sheet of paper. Have students close their eyes and invite them to visualize a beautiful natural setting, or a natural wonder, that they have seen in person or in a book. Have students open their eyes and illustrate their visualization. Invite students to share their drawings in small groups and then with the class.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *The Grand Canyon*. 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, author's name).
- 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.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy:

Ask and answer questions

Explain to students that engaged readers ask and answer questions while they are reading and that one way to organize this information is with a KWLS chart. Create a KWLS chart on the board. Have students share what they already know about the Grand Canyon and record this information in the *K* section of the chart. Invite students to review the cover and the photographs in the book to develop questions about the book. Record their questions in the *W* section of the chart.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Fact or opinion

- Write the words *Fact* and *Opinion* on the board and read them aloud to students. Explain to students that a fact is a detail that is true and can be proven and an opinion is a belief or judgment about a subject. Point out that books can contain both facts and opinions.
- Model how to discern facts and opinions. Use yourself as an example, such as *I have been a teacher for ten years; I am the kindest teacher in the world; first grade is the most fun to teach*. Invite students to work in small groups to decide whether each statement is a fact or an opinion and how they know. Record each statement on the board under the correct heading.

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 Grand Canyon. 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.

- *Why can we see the Grand Canyon from space?* (level 1) page 3
- *What is a national park?* (level 1) page 4
- *How was the Grand Canyon made?* (level 1) page 6
- *Who were the first groups of people to explore the Grand Canyon?* (level 2) pages 8 and 9
- *What kinds of activities do people do at the Grand Canyon?* (level 2) pages 11–14

- *Why is it important that the Grand Canyon became a national park?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Captions

Explain that captions are the words that accompany the pictures in the book and give the reader more information. Have students turn to page 7 and locate the caption on the page. Read the caption aloud as students follow along. Explain that captions often provide additional information that the author wants the reader to know about a topic. Have students work in small groups to review the captions on pages 8 and 9. Invite them to discuss why the author chose to include each caption. Have groups share their findings with the class.

Skill Review

- Refer back to the KWLS chart on the board and invite students to share any answers they found to the questions they posed before reading the book. Record this information in the *L* section of the chart. Ask students what new questions they developed while reading and record this information in the *W* section of the chart. Point out that the *S* section of the chart is for information that they still want to know about the Grand Canyon that was not in the book.
- Model how to discern fact or opinion.
Think-aloud: *This book is telling me about why the Grand Canyon is so special. Some of the sentences in the book are stating facts, and some are sharing the author’s opinion. For example, on page 6 I read: The Colorado River made the Grand Canyon through erosion. I know this is a fact because it can be checked or confirmed. Determining fact or opinion is one way for me to better understand what I read.*
- Model how to complete the **fact-or-opinion worksheet**. Have students determine whether each sentence is a fact or an opinion.

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: Fact or opinion

Review the fact-or-opinion worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups.

Comprehension Extension

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

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers should include: *The Grand Canyon is a national park in Arizona that is considered a natural wonder. The Grand Canyon is special for many reasons, including the fact that it can be seen from space, the amazing views, and so on.*)

Comprehension Checks

- Book quiz
- Retelling rubric

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness:

Initial consonant /gr/ sound

- Say the word *grass* aloud to students, emphasizing the initial consonant /gr/ sound. Have students say the word aloud and then say the /gr/ sound. Have students practice saying the initial consonant /gr/ sound to a partner.
- Say the following word pairs and have students work with a partner to identify the word in each set that contains the initial consonant /gr/ sound: *get/grab, grout/guess, goat/ground, grow/gone*. Remind them to watch your mouth as you say each word.
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words one at a time and have students jump and sit back down when they hear a word that contains the initial consonant /gr/ sound: *grunt, game, grew, grasp, got, green*.

Phonics: Initial consonant gr-blend

- Write the word *grand* on the board and read it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /gr/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word *grand* as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letters represent the initial consonant /gr/ sound in the word *grand*.
- Repeat with the word *grass*. Ask students how the words *grand* and *grass* are the same (they both contain the initial consonant /gr/ sound).
- Write the following words on the board, leaving out the initial consonant *gr*-blend: *grin, grid, grab, grub, gram, and grill*. Invite volunteers to come to the board and add the initial consonant *gr*-blend to each word and read the word aloud.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to reread the book and circle all the words containing the initial consonant *gr*-blend. Review students' findings as a class.

Grammar and Mechanics:

Proper nouns: Names of places

- Review or explain that a *noun* is a *person, place, or thing*. Invite students to give examples of common nouns and list them on the board. Point out that some nouns name specific people, places, and things and that they are called *proper nouns*. Use the common nouns listed on the board to provide examples of proper nouns.
- Explain that proper nouns can name specific places. Write the following common nouns on the board: *school, city, street*. Have students work with a partner to identify a proper noun for each common noun. Invite each group to share their findings with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students reread pages 6 through 8. Have them underline each proper noun. Review students' findings as a class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [proper-nouns-names-of-places worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Synonyms and antonyms

- Write the word *big* on the board and read it aloud. Ask students to suggest words that have a similar meaning (*giant, grand, and so on*). Explain that a word that means the same or almost the same as another word is called a *synonym*. Ask students to suggest a word that means the opposite of *big* (*tiny, small, and so on*). Explain that a word that means the opposite of another word is called an *antonym*. Write the words *synonym* and *antonym* on the board and read them aloud.
- Model how to locate the word *big* in a thesaurus. Have students work in small groups and provide each group with a thesaurus. Write the following words on the board, and have each group use the thesaurus to identify a synonym and antonym for each: *happy, pretty, tall*.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the word *scary* on the board and read it aloud. Have students work independently to use a thesaurus to identify a synonym and antonym. Have students share their findings with a partner and invite their partner to give a thumbs-up signal if the synonym and antonym are correct.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [synonyms-and-antonyms worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

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