

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 16 Word Count: 800

Book Summary

When Kyle goes to visit his grandmother over the Memorial Day weekend, he discovers some big differences between the big city where he lives and the small town where his grandmother lives. But the most important thing he learns is what Memorial Day really means and how people observe it—in the United States as well as in other countries.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand text
- Analyze a character in the text
- Identify and categorize words with the two sounds of variant vowel oo
- Identify and use apostrophes
- Identify and create compound words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Memorial Day* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- *Analyze character, apostrophes, compound words worksheets*
- Dictionaries
- Index cards
- *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 [Vocabulary a-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com).

- Content words:
 Story critical: *cemetery (n.)*, *honor (v.)*, *soldier (n.)*, *solemn (adj.)*, *symbol (n.)*, *tradition (n.)*
 Enrichment: *federal (adj.)*, *graves (n.)*, *headstones (n.)*, *inscription (n.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students to think of their favorite holiday. Invite them to share details of the holiday, why they celebrate it, and what they do to celebrate the holiday.
- Write the title *Memorial Day* on the board and draw a circle around it. Ask students if they have heard of this holiday and, if so, what they know about it. Record their answers around the title.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. 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, fiction or nonfiction, 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).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Connect to prior knowledge**

- Explain to students that good readers make connections between what they already know and new information they read. Remind students that thinking about what they already know about the topic of the book will help them understand what they read.
- Model connecting to prior knowledge using the information on the covers.
Think-aloud: When I read a book, I try to think about what I already know about the topic of the book before I begin reading. When I read the title of this book and look at the cover, I know it's going to be about Memorial Day. The pictures make me think that Memorial Day must have something to do with soldiers and flags. It reminds me of July 4th, when everyone in my neighborhood flies the American flag. Maybe Memorial Day is like the 4th of July.
- Invite students to preview the book. Ask them to share how they connected to prior knowledge, based on the covers and title page of the book.
- 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 to students that authors try to make characters believable and interesting so readers feel as though they know and understand them. Point out that readers learn about characters in a story through their words, thoughts, and actions.
- Ask students to turn to pages 3 and 4 in their book. Read pages 3 and 4 aloud to students while they follow along. Model how to analyze a character, based on the character's thoughts.
Think-aloud: As I read pages 3 and 4, I learned about some of Kyle's thoughts. He was ready for summer, He loved his grandma's small town, and he was glad to be spending the long weekend there. On the basis of these clues, Kyle appears to be a loving grandson who is eager to spend time with his grandma.
- Introduce and explain the **analyze character worksheet**. Create a two-column chart on the board with Kyle as the heading. Label the first column *Traits* and the second column *Clues*. Write *loving* and *eager* under the *Traits* heading, and phrases from the book that support each trait under the *Clues* heading. Have students write the information from the discussion on their worksheet.

Introduce the Vocabulary


- Write the story critical vocabulary words in a list on the board. Point to each word, read it aloud, and ask students to give the thumbs-up signal if they know the word or have heard it before. Circle any words that most students are unfamiliar with.
- Explain to students that good readers can use context clues to help them figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word in the text. However, sometimes they will not find enough context clues to clearly define the unfamiliar word. Model how students can use the dictionary to locate a word's meaning.
- Ask students to take turns reading the words and their definitions in the dictionary. After each definition has been read, have them find the sentence on the page where the word is located. Have them read the sentence aloud to confirm the definition.
- Prepare index cards ahead of time that have the vocabulary words and definitions written on them, one word or definition per card. Spread out the cards face down on the table and have students play Concentration to match the words with their definitions. Have them use the dictionary to confirm whether they have made a match.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about Kyle and his Memorial Day weekend. Remind them to stop after every few pages to make connections to what they are reading and to think about what they are learning about Kyle.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read pages 5 and 6. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.
 - Model connecting to prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: Before I started reading the story, the title of the book made me think about soldiers, the American flag, and the 4th of July. I used my own experience to predict what kinds of things might happen on Memorial Day and what Kyle might do or see in his grandma's town. After I read these first two pages, I now know that Kyle's grandma lives in an old, small town where everyone knows each other. I grew up in a big city, but my aunt and uncle lived in a small town, and it was so fun to visit them!
 - Invite students to share how they connected with what they already knew as they read. Allow time for students to discuss how their experience might be similar to the main character's, if they were ever in a similar situation.
 - Ask students to use information in the text and their prior knowledge to analyze what type of person Kyle seems to be (curious about the town and the parade). Have students identify information from the text that gives clues to their thinking (you couldn't walk past someone without saying hello or swapping news; this was the first Kyle had heard about a parade; "What parade?" he asked Grandma). Have them share information from their prior knowledge that supports their ideas. Ask them to transfer this information to their worksheet. Model and assist, if needed.
 - Have students read to the end of page 7. Encourage them to share how they connected to prior knowledge as they read. Point out to students that Kyle himself is trying to connect the news of the parade in Grandma's town to his prior knowledge of parades. Accept all answers that show students understand how to connect to prior knowledge.
 - **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 10 and then share connections they made to this portion of the text (for example, whether they have ever visited a cemetery). Ask students to work with a partner to write on their worksheet additional traits they discover about Kyle and the clues that support it. They may also add additional clues for traits they have already listed. For example, they may want to add more evidence of Kyle being *curious* to the *Clues* side of their worksheet. Assist student pairs as needed.
 - Have students read the remainder of the book. Encourage them to use their previous experiences and prior knowledge to help them connect to the new information they are learning about Memorial Day.
-  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

- Discuss how making connections between information students read and what they already know or have experienced keeps them actively involved with the story and helps them remember what they have read.

- **Think-aloud:** *When I read about how Kyle used the Internet to find out all he could about Memorial Day. This reminded me of my own son because when he gets interested in something, he will spend hours and hours on the computer reading all about it. He won't even come to the dinner table!*
- Have students share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge to understand the character of Kyle and the information about Memorial Day.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review how readers got to know Kyle throughout the story. Share and discuss the clues from the text that support students' descriptions of Kyle.
- **Independent practice:** Have students write on their analyze characters worksheet additional clues from the text that support one or more of Kyle's character traits. If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this story, a boy comes to understand the history and importance of Memorial Day in the United States and in other countries. Now that you have read this book, what will you think about and do on the next Memorial Day?

Build Skills

Phonics: Variant vowel oo

- Write the word *school* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /oo/ sound in *school* aloud. Run your finger under the letters in the word as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letters represent the /oo/ sound in the word.
- Write the word *good* on the board and say it aloud with students. Have students say the /oo/ sound in *good* aloud as you run your finger under the letters. Ask students to identify the sound. Ask if it is the same sound as in *school* (no, there are two different sounds for /oo/). Have students practice the two sounds aloud, listening for the difference.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 5 in the book. Ask them to find a word on the page that has the variant vowel /oo/ in it (*took*). Ask students to identify which /oo/ sound is in *took* (/oo/ as in *good*). Next, have students turn to page 7, and repeat the process for the word *pool*.
- **Independent practice:** Draw a two-column chart on the board. Label one side of the chart *school* and the other side *good*. Have student pairs search the book for other words with variant vowel /oo/. Record the words on the chart according to the sound the oo makes in the word. Students may add other words they know that are spelled with oo.

Grammar and Mechanics: Apostrophes

- Direct students to page 3 and point to the word *we'll*. Review or explain that this word is called a *contraction* and that it stands for two words. Ask students to use context clues to identify which two words were joined together to make the new word (*we* and *will*). Write both the contraction and the two words that make it up on the board. Point out that the letters *w* and *i* are dropped to make the contraction.
- Review or explain that a contraction is a word formed by joining two words, and that an apostrophe shows where one or more letters have been left out.
- Ask students to turn to page 5 and identify the contraction (*couldn't*). Ask students to identify which letter was replaced by an apostrophe (*o*).
- Explain that apostrophes are used in one other way, with a possessive noun. A possessive noun shows ownership, or possession, and is formed by adding 's to the end of the word.
- Direct students to page 10. Ask them to find the possessive word in the first paragraph (*grandmother's*). Explain how this word shows possession because of the 's on the end (the age of the grandmother, or *grandmother's* age).

- **Check for understanding:** Help students to see the difference between a possessive and a contraction by pointing out that a possessive is not made up of two words. Write a volunteer's name on the board and ask that volunteer to name something that he or she owns. Then add an 's to the end of the name before writing the item (for example, Susan's pencil). Repeat the example for other volunteers who would like to contribute. Next, have student pairs find contractions in the book. Have them share with the group which two words make up each contraction.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [apostrophes worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud after students finish.

Word Work: **Compound words**

- Write the word *sunblock* on the board. Ask students which two words were joined together in the word *sunblock* (*sun* and *block*). Explain that this word is called a *compound word*. A compound word contains two words that join together to create a new word with one meaning. Explain that the definitions of the two base words often can help students figure out the meaning of the compound word (something that *blocks* the *sun*).
- Ask students to turn to page 4 in their book and find three compound words on this page (*grandparents'*, *weekend*, *grandmother*). Ask volunteers which two words make up each compound word. Ask a volunteer to share how the meanings of the two base words can be used to figure out the meaning of each compound word.



- **Check for understanding:** Have students read page 5 in their book. Have them identify and highlight or underline the two compound words (*everyone* and *someone*). Ask students to draw a line through the middle of each word to separate it into its two base words. Discuss with students the definitions of the two base words and the compound word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compound words worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud after they are finished.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can 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 students share their prior knowledge throughout the story with someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Realistic Fiction Writing Connection

Have students plan and write an informational narrative of a character who is celebrating a holiday. Review with students how to include facts and information into a story. Have them include what the character did, saw, and felt about the holiday, like Kyle in *Memorial Day*.

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

Social Studies Connection

Supply books and links to Internet websites for students to learn more about Memorial Day, as the main character in the book did. Ask volunteers to research Memorial Day in other countries, too. Give students index cards and instruct them to write their findings on the cards, along with any other interesting information they discover. Lead a roundtable discussion in which students share their findings and discuss the details.

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 connecting to prior knowledge to comprehend the text during discussion
- analyze the words, thoughts, and actions of a character during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify and categorize the two sounds of variant vowel /oo/ during discussion
- accurately recognize and use apostrophes during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify and form compound words during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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