

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 20 Word Count: 1,238

Book Summary

From gigantic apes to alien spacecrafts, special effects help to create images on screen that make scenes more believable and entertain audiences of all ages. Types of special effects are discussed in relation to their evolution in the movie industry. Photographs, illustrations, and timelines support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Summarize

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of summarizing to understand text
- Identify details to compare and contrast different types of special effects
- Identify and use commas in a series
- Identify and create closed compound words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Special Effects* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Compare and contrast, commas, closed compound words 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: **backdrop** (n.), **illusion** (n.), **models** (n.), **projected** (v.), **scenery** (n.), **special effects** (n.)

Enrichment: *animatronics* (n.), *color-replacement photography* (n.), *computer-generated images* (n.), *developed* (adj.), **imaginable** (adj.), **miniature** (adj.), *movements* (n.), *process* (n.), **props** (n.), *rear projection* (n.), *stop-motion animation* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students to name their favorite movies. Discuss their favorite scenes from these movies and what made them enjoyable.
- Show students clips or pictures of different special-effects movies like *King Kong* and *E.T.* Discuss the special effects used in each movie and why they might be important in movies. Ask students to tell how they think the special effects in each movie were created.

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 and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).
- Ask students to turn to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to read about based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Summarize**

- Explain to students that one way to understand and remember information in a book is to write a summary, or a brief overview, of the most important information in a chapter. Point out that a summary often answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.
- Create a chart on the board with the headings *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, and *Why*. Read the introduction aloud to students and model summarizing.
Think-aloud: To summarize, I need to decide which information is the most important to remember in a section. To do this, I can consider who and what the chapter was about, what happened, and when and why it happened. Then I can organize that information into a few sentences. This chapter is mostly about Willis O'Brien creating the movie King Kong. I will write this under the heading Who. The author explains that Willis O'Brien helped develop special effects, which is the part of moviemaking that creates pictures and sounds that make movies seem real. I will write created special effects under the heading What. King Kong was one of the many movies that would have been impossible to create with realistic detail without the use of special effects. I will write made King Kong appear real under the heading Why. This technology was first used in movies in the 1920s and 1930s. I will write these years under the heading When. When I organize all of this information, a summary of the introduction might be: Early movies of the 1920s and '30s, such as King Kong, were made more believable through the creation of special effects. Willis O'Brien was a master of movie special effects who helped to change how movies were made.
- Write the summary on the board. Discuss how you used the information in the chart, along with your own words, to create the summary.
- 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 to students that one way to understand concepts in a book is to tell how the information is similar and different.
- Show students the picture of the King Kong model at the bottom of page 7 and the dinosaur model on page 14. Model how to compare and contrast using clues from the pictures.
Think-aloud: In these pictures, I see two models. I see some things about them that are the same and some things that are different. I also notice that both models have a robotic skeleton on the inside. Both have an outer covering similar to what the real animal might have. These are ways that the models are the same. However, one model is of a giant ape and the other is of a dinosaur. The outer covering of the ape has fur, but the outer covering of the dinosaur appears to have a rough, bumpy hide.
- Model how to compare and contrast information using a Venn diagram. Draw a Venn diagram on the board. Label the left circle *Ape Model* and the right circle *Dinosaur Model*. Explain to students that information telling how the two models are similar is written where both circles overlap. Information that is only true of the ape model is written in the left side of the left circle. Information that is only true of the dinosaur model is written in the right side of the right circle.

- Have students identify other similarities and differences between the two models. Write this information on the Venn diagram.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following content vocabulary words on the board: *backdrop*, *illusion*, *models*, *projected*, and *scenery*. Read the words aloud with students. Ask them to share what they might know about the meaning of each word. Point out to students that using familiar words might help them identify the meanings of the words. (For instance, the word *back* could help them in thinking about what *backdrop* might mean.)
- Write each of the content vocabulary words on a piece of poster board. Place students in small groups and assign each group to a poster. Have them discuss what they know about the meaning of their word and write a definition on the paper. Rotate the groups until each group has visited every poster.
- Review each word and the information about the word that students wrote on the poster. Create a definition based on students' knowledge and write it on the board.
- Have a volunteer read the definition for each word from the glossary. Compare students' definitions with the glossary definitions. Use the comparison to modify the definition for each word on the board.

Set the Purpose


- Have students read the book to find out more about different types of special effects. Encourage students to underline information in each chapter while reading that answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 7 to the end of page 9. Encourage those who finish before others to reread the first two chapters.
- Model summarizing important information in the second chapter, "Stop-Motion Animation." **Think-aloud:** *I made sure to stop reading after the second chapter to summarize what I'd read so far. First, I thought about the information that answers the questions who, what, when, where, and why. Then, in my mind, I organized the important information into a few sentences. In this chapter, I learned how Willis O'Brien used models and stop-motion animation to create King Kong. I underlined his name, models, and stop-motion animation. I also learned the meaning of stop-motion animation. I underlined miniature models photographed one frame at a time and different positions in the book. O'Brien used stop-motion animation because it made the models appear as though they were alive and moving. I will also underline the words illusion of being alive in the book.*
- Write the information underlined in the chart on the board. Have students share any additional information they underlined that answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*. Write this information on the chart. Create a summary with students based on the information in the chart. (Willis O'Brien invented stop-motion animation, which involved photographing miniature models one frame at a time in different positions. This early special effect made the models appear to move and look as if they were alive.)
- Have students work with a partner to read page 10 and underline important information in their book about *rear projection*. Remind them to answer the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*. When they have finished, create a summary as a class. (Rear projection is another type of special effect, in which the moviemaker creates fake scenery behind an actor.)
- Review with students the underlined information they used to summarize the chapters on stop-motion animation and rear projection. Discuss any similarities and differences between these two kinds of special effects (similarities: make movies more lifelike and believable, allow moviemakers to include more lifelike action in movies; differences: stop-motion animation uses models and still-frames, rear projection creates a different scene for the background).

- **Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 11 and 12 about *color-replacement technology*. Remind them to underline information that answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why* while reading. Then have students work with a partner to write a brief summary of the chapter on a separate piece of paper. Have them share and discuss their summaries.
- Have students work with a partner to compare and contrast *rear projection* and *color-replacement photography*. Have them write the information on a Venn diagram on a separate piece of paper. If time allows, invite students to share their work.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Have them underline information in each chapter that answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.

 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 skills and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Divide students into small groups. Assign each group one of the remaining chapters from the book (“Animatronics,” “Miniature Models,” “Weather Special Effects,” or “Computer-Generated Images”). Have each group discuss the information they underlined in their chapter. Have them use the information to write a group summary of the chapter. When students have finished, share and discuss their summaries aloud.
- **Think-aloud:** *I know that summarizing keeps me actively involved in what I’m reading and helps me remember what I’ve read. I know that I will remember more about the different kinds of special effects for movies because I summarized as I read the book.*
- Ask students to share whether the process of creating any of the types of special effects surprised them.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review with students the similarities and differences between *stop-motion animation* and *rear projection*. Discuss how the information was organized on the Venn diagram.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students provide examples of how *miniature models* and *animatronics* are alike and different. Record this information on a Venn diagram on the board.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compare-and-contrast worksheet](#) by comparing *computer-generated images* with another kind of special effect from the book. If time allows, discuss their answers.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about the types of illusions that special effects create, such as giant apes and live dinosaurs. Now that you know this information, how does this knowledge change the way in which you view movies?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Commas in a series

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Once the images are created on the computer, they can be changed moved copied and combined with other images for the movie.* Ask students to explain why this sentence doesn’t make sense (the words *changed moved copied* don’t make sense as written).
- Explain to students that when writers list a series of items in a sentence, the words need to be separated by commas. Without the commas, the sentence is difficult to read and understand.

- Direct students to page 17. Ask them to locate this sentence on the page and identify the proper placement of the commas in the sentence. Ask a volunteer to come to the board and add commas in the correct places, separating the words *changed*, *moved*, *copied*, and *combined*. Point out that the last word (*combined*) is joined to the list by the word *and* following the comma.
- Have students turn to page 18 and read aloud the last sentence in the first paragraph: *They love being frightened, amazed, entertained*. Ask a volunteer to identify the words in a list (*frightened*, *amazed*, *entertained*). Discuss the locations of the commas within the list and the word *and*, which joins the last word to the list after the comma. Point out that the sentence makes much more sense with the correct punctuation.
- Read the following sentence from page 18: *And audiences of today are equally awestruck as they watch volcanoes erupt in cities, spaceships engage in dogfights, and huge ocean liners crack in half and sink to the bottom of the ocean*. Point out to students that this sentence contains a list of words in a series as well. Explain that lists may also contain phrases that need to be separated by commas, such as *volcanoes erupt in cities*, *space ships engage in dogfights*, and *huge ocean liners crack in half*.



- **Check for understanding:** Write the following sentence on the board: *When snowstorms are needed in a movie, snowflakes can be made from bleached potato flakes plastic flakes or powdered laundry detergent*. Have students copy the sentence into the inside front cover of their book and add commas to separate the phrases. Check individual answers for understanding.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [commas worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Closed compound words

- Write the word *spacecraft* on the board. Have students identify words they know within this larger word (*space* and *craft*). Review or explain that when two short words are combined to form a new word, the new word is called a *compound word*. Point out to students that *spacecraft* is an example of a *closed compound word* because it is written as one word.
- Have students use the meaning of each smaller word to tell the meaning of the word *spacecraft* (a vehicle used for traveling through space).
- Have students turn to page 6 in the book. Read the following sentence: *Special effects allow a superhero to rescue anyone, anywhere, at any time*. Have students identify three compound words (*superhero*, *anyone*, *anywhere*). Ask them to identify the two separate words that were joined to create each compound word (*super* and *hero*, *any* and *one*, *any* and *where*).
- Ask students to identify the meaning of each compound word with a partner (*superhero*: an admirable person with outstanding qualities; *anyone*: every person who might be thought of in a particular context; *anywhere*: every place that could be thought of for a particular purpose).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students identify a closed compound word in the first sentence on page 8 (*backdrop*). Encourage them to name other closed compound words they know. Write these words on a poster labeled *Closed Compound Words* and post it in the classroom.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [closed-compound-words worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

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 them discuss with someone at home how to summarize as they read each chapter.

Extend the Reading

Expository Writing Connection

Have students research the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Awards for Visual Effects. Have them identify what the Academy bases its decisions on when choosing the winning films. Have them read about the history of the Academy, as well as where and when it announces nominations. Ask students to write a report based on the information from their research.

Science and Art Connection

Explain to students that cartoons use a special effect that creates the illusion of movement. Point out that *cartoons* are a series of pictures with objects in slightly changed positions in different pictures. When these pictures are flipped through quickly, it creates the illusion that the image is moving. Have students create a flipbook on 4x4 pieces of paper. Have students begin by drawing a simple object. On the next page, have them draw the same object, moving it very slightly to the right or left. Continue drawing the same object on the pages that follow, moving it slightly further to the right or left on each subsequent page. Staple the pages together and have students flip them from beginning to end to watch their own special-effects creation.

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:

- accurately use details from the text to create chapter summaries during discussion and on a separate piece of paper
- correctly compare and contrast nonfiction details within the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly recognize and use commas in a series during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify and form closed compound words during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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