

## Focus Question:

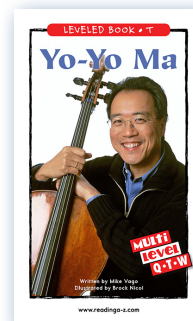
*How is the Silk Road Ensemble a reflection of Yo-Yo Ma's background and music?*

## Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Biography

At the age of seven, Yo-Yo Ma was already a famous cellist. From his upbringing in Paris and New York City, Ma was saturated with the culture of classical music. With the support and wisdom of his parents, he emerged as one of the most prolific and well-respected musicians in the world. In *Yo-Yo Ma*, students will learn about the life and music of this remarkable man who forever changed the musical landscape. The book can also be used to teach summarizing skills and the elements of a biography.

The book and lesson are also available for levels Q and W.



## Lesson Essentials

### Instructional Focus

- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Identify elements of a biography
- ☐ Describe information provided by photographs
- ☐ Recognize and use complex sentences
- ☐ Identify and use antonyms

### Materials

- ☐ Book: *Yo-Yo Ma* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Elements of a biography, complex sentences, 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](http://VocabularyA-Z.com).

#### • Words to Know

**Story critical:** *classical* (adj.), *composers* (n.), *culture* (n.), *ensemble* (n.), *heritage* (n.), *orchestra* (n.)

**Enrichment:** *collaborate* (v.), *conductor* (n.), *inauguration* (n.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *difficult* (adj.), *event* (n.), *instead* (adv.), *record* (v.), *tradition* (n.), *understand* (v.)

## Guiding the Reading

### Before Reading

#### Build Background

Write the word *talent* on the board, and read it aloud with students. Discuss with students the meaning of the word *talent*. Point out that talent refers to something that someone is able to do very well. Have students think of a talent they possess, something they are able to do well. Have them share their talent with a small group and encourage volunteers to share with the class. Explain to students that they will be reading about a man named Yo-Yo Ma who is an incredibly talented and well-known musician.

#### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Yo-Yo Ma*. 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' name, illustrator'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:

##### Summarize

Explain to students that one way to understand and remember information in a book is to write a summary, or brief overview, of the most important information. Point out that a summary can encompass the entire book or a section of the book. Explain that a summary often answers the questions *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, and *why*. Direct students to the table of contents. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Have students work in small groups to preview the table of contents,

### Guiding the Reading (cont.)

photographs, and illustrations and discuss what they expect to read.

#### Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

##### Elements of a biography

- Ask students to explain the difference between a biography and an autobiography (*biography*: the story of a person's life written by someone else; *autobiography*: the story of a person's life written by that person). Explain that this book gives biographical information about Yo-Yo Ma.
- Write the words *Accomplishments*, *Personality*, and *Influence* on the board in a three-column chart. Have students turn to a partner and discuss the meaning of each word. Discuss the definitions as a class (*accomplishments*: success achieved through practice or experience; *personality*: the qualities that make each person unique; *influence*: an effect on someone or something). Point out to students that as they read about Yo-Yo Ma they should pause to consider his accomplishments, personality, and influence.

#### 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 Yo-Yo Ma. 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.

- *How did Yo-Yo Ma's parents influence Yo-Yo's musical career?* (level 2) pages 4–6
- *In what way did the concert in Paris forever change Yo-Yo's life?* (level 1) page 5

- *How were Yo-Yo and his sister similar as children? How were they different?* (level 2) pages 6–7
- *What were Yo-Yo's major accomplishments as a young person?* (level 2) pages 7–8
- *What were Yo-Yo's major accomplishments as an adult?* (level 2) pages 10–14
- *What is the Silk Road Ensemble, and why did Ma create it?* (level 1) page 14
- *Why is Yo-Yo Ma a world-famous musician?* (level 3) multiple pages

#### Text Features: Photographs

Have students view the photograph on page 14 and read the caption. Point out that the caption was provided by the author to expand upon and clarify the information discussed in the book. Have students discuss the following questions with a partner: *Why did the author include this photograph? What do you learn about the Silk Road ensemble from this photograph that was not presented in the text of the book? What can you tell about Yo-Yo Ma on the basis of this photograph?* Have students share their ideas with the class.

#### Skill Review

- Review with students that a *summary* is a brief overview that includes only the most important information about a book or a section of a book. Point out that a summary answers the questions *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, and *why*.
- Have students work in small groups to review the section "Back Problems" and create a written summary. Remind them to include only the most important information that answers the questions *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, and *why*. Invite groups to share their summaries with other groups and then with the class. Discuss with students how summarizing a book or a section of a book helps them understand and remember what they have read.
- Review with students the elements of a biography: accomplishments, personality, and influence. Point out that by identifying these aspects of a well-known person, the biographical information is easier to organize and remember.
- Model identifying elements of a biography.  
**Think-aloud:** *I know that the elements of a biography include a person's accomplishments, personality, and influence. As I read, I look for this information about Yo-Yo Ma. For example, I know that Yo-Yo Ma has expressed that he has no idea how he became one of the world's most popular musicians. He even claims to be "an accident" and attributes his success to a combination of many things, including his family. On the basis of this information, I can conclude that Yo-Yo is a humble and talented man, which are both aspects of his personality. As I continue to read, I will consider the other aspects of a biography as they relate to Yo-Yo Ma's life, including his major accomplishments and influence on the world of music.*

## Guiding the Reading (cont.)

- Record the above information about Yo-Yo Ma in the chart on the board under *Personality*. Invite volunteers to add any additional information.
- Model how to complete the [elements-of-a-biography worksheet](#). Remind students to use details from the text to support their responses.

## 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: Elements of a biography

Review the elements-of-a-biography worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the details they chose. Remind students that identifying the elements of a biography will help them better remember and understand the information presented in a biography.

## Comprehension Extension

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided for extension activities.

## Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers should include the following information: *The Silk Road Ensemble is a reflection of Yo-Yo Ma's background and music because it represents many different cultures and different kinds of music.*)

## Comprehension Checks

- [Book quiz](#)
- [Retelling rubric](#)

## Book Extension Activities

### Build Skills

#### Grammar and Mechanics: Complex sentences

- Write the following sentence on the board: \_\_\_\_\_ *starting at Harvard, Ma played at a summer music festival.* Have students read the sentence and suggest words that could fill in the blank to complete the sentence (*before, after*).
- Review or explain that a *subordinating conjunction* is a word that joins an independent clause and a dependent clause. Point to the examples that students suggested to complete the sentence on the board. Explain that subordinating conjunctions join parts of sentences together to form complex sentences. List examples of subordinating

conjunctions on the board: *after, although, as, as, if, because, before, for, once, since, so that, though, unless, until, when, whenever, where, whereas, wherever, whether, while.*

- Reread the sentence on the board, including the subordinating conjunction in the sentence. (*Before starting at Harvard, Ma played at a summer music festival.*) Underline *Ma played at a summer music festival.* Explain that this part of the sentence is called the *independent clause*. Circle *Before starting at Harvard.* Explain that this part of the sentence is called the *dependent clause*.
- Check for understanding:** Have students highlight the following sentence on page 9: *As soon as Ma graduated, he had to stop playing cello.* Have students underline the independent clause (*he had to stop playing cello*) and circle the dependent clause (*As soon as*). Ask students to identify the conjunction (*As soon as*).
- Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [complex sentences worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

## Word Work: Antonyms

- Write the word *early* on the board and read it aloud with students. Ask students to suggest a word that means the opposite of *early*. Review or explain that a word that means the opposite of another word is called an *antonym*.
- Reread page 5 as students follow along. Have them highlight the following words: *young, terrible, quickly, large, biggest.* Invite students to work with a partner to identify an antonym for each word. Have them discuss how using the antonym in the given sentence changes the meaning of the text. Have volunteers share their discussions with the class.
- Check for understanding:** Have students work independently to record antonyms for the following words: *challenging, famous, gifted, risky.* Then have students turn to a partner and share their antonyms. Invite students to give a thumbs-up signal if their partner identified an antonym correctly.
- Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [antonyms worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

## Connections

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