

Focus Question:

How is April Fools' Day best celebrated?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

Have your friends ever tried to convince you to buy some plaid paint? If so, you've probably been the victim of an April Fools' Day prank! *April Fools' Day* is a fascinating book that delves into the history of April Fools' Day and gives some helpful pointers on how to pull appropriate and fun April Fools' Day pranks. Students will love the examples from history as well as modern classics. The book can also be used to teach students how to identify main idea and details as well as to connect to prior knowledge to better understand the text.

The book and lesson are also available for levels M and P.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Connect to prior knowledge to better understand text
- ☐ Identify the main idea and details in a text
- ☐ Understand and use the table of contents
- ☐ Recognize and use commas after introductory words
- ☐ Place words in alphabetical order

Materials

- ☐ Book: *April Fools' Day* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Main idea and details, commas after introductory words, alphabetical order 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.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *hoax* (n.), *media* (n.), *naïve* (adj.), *pranks* (n.), *traditional* (adj.), *victim* (n.)

Enrichment: *consumer* (n.), *disguises* (n.), *spoof* (n.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *another* (adj.), *believe* (v.), *certain* (adj.), *report* (v.), *show* (v.), *use* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the words *April Fools' Day* on the board and read them aloud to students. Ask students to share with a partner everything they know about this holiday, including the date, history, and examples of April Fools' Day pranks. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class, and record this information on the board.
- Ask students to discuss with a partner some guidelines for appropriate April Fools' Day pranks. Invite volunteers to share the guidelines they came up with and record these on the board. Explain to students that they are going to be learning about the history of April Fools' Day and some safety rules for how to celebrate appropriately.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *April Fools' Day*. 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:

Connect to prior knowledge

Explain to students that effective readers make connections between what they already know and new information they read. Point out that this is called *connecting to prior knowledge*. Remind students that thinking about what they already know about the topic of a book will help them better understand and remember what they read.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Read the title of this book and ask students to look at the front and back covers. Invite volunteers to share what they already know about the topic of this book on the basis of the title and cover pictures.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Main idea and details

- Explain to students that most books have a *main idea*, or a general topic that is the subject of the book. Further explain that the extra information or descriptions that help explain the main idea are the *details* of the book. Point out to students that the title of a book often provides clues about the main idea.
- Have students discuss with a partner their predictions about the main idea of this book. Invite volunteers to share their predictions with the class, and write these predictions on the board.

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 April Fools' Day. 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.

- *What are two theories historians have for how April Fools' Day began?* (level 1) page 6
- *Why did Romans celebrate Hilaria?* (level 1) page 7
- *How have April Fools' Day pranks changed throughout history?* (level 2) multiple pages
- *How do people celebrate April Fools' Day in Europe?* (level 2) pages 8–9

- *What almost happened in Jordan because of an April Fools' Day prank?* (level 1) page 11
- *Why do you think that people in the United Kingdom thought they could grow spaghetti trees?* (level 3) page 12
- *What are the rules you need to follow when planning an April Fools' Day prank?* (level 2) multiple pages
- *Why is it important to follow certain rules when pulling April Fools' Day pranks?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Table of contents

Explain that the table of contents helps readers identify key topics in the book in the order they are presented. Put students into small groups and give each group multiple sentences cut out from the book. Ask groups to work together to match the sentences with the correct section by using the table of contents. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class. Discuss with students how the table of contents helps readers better sort the information in the book into key topics.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you connect with prior knowledge as you read. Share personal experiences with April Fools' Day traditions. Ask volunteers to share their personal connections with the class.
- Review the predictions for the main idea of this book that are written on the board. Have students work with a partner and brainstorm to generate the main idea of this book and compare it to the main ideas that were predicted before reading. Guide students to a class consensus regarding the main idea of the book, such as: *There are many safe and fun ways to celebrate April Fools' Day.* Write this main idea on the board.
- Model identifying details that support the main idea.

Think-aloud: *I know the main idea of this book:*

There are many safe and fun ways to celebrate April Fools' Day. Since every main idea needs details to explain it, I will be looking for details that explain or describe the different ways people safely celebrate April Fools' Day. On page 8, I read about how people in Scotland send victims on foolish errands as a prank, and on page 9, I read about how people in France tape a paper fish to a victim's back. This shows how some people celebrate April Fools' Day safely, so I know that these are two details that support the main idea. I will continue to look for more details that support the main idea as I read this book.

- Model how to complete the **main-idea-and-details worksheet** using evidence from the text.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

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: Main idea and details

Review the main-idea-and-details worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share their main ideas and details with the rest of the class. Ask students to share how identifying details that support the main idea helped them to better understand the text.

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 will vary. Example: *The best way to celebrate April Fools' Day is by pulling safe, lighthearted, silly pranks on your friends. Always keep it kind!*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics:

Commas after introductory words

- Explain that commas are used by writers in many ways. Point out that some of the uses are to separate an introductory word or phrase from the rest of the sentence, to separate items in a list of three or more items, and to separate clauses within a sentence.
- Write the following sentence on the board and read it aloud: *Today, April Fools' Day is celebrated around the world.* Ask a volunteer to come to the board and circle the comma. Explain that the word *today* is an introductory word and that the comma separates it from the rest of the thought. Remind students that this is one of many uses for commas.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students reread the section "Around the World" to locate and circle commas. Ask them to share with a partner the commas found and how they are used. Discuss as a class which commas were used to separate an introductory word or phrase from the rest of the sentence.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **commas-after-introductory-words worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Alphabetical order

- Review or explain the process of putting a list of words in alphabetical order. Remind students that it is important to look at the first letter. Explain that if there are multiple words that start with the same first letter, students then need to look at the second letter, and so on.
- Write the words *hoax*, *victim*, *spoof*, and *naïve* on the board. Have a volunteer share how to place the words in alphabetical order.
- Put students in small groups, and give each group the following six words: *consumer*, *fools*, *media*, *money*, *spring*, and *season*. Have students work together to place words in alphabetical order. Invite volunteers from each group to share their answers.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the words *disguises*, *trick*, *traditional*, *believe*, and *jokes* on the board. Have students write the words in alphabetical order on a separate sheet of paper and share their answers with a partner.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **alphabetical order worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

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