

Focus Question:

Do you think the monkey's paw really has power? Why or why not?

Book Summary

Text Type: Fiction/Mystery

A mysterious monkey paw is said to have the power to grant wishes . . . but not without consequence. When a group of friends finds themselves in possession of the monkey's paw, strange things begin to happen. *The Monkey's Paw* is an engaging and exciting story that will leave readers on the edge of their seats. The book can also be used to teach students how to make inferences and draw conclusions as well as to identify adjectives.

The book and lesson are also available for levels Y and Z1.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Make inferences / draw conclusions
- ☐ Describe information provided by illustrations
- ☐ Recognize and use adjectives
- ☐ Place words in alphabetical order

Materials

- ☐ Book: *The Monkey's Paw* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Make inferences / draw conclusions, adjectives, 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: *horrid* (adj.), *illogical* (adj.), *persist* (v.), *shriveled* (adj.), *sodden* (adj.), *twitches* (v.)

Enrichment: *descends* (v.), *disheveled* (adj.), *fidgiting* (v.), *gurgling* (adj.), *sluggishly* (adv.), *withered* (adj.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *believe* (v.), *cause* (v.), *except* (conj.), *finally* (adv.), *forever* (adv.), *respond* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

Provide each student with one piece of blank paper and one piece of lined paper. Have students create an idea web on the blank piece of paper and record the central idea: *If I had one wish*. Invite students to brainstorm ideas about what they would wish for and record this information on the idea web. Then, have students choose one wish to write about. Provide students with the time necessary to write about their one wish and to answer the following questions: *Why did the student choose this wish? Whom does the wish benefit (self, family, friend, the world, and so on)? Are there any drawbacks to this wish coming true?* Have students work in small groups to share their writing. If time allows, invite several volunteers to share their work with the class.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *The Monkey's Paw*. 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' names, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Summarize

Explain to students that engaged readers *summarize*, or create a brief overview, as they read. Explain to students that when readers summarize what they read, it helps them identify the sequence of events in a story. 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 aloud a summary from the back of a familiar book. Ask students what information is included in the summary and what information is omitted. Remind students that a summary includes only the most important details.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Make inferences / draw conclusions

- Explain to students that authors may give information to readers without explicitly writing it in the story. Discuss how authors provide readers with clues and how readers use those clues along with what they already know to make inferences or draw conclusions about what is happening in the story.
- Read page 3 aloud to students and have them locate the first paragraph on the page. Point out that, on the basis of this information, we can conclude that Kara, Miguel, and Damien are close friends. Explain how the author does not tell us directly about their friendship but rather offers details that show they enjoy spending time together and that they are very comfortable in each other's company.

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 monkey's paw. 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 does Shelly throw into the fire, and why?* (level 2) pages 3 and 4
- *How does Kara feel about the monkey's paw? How do you know?* (level 2) pages 5 and 6
- *What does Damien believe is the cause for the death of his dog?* (level 1) page 8
- *How does Miguel feel about Damien using the paw a second time?* (level 1) page 9

- *How do the characters respond to the strange noises outside?* (level 2) pages 11 through 15
- *How does Kara attempt to solve the problem of the noises outside?* (level 1) page 15
- *What do you think was causing the sound outside Damien's house during the storm? What makes you think so?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *Do you think Shelly was correct in warning her friends about the monkey's paw? Why or why not?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Illustrations

Explain that illustrations provide readers with detailed images of the characters and settings of the story. Point out that they also help explain the plot to readers. Have students work with a partner to review the illustration on page 4. Ask students: *How does this illustration show each character's attitude toward the monkey paw? What other information is shown in this illustration that is not written in the story?* Have students review other illustrations in the book and discuss in groups how they help create strong images and aid readers in understanding the story.

Skill Review

- Remind students that a summary of a story describes the most important events and characters. Have students work in groups to describe the characters in the story and identify the most important events. Direct them back to the chart on the board and review that a summary often includes *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*. Invite students to share details with the rest of the class and record this information on the board.
- Have students work in groups to create a summary of what they have read, referring to the information on the board. Call on groups to share their summary with the rest of the class.
- Model making inferences and drawing conclusions. **Think-aloud:** *In the story, I learned that Kara initially does not believe in the powers of the monkey's paw and wants to keep it only because she thinks it is cool and unusual. In fact, when Damien wants to use the paw a second time to bring his dog back, Kara supports him and even thinks it will help Damien feel better. At the end of the story, however, when the characters are faced with strange noises outside the house during the storm, Kara picks up the monkey's paw to make a wish. These details help me conclude that Kara has changed her mind about how she feels about the monkey's paw. Although the author does not state this directly, I can use the details in the story to make inferences and draw conclusions.*
- Model how to complete the [make-inferences / draw-conclusions worksheet](#). Have students identify details from the story and prior knowledge they have about those details. Then, have students make

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

inferences on the basis of that information. Have students discuss the inferences with a partner.

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:

Make inferences / draw conclusions

Review the make-inferences / draw-conclusions worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to discuss their inferences as a class and share why and how they made those inferences.

Comprehension Extension

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

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary but sample responses may include: *yes, I believe the monkey's paw really has power because after Damien wishes for Bruiser to come back, there are loud thuds and growling sounds outside, and the sounds disappear only after Kara makes another wish.*)

Comprehension Checks

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

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Adjectives

- Have students look at the illustration on page 3. Ask them to come up with a list of words that describe the characters. Have volunteers share the words they came up with and write the words on the board.
- Point out that the words they just listed are called *adjectives*. Explain that *adjectives* are words that describe nouns and pronouns and that adjectives tell *which one*, *how many*, and *what kind*.
- Write the following sentence on the board: *Kara holds the paw to the flickering light and brushes away some soot.* Have students work with a partner to identify the adjective in the sentence and the noun or pronoun it describes. Then have students determine whether the adjective describes *which one*, *how many*, or *what kind*.

- **Check for understanding:** Have students reread page 8 independently, circle all of the adjectives, and underline the noun or pronoun each describes. Then have them identify whether each adjective describes *which one*, *how many*, or *what kind*. Invite students to share their findings with the class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **adjectives worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Alphabetical order

- Review or explain the process of putting a list of words into alphabetical order, including words that begin with the same letter.
- Write the following words on separate pieces of paper and display them on the board: *Shelly, Damien, shriveled, Kara, shaking, Miguel*. Discuss how to place these words in alphabetical order, reminding students to look at the first letter in each word. Explain that if two words begin with the same letter they will then need to look at the second letter or even the third letter to determine the correct order.
- Have students work in small groups, and give each group the following eight words: *disheveled, darkness, Kara, shriek, darts, Shelly, dark, Damien*. Invite students to work together to put these words in alphabetical order. Invite volunteers from each group to share their answer.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students make a list of eight words that they will exchange with a partner. Instruct them to make at least half of the words in the list begin with the same two or three letters. Invite students to trade their lists with a partner and place the words in correct alphabetical order. Have students review their responses with their 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.