

Focus Question:

How has New York City's skyline changed?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

New York City is a major world hub with an unmistakable yet evolving skyline. Yet this thriving city wasn't always a towering metropolis. *A New Skyline* details the history and evolution of New York City's skyline. The book can also be used to teach students how to effectively sequence events and the proper use of adjectives.

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



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Determine a sequence of events
- ☐ Describe information provided by captions
- ☐ Recognize and use adjectives
- ☐ Identify and use compound words

Materials

- ☐ Book: *A New Skyline* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Sequence events, adjectives, compound words 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: *architects* (n.), *complex* (n.), *innovations* (n.), *landmark* (n.), *skeleton* (n.), *spire* (n.)

Enrichment: *commerce* (n.), *efficient* (adj.), *excavating* (v.), *populated* (adj.), *unveiled* (v.), *vertically* (adv.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *area* (n.), *constructed* (v.), *design* (n.), *identify* (v.), *structures* (n.), *support* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Display on the board a map of the world. Invite students to share the names of major cities around the world and locate them on the map. Then display a map of the United States and have students name major cities in the United States and locate them on the map. Point to New York City and invite students to share their knowledge or experiences of the city.
- Write the word *skyline* on the board and have students read it aloud. Have students share what they know about the word *skyline*. Display an image of New York City's skyline and the skyline of another major city in the United States. Have students work with a partner to compare and contrast the images. Discuss with students how a city's skyline can reflect its history.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *A New Skyline*. 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 Comprehension Skill:

Sequence events

- Review with students that events from history are told in order from beginning to end, or in *sequence*. Point out that a timeline is a helpful tool when reading nonfiction texts about historical events. Draw a timeline on the board and demonstrate how a timeline is organized and how to record information on it.
- Use important events from your own life to demonstrate how to create a timeline. Point out

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

that only the most important events are included. Have students work with a small group to create a timeline using the information from the chart on page 7. Draw a new timeline on the board and invite volunteers to come and fill it out. Have students compare the chart to the timeline.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Summarize

- Remind students that engaged readers summarize as they read. Review with students that a summary of a nonfiction book includes the main idea and supporting details. Explain that a summary may be created for the entire book or for each section of the book.
- Refer to the timeline of your life recorded on the board and use this information to create a summary. Explain to students that when creating a summary, either written or oral, transition words such as the following are often used to organize information: *first, next, then, after, during, in, and finally*. Recite your summary based on the timeline and have students raise their hand every time they hear a transition word.
- Have students review their timelines from the chart on page 7 and work in small groups to create an oral summary. Remind students to include transition words and to the most important details. Have student groups share their summaries with the class.

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 New York City’s changing skyline. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer.
- 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 are city skylines similar to fingerprints? How are they different?* (level 1) page 4
- *What caused New York City to become the most densely populated city in the world by 1925?* (level 1) page 5
- *Why were new building methods needed in New York in its early stages of development?* (level 2) pages 5–6
- *What kinds of structural innovations were used to build the World Trade Center towers?* (level 2) pages 11–12
- *How did the attacks on New York City on September 11, 2001, change the skyline?* (level 2) pages 13–15
- *How did the development of new building methods affect New York City’s skyline?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *What part of New York’s skyline do you like best? Why?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Captions

Explain that captions are the sections of text that accompany photographs and illustrations and help the reader understand them. Have students turn to page 5 and read the caption. Ask students the following questions: *How does this caption help you understand the photograph? Does the caption provide information about how New York City’s skyline has changed over time? Why did the author choose to include a caption with this photograph?* Invite students to share their responses with the class. Have them work in small groups to read other captions in the text and discuss why the author included this information.

Skill Review

- Draw a new timeline on the board. Read the section “Building an Empire” aloud to students. Have students discuss with a partner the proper sequence of events. Then invite volunteers to come to the board and add appropriate details to the timeline.
- Model using a sequence of events to create a summary. **Think-aloud:** *Now that I have the events organized on the timeline, I refer to these events and the main idea to create a summary, such as the following:* During the 1920s, two of New York City’s best-known structures were built. In 1928, construction began on the Chrysler Building. The builder wanted it to be the tallest building in the world, so after construction he added a spire to it. In 1930, it became the tallest building in the world, standing over 1,000 feet tall. Meanwhile, another skyscraper was being built just blocks away. This new building, the Empire State Building, took the title for world’s tallest building in 1931. Over time it has become a symbol of New York City.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

- Have students reread the section titled “Two Giants Rise, Then Fall.” Have students work in small groups to create a timeline of the events presented in this section. Invite each group to share their timeline with the class.
- Have students work in small groups and refer to their timeline to create a written summary of the section “Two Giants Rise, Then Fall.” Remind students that a summary typically begins with the main idea and is followed by the most important details. Invite each group to share their summary with the class.
- Model how to complete the [sequence events worksheet](#). Have students fill it in as they read.

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: **Sequence events**

Review the sequence events worksheet that students completed. Have students share and discuss their work in groups. Then have student groups create an oral summary of the entire book referring to the information on their worksheet.

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. (Students’ responses should include the following details: *New York City’s skyline has changed by growing upward, with skyscrapers soaring into the sky and new buildings coming and going. Sometimes the change is rapid and sometimes slow, but New York’s skyline continues to evolve.*)

Comprehension Checks

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

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Adjectives**

- Review with students that *adjectives* are *words that describe nouns and pronouns*. An adjective tells which one, how many, or what kind.

- Write the following sentence on the board and read it aloud to students: *At the top of the tower is a lighted spire*. Have students look for a word that describes one of the nouns. Invite a volunteer to come to the board and underline the adjective (*lighted*). Then have a different volunteer circle the noun described by the adjective (*spire*). Discuss with students how the adjective *lighted* describes the kind of spire added to the building.
- Write the following sentence on the board and read it aloud to students: *Huge steel beams were connected to form the building’s skeleton*. Have them work in small groups to identify the adjectives in the sentence and the modified noun. Invite groups to share their findings with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to reread the section titled “Growing the Big Apple,” circle each adjective, and underline its corresponding noun or pronoun. Ask students to share a noun with the rest of the class and have other students find its adjective.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [adjectives worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Compound words**

- Write the word *skyline* on the board. Ask students which two words were joined together to make the word *skyline* (*sky* and *line*). Explain that this word is called a compound word and that a *compound word* contains *two words that join together to create a new meaning*. Explain that the definitions of the two separate words can help students to figure out the meaning of the bigger word.
- Have students work in small groups to reread page 4 and highlight the compound words (*outline, skyline, fingerprints, however, sometimes*). Then invite volunteers to identify each word within the compound. Have students work in their groups to discuss the words’ definitions and use the compound words in complete sentences. Invite volunteers to share sentences with the rest of the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to locate and circle all of the compound words in the section “Growing the Big Apple.” Have them list the compound words on a separate piece of paper and circle the two smaller words in each compound. Then have them use each compound word in an oral sentence to demonstrate understanding of the word’s meaning.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compound words worksheet](#). If time allows, have students share their responses.

Connections

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