



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 10 Word Count: 152

Book Summary

The Food Chain features five items in the food chain. The book describes how each link in the food chain is consumed by the link that follows it. The book concludes with a one-page photo sequence of the parts of the food chain depicted in the book.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Ask and answer questions to understand text
- Sequence events in a process
- Blend phonemes
- Identify vowel digraph ea
- Capitalize sentence beginnings and punctuate sentence endings
- Locate and read compound words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*The Food Chain* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- [Sequence events, capitalization and punctuation, compound words worksheets](#)
- Word journal (optional)
- [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](#).

- High-frequency words: *all*, *other*, *they*
- Content words:
 - Story critical: *air* (n.), *animals* (n.), *plants* (n.), *soil* (n.), *sunlight* (n.), *water* (n.)
 - Enrichment: *bear* (n.), *fish* (n.), *food chain* (n.), *frog* (n.), *grasshopper* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Show or draw a chain. Explain to students that each piece of the chain is called a link. Have students share their experiences of using chains to link things together.
- Write the words *Food Chain* on the board. Invite students to share what they know about a food chain. Write their responses on the board under the heading *Food Chain*.

Book Walk

Introduce the Book

- Show students the front and back covers of the book and read the title with them. Ask what they might read about in a book called *The Food Chain*. (Accept any answers students can justify.)
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Ask and answer questions**

- Explain to students that one way to understand a book is to ask questions about the story before and during reading, and then to look for the answers as they read.
- Model asking a question based on the front cover.
Think-aloud: I know that good readers ask questions before they read a book. I know that this helps them set a purpose for reading. When I look at the pictures on the front and back covers of the book, I see pictures of strawberries and a lion. The title of the book is The Food Chain. I wonder what a food chain is and what lions and strawberries have to do with a chain. Asking these questions gets me thinking about the book and gives me a purpose for reading because I want to find the answers to my questions.
- Write these questions on the board. Have students preview the covers and title page of the book. Ask them to share questions they have about the book. Write these questions on the board.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Use the pictures to preview the book with students. Reinforce new vocabulary by incorporating it into the discussion. For example, on page 3, you might say: *What do green plants need in order to live? That's right, plants need water, sunlight, air, and soil to live.* On page 5, say: *What do these animals eat? That's right, they eat meat. They are called meat eaters.*
- Reinforce word-attack strategies by modeling how to read unfamiliar words. Read the first sentence on page 3 to students. Point to the word *sunlight*. Explain that when readers come to an unfamiliar word, they can look inside the word for smaller words they know. Then they can use what they know about sounds and letters to figure out the word. Point to the word *sun* in the word *sunlight*. Then point to the word *light*. Run your finger under the word and demonstrate how to blend the sounds together to read the word *grasshopper*. Reread the sentence. Point out that good readers always reread to make sure the new word makes sense in the sentence.
- Encourage students to add new vocabulary words to their word journals.


Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find answers to their questions about the food chain. Remind them to continue to ask and answer questions as they read.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Have a volunteer point to the first word on page 3 (*All*). Point out where to begin reading on each page. Remind students to read words from left to right. Point to each word as you read it aloud while students follow along in their own book.
- Ask students to place a finger on the page number in the bottom corner of the page. Have them read to the end of page 6, using their finger to point to each word as they read. Encourage students who finish before others to reread the text.

- Model answering questions.
Think-aloud: Before reading, I wanted to know what a food chain was and how plants and lions are part of a chain. I learned that some living things eat plants, like strawberries. They are called plant eaters. Other living things, such as lions, eat the plant eaters. They are called meat eaters. All these living things are part of a chain. The food chain links the food each animal eats. I wonder what the steps are in the food chain. I'll keep reading to find out if my question is answered.
 - Ask students whether they were able to answer any of the questions on the board. Ask them whether they thought of additional questions as they were reading. Write these questions on the board.
 - Have students read the remainder of the story. Remind them to keep looking for answers to their questions as they read.
-  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 the discussion that follows.

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.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Invite students to share answers they found to their questions while reading. Discuss how asking and answering questions in their mind as they read made them think about what they were reading.
- *Think-aloud: I wanted to know what the steps are in the food chain. I found out that first a plant grows. Next a plant eater eats the plant. Then a meat eater eats the plant eater.*
- Discuss additional strategies students used to gain meaning from the book.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: Sequence events

- **Discussion:** Ask students to share new information they learned about the food chain. Ask them to name different living things from the book.
- **Introduce and model:** Tell students that this book tells about the steps of the food chain. These steps happen in a particular order. First one thing happens, then something else, and so on. Explain that the order in which the steps happen is called the *sequence*. Point out the sequence in this book.
Think-aloud: In this book, the first step is the plant makes food to grow. Next, the grasshopper eats the plant. Then, the frog eats the grasshopper. The order of the steps in the food chain is important. It wouldn't make sense if the grasshopper ate the frog. I need to tell the most important events in the correct order.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students tell the sequence of events through the end of the story. If necessary, use the pictures in the book as a guide.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [sequence events worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

 Instruct students to use the last page of their book to write about and draw their favorite food. Ask students to share their drawing with the group.

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Blend phonemes

- Say the word *fish* by segmenting it into its individual phonemes: /f/ /i/ /sh/. Tell students that you can tell what the word is by blending the sounds together to say the whole word: *fish*.


Lesson Plan *(continued)*

The Food Chain

- Say the following words to students by segmenting them into their individual phonemes: *frog*, *meat*, *eats*, *plant*, *chain*. Pause after saying each word and have students blend the sounds together to say each word.

Phonics: **Vowel digraph ea**

- Have students turn to page 5 and find the word *meat*. Have a volunteer read the word while you write it on the board. Ask students what sound they hear in the middle of the word. Explain to them that the letters *e* and *a* together sometimes make the long /e/ sound they hear in the middle of the word *meat*.
- Write the *ea* letter combination on the board. Have students trace the letter combination on their hand while saying the sound it represents.

 Have students locate and circle other *ea* digraph words in the book that make the long /e/ sound: *each*, *leaves*, *meat*, *eaters*, *eats*. Have them read each word to a partner.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Capitalization and punctuation**

- Have students turn to page 3 in the book and locate the first sentence. Review or explain that all sentences begin with a capital letter. Have students point to the capital letter at the beginning of each sentence on the page.
- Explain to students that sentences end with a signal that tells readers when to stop reading. Read the first sentence on page 3 and point to the *period* at the end of the sentence. Explain that the period signals the end of the sentence. Have students locate and point to the periods on page 3.
- Ask students to suggest sentences and write them on the board, leaving off the end punctuation. Have volunteers come to the board and correct the sentences.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [capitalization-and-punctuation worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Compound words**

- Have students turn to page 7 and locate the word *grasshopper*. Read the word with students. Ask them to identify smaller words they know in the word *grasshopper*. Point out that the words *grass* and *hopper* make up the larger word *grasshopper*.
- Invite students to share what they know about the meaning of the words *grass* and *hopper* (*grass* is a plant that covers the ground, *hopper* is a person or thing that hops, which is similar to the action word *jumps*). Explain to them that combining the meanings of these two words helps to tell the meaning of the word *grasshopper* (something that hops in the grass).
- Repeat this process with the word *snowman*. Ask students to use what they know about the words *snow* and *man* to explain to a partner the meaning of the word *snowman*.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compound words worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, allow partners to 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.

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing Connection

Discuss with students the steps of a familiar process, such as getting ready for school in the morning. Have them draw and label the steps they take in order. Invite students to share their sequence with a partner.

Social Studies Connection

Provide students with reference books and magazines about animals. Have them identify whether each animal is a plant eater or a meat eater. Create a class chart.

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:

- consistently generate questions about the food chain before and during reading; answer questions while reading
- sequence steps in the food chain during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately blend individual phonemes together to form words
- identify and read digraph ea words that produce the long /e/ sound
- correctly punctuate sentences with periods during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly read and identify meanings of compound words

Comprehension Checks

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