

### About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 24 Word Count: 1,855

### Book Summary

Isaac Green and two of his friends want to skateboard down a five-mile-long irrigation ditch that has no water in it during the months of November and December. If they can skate the entire "Snake" without "getting bitten," they will earn the right to wear a coiled snake patch on their jackets. The only thing in their way is a high school bully named Cliff. Skaters and nonskaters alike will enjoy the characters, setting, and riveting plot of this "good guy versus bad guy" story.

### About the Lesson

#### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

#### Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of making connections to prior knowledge to understand fictional text
- Understand and identify story elements
- Understand and use quotation marks and associated punctuation
- Recognize noun and verb forms of content vocabulary

#### Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Wheeling the Snake* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Story elements, quotation marks, content vocabulary worksheets
- 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

Content words:

Story critical: *harassing (v.), irrigation (n.), muttered (v.), ominous (adj.), taunts (n.), tradition (n.)*

Enrichment: *hesitantly (adv.), pipeline (n.), sarcastically (adv.)*

### Before Reading

#### Build Background

- Discuss skateboarding and in-line skating. Ask students to share their experiences and any technical terms they know. Mention that the term *skater* is used for both sports and that the term *skateboarder* is also used for skateboarding.
- Have students tell what they know about safety gear and etiquette. For example, helmets should always be worn to avoid serious injury. Skateboarders should not drop into a ramp without checking to be sure they are not putting another skateboarder at risk. When skateboarders fall, they should get up and out of the way quickly unless they are seriously injured. Skateboarders and in-line skaters should always yield to pedestrians.

### Preview the Book

#### Introduce the Book

- Give students a copy of the book and have them preview the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers and offer ideas as to what kind of book this is and what it might be about.

#### Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Connect to prior knowledge**

- Explain to students that thinking about what they already know about the topic of a book as they read helps them understand and remember what they read.
- Model making a connection to prior knowledge.  
*Think-aloud: Believe it or not, people skateboarded back when I was a girl. We didn't have the money to buy a skateboard, so my dad made me one. He painted a board green and attached the wheels from roller skates to it. It worked great. I can't remember why I quit skateboarding.* (Tailor comments to fit personal experience.)
- Show students the title page. Talk about the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).
- Have students preview the rest of the book, looking at and discussing what they see in the illustrations. Ask if any of the illustrations remind them of experiences they have had or have heard about from friends.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

#### Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out a word. They can look for base words, prefixes, and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Direct students to page 3 and have them find the word *irrigation*. Tell students they can look at the letters the word begins with to help them sound out the word. Remind them to apply their knowledge of syllables and vowels (one vowel sound per syllable). Tell them they can use context clues to determine the meaning of the word. Read the sentence containing the unfamiliar word, pointing out the phrase about the water being carried to farmlands below. The sentence that follows says that one of these ditches carries water five miles to alfalfa fields. Explain that students can use these clues to figure out that an irrigation ditch delivers water to farmers.
- Explain that sometimes a context clue can be found in the same sentence, but at other times students will need to use clues from the rest of the paragraph to make a guess about the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Tell them that if their guess doesn't make sense in the sentence, they can look up the word in a dictionary or thesaurus.
- Have students find the third paragraph on page 11. Ask what they think *goofing at the rail* means. Ask what they think *blew a gasket* means. Ask volunteers to think of sentences that have the same meanings as these two expressions.
- Discuss the technical terms in the story, such as *poor backside 180-kick flip* on page 11, *kicked the tail out* on page 20, and *spun a ragged 360* on page 22. Ask if anyone can explain the moves that these terms refer to.


#### Set the Purpose

- Tell students as they read the book to think about what they know about in-line skating and skateboarding.

### During Reading

#### Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 13. Tell them to pay special attention to words or phrases in the book that remind them of experiences they have had or have heard about related to skateboarding or in-line skating. If they finish before everyone else, they should go back and reread.
- When they have finished reading, have students share any experiences of being challenged by a friend to do something difficult. Have them tell whether they agreed to the challenge and how they evaluated whether or not it was wise to say yes. Have them tell the outcome of the challenge (whether or not it turned out to be wise after all).
- Ask students to share other aspects of the story that remind them of experiences in their own lives.
- Have students read the remainder of the book, continuing to connect experiences in their own lives with the events in the story.

 Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.


### After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, students 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

- Discuss how making connections with what students already know about the topic of the book keeps them actively involved in the reading process and helps them remember what they've read.

#### Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Story elements**

- **Discussion:** Ask students if they were reminded of other experiences in their own lives as they read the rest of the story. Ask if any students had ever set a challenging goal for themselves and then achieved it. Ask how they felt after they succeeded. Ask whether their success prompted them to set other challenging goals.
- **Introduce and model:** Tell students that all stories have certain things in common: *characters* (who/ what is in the story), *setting* (where the story takes place), *plot* (the events that happen in the story), and a *problem* that the characters need to solve (the problem is usually solved near the end of the story). Explain that *Wheeling the Snake* has all of these elements.
- **Model identifying story elements.**  
*Think-aloud: I know that the most important characters in this story are Isaac, Sam, Jessie, and Cliff. If it weren't for these four characters, the story wouldn't be nearly as interesting to readers. It also wouldn't be nearly as interesting without the challenge of the Snake.*
- **Check for understanding:** Have students name the other characters in the story. Give them the **story elements worksheet**. Explain the instructions and point out the box labeled *Problem*. Discuss what the story problem is. Point out the boxes on the worksheet where students should list what happened in the story.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the worksheet. Discuss their responses.  
 **Extend the discussion:** Have students think of another way Isaac could have dealt with Cliff. Have them use the last page of their book to write a short paragraph telling what Isaac might have done instead. Have them share their paragraphs with the group.

### Build Skills

#### Grammar and Mechanics: Quotation marks

- Have students turn to page 7 in the book. Read the page with students. Ask who is speaking first and how they know who it is. Circle the quotation marks and explain that these are placed before and after a speaker's exact words. Point out the question mark and explain that it is placed inside the quotation marks at the end of the spoken words.
- Have students look at the next paragraph. Ask who is speaking. Point out the absence of the words *she said*. Explain that in order to make a story easier to read and more realistic, writers sometimes leave out those words if the reader can figure out who is speaking from other clues in the sentence or paragraph. Point out the period at the end of the first words she speaks (because it's the end of the sentence). Point out the comma in her dialogue at the end of the paragraph (because other words follow the words she speaks).
- Have students look at the next words spoken and identify the speaker. Reinforce that they can tell who is speaking because Isaac and Jessie are having a conversation and are taking turns speaking. Point out that the dialogue doesn't require complete sentences and is often more realistic without them. Call attention to the end punctuation in the sentence.
- Have students look at the next paragraph and tell who is speaking. Point out the comma at the end of her words before the writer tells how she says the words. Point out the exclamation mark at the end of the next sentence.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students complete the [quotation marks worksheet](#). Discuss their responses.

#### Word Work: Content vocabulary

- Write the words *irrigation* and *irrigate* on the board. Explain that one of these words is a noun and one is a verb. Ask students to identify each and to tell how they know. Explain that some words have both noun and verb forms.
- Tell students that *teach* and *teacher* are two more examples. Ask students to think of other word pairs. List these on the board, discussing the noun and verb forms.
- Explain to students that the noun and verb forms of some words are identical. Write the word *dance* on the board and have student volunteers give examples of sentences in which *dance* is used as a noun and as a verb.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students complete the [content vocabulary worksheet](#) by filling in the missing noun or verb form for each word listed. Provide dictionaries for students to use if they need help.

### 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

#### Writing Connection

Have students reread pages 22 and 23. Ask them to write an ending to the story that tells what might have happened if the kids had not been confronted by Cliff. Have students share their endings with the group.

### Social Studies Connection

Have students turn to page 17. Ask them if Jessie's comments to Cliff were the best way to deal with a bully. Have students suggest things they might do instead, such as walking away, using humor, trying to make friends with the bully, or asking an adult for help. Provide role-playing situations in which students can practice appropriate and nonviolent ways to deal with a bully.

### 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:**

- use the strategy of making connections to prior knowledge to understand text
- identify the setting, main characters, and plot of a story
- recognize the placement of quotation marks and understand associated punctuation
- understand the noun and verb forms of content vocabulary

### Comprehension Checks

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