

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 20 Word Count: 1,456

Book Summary

Remembering the Alamo tells about the famous battle in 1836 and highlights the leaders on both sides. It recounts the history of Texas and Mexico, the events leading up to the battle, and what happened after Mexican troops defeated the Texans. Illustrations, diagrams, photos, a time line, and maps support the informative text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of asking and answering questions to understand informational text
- Identify main ideas and details
- Recognize adjectives in text
- Identify proper nouns

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—**Remembering the Alamo** (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- **KWL, main idea and details, proper nouns 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: *colony (n.), dictatorship (n.), frontier (n.), missions (n.), siege (n.), spared (v.)*
 Enrichment: *Anglo (n.), call to arms (n.), defiant (adj.), plantations (n.), sharpshooters (n.), swarmed (v.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Have students tell what they know about the Alamo. Create a KWL chart on the board and fill in the first column (*K*) with things students know about the topic. Give students the **KWL worksheet** to fill in as you discuss what they already know about the topic.
- As a group, brainstorm some things students would like to know about the Alamo and have students fill in the second column (*W*) of their worksheets. Write some shared ideas on the class chart, as an example.

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. Model how to ask questions as you preview the book.
- Have students preview the rest of the book. Show students the title page, photos, illustrations, diagrams, maps, time line, and glossary.
- Show students the index. Explain that the alphabetized list and page numbers tell where they can find information about topics in the book. Ask students to find out what pages they can read to find out more about Davy Crockett (11, 12, 18).

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

- Direct students to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. After reviewing the section titles, model using the table of contents as a way to think of questions. Then ask students to share questions they have about the Alamo, based on the covers and table of contents. Record all questions in the second column of the KWL chart, reminding students to write their ideas on their worksheet.
- Model asking questions.
Think-aloud: I can use the section titles to think of questions I'd like to have answered about the Alamo. For example, the second section is titled "History." This makes me wonder about the history of Mexico and Texas before the battle began. I think this is a good question. I'll write it on the chart. I'd also like to know where the Alamo is located. I'll write that question on the chart, too.
- Encourage students to use the photos, maps, glossary, and other book features to help them think of questions to add to their KWL charts.
- Tell students that they might try exploring the index to find the answers to some of their questions. For example, tell them if one of their questions is about Santa Anna, they can find information about him in the index. Have students tell the page numbers where they would look for the information (9, 10, 12-16, 18, 19).
- 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 the 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. Have students find the bold word *defiant* on page 12. Tell students they can look at the letter the word begins with and then think about what they know about syllables and vowels (one vowel sound per syllable) to sound out the rest of the word. Tell students to first look for a clue to the word's meaning in the sentence. Explain that in this book they will not always find a context clue in the sentence that explains the unfamiliar word, but that other information in the paragraph explains it.
- Model how students can use the glossary or a dictionary to find the word's meaning. Have a volunteer read the definition of *defiant* in the glossary. Have students follow along on page 12 as you read the sentence in which the word *defiant* is found to confirm the meaning of the word. Tell them that in this book, all of the words defined in the glossary are written in bold print in the text.
- Preview other vocabulary, such as *plantations*, *siege*, and *colony*, in a similar fashion before students begin reading.


Set the Purpose


- Have students read the book to find factual answers to their questions about the Alamo.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 12. Tell them to look for facts about the Alamo that answer their questions. If they finish before everyone else, they should go back and reread.
- When they have finished reading, have students tell what each section is about so far and the interesting facts they found. Circle any questions on the KWL chart that have been answered and add any new questions students have. Model answering a question on the KWL chart, and writing it in the final column (L).
- **Think-aloud:** *I wanted to know about the history between the two sides before the battle began. I found out that there was a lot of history between Texas and Mexico before the battle at the Alamo. On page 8, I read that the Mexican government outlawed slavery, which angered Anglo settlers in Texas. I also found out that Texas was a part of Mexico in 1824. I'd like to learn more about that. What questions did you find answers to?*
- Have students tell questions they found the answers to while reading. Record their responses on the KWL chart on the board and instruct them to fill in the last column of their own KWL chart.

 Tell students to read the remainder of the book. Remind them to look for answers to the other questions written on the KWL chart, or to think of other questions to add to it as they read. Tell them to write down any questions they have in the page margins of their book and to underline any information that answers a question on the KWL chart.

 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, 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

- Ask students what other questions they came up with for the KWL chart and what questions they answered. Discuss how keeping in mind the questions they wanted to answer kept them actively involved in the reading process and helped them understand and remember what they read.
- **Think-aloud:** *I wanted to know more about Texas once being a part of Mexico. I read in the book that Mexico revolted against Spanish rule and became an independent country in 1821, and this is what made Texas a part of Mexico instead of Spain. I can write the answer on my chart. There are other questions I have that the book didn't answer. I'm going to have to look in other places, such as the Internet or an encyclopedia, to find those answers.*

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- **Discussion:** Ask students what they thought of the battles described in the book. What detail about each battle did they think was most interesting? Ask which of the leaders in the book they admire most.
- **Introduce and model:** Review or explain that many books are about one thing. Tell students that it is easy to tell what a book like this one is about because the topic, or main idea, is the title of the book. Direct students to the table of contents. Explain that each section in this informational book contains details about the Alamo. Have students look at the fourth section title. Explain that the main idea of this section is the battle of the Alamo. It tells details about what time the battle began and ended, who won, and how many men died. Explain that finding details about main ideas in a text helps students understand and remember information as they read.

- **Check for understanding:** Have students look at the seventh section title. Ask what the main idea of this section is (Who's Who at the Alamo). Ask what details the section includes about each person.
- **Independent practice:** Give students the [main-idea-and-details worksheet](#). Discuss their responses.
- **Extend the discussion:** Ask students what they thought of the book. Ask if they would like to visit the Alamo and, if so, what they would expect to see there.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Adjectives

- Review or explain that adjectives are words that describe nouns or pronouns. An adjective tells which one, how many, or what kind.
- Write the following sentences on the board. Ask students to count the number of adjectives in each sentence. Tell them to hold up the same number of fingers as there are adjectives in each sentence, after you read it aloud (2, 1, 3).
Mexican troops flew a red flag.
They fought for twelve days.
The famous battle was short but deadly.
- Have individual students come to the board and circle the adjective(s) in each sentence (*Mexican, red, twelve, famous, short, deadly*). Then have them underline the noun that each adjective describes (*troops, flag, days, battle*). Point out that the first sentence contains two nouns that are being described.
- ✎ **Check for understanding:** Have students use the inside back cover of their book to write *adjective* along with the definition of the term (a word describing a noun or pronoun that tells which one, how many, or what kind) to help them remember the terminology.
- ✎ **Independent practice:** Have students work in pairs to go through the book and underline all of the adjectives they find. Discuss the results as a group, identifying the nouns that each adjective describes.

Word Work: Proper nouns

- Explain that in this book, the names of people and places are capitalized because the first word of a sentence and proper nouns are always capitalized.
- Review or explain that a proper noun is the name of a person, place, or thing. For example, the name *Alamo* is a proper noun. The author's name, *Kira Freed*, is also a proper noun. Ask students to turn to page 11. Ask in which case you capitalize the word *governor*, making it a proper noun (*Governor Henry Smith*, because it is part of his name).
- On the board, write the first sentence from page 10: *In early October 1835, the first battle of the fight for Texas independence took place in the town of Gonzales.* Do not capitalize any of the words, including the letter at the beginning of the sentence. Have students read through the sentence, looking for places to capitalize the appropriate words. Ask for a volunteer to come to the board and change the words to proper nouns (*In, October, Texas, Gonzales*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students each write a sentence of their own choice from the text without capitalizing the appropriate words. Then have students exchange papers and put capital letters in the appropriate places.
- Have students complete the [proper nouns worksheet](#). When everyone has finished, review the answers aloud.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

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

Have students create a *Who's Who at the Alamo* book by selecting one person to research. Have them write a brief report on their person of choice. Provide adequate Internet and print resources to facilitate student research. Bind reports in a book titled "Remembering the Alamo" and display on the classroom bookshelf for all to read.

Visit [Writing A-Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on expository writing.

Social Studies Connection

Discuss what the United States would be like if Texas had become a separate country, as many people wanted. How would it have affected the U.S. relationship with Mexico? How would it have affected the U.S. borders and agricultural production? Ask students to discuss other ways it would have affected history.

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 asking and answering questions to understand informational text
- identify main ideas and details
- recognize adjectives in the text
- correctly identify and capitalize proper nouns found in the text

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)