



About the Book

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Book Summary

Pumpkin carving is a favorite fall tradition.

Let's Carve a Pumpkin explains the steps involved in this fun craft with simple sentences and helpful illustrations. Emergent readers can use the pictures and prior knowledge of the subject to decode the text. Students will also learn about sequencing events.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

Objectives

- Connect to prior knowledge to understand text
- Sequence events
- Discriminate initial and final consonant /s/ sound
- Identify initial and final consonant Ss
- Identify and use exclamatory sentences
- Spell and use the high-frequency word *you*

Materials

Green text indicates resources that are available on the website.

- Book—*Let's Carve a Pumpkin* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Index cards
- Cut-out pictures from an extra copy of the book
- Highlighters
- Sheets of paper
- Sequence events, initial and final consonant Ss, exclamatory sentences worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

- High-frequency words: *ask*, *help*, *you*
- Content words:
Story critical: *carve* (v.), *draw* (v.), *light* (n.), *pumpkin* (n.), *scoop* (v.), *seed* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students to raise their hand if they have seen or made a jack-o'-lantern before. Invite volunteers to come to the board and draw a picture of their own design of a jack-o'-lantern. Have students discuss with a partner their experience with carving pumpkins and what time of year they participate in this activity. Invite volunteers to share their experience with the rest of the class.

- Write the word *carve* on the board and read it aloud with students. Discuss with students the meaning of the word and how it is related to pumpkins. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class other items that people carve.

Book Walk

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. 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: **Connect to prior knowledge**

- Explain to students that engaged readers make connections between the information they read in a book and what they already know about the topic. Point out to students that connecting to prior knowledge helps the reader better understand new information.
- Model connecting to prior knowledge using information from the cover.
Think-aloud: The title of the book is Let's Carve a Pumpkin, and the picture on the cover presents a girl drawing a face on a pumpkin. When I saw the information on the cover, I automatically began to think of my own prior knowledge about the subject. When I was a girl, my family always picked out pumpkins for Halloween. We scooped out their seeds and cut faces out of the front to make jack-o'-lanterns for decoration. We drew faces on the pumpkin first, like the girl in the picture is doing. I also thought about the word carve, which I know means to cut an object. Since the title is about carving pumpkins and the girl is drawing a face on a pumpkin, I assume the story will be about cutting pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns. Connecting to prior knowledge helped me to understand what the book would be about, and it also made me excited to read more about something I enjoyed doing when I was younger.
- Have students preview the rest of the pictures in the book. Ask them to share with a partner any connections they made. Invite volunteers to share a connection with the rest of the class.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Sequence events**

- Explain to students that the steps in a procedure, much like the events in a story, must follow a particular order from beginning to end. Explain to students that when they describe the order in which steps occur, they are describing a sequence of events.
- Point out that transition words such as *first*, *next*, *then*, and *last* are often used to organize the telling of a sequence of events.
- Model sequencing the steps of a familiar process.
Think-aloud: When I get ready for school in the morning, I follow certain steps in a set order. First, I get out of bed. Then, I get dressed and wash up. Next, I have breakfast. Then, I brush my teeth. Last, I collect my materials for the day and leave the house. I follow this sequence of events every morning. This book describes the process of carving a pumpkin. Like getting ready in the morning, carving a pumpkin requires people to follow a certain sequence of steps to successfully complete the activity.
- Write key words about each step on the board as you describe them to students. Have students discuss with a partner what transition words best match each step. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class a transition word for one of the events on the board, and record those words on the board. Remind students that the word *first* only works with the first step described, and the word *last* only works with the last step described.

- Use the key words on the board to describe the sequence of getting ready in the morning with the events out of order. Ask students to nod their head if your description makes sense and to shake their head if it does not. Have students discuss with a partner why a correct sequence of events is so important. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words students will encounter. For example, while looking at the picture on page 8, you might say: *What is the girl drawing? That's right; she is drawing a face. What does the word draw mean? What are other things you can draw?*
- Remind students to look at the picture and break large words into smaller pieces to help decode difficult words. For example, point to the word *pumpkin* on page 4 and say: *I am going to check the picture and think about what would make sense to figure out this word. The sentence says they find something round. The word is large, but I can break it into smaller pieces. I see two smaller word chunks. The second chunk is easy to sound out: it makes the sound /kin/. The first chunk begins with the /p/ sound. The sentence describes this word as round, and when I look at the picture, I see round pumpkins. The word pumpkin begins with the /p/ sound and ends with the /kin/ sound. It makes sense with the sentence. This word must be pumpkin.*
- Pass out six index cards to each student. Write the story-critical vocabulary words on the board, and have students write one word on each card. Discuss the meaning of each word with students, and have them draw a picture representing the meaning of the word on the other side of the index card.
- Have students examine the first picture in the book and discuss with a partner which vocabulary words apply to that picture. Have students place on their desk the index cards that work with the picture. Then, have partners use those cards to create oral sentences, that describe the picture, using the vocabulary words. Repeat the process with several other pictures in the book.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about carving pumpkins. Remind them to make connections to what they already know about the topic and to correctly sequence the information they read.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 3 to the end of page 6. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.
- Model making connections to prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: On page 6, I read about the family scooping out the inside of a pumpkin. When I read this page, I thought about times I cleaned out a pumpkin for carving. The inside felt slimy and slippery. I had to cut the pulp away from the shell, and it took many scoops to clean it all out. My sisters and I laughed at how messy we were. Connecting to prior knowledge helped me to understand why the book described the process as gross but fun. It also helped me enjoy the book more because I could easily relate to what the characters were doing, and I could almost feel like I was there with them.
- Record on the board the prior knowledge you described in the think-aloud, using key words and pictures. Reinforce with students how your prior knowledge is related to the information in the book.
- Have students share with a partner connections they made between their prior knowledge and what they read on these pages. Have students draw a picture of the prior knowledge they connected to the book. Remind students that their picture should reflect what they already knew about the subject, not just what they learned from reading.
- Have students share their picture with a partner and explain how it connects to something they read.

- Ask students to identify with a partner the first step in carving a pumpkin. Call on a random student to share it with the rest of the class, and record it on the board using key words and pictures. Have students call out the transition word the book uses to describe this step. Write the word *first* on the board above the key words and picture.
- Ask students to nod their head if the next step is scooping out the insides and to shake their head if that is not the next step. Discuss with students why that step can't be next in the sequence of events (the family doesn't even have a pumpkin yet). Invite a volunteer to share the next step with the rest of the class. Write the word *next* on the board, and beneath it record the next step in the sequence using key words and pictures.
- Write the words *then* and *next* on the board. Have students discuss with a partner the correct order of the next two steps described in the book. Invite volunteers to share the next steps, and record them in the appropriate place in the sequence.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 9. Encourage them to share with the rest of the class how they connected to prior knowledge as they read.
- Place on the board the cut-out pictures from an extra copy of the book. Use pages 3 through 9, and place them on the board in the wrong order. Have students discuss with a partner the proper sequence for the pictures. Invite volunteers to come to the board and rearrange the pictures into the correct order.
- Have students refer to the pictures on the board to describe the sequence of events to a partner. Encourage students to use transition words when identifying the steps. Invite volunteers to describe the sequence to the rest of the class.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to make connections between what they know and what they read and to pay attention to the transition words used to clarify the sequence of events.



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

- Have students discuss with a partner the final connections they made to the book. Ask students to draw one more picture representing the prior knowledge they connected with information they learned. Invite volunteers to share their picture with the rest of the class and explain how it connects with information in the book.
- **Think-aloud:** *As I read page 12, I noticed how happy the family looked, and I saw that the sentence used an exclamation mark to denote excitement. I thought about when my family finished carving pumpkins. We set them outside our front door, too, so our neighbors could see our jack-o'-lanterns. We were delighted and proud of our creations. Connecting to prior knowledge helped me to understand the emotion presented in the book and enabled me to enjoy it more because I felt so connected to what I read.*
- Have students discuss with a partner how making connections to prior knowledge helped them to understand and enjoy what they read. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review with students the steps involved in carving a pumpkin, and refer to the sequenced pictures on the board. Place the cut-out pictures from the last three pages of the book on the board, in an incorrect sequence. Have students discuss with a partner how to order these steps, and invite a volunteer to come to the board and rearrange the pictures. Discuss with students what transition words best accompany each picture. Invite volunteers to come to the board and write one of the following words above each picture: *first*, *then*, *next*, or *last*.
- Remove the pictures from the board. Assign students a partner, and have one student in each pair pretend to be a person who has never carved a pumpkin before. Have the other partner describe the process to their partner, using a correct sequence of events and appropriate transition words. Then, have students switch roles and repeat. Reinforce to students that they have to use the proper sequence of steps in order to accurately explain the process to a person who has never done it before.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [sequence events worksheet](#). Have them work in pairs to check their work.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you read about the steps involved in carving pumpkins. When do people typically do this activity, and why do they do it?

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Initial and final consonant /s/ sound

- Say the word *seeds* aloud to students, emphasizing the initial /s/ sound. Have students say the word aloud and then say the /s/ sound.
- Have students discuss with a partner how the sound at the beginning of the word compares to the sound at the end of the word. Say the word *seeds* aloud again, emphasizing each phoneme. Point out that the word begins and ends with the same sound.
- Read pages 7 and 8 aloud, and have students clap their hands when they hear a word beginning with the /s/ sound and clap their desk when they hear a word ending with the /s/ sound. Ask students whether they heard a word that has the /s/ sound at the beginning and end of the word, and reinforce that *seeds* starts and ends with the same sound.
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words one at a time: *see*, *snack*, *lights*, *scoop*, *things*, *carves*, and *same*. Have students hold up one finger if the word begins with the /s/ sound and hold up two fingers if the word ends with the /s/ sound.

Phonics: Initial and final consonant Ss

- Write the word *seeds* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /s/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letter represents the /s/ sound in the word *seeds*. Point out to students that the word *seeds* has the /s/ sound at the beginning and end of the word.
- Write the letter *Ss* on the board and have students trace the letter in the air. Point out to students that the letter *Ss* has a shape similar to a snake, which makes a hissing sound like the /s/ sound, and the word *snake* starts with the letter *Ss*. Have students practice writing the letter *Ss* on a separate piece of paper while saying the /s/ sound. Encourage students to turn some of their letters into snakes while making a hissing sound.
- Have students work in groups to brainstorm a list of words that begin with the /s/ sound. Then, ask groups to brainstorm a list of words that end with the /s/ sound. Call on groups up to the board to write one word, and have the other students point to the letter *Ss* and identify whether it comes at the beginning or end of the word.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *sun*, *cats*, *has*, *sit*, *pens*, *say*, *sips*, and *soft*. Say each word, one at a time, and have volunteers come to the board and circle the letter *Ss* in each word while other students trace the letter *Ss* in the air. Ask students to point to the word that begins and ends with the letter *Ss*.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [initial-and-final-consonant-Ss worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Exclamatory sentences**

- Write the following sentence on the board and read it aloud with students: *Be careful when you cut!* Explain to students that every sentence has a signal at the end to show readers where to stop reading. Ask students to point to the signal at the end of the sentence. Circle the exclamation mark.
- Have students share with a partner what punctuation mark typically ends a sentence (a period). Explain to students that the punctuation mark on the board is called an *exclamation mark*. Have students trace an exclamation mark on their desk.
- Explain to students that sentences ending in exclamation marks are exclamatory sentences. Explain that an *exclamatory sentence* is a sentence that expresses strong emotion, such as surprise, excitement, or warning. Ask students to discuss with a partner what feeling the sentence on the board is expressing (warning).
- Pass out highlighters to the students. Have students find and highlight every exclamatory sentence in the book. Invite volunteers to share a sentence they found with the rest of the class, and have other students give a thumbs-up signal if they agree it is exclamatory.
- Demonstrate how to read an exclamatory sentence with feeling: first read the sentence in a normal tone of voice, and then read it with emotional emphasis. Explain to students that the exclamation mark commands the reader to read the sentence with feeling. Have students practice reading to a partner the highlighted sentences from the book with appropriate expression.
- **Check for understanding:** Write on the board a mixture of exclamatory and declaratory sentences, leaving off the ending punctuation marks. Read the sentences to students, and have them work in groups to decide whether to use a period or an exclamation mark to end each sentence. Invite volunteers to come to the board and add the appropriate punctuation mark. Then, have students practice reading the exclamatory sentences aloud.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [exclamatory sentences worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **High-frequency word you**

- Write the word *you* on the board and read it aloud with students. Explain to students that they will often see this word in books they read, and they should memorize it so they don't have to spend time decoding it.
- Have students trace the word *you* at the top of their desk with a finger while you spell it aloud.
- Invite a volunteer to come to the front of the class and stand beside you. Point to yourself and say the word *me* aloud, then point to the student and say the word *you* aloud. Have students imitate your actions with a partner. Remind students that the word *you* is a pronoun referring to the person being spoken to.
- Have students work with a partner to quiz each other on spelling the word *you*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students think of three oral sentences using the word *you*. Have them share their sentences with a partner and then spell the word *you* aloud. Invite volunteers to share one sentence with the rest of the class.

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. Have them discuss the connections they made to the book with someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Procedural Writing and Art Connection

Discuss with students other activities that require people to follow a specific sequence of steps, such as board games, making a sandwich, building a sand castle, and so on. Generate a list of these activities on the board. Have students choose one activity and describe to a partner the steps involved in completing their activity. Provide students with key words related to the chosen activities. Write the words *first*, *next*, *then*, and *last* on the board. Have students write each step in a sentence, starting with one of the words on the board and using key words to guide the sentence. Ask students to draw a picture illustrating their activity.

Visit WritingA-Z.com for a lesson and leveled materials on procedural writing.

Social Studies Connection

Read to students a fictional book about Halloween. Then, read a book about Dia de los Muertos, and share with students information about that holiday, as well as the Chinese Ghost Festival. Display photographs and items related these holidays. Discuss with students how the three celebrations compare and contrast, and record the comparisons on the board. Have students work in groups to discuss why they think different cultures have celebrations with scary elements. Invite groups to share their thoughts with the rest of the class. Conclude with a Halloween craft.

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 use the strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand text during discussion;
- accurately sequence events during discussion and on a worksheet;
- consistently discriminate initial and final consonant /s/ sound during discussion;
- correctly write the letter symbol that represents the /s/ sound during discussion and on a worksheet;
- correctly use exclamatory sentences during discussion and on a worksheet;
- accurately use the high-frequency word *you* during discussion and in oral sentences.

Comprehension Checks

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