



About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 22 Word Count: 2,852

Book Summary

Leaving Home is a fictional narrative about a boy who moves with his family from Jamaica to the United States. The story details Desmond's feelings as he begins a new life in a city with a strange climate, a different school, and no friends. Students who have ever moved to a new place will personally relate to the story.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior experience

Objectives

- Connect to prior experience while reading
- Analyze a character using information in text
- Identify and use action verbs and adverbs that show feelings
- Understand content vocabulary

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Leaving Home* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Character analysis, verbs and adverbs, 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: *detachment (n.), gloss (v.), incessantly (adv.), quirks (n.), reprieve (n.), stupefied (adj.)*

Enrichment: *adorned (v.), laden (adj.), mayhem (n.), patois (n.), savory (adj.), vigil (n.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students what it is like to move to a new place or go someplace new. Ask students who have moved to tell how they felt when they learned they were going to move. Have them talk about the experiences they had making new friends and adjusting to a new place and a different school.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students a copy of the book. 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. Have them predict what they will read about in *Leaving Home*.

- Direct students to the table of contents. Review or explain that this is a chapter book in which the chapters are not titled. Tell students that authors often divide books into chapters that have the same main idea in order to make the book easier to understand.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Connect to prior experience**

- Explain to students that having some prior experience about the topic of a book and making a connection with what they know while they are reading helps them understand and remember the information in the book.
- Model using the illustrations and title as a way to make connections with prior experience.
Think-aloud: *When I looked at the illustrations and the title, they reminded me of when I moved to a new school. I moved from the city to the country. I didn't know any of the kids at the new school. I felt awkward not knowing where to go and intimidated by the groups of friends. I was fortunate to have some kids talk to me the first week. I hope the boy in this book finds some friends right away to help him adjust. I'll have to read the book to find out if he does.*
- Have students preview the rest of the book, looking at the illustrations and map.
- 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 within words, prefixes, and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. For example, point out a word in bold, such as the word *incessantly* on page 4. Model how students can use context clues to figure out the meaning of the word. Read the sentence in which the word is found and ask students what the word *incessantly* means (not stopping). Then have students check the glossary to confirm the word's meaning.
- Remind students that they should check whether a word makes sense by rereading the sentence.
- Have students turn to the glossary on page 22. Have them read the glossary words and their definitions aloud. Next, have students turn to the pages indicated and read each glossary word in the sentence in which it is found. Use context clues in the surrounding sentences to work out unfamiliar vocabulary words as necessary.

Set the Purpose

- Have students remember how they felt moving to someplace new, or being the new person in an unfamiliar situation, as they read the book.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Review or explain that this story is written in the first-person narrative style. The author is retelling events as they actually happened. Have students read to the end of page 7. Tell them to underline the names of the characters, where and when the story takes place, and any important events that occur. Tell students to go back and reread the chapters if they finish before everyone else.
- When they have finished reading, have students identify the characters and setting. Have students tell the major events that have happened so far in the story. On a world map, show students Jamaica and discuss how close it is to the equator compared to Chicago.
- Model making connections to prior experience.
Think-aloud: *While I read the first two chapters, I thought about my feelings being in a new school. My teacher didn't talk about my move, and I didn't move to a new country. It must be much more difficult for Desmond to adjust than it was for me. I'm hoping that the girl sitting beside him who smiled will make him feel welcome.*

- Tell students to read the remainder of the book, thinking about feelings they have had when placed in a new situation.



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

- Reinforce how connecting to prior experience helps keep readers actively engaged as they are reading and helps them understand and remember what they have read.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Character analysis**

- **Discussion:** Ask students how the author let the reader know how Desmond feels about moving. (Desmond tells what he is thinking and feeling in the text.) Ask students if they have ever experienced similar feelings.
- **Introduce and model:** Ask students which character narrates the story (Desmond). Remind students that a character's words, thoughts, feelings, reactions, and actions indicate what may happen next in a story. Read the last paragraph on page 5 aloud.
Think-aloud: When Mr. Tidewell discusses Jamaica, it makes Desmond feel uncomfortable. We know this because Desmond groans. Do you think Mr. Tidewell actually helped Desmond by talking about Jamaica in class? (Answers will vary.)
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read page 8 and the first paragraph on page 9. Ask them to tell the first action (Mr. Tidewell asks Desmond questions). How does Desmond feel? (He doesn't want to talk and have students laugh at his accent.) What is Mr. Tidewell's reaction? (He asks students to question Desmond.) Explain that the events are part of a chain of feeling, or emotion: action, feeling, and reaction.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the [character analysis worksheet](#). Discuss their responses.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Action verbs and adverbs**

- Read aloud the first two paragraphs on page 5. Discuss the differences in how Desmond felt when he was in school in Jamaica compared to how he feels in his new school.
- Tell students that this author uses many descriptive action verbs and adverbs. These words help us know how Desmond is feeling. Review that *action verbs* tell an action. Review that an *adverb* describes a verb by telling how, when, where, or how often an action happens.
- Tell students to turn to page 6 and read the second paragraph. Ask what action verbs and adverbs the author uses to let the reader know how Desmond is feeling (*imagined, probably bored, sank lower*). Discuss how the words *sank lower into my seat* let the reader know Desmond's feelings.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students think about an uncomfortable experience in which they were the new person. It could be about the first day on a sports team, going to a new school, attending a new group such as Scouts, or moving to a different environment. Tell students they are going to write about this experience using action verbs and adverbs to explain the feelings they experienced. Have students complete the [verbs-and-adverbs worksheet](#). Ask volunteers to share their experiences.
- **Extend the activity:** Ask students to tell some of the action verbs and adverbs they underlined on the worksheet. Write these words on the board. Ask other students to tell what emotions these words express.

Word Work: **Content vocabulary**

- Tell students that many of the words in the book are used in everyday conversations, which helps the reader feel a connection to this book (*Attention, class! a warm welcome*). Some of the words tell us more about Desmond's culture (*patty, tropical colors, reggae music, Ting, patois*).
- **Check for understanding:** Write on the board: *singsong tone, goose bumps rose, breeze and noises wafted, class snickered, her face scrunched*. Provide opportunities for students to define the words and use them in sentences.
- For additional practice, have students complete the [content vocabulary worksheet](#).

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 books to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends.

Extend the Reading

Writing and Art Connection

Have students draw a picture of a face that shows a feeling. Under the picture, have students write one sentence telling about their picture. Remind students to use capital letters and periods.

Social Studies Connection

Provide print and Internet resources for students to research Jamaica. Have groups make posters that tell about life in Jamaica. Topics might include popular foods, industry, tourist attractions, type of government, cultural holidays, languages spoken, and so on.

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:

- connect to prior experience to understand and remember information in text
- analyze a character's feelings and record them on a graphic organizer
- complete a worksheet using action verbs and adverbs to express thoughts and feelings
- understand and use content vocabulary on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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