

Focus Question:

How does being stinky help plants and animals?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

Some plants and animals rely on their odor as a means of survival. *Nature Stinks!* is both an informational and an entertaining look at the strange antics of these smelly creatures. Detailed photographs and captions support in-depth student learning. The book can also be used to reinforce the skills of comparing and contrasting as well as asking and answering questions. The book and lesson are also available for levels H and N.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to understand text
- ☐ Compare and contrast information in a text
- ☐ Describe information provided by captions
- ☐ Identify open vowel y
- ☐ Recognize and use adjectives
- ☐ Place words in alphabetical order

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Nature Stinks!* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Compare and contrast, adjectives, alphabetical order worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

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

• Words to Know

Story critical: *disturb* (v.), *enemies* (n.), *liquid* (n.), *rotten* (adj.), *spray* (v.), *stinky* (adj.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *common* (adj.), *type* (n.), *use* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Place several pictures of different kinds of animals on the board such as a bear, a dog, a hawk, and a skunk. Discuss with students how each animal might protect itself in the wild. Show students several pictures of plants such as a cactus, an oak tree, and a rose bush. Point out that just like animals, plants have defenses that are key to their survival. Discuss various plant and animal defenses and list this information on the board.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Nature Stinks!* 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, author's name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy:

Ask and answer questions

Explain to students that engaged readers consider what they know and don't know about a topic before beginning to read. Create a KWLS chart on the board. Invite students to share their knowledge about how plants and animals use a strong smell to help them survive and record the information in the *K* column. Ask students what questions they have about the topic and record these questions in the *W* column. Point out that the *L* column is to record what they have learned and the *S* column is for information they still want to know that was not included in the book.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Compare and contrast

- Write the words *Compare* and *Contrast* on the board and read them aloud to students. Have students turn to a partner and discuss the definitions of *compare* and *contrast*. Invite students to share their discussions. Explain that to *compare* means to look at the way things are the same and to *contrast* means to look at how things are different.
- Create a Venn diagram on the board and label the right circle *Raccoon* and the left circle *Skunk*. Invite students to share how raccoons and skunks are similar and different. Model how to record their responses on the Venn diagram. Explain to students that using this graphic organizer will help them to better understand and remember what they have read.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the “Words to Know” box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about how plants and animals use their smell to help them survive. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- 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 a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *Why do some plants and animals smell bad?* (level 1) page 4
- *How are wolverines and musk oxen the same? How are they different?* (level 2) pages 7 and 8
- *Why does the corpse flower attract insects?* (level 1) page 9
- *What are the different ways that animals create stink?* (level 2) multiple pages

- *Why is it necessary for centipedes to create a stinky smell?* (level 1) page 13
- *How are stinky plants and animals the same? How are they different?* (level 2) multiple pages
- *Why is being stinky a good way to keep enemies away?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Captions

Explain that *captions* are words that accompany the photographs in a book and give the reader more information. Have students turn to page 6 and locate the captions on the page. Read the captions aloud as students follow along. Point out that these captions provide more information about the animals in the photographs. Explain that captions often provide additional information that the author wants the reader to know about a topic. Have students work in small groups to review the captions on pages 7 and 8. Invite them to discuss why the author chose to include these captions and what additional information they learned from the captions. Have groups share their findings with the class.

Skill Review

- Review the questions listed in the KWLS chart with students. Ask volunteers to share information from the book that answered their questions and record this information in the *L* column. Invite students to share new questions that arose as they read and record them in the *W* column. Remind students that not all questions will be answered in the book and this information should be listed in the *S* column.
- Model comparing and contrasting information from the text.
Think-aloud: As I read, I pause often to think about how the plants and animals in this book are the same and how they are different. Comparing and contrasting helps me remember and understand what I have read. For example, when I compare the stinkbird and the vulture, I know that they have several things in common, including they are both birds and they both use smell to defend themselves from enemies. I will record this information in the Venn diagram to show how stinkbirds and vultures are similar.
- Have students work in small groups to contrast stinkbirds and vultures. Invite each group to share their findings and record this information on the Venn diagram.
- Model how to complete the *compare-and-contrast worksheet*. Have students work in small groups to compare their findings.

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.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: **Compare and contrast**

Review the compare-and-contrast worksheet that students completed. Have students share their responses with the class. Remind students that comparing and contrasting is one way to organize information to help readers better remember and understand what they are reading.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Responses should include the following: *Being stinky helps plants attract helpful insects. Animals create unpleasant smells to keep away enemies.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonics: **Open vowel y**

- Write the word *stinky* on the board and read it aloud with students. Have them locate the word *stinky* on page 4. Ask students what sound they hear at the end of the word *stinky*. Circle the letter *y* at the end of the word and have students do the same on page 4. Point out that sometimes the letter *y* at the end of a word makes the long /e/ sound.
- Read page 6 aloud with students, including the caption. Have students work with a partner to circle words that have the open vowel *y* that makes the long vowel /e/ sound (*stinky, smelly, enemy, body*). Review students' findings as a class.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to reread pages 7 and 8. Invite them to circle the words that include the open vowel *y* that makes the long vowel /e/ sound at the end of the word. Remind students to include headings and captions in their reading. Review findings as a class.
- **Independent practice:** Have student work independently to reread pages 9 and 10 and circle the words containing the open vowel *y*. Invite students to share their findings with a partner and then with the class.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Adjectives**

- Write the following sentence on the board:
Wolverines make a smelly liquid to keep other

animals away from their home. Ask students to identify the word that describes *liquid* (*smelly*). Explain that *smelly* describes the kind of liquid created by the wolverine.

- Remind students that *adjectives* are words that describe people, places, and things. Adjectives are often placed right before the person, place, or thing in a sentence.
- Have students reread pages 5 and 6 aloud in small groups. Invite them to identify and underline all of the adjectives. Invite each group to share their findings with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to reread pages 12 through 14. Invite them to locate and underline all of the adjectives. Have students share their findings in small groups and then as a class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **adjectives worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Alphabetical order**

- Explain to students that sometimes words are organized in *alphabetical order*. Point out that alphabetical order is determined by looking at the first letter of a word and then deciding which letter comes first in the alphabet.
- Write the names of several students on the board and underline the first letter of each name. Have students turn to a partner and discuss which name would come first in alphabetical order and why. Model how to place the names in alphabetical order using the first letter.
- Record three names on the board that begin with the same letter. Explain to students that when two or more words start with the same letter, they must look at the second letter of the word to determine the correct order. Model for students how to place the names beginning with the same letter in alphabetical order.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on sentence strips: *stink, animals, skunk, birds, enemies, smelly, body, plants*. Invite eight volunteers to the front of the room and give each student a word. Read the words aloud as a class. Have students turn to a partner and discuss how to place the words in alphabetical order. Invite a volunteer to arrange the students with the sentence strips in the correct order. Have students give a thumbs-up signal if the order is correct.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **alphabetical order worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.