

Focus Question:

What is a ghost town? How does a town become a ghost town?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

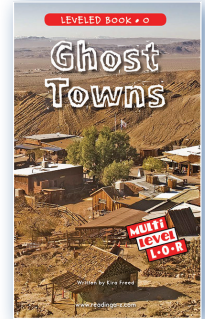
Have you ever seen pictures of an abandoned town and wondered what happened there?

Ghost Towns provides students a comprehensive look at some of these abandoned towns.

Detailed photographs and engaging text will keep students interested in this fascinating topic.

The book can also be used to teach students how to identify cause-and-effect relationships as well as to create a summary to better understand the text.

The book and lesson are also available for levels L and R.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Identify cause and effect
- ☐ Describe information provided by captions
- ☐ Identify consonant digraph *gh*
- ☐ Recognize and use commas after introductory words
- ☐ Identify and use homographs correctly in sentences

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Ghost Towns* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Cause and effect, commas after introductory words, homographs 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: *deserted* (adj.), *landslides* (n.), *nuclear power plant* (n.), *radiation* (n.), *remote* (adj.), *resource* (n.)

- Academic vocabulary:** *area* (n.), *became* (v.), *because* (conj.), *different* (adj.), *enough* (adj.), *event* (n.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *ghost* on the board. Ask students to turn to a partner and share what they know about ghosts. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class. Repeat with the word *town*.
- Ask students to think about what these two words might mean when they are put together, and write *ghost town* on the board. Have students share their ideas with a partner. Invite volunteers to share with the class, and write their ideas on the board.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Ghost Towns*. 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: Summarize

Explain to students that one way to understand and remember information in a book is to write a summary, or a brief overview, of the most important information in a section or chapter. Point out that a summary often answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*. Create a chart on the board with the headings *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, and *Why*. Read page 5 aloud and model summarizing.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Cause and effect

- Discuss cause-and-effect relationships. Explain that a *cause* is an action or event that makes something

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

happen and the *effect* is what happens because of, or as a result of, the action or event.

- Explain to students that there can be more than one effect from a cause. Copy the top of the **cause-and-effect worksheet** on the board, and write *Starting a new school* in the Cause box and *Making new friends* in the top Effect box. Ask students what else can happen when you start at a new school. Record responses in the Effect boxes.
- Explain to students that they will be looking for cause-and-effect relationships as they read the book.

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 ghost towns. 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.

- *What is a ghost town?* (level 1) page 5
- *What are examples of resources that can run out and cause a town to become deserted?* (level 2) pages 4, 6–7
- *How can natural disasters create ghost towns?* (level 2) pages 8–9
- *Which is more dangerous: running out of resources or disasters caused by nature? Why?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *Which ghost towns were created by an event in nature? Which were created because of people?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *How are ghost towns all alike? How are they different?* (level 3) multiple pages

- *Why did the author write this book about ghost towns?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Captions

Explain that captions are helpful when reading because they clarify illustrations and photographs and provide the reader with more detailed information. Have students turn to the photograph on page 6 and cover the caption. Have students guess what the photograph is showing. Then, have students uncover the caption and read about the photograph. Repeat with multiple photographs from the text. Explain that reading captions is an important part of understanding the text and that all captions should be read to give students a better understanding of the text.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you summarize as you read, and direct them to stop at several points during reading to answer the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.
- Place students into groups and assign each group a different section from the book. Ask groups to create a written summary of their section. Remind them to make sure to answer all of the important questions. Invite groups to share their summaries with the class.
- Remind students that a *cause* is an action or event that makes something happen and the *effect* is what happens because of the cause.
- Model evaluating details to understand cause-and-effect relationships in the book.
Think-aloud: *The book is providing me with information about the cause-and-effect relationship of how ghost towns are created. I read on page 4 that a town was built in Montana in 1862 because gold was found there. After the gold became hard to find, everyone left the town and it became a ghost town. The cause is running out of gold and the effect is everyone left the town. This is one of many cause-and-effect relationships I read about in the book.*
- Model how to complete the cause-and-effect worksheet. Have students identify details from the book and circle them. Then, have students discuss the details with a partner and determine the effect. Have students record this information on their worksheet.

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: Cause and effect

Review the cause-and-effect worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share the relationships they chose with the rest of the class. Point out that sometimes one effect leads to another, and so on. Ask students why it is important to understand cause-and-effect relationships when considering a historic event or series of events.

Comprehension Extension

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

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Samples: *Ghost towns are empty places where people once lived. Ghost towns can be created as a result of many things, including natural disasters, man-made disasters, and running out of resources.*)

Comprehension Checks

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

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonics: Consonant digraph gh

- Write the words *ghost* and *cough* on the board and read them aloud with students.
- Introduce or review the consonant digraph *gh* with students. Explain that the consonant digraph *gh* makes the /g/ sound at the beginning of a word (as in *ghost*) and the /f/ sound at the end of a word (as in *cough*). Remind students it can also be silent, as in the words *high* and *night*.
- Say the words *ghoul* and *laugh* aloud, emphasizing the consonant digraph *gh*, and have students write the words on a separate sheet of paper. Have students compare their words with a partner's. Reinforce with students the difference in sound when the consonant digraph *gh* is at the beginning of the word and when it's at the end of the word.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board, leaving off the consonant digraph *gh*: *enough*, *ghetto*, *ghastly*, and *rough*. Say the first word aloud, and have students stand up if they hear the consonant digraph *gh* make the /g/ sound and squat all the way down if they hear it make the /f/ sound. Invite a volunteer to come to the board and add the consonant blend. Repeat with the remaining words.

Grammar and Mechanics:

Commas after introductory words

- Explain that commas are used by writers for many reasons. Some of the uses are to separate an introductory word or phrase from the rest of the sentence, to separate a list of three or more items, and to separate clauses within sentences.
- Write the following sentence from page 7 on the board and have students locate it in their book: *Over time, there were fewer whales around the island.* Ask a volunteer to come to the board and circle the comma. Explain that the words *over time* are introductory words and that the comma separates them from the rest of the thought. Remind students that this is one of the many uses for a comma.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students look through the book with a partner to locate commas. Ask them to share with the class the commas they found and why they were used.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **commas-after-introductory-words worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Homographs

- Write the word *wave* on the board and draw a picture of a hand. Ask students to turn to a partner and use the word *wave* in a sentence. Then draw a picture of an ocean wave and ask students to create a new sentence. Invite volunteers to share their sentences with the class.
- Review or explain that *homographs* are multiple-meaning words. They are spelled the same and sound the same, but they have different meanings.
- Put students into groups, and give each group the following five words: *court*, *cool*, *park*, *bat*, *yard*. Have groups create two versions of each word, with pictures and sentence examples. Have groups share their work with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *duck*, *leaves*, *stick*. Have students write two sentences for each word on a separate sheet of paper, reflecting the two different meanings of each word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **homographs worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

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