

### Focus Question:

*What is the United Nations, and how does it address the needs of the world?*

### Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

*The United Nations* provides students with overview of the global organization that has been serving the world since 1945. Detailed information and helpful graphics will keep students engaged as they learn more about the UN and its many roles in striving for international cooperation. This book can also be used to teach students how to summarize a text as well as identify the main idea and details to better understand information.

The book and lesson are also available for levels Y and Z1.



### Lesson Essentials

#### Instructional Focus

- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Identify main idea and details
- ☐ Understand and use graphics to clarify text
- ☐ Recognize and use proper nouns that name places
- ☐ Identify and use homographs correctly

#### Materials

- ☐ Book: *The United Nations* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Summarize, main idea and details, proper nouns, 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](http://VocabularyA-Z.com).

##### • Words to Know

**Story critical:** *committees* (n.), *diplomats* (n.), *human rights* (n.), *humanitarian* (adj.), *international* (adj.), *organization* (n.)

**Enrichment:** *climate change* (n.), *composure* (n.), *controversial* (adj.), *disarmament* (n.), *negotiate* (v.), *sanitation* (n.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *conflict* (n.), *convince* (v.), *goal* (n.), *maintain* (v.), *reject* (v.), *ultimate* (adj.)

### Guiding the Reading

#### Before Reading

##### Build Background

- Place on the board the flag of the United Nations. Ask students if they recognize this flag and can share any details about it. Ask students to notice what's on the flag (the continents, the wreath around it) and make predictions as to what it could stand for if they don't already know.
- Explain to students that this is the flag for the United Nations, an international organization dedicated to promoting cooperation between countries to keep the peace and help tackle the world's problems.

##### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *The United Nations*. 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).
- 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 Comprehension Skill:

##### Main idea and details

- Explain to students that most nonfiction books have a *main idea*, or a general topic that is the subject of a book. Point out that the extra information or descriptions that help explain the main idea are the *details* of the book. Emphasize that determining the main idea of a book helps readers better understand and remember the text.
- Explain to students that in addition to determining the main idea for the entire book, it is also important to discover the main idea for each section

### Guiding the Reading (cont.)

of the book because each section will often have its own main idea and details. Students can then use the main idea and details of each section of the book to create an overall main idea of the book.

### Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Summarize**

Explain to students that engaged readers recall, talk about, and write about what they've read by using the main idea and details from the text to create a summary. Point out that a *summary* is a brief overview of the most important information in the text and that a summary answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*. Explain to students that using the main idea and details from each section of the text can help create an overall summary of the entire 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 20. 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 the United Nations. 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.

- *Would the United Nations have been founded if World War II had not been fought? Why or why not?* (level 3) pages 4–5, 7
- *How is the UN organized?* (level 1) page 7
- *What skills does the secretary-general need to possess to do his or her job effectively?* (level 1) page 8
- *What is the purpose of the Security Council? How are the powers of the UN's soldiers different from a country's soldiers?* (level 2) pages 10–11

- *What might the world be like if ECOSOC hadn't established the Montreal Protocol in 1987?* (level 3) page 13
- *Why might there be more refugees in the world now than at any time since World War II?* (level 3) page 17
- *Why is the UN a controversial organization? Is this a fair assessment?* (level 3) multiple pages

### Text Features: **Graphics**

Explain that graphics include charts, graphs, and diagrams in a book that help the reader better understand the text. Have students review the graphics throughout the book and discuss how the visual display of information in the graphics helps clarify the written text. Ask students: *What is the purpose of the graphic showing the largest ozone hole on page 13? How does the bar graph on page 17 help readers more clearly understand the information presented in the text?* Have students share their answers with the class.

### Skill Review

- Remind students that the overall main idea of a book can usually be determined by evaluating the main idea and details in each section.
- On the board, write *Main Idea* with a box around it. Draw eleven lines extending out from the square and write the names of the eleven sections of the book: "A Charter for Peace," "The United Nations Today," "The Secretariat," "The General Assembly," "The Security Council," "The Economic and Social Council," "The International Court of Justice," "The World Health Organization," "UNESCO," "The UN High Commissioner for Refugees," and "Complexity and Controversy of the UN." Draw squares around each of these sections, and draw one line below each square for the main idea of each section. Then, draw three lines below each of the sections' main ideas for the corresponding details. This will create a web diagram on the board. Pass out to students a copy of the [main-idea-and-details worksheet](#), which will look like the image on the board.
- Model identifying details that support the main idea of the book.  
**Think-aloud:** *I know it is important to determine the main idea and details of each section of a book in order to help determine the main idea for the entire book. In the first section, "A Charter for Peace," I read that World War II, which lasted from 1939–1945, had been the worst conflict in human history. From this conflict arose a new organization whose mission would be to help keep the peace. This organization is the United Nations. From this information, I can identify the main idea of this first section: the United Nations was founded in 1945 with the mission of keeping the peace around the world. This is the main idea of the first section.*

## Guiding the Reading (cont.)

*Since every main idea needs details to explain it, I will be looking for three details that explain or describe this main idea. I will continue to look for main ideas and details from each section of this book as I read, which will also help determine the overall main idea of this book.*

- Have students work with a partner to identify three details that support the main idea from the first section of the book.
- Remind students to continue identifying the main idea and details from each section of the book as they read, and have them record their answers 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.

## Skill Review

### Graphic Organizer: Main idea and details

Review the main-idea-and-details worksheet that students completed. Put students into eleven groups, and assign each group a different section from the book. Have them complete the [summarize worksheet](#) using the information from their main-idea-and-details worksheet. When all groups are finished, have one volunteer from each group read their group's summary. Have summaries read in order of the sections of the book. Then work with the class to generate an overall summary of the book on the basis of each section's summary. Write this summary on the board.

## 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. Sample: *The United Nations is an international organization that was founded in 1945 with the mission of keeping the peace. The United Nations helps people by aiding those in trouble, promoting human rights, and dealing with global problems.*)

## Comprehension Checks

- [Book quiz](#)
- [Retelling rubric](#)

## Book Extension Activities

### Build Skills

#### Grammar and Mechanics:

#### Proper nouns: Names of places

- Review that words used to tell the names of specific people, places, and things are called *proper nouns*, and remind students that these words begin with a capital letter. Explain that students will be focusing on proper nouns that name places today.
- Write the names of ten places (not proper nouns), such as *state* and *mall*. Have students work with a partner to change each place into a proper noun, such as *California* and *Mall of America*. Invite volunteers to come to the board and change each noun to a proper noun. Ask the class to give a thumbs-up signal if students changed the noun to a proper noun correctly.
- Have students write a list of ten proper nouns that name places. Have students swap their list with a partner to double check that each noun is a proper noun that names a place. Students should also check that each proper noun begins with a capital letter.
- **Check for understanding:** Write ten common and proper nouns on the board, using all lowercase letters. Have students write the proper nouns correctly on a separate piece of paper.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [proper nouns worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

#### Word Work: Homographs

- Write the words *spoke* and *spoke* on the board. Point out that the words sound the same and are spelled the same, but they have different meanings. Explain that these are called *homographs*. Ask students to work with a partner to create two definitions of the word *spoke*. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class.
- Write the words *watch* and *watch* and *bow* and *bow* on the board and repeat the same activity. Then put students into groups and ask each group to generate a list of five new homographs (both words and definitions). Have groups share their work with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *punch*, *saw*, *rose*. Have students write two sentences for each word on a separate sheet of paper, each reflecting a different meaning of the 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.