

### About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 16 Word Count: 1,198

### Book Summary

*Pepper: The King of Spices* is an engaging introduction to the history of a very common table spice. Illustrations and photographs support information on where and how pepper grows, the history of its value and uses, and how it was exported to all parts of the world.

### About the Lesson

#### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Summarize

#### Objectives

- Identify the main idea and supporting details
- Use the reading strategy of summarizing to understand the text
- Identify long /o/ digraphs
- Identify and use adjectives
- Recognize and understand the use of similes

#### Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Pepper: The King of Spices* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- [Main idea and details/summary, adjectives, similes 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: *demand (n.), flavor (n.), grind (v.), peppercorn (n.), spices (n.), supply (n.)*  
 Enrichment: *explorers (n.), journey (n.), trade (v.)*

### Before Reading

#### Build Background

- Display a pepper shaker to students. Ask students to share what they already know about pepper. Give each student a small portion in his or her hand and have them smell and taste it (if possible). Ask volunteers to describe the smell and taste.
- Say the following statements aloud, and ask students to give you a thumbs-up signal if they think the statement is true or a thumbs-down signal if they think the statement is false: *Pepper is actually a berry (true); peppercorns were once used as money (true); pepper is called the King of Spices because it was invented by a king (false); long ago, poor people could be put to death just for having pepper (true).*
- Invite students to share other information they know about pepper.

### Preview the Book

#### 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, fiction or nonfiction, 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, illustrator's name).

#### Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- Explain to students that sometimes the amount of information about a topic is so large that it is grouped into sections, and each section has its own main idea.
- Read pages 4 and 5 aloud to students. Model identifying the main idea and details.  
*Think-aloud: I know that the headings of sections sometimes identify the main idea. Each section in the book contains details that support a main idea about pepper. As I read the Introduction, most of the sentences describe pepper and how it is used. I learned that pepper is a dried-up berry called a peppercorn. These berries grow on a vine. People dry and crush the berries into tiny pieces to use as a spice in their food. I will underline this information. Based on what I've read, I think the main idea of the section is: Pepper is a spice made from dried-up berries called peppercorns.*
- Create a chart similar to the [main-idea-and-details/summary worksheet](#). Say: *I can use this chart to help me keep track of the main idea and details of each section of the book. I will use the section heading as a strong clue as to what the main idea is for that section.*
- Write the main idea for the Introduction on the chart on the board. Ask students to identify the details from the book that support this main idea (it's crushed into tiny pieces, used to flavor food, and so on).

#### 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 the text. Point out that a summary includes the main idea and one or two supporting details. It often answers the questions *who, what, when, where, and why*.
- Model summarizing the main idea and details from the Introduction on the board.  
*Think-aloud: To summarize, I decide which information affects the meaning of the section that would be important to remember. To do this, I can identify the main idea and important details, and then organize that information into a few sentences. When I look at the main idea and details on the board, a summary of the Introduction might be: Pepper is a spice made from dried-up berries called peppercorns. The berries are crushed into tiny pieces and used to flavor food. Pepper is the most commonly used spice in the world.*
- Write the summary on the board. Have students identify the main idea and details within the summary. Discuss how you used your own words to create the summary.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

#### Introduce the Vocabulary

- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words students will encounter. For example, on page 8 you might say: *The text says "There was a very small supply of pepper but a big demand for it." What clues does the paragraph provide to help you understand the meaning of demand?* (On page 8, the paragraph says that pepper did not grow in Europe, but many people wanted it. Therefore, *demand* must mean how much people want something.)



- Remind students to look at the letters a word begins with or ends with, or break the words into chunks, as ways to figure out a difficult word. For example, point to the word *peppercorn* on page 4, and say: *When I look at the parts of this word, I see that this word contains two familiar words: pepper and corn. When I put these two words together, I create the word peppercorn. I can use the meaning of pepper and corn to figure out the meaning of the whole word, or I can read the definition of the word in the glossary.*
- Repeat this process with other glossary or multisyllabic words from the text.

### Set the Purpose

-  Have students read the book to learn more about pepper. Ask them to underline important information, or details, in each section and to use that information to identify a main idea.

### During Reading

#### Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 9. Encourage those who finish before others to reread the text. When students are ready, discuss the important details they identified.
- Model identifying the main idea and details of the section titled "How Pepper Grows."  
**Think-aloud:** *As I read the section titled "How Pepper Grows," most of the sentences mention something about the plant that pepper grows on, the berries, and how the berries dry out and are ground up. I will underline this information. Based on what I've read, I think the main idea of the section is: Pepper berries grow on a vine and are dried out and ground up to put on food.*
- Write the main idea on the board. Ask students to identify details that support this main idea (grow in groups of 30 to 70, turn black and hard when dried, and so on). Write these details on the board.
- Review how to create a summary from the main idea and details. Refer back to the summary created during the introduction to the skill. Discuss and create the summary as a class and write it on the board. (Pepper berries grow on a vine and are dried out and ground up to put on food. Pepper berries grow in groups of 30 to 70 on a vine. They are dried out into hard, wrinkled black peppercorns. People then grind them into tiny flakes to sprinkle on food.)
-  **Check for understanding:** Divide students into groups. Assign each group either the section titled "Where Pepper Grows" or the section titled "A Popular Spice." Have them identify and underline important details in the section. Have students work with their group to identify the main idea from these details. Discuss their responses as a class and write a main idea for each section on the board.
- Ask students to write a brief summary of the section on a separate piece of paper. Have them share what they wrote.
- Ask students to read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about the important details in the book so they can summarize the information as they read.
-  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 Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Discuss how stopping to review the important details helped students remember the facts and better understand the information in the book.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce and explain the main-idea-and-details/summary worksheet. Have students write the main idea and supporting details for either the section of the book titled “A Long, Expensive Journey” or “Pepper Today” on their worksheet. If time allows, discuss their responses.

### Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Review with students the main idea and details for the sections titled “A Long, Expensive Journey” and “Pepper Today.”
- **Independent practice:** Have students write a summary using the information from their section on their main-idea-and-details/summary worksheet. If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned many interesting facts about the history of pepper. Now that you know this information, what will you think about the next time you reach for the pepper shaker?

### Build Skills

#### Phonics: Long /o/ vowel digraphs *oa* and *ow*

- Write the word *boat* on the board and say it aloud with students. Have students say aloud the long vowel sound they hear in the middle of the word.
- Point to the letters *oa* in the word and tell students that the letters *o* and *a* together represent the long /o/ vowel sound they hear in the middle of the word *boat*. Explain that the *oa* letter combination is one of the letter combinations that represent the long /o/ sound.
- Write the word *grow* on the board and say it aloud with students. Have students say aloud the long vowel sound they hear in the middle of the word.
- Point to the letters *ow* in the word and tell students that the letters *o* and *w* together represent the long /o/ vowel sound they hear at the end of the word *grow*.
- Explain to students that *ow* is another letter combination that represents the long /o/ vowel sound. Tell students that the *oa* and *ow* letter combinations are called *long /o/ digraphs*.
- Create a T-chart on the board with *boat* written on one side and *grow* on the other side. Say the following words with the long /o/ sound aloud one at a time: *toad*, *coal*, and *float*. Write them on the T-chart in the *boat* column. Underline the *oad*, *oal*, and *oat* endings in these words. Point out that these chunks can be used to spell other words with the same ending sounds (such as *load*, *goal*, and *goat*).
- Repeat the procedure for *ow* words: *tow*, *flow*, and *row*.
- **Check for understanding:** On a separate piece of paper, have students create their own T-chart with *boat* and *grow* as headers. Say aloud each of the following words and have students write the words under the proper column on their paper: *coat*, *road*, *mow*, *goal*, *low*. Check for accuracy.

#### Grammar and Mechanics: **Adjectives**

- Choose an object in the room or at random and make a list of ways to describe it. (For example: The table is *long*, *wooden*, *flat*, and so on.)
- Write the following sentence on the board: *Pepper has a strong flavor*. Point out the noun *flavor* in the sentence and underline it. Ask students to identify a word that describes the flavor (*strong*).
- Review or explain that *adjectives* are words that describe nouns or pronouns. An adjective can help the noun tell *which one*, *how many*, and *what kind*.
- Write the following sentences on the board: *Pepper makes plain food taste better*. *People do not eat whole peppercorns*. *People who had pepper could sell it for a high price*.
- Have individual students come to the board and circle the adjective(s) in each sentence. Then have them underline the noun each adjective describes.



**Check for understanding:** Have students identify and circle all the adjectives on page 9. Have them underline the noun that each adjective describes. Discuss students' answers as a group. Ask volunteers to identify whether each adjective describes which one, how many, or what kind.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [adjectives worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

### Word Work: **Similes**

- Have students turn to page 6. Read the following sentence from the second paragraph aloud: *They become wrinkled like a raisin.*
- Write the phrase *like a raisin* on the board. Explain to students that the phrase is an example of a *simile*. Point out that authors use similes to make their writing more vivid and enjoyable by comparing one thing with another using the word *like* or *as*. For example, instead of just saying the berry was wrinkled, the author compares it to a raisin. This helps readers create a clear and enjoyable mental image.
- **Check for understanding:** Ask students to work with a partner to create their own simile about the taste or smell of pepper. Have them write it on a separate piece of paper. Invite them to share their simile with the class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [similes worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

### **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. Ask them to share what they thought was the most interesting fact about pepper.

### **Extend the Reading**

#### Informational Writing Connection

Provide print and Internet resources about various spices and allow individuals or pairs of students to choose one kind of spice to research further. Have them gather such information such as: how it's grown, where it's grown, its history, surprising facts, and so on. Have students report their findings in a presentation format of their choice. Ask them to include an illustration of the plant that the spice originates from.

Visit [Writing A-Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on informational writing.

#### Elements of Nonfiction Connection

Review with students the information in the "Do You Know?" box on page 5 and the maps in the book. Discuss the purpose for incorporating these types of features in the book (to provide clarification and elaboration of the photograph and information on nearby pages; to draw conclusions about information presented in the main body of the text; to visualize locations referred to in the text). Ask students to explain why it might be beneficial to study and understand these nonfiction elements in the text as they read. Then look at each map with students. Have them identify their location on the map compared to the location referred to in the text.

### 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 card 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:

- identify the main idea and supporting details to better understand the text through discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately use main idea statements and supporting details to write a summary in their own words
- correctly identify and use long /o/ digraphs *oa* and *ow* during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify adjectives in text during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly recognize and understand the use of similes during discussion and on a worksheet

### Comprehension Checks

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