

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 12 Word Count: 177

Book Summary

Eva finds a chocolate heart at her seat on Valentine's Day. But who gave it to her? One by one, Eva questions her classmates and even her teacher, losing chocolate but gaining valentines along the way. Will Eva find out who gave her the mystery valentine before it's all gone? Colorful and engaging illustrations support the text. Use this story to teach students how to sequence events and use contractions.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

Objectives

- Connect to prior knowledge to understand text
- Sequence events
- Segment syllables
- Identify VCe pattern
- Recognize and use contractions
- Understand and arrange words in alphabetical order

Materials

Green text indicates resources that are available on the website.

- Book—*Mystery Valentine* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Dictionaries
- Sheets of paper
- Cut-out pictures from an extra copy of the book
- [Sequence events, VCe pattern, contractions worksheets](#)
- [Discussion cards](#)



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](#).

- High-frequency words: *asks*, *but*, *with*
- Content words:
 Story critical: *chocolate* (n.), *deserve* (v.), *sharing* (v.), *trade* (v.), *valentine* (n.),
Valentine's Day (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask how many students have ever gotten a gift on Valentine's Day. Discuss the gifts students have received on Valentine's Day. Make a list on the board.

- Ask students whether they have ever received a gift whose giver they did not know. Write the word *mystery* on the board and read it aloud with students. Discuss the fact that a mystery is something that is unknown and has to be figured out.

Book Walk

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, 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, illustrator's name).

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

- Explain to students that effective readers make connections between what they already know and new information they read. Remind students that thinking about what they already know about the topic of the story will help them understand what they read.
- Model connecting to prior knowledge using the information on the covers.
Think-aloud: On the cover I see a girl looking at a valentine on her desk. She looks surprised or confused. The title of the story is Mystery Valentine. I know a mystery is something that is unknown or difficult to understand. On the basis of the title and the pictures, I think the girl must not know who gave her the valentine. The story will probably be about the girl trying to solve the mystery. I will have to keep reading to find out who left the valentine on her desk.
- Have students share how they connected to prior knowledge with a partner, on the basis of the covers and the title page of the story. Then, have partners share connections with the whole group.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Sequence events**

- Review or explain to students that stories usually must be told in a particular order from beginning to the end. The correct order of a story is called the *sequence of events*.
- Explain that certain words are often used to describe a sequence of events. Write the transition words *first*, *next*, *then*, *after that*, and *finally* on the board. Encourage students to listen for these words as you describe the sequence of events in a story.
- Model sequencing the main events of a story about a birthday party.
Think-aloud: If I want to tell someone a story about my sister's birthday party, I need to include certain events in order to tell the story correctly. In my birthday story, first we arrived at the park. Next, my sister's friends came to the party and brought presents. Then, we played games. After that, my sister blew out the candles on her cake while we sang "Happy Birthday." Then, she opened all of her presents. Finally, my sister thanked her friends, and we all went home.
- Tell the story using key words on the board to sequence the events of the story out of order. Ask students to explain why the order of the events is important (the sequence of events does not make sense when told out of order). Discuss with students that a story does not make sense when the events are out of order.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words students will encounter. For example, while looking at the picture on page 3, you might say: *It looks as though it's Valentine's Day at school. Someone gave Eva a chocolate heart. I wonder who gave it to her. How will she find out?*
- Write the following story-critical words on the board: *deserve*, *sharing*, *trade*, and *valentine*.
- Point out that these words can be found in the story and that understanding the meaning of each word will help them better understand the story.


- Give each student a blank piece of paper. Have students divide the paper into four sections and write one vocabulary word in each section. Then, have students illustrate each vocabulary word on the basis of prior knowledge. Once students have illustrated each vocabulary word, have them share and discuss each word with a partner.
- As a class, discuss the meaning of each vocabulary word.
- Model how students can use a dictionary to find a word's meaning. Have them locate the word *deserve* in the dictionary. Invite a volunteer to read the definition for *deserve*. Have students compare the dictionary definition with their definition.
- Have students follow along on page 12 as you read the sentence in which the word *deserve* is found to confirm the meaning of the word. Repeat the exercise with the remaining vocabulary words.

Set the Purpose

- Have students use what they already know about Valentine's Day as they read. Remind them to think about the sequence of events as they read.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 2 to the end of page 5. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.
 - Model making connections to prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: As I read, I learned it is Valentine's Day and Eva found a chocolate heart at her seat. She does not know who gave it to her. First, Eva asks Rachel about the heart, but Rachel did not leave it. Then, Eva asks Tyler, but he did not leave it either. I know when I am trying to solve a mystery, I usually ask questions too. This is a good strategy to find out who left the chocolate. I will have to keep reading to find out what happens.
 - Invite students to share with a partner how they connected with what they already knew as they read. Have the partners share with the whole group.
 - Cut out the pictures from an extra copy of the book. Place the pictures from pages 3 through 5 on the board. Have students describe the sequence of events to a partner, using the pictures as a guide. Encourage students to use the transition words *first*, *next*, and *then* as they share the sequence.
 - Invite a volunteer to describe the sequence of events to the rest of the class. Record the words *first*, *next*, and *then* on the board above the appropriate pictures.
 - **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 9. Remind them to continue making connections to prior knowledge.
 - Place the pictures from page 3 through 9 on the board in the wrong order. Have students work with a partner to sequence the events. Invite volunteers to share the correct sequence of events with the class, and encourage them to use transition words to link events. Invite a volunteer to share the sequence with the class, and rearrange the pictures on the board.
 - Invite volunteers to come to the board and record the appropriate transition words above each picture. Point out that the word *first* can only go with the first event, but the words *next*, *then*, and *after that* can be rearranged and repeated for all of the events in between the first and last events.
 - Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about what they know about or have experienced with valentines as they read and to pay attention to the correct sequence of events in the story.
-  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 the discussion that follows.

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 with students how thinking about what they already know about a topic of a story helps them understand and remember what they read and keeps them actively engaged with the story.
- **Think-aloud:** *When I read pages 11 and 12, I thought about the gifts my best friend and I have exchanged. She has often given me small gifts she knows I will enjoy, such as my favorite drink or candy. Sometimes she will include a note or say, "You are a good friend. Thanks for all you do!" It always makes me feel special when my friend remembers me in this way. This helps me understand how Josie and Eva might feel at the end of the story.*
- Ask students to explain how thinking about what they already knew helped them to understand and remember the story.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Place the cut-out pictures from the whole book on the board. Have students work with a partner to sequence events from the beginning to the end. Encourage them to use words such as *first*, *next*, *after that*, and *finally* to create their sequence. Invite volunteers to share their sequence of events with the rest of the class, and have them come to the board to rearrange the pictures into the correct order.
- Have students share with a partner how sequencing events helped them to remember and enjoy the story. Invite volunteers to share their ideas with the rest of the class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [sequence events worksheet](#). Discuss their answers.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you read about a girl trying to solve a valentine mystery. Now that you have read and thought about this information, what will you do the next time you have a mystery you need to solve?

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Segment syllables

- Review or explain that every word contains one or more parts. Explain that these parts are called *syllables*.
- Show students how to count syllables by clapping as they say a word. Demonstrate with the word *chocolate*. Clap each time you say a syllable (three claps).
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words one at a time and have students clap the syllables and tell how many syllables are in each word: *valentine*, *piece*, *dinosaur*, *trade*, *teacher*, *volcano*, *deserve*.

Phonics: VCe pattern

- Write the word *trade* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the long vowel /a/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letter represents the long vowel /a/ sound in the word *trade*.
- Cover the letter e with your hand. Have students read the word *trad* aloud. Remind students that the letter a can have two sounds: the short /a/ sound and the long /a/ sound. Uncover the letter e and have students read the word to you. Explain to students that one way to make the letter a have a long vowel /a/ sound is by adding a silent e to the word.
- Explain to students that a silent e at the end of the word makes a vowel say its name. Write the words *make*, *gave*, and *shade* on the board. Point to each word and have students read it aloud. Remind them that the vowels should say their name. Invite volunteers to come to the board and circle the silent e and underline the medial vowel.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *not*, *nap*, *slop*, *cut*, *plat*, *slat*, and *tap*. Say each word, one at a time, and have students repeat. Invite volunteers to come to the board and add the silent e to the end of each word. Have students read the new words to a partner. Call on random students to read the words aloud.

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

Grammar and Mechanics: **Contractions**

- Have students read the second sentence on page 4 aloud. Ask students to point to the word *wasn't*. Write *wasn't* on the board.
- Explain to students that *wasn't* is a contraction and is made by joining together the words *was* and *not*. Write the words *was* and *not* on the board beneath the word *wasn't*. Have students read the sentence from page 4 again, this time substituting the words *was* and *not* for the word *wasn't*. Ask students to give a thumbs-up signal if the sentence still makes sense.
- Explain to students that a *contraction* is a word formed by joining two words and connecting them with an apostrophe.
- Circle the apostrophe in the word *wasn't* on the board, and have students point to the apostrophe in *wasn't* in their book. Point out that the apostrophe shows where a letter has been left out. Explain to students that in contractions, one letter is always left out when the two words are combined. Ask students to identify which letter has been left out of the contraction *wasn't*.
- Write the following contractions on the board: *there's*, *you'd*, and *what's*. Have students work with a partner to determine the two words that form each contraction, and have each student write the words on a separate sheet of paper. Point to the contractions on the board and have students call out the two words that are joined to create the contraction.
- Write the words *you* and *are* on the board and read them aloud with students. Have students work in groups to discuss how they would join these words to make a contraction, and ask students to write the contraction on their separate sheet of paper. Write the contraction *you're* on the board, and have students correct their written contraction if necessary.



Check for understanding: Have students work with a partner to find and highlight all the contractions in the book. Have students write somewhere on the page the two original words that were joined to form the contraction. Invite volunteers to share a word with the rest of the class, and have other students give a thumbs-up signal if the word is a contraction.

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

Word Work: **Alphabetical order**

- Review or explain the process of putting a list of words in alphabetical order. Remind students to look at the first letter of each word to determine which word would come first in alphabetical order.
- Write the words *trade* and *chocolate* on the board. Have a volunteer explain which word would appear first in alphabetical order (*chocolate*) and why (because *Cc* comes before *Tt* in the alphabet).
- Write the words *deserve* and *valentine* on the board. Ask a volunteer to tell which word would appear first in alphabetical order and to explain his or her thinking (*deserve*, because the letter *Dd* comes before *Vv* in the alphabet).
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board and have students work with a partner to arrange them in alphabetical order: *love*, *heart*, *piece*, *bird*. Have a volunteer explain which word would appear first in alphabetical order (*bird*) and why.
- **Independent practice:** Provide each student with a blank piece of paper. Write the following words on the board and have students record them in alphabetical order: *teacher*, *dinosaur*, *volcano*, *friend*, *yourself*, *smiles*, *bite*, *gave*. If time allows, discuss students' responses as a class.

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. Have them discuss the sequence of events with someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Realistic Fiction Writing and Art Connection

Encourage students to think about a time when they have had to solve a mystery. Have them think about the main character in the story and how she solved her problem. Have them use the story as a model to write their own story about a time they had to solve a mystery. Encourage students to include a drawing to go along with their story.

Visit WritingA-Z.com for a lesson and leveled materials on realistic fiction writing.

Math Connection

Gather several types of Valentine's Day candy. Have students vote for their favorite kind of candy. Collect the data using tally marks on a large chart. Use the data from the chart to create a graph to show the favorite type of candy for the class. Have students use the data to ask questions. Collect data from several classes and then create an even larger graph.

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

- consistently use the strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand text during discussion;
- accurately sequence events during discussion and on a worksheet;
- accurately segment syllables during discussion;
- identify and use the VCe pattern during discussion and on a worksheet;
- correctly understand and identify contractions during discussion, in the text, and on a worksheet;
- understand the process of arranging words in alphabetical order during discussion and on a worksheet.

Comprehension Checks

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