

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 20 Word Count: 2,028

Book Summary

Takehito's Tango tells the story of a young Japanese boy named Takehito and his desire to make friends and fit in at his new school. His teacher pushes him to participate in the talent show, which sets him on a mission to uncover a hidden talent. With the help of young Melinda, he works hard to learn a dance called the tango. He picks up the steps quickly and even begins to enjoy the attention of his admirers. On the day of the talent show, he takes the stage, and Takehito realizes that he has already made at least one friend—Melinda.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Visualize

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of visualizing to understand text
- Analyze characters in the text
- Understand the use of a dash as punctuation
- Recognize and use synonyms and antonyms
- Use a thesaurus

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Takehito's Tango* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Thesauruses
- Index cards
- Visualize, analyze characters, dash, synonyms and antonyms 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: *awkward (adj.), clumsily (adv.), footwork (n.), rhythm (n.), spectators (n.), talent (n.)*
 Enrichment: *audience (n.), deliberate (adj.), emigrated (v.), entranced (v.), performance (n.), traditionally (adv.)*

Before Reading

Build Background:

- Ask students how they felt when they were new to a situation and how they made friends. Invite them to share examples of things they have done to meet new people. Write their ideas on the board.

- Show students a video or read an informational passage to them about the tango. Explain that it is a very old dance with a rich cultural heritage, and is alive with dramatic presentation and emotion. Ask students whether they have ever seen anyone dance the tango. Encourage them to share what they know.

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).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to read in the book based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept any answers students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Visualize**

- Explain to students that good readers often visualize, or create pictures in their mind, while reading. Visualizing is based on the words used in the text and what a person already knows about a topic.
- Read page 4 aloud to students. Model how to visualize.
Think-aloud: Whenever I read a book, I always pause after a few pages to create a picture in my mind of the information I've read. This helps me organize important information and enjoy reading the book. For example, on page 4, the author describes a Japanese cowboy chasing after a train. I pictured him galloping fearlessly on his horse, eyes determined and focused on the speeding train. I pictured the gap widening between the horse and train as the steed slowed with exhaustion.
- Reread page 4 aloud to students, asking them to use the words in the story to visualize. Introduce and explain the [visualize worksheet](#). Have students draw on the worksheet what they visualized from the text on page 4. Invite students to share their drawings.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Analyze characters**

- Explain that there are many ways to learn about a character in a story. One way is to examine a character's words or thoughts. Another way is to examine the actions of the character. Explain to students that an author uses a character's words, thoughts, and actions to give the reader insight into a character's personality, relationships, and motivations, and the conflicts he or she may face.
- Ask students to follow along as you read aloud page 5 in the story. Model how to analyze a character based on his or her actions.
Think-aloud: As I read page 5, I found out that Takehito had only been daydreaming about chasing the train and roping it with his lasso. He had been staring out the window from his desk while his teacher was talking. Mrs. Klein asked him a question, which jerked his thoughts back to reality, as his classmates waited to hear his answer. On the basis of these clues, Takehito appears to be a daydreamer who is eager for adventure. This information tells me that he may have a hard time paying attention in class and may not be able to complete his work because he misses instructions from his teacher.
- Have students reread page 5 and think about Mrs. Klein's character traits. Discuss what Mrs. Klein's actions and words might reflect about her personality (observant, strict).
- Introduce and explain the [analyze characters worksheet](#). Have students write the information from the discussion on their worksheet.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following content vocabulary words on the board: *footwork*, *rhythm*, and *performance*. Read the words aloud with students. Ask them to share what they know about the meaning of each word. Point out to students that using familiar words might help them identify the meanings of the words. (For instance, the word *footwork* is a compound word, and the two words that make up the compound word might help them in thinking about what *footwork* might mean—work that is done with the feet.)
- Write each of the content vocabulary words on a piece of poster board. Place students in small groups and assign each group to a poster. Have them discuss what they know about the meaning of their word and write a definition on the paper. Rotate the groups until each group has visited all three posters.
- Review each word and the information about the word that students wrote on the poster. Create a definition based on students' knowledge and write it on the board.
- Have a volunteer read the definition for each word from the glossary. Compare students' definitions with the glossary definitions. Use the comparison to modify the definition for each word on the board.
- Have students use the three content vocabulary words to predict what might happen to Takehito in the school talent show. After reading, compare their predictions to the actual outcome in the book.

Set the Purpose


- Have students read to find out more about Takehito and his experiences. Remind them to stop after every few pages to visualize the most important information and draw on their worksheet what they visualized.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 6 to the end of page 9. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread. Have students draw what they visualized during one or more events of the story on their [visualize worksheet](#).
- **Model visualizing.**
Think-aloud: On page 9, I read about Manny making elotes. I pictured him expertly plucking an ear of corn from the boiling water, the steam coming out in all directions. Next, I pictured him generously slathering the corn with butter and mayonnaise, which dripped off as it melted.
- Invite students to share their drawings of what they visualized while reading pages 6 through 9. Have them explain their drawings aloud.
- On the basis of the information read so far, ask students why someone may consider Takehito to be a daydreamer. (He is often unfocused in class and lost in his own thoughts.) Ask them to think of other words they might use to describe Takehito (shy, reserved, and so on). Encourage students to write this information in the *Traits* section on their [analyze characters worksheet](#). Then have them write clues from the text that support their answers on their worksheet (he didn't have many friends, he pretended to be sick so he didn't have to be in the talent show, and so on). Have students share their responses from the text.
- Ask students to explain how readers know that Mrs. Klein cares about Takehito (she stands up for him when others are picking on him, she worries about him, she pushes him to perform in the talent show so he can establish some friendships, and so on). Encourage students to write this information on their *analyze characters worksheet*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 11. Have them visualize the information in the text as they read. Ask students to draw what they visualized about Takehito in the ballroom on their *visualize worksheet*. Invite them to share what they visualized as they read. Have students look at the illustrations, and encourage them look at each of the character's faces to see how they are feeling.

- On the basis of the information they read since Takehito's visit with Manny, ask students how Takehito might be feeling about the idea of learning to dance (reluctant, yet interested). Have students write this information in the *Traits* section on their analyze characters worksheet. Then have them write clues from the text that support their answers on their worksheet. (Takehito could not say what he was interested in; he was entranced with the poster of the two dancers; and so on.) Have students share their responses from the text.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Encourage them to continue to visualize as they read the rest of the story. Remind them to continue thinking about the important events of the story 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 Reading Strategy

- **Think-aloud:** *On page 18, I read about Takehito daydreaming about his performance at the talent show. I pictured him standing onstage with the entire student body staring at him, pointing and laughing. I pictured Takehito slowly and deliberately stepping to center stage, his chin high and his face confident. I pictured the white spotlight flashing to him, his spurs reflecting the brilliant glare. I saw Takehito and Melinda dancing in perfect rhythm, their steps in harmony as the crowd waved and screamed wildly in approval.*
- Ask students to explain how the strategy of visualizing helped them understand and enjoy the story. Ask volunteers to share examples of the things they visualized.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the [visualize worksheet](#). If time allows, have them share their drawings with a partner.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review the characteristics of Takehito that students identified from the first pages of the story and those they wrote in the first column on the board (daydreamer, eager for adventure, shy, reserved). Review other character traits for Takehito that students may have identified later (interested, excited, friendly, persistent, and so on). Have students read aloud the examples they wrote in the *Traits* section of their worksheet.
- Point out how, in the beginning of the book, Takehito appears to be very shy, but later he chooses to perform a talent that would draw a lot of attention to him. Ask students to explain why Takehito may appear shyer than he really is (language and cultural barriers).
- Ask students why Mrs. Klein appears to be hard on Takehito, but that readers later learn she is deeply concerned about him (she wants him to make friends and be successful in school, she wants him to pay attention in class so he will learn, and so on). Discuss how Mrs. Klein's intentions are to help him become happy with school as he enters junior high, and ask students why they think that is important to her.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the analyze characters worksheet, completing the character trait analysis of Takehito, Mrs. Klein, and Melinda. If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this story, Mrs. Klein appears to be a very strict teacher, but inside she deeply cares for her students. Takehito appears to be very shy but is not as shy as others perceive him to be. Now that you know this information, why is it important to realize that appearances aren't always accurate reflections of the truth? How might this notion help you understand the actions of others around you?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Dash

- Review or explain that a dash (—) is a punctuation mark used to indicate a break or omission. It is also used to clarify information within a sentence.
- Direct students to page 4 in the book. Write the following sentence on the board: *Holding his breath, Takehito kicked his boots out from the stirrups and set sailing off his horse and into the air—nearly flying toward the train.* Ask students how the dash is used in this instance (to clarify where he was sailing in the air).
- Direct students to page 14. Write the following sentence on the board: *Lots of people from different cultures—African, Indian, French, Spanish, Italian—created what we're doing right now.* Ask students how the dash is used in this instance (to clarify a thought in the middle of the sentence).
- Point out to students the difference between a dash and a hyphen. Have students turn to page 11 and locate the word *cherry-blossom*. Review or explain that hyphens are shorter in length and are used to connect two words to create a compound word or indicate a word broken at the end of a line. Remind students not to confuse a dash with a hyphen.
- Direct students to page 13 in the book. Write the following sentences on the board: *When you walk forward, strike your heel first, then your toe—heel, toe, heel, toe, heel, toe.* Ask a volunteer to come to the board and circle the dash (after the words *your toe*). Ask students how the dash is used in this instance (to clarify a thought).



Check for understanding: Have students find and circle the dash on page 11. Have them write how the dash is used in this instance.

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

Word Work: Synonyms and antonyms

- Write the word *beautiful* on the board. Ask students to suggest a word that means almost the same thing (*pretty, lovely*). Review or explain that a word that means the same or almost the same as another word is called a *synonym*.
- Ask students to suggest a word that means the opposite of *beautiful* (*ugly, hideous*). Review or explain that a word that means the opposite of another word is called an *antonym*.
- Write the following sentence on the board: *A few people who walked past them on the sidewalk applauded.* Ask them to find the word that describes what the people did when they walked by (*applauded*). Ask them to suggest a word that means the same or almost the same as *applauded* (*clapped*). Ask students to suggest a word that means the opposite of *applauded* (*booed*).
- Show students a thesaurus. Use the example above to explain how a thesaurus is used, writing the synonyms and antonyms for *applauded* on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Give pairs of students a thesaurus. Ask them to find the word *large* and have them name the synonyms listed. If the thesaurus lists antonyms, have them find the antonyms for *large*. If needed, provide additional practice using a thesaurus.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [synonyms-and-antonyms worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, allow partners to 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 students practice visualizing the story with someone at home and then comparing the pictures they created in their mind.

Extend the Reading

Realistic Fiction Writing Connection

Have students write a story about a character who is encouraged to do something he or she didn't want to do. Ask them to include the following about the character in their story: the feelings experienced, reasons for the hesitancy to act outside an area of comfort, and what the character did to overcome those feelings.

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

Social Studies Connection

Supply books and links to Internet websites for students to learn more about the tango. Have them find out more about the history of the dance, as well as how it is enjoyed and currently performed. Give students index cards. Have them write these facts, along with any other interesting information they discover, on the cards. Lead a roundtable discussion for students to share their findings and discuss the details.

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 visualizing to comprehend the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- analyze the words, thoughts, and actions of characters during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify the use of dashes as punctuation; distinguish dashes from hyphens during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify, select, and use synonyms and antonyms during discussion and on a worksheet; successfully demonstrate how to use a thesaurus

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)