

Lesson Plan

A Late Night Chat with a Parakeet



About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 22 Word Count: 1,279

Book Summary

A Late Night Chat with a Parakeet is a humorous story told from the point of view of the main character, Hattie MacGruder. In this story, Hattie uses her diary to tell what happens when she receives a parakeet that can talk and how she feels when no one believes her.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Retell

Objectives

- Retell to understand and remember informational text
- Summarize important events in a book
- Identify and use proper nouns
- Identify use antonyms

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*A Late Night Chat with a Parakeet* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Summarization, proper nouns, 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: *absolute* (adj.), *babbling* (v.), *disease* (n.), *parakeet* (n.), *sassing* (v.), *ventriloquism* (n.)
 Enrichment: *funeral* (n.), *gypsy* (n.), *partially* (adv.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students to share whether or not they believe birds can talk. (Some birds, like parrots, mimic what people say.) Extend the conversation to ask students whether or not a person could have a real conversation with a bird. (*Although birds can mimic words, a person cannot have a real conversation with a bird.*)

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students a copy of the book and have them preview the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers and offer ideas as to what kind of book this is and what it might be about.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

A Late Night Chat with a Parakeet

- Show students the title page. Talk about the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Retell**

- Tell students that one strategy readers use to understand what they're reading is to retell what is happening in the story.
- Model how to retell.

Think-aloud: *When I read, I am going to pause after every few pages and review in my mind who the main characters are and the most important events that have happened. After I read the whole story, I will be able to use this information to summarize the story in my own words.*

- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out a word. They can look for base words, prefixes, and suffixes or other word endings. They can also look for familiar words within words to help them work out words.
- Model using the context to identify an unfamiliar word. For example, have students find the word *untruth* near the top of page 5 and reread the sentence. Say: *I read that Sybil and Sarah are liars and fibbers. The sentence before tells me that there are people who are not telling the truth. I also know that the prefix un- means not. When I put all this information together, I can infer, or guess, that untruth means a statement lacking truth.* Have students read the word in the sentence to be sure it makes sense.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the story to find out what happens to the little girl and the parakeet. Remind students, as they read, to retell the most important characters and events in their minds to help them remember and understand who and what the text is about.


During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 6. Have them go back and reread the pages if they finish before everyone else.
- Have students read aloud individually and listen for their use of word-attack strategies as they read.
- Model how to retell.

Think-aloud: *While I was reading, I paused after a few pages to think about the most important events and characters in the story. Based on what I read, I know that Hattie is an important character. I also know that she has a talking parakeet but that her friends do not believe her. This prompts her to explain why her story is true. As I read, I will continue to retell the story in my mind and in my own words to remember and understand the text.*

- Have students read to the end of the book. Ask them to retell only the most important events and characters in the story.

 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

- Reinforce that retelling a story in their own words while reading helps students understand the text. *Think-aloud: As I read, I learned that Hattie's parakeet flew away, so she was not able to show her friends that he could talk. When her friends didn't believe her story, she became upset. However, I also learned that Hattie is very dramatic and likes to write stories. This might have been one of the reasons her friends did not believe her story. Retelling the story in my own words helped me remember the events and better understand the characters.*

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Summarize**

- **Discussion:** Tell students that one strategy readers use to understand and remember a text is to summarize information that they have read. Explain that a summary contains a few sentences that list the most important points from the beginning, middle, and end of the text. A summary should be written in the student's own words.
- **Introduce and model:** Give students the [summarization worksheet](#). Tell them that the beginning of a story often introduces the characters and setting to readers. Explain that Hattie's story about the parakeet begins with her first diary entry. Discuss the characters and events in the beginning of the text with students. Ask students to explain the most important characters and events. (*Hattie was given a parakeet after her great-aunt died.*) Have students write the most important points from the beginning of the text on the worksheet.
- **Check for understanding:** Explain to students that often the middle of a story contains a problem. Have students discuss the most important information from the middle of the text. (*Hattie's parakeet can talk. While she is sleeping it flies away.*) Have students write the most important points from the middle of the text on the worksheet.
- **Independent practice:** Explain to students that often the end of a story contains the solution to the problem. Have students individually explain the most important information from the end of the text and write it on the worksheet. (*Hattie tells everyone that her bird can talk, but no one believes her.*) When finished, ask students to combine the important points on their worksheet to create the summary in their own words. (*Hattie got a talking parakeet after her great-aunt died. But the parakeet flew away, and no one believed her story.*) Have students write the complete summary on their worksheet.



Instruct students to use the inside back cover of their book to describe a time when they had difficulty believing something someone said to them.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Proper nouns

- Review with students the definition of a *noun*. Write the words *person*, *place*, and *thing* on the board.
 - Write the words *girl*, *day*, and *soda* on the board. Ask students to come to the board to place these words under the correct category of *person*, *place*, or *thing*.
 - Ask students to turn to page 8 in the text and identify the words *Sybil*, *Sunday*, and *Coke*. Have students place these words in the correct category of *person*, *place*, or *thing*.
 - Ask students to look at the words in the category on the board and explain what is different about the words (some words have a capital letter at the beginning and some do not). Explain that names of people, places, and things are called proper nouns. Proper nouns have a capital letter at the beginning.
- Ask students to identify other proper nouns in the text and circle these words. Have students add these words to the list created on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students complete the [proper nouns worksheet](#).

Word Work: **Antonyms**

- Have students turn to page 11 in the text. Ask them to read and explain how Hattie thought her mom would be feeling when she got home (sad). Then have students read and explain how Hattie's mom was really feeling when Hattie got home (happy).
- Write *sad* and *happy* on the board. Have students explain what they notice about these two words (they are opposites). Explain to students that words meaning the opposite of each other are called *antonyms*.
- Write the following words on the board: *sunny*, *up*, and *dry*. Ask students to come to the board to write antonyms for each of the words (*cloudy*, *down*, *wet*). Encourage students to suggest other antonym pairs they know of and write these on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students complete the [antonyms worksheet](#).

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.

Extend the Reading

Writing and Art Connection

Have students write their own diary entry. Ask them to pretend they are Hattie and have them tell what happens next. Students can use the following questions to prompt their writing:

1. Does the bird come back?
2. Does someone find the bird and discover that it can talk?
3. Is Hattie still friends with Sarah and Sybil?
4. Does Hattie get another pet?
5. Does the new pet talk to Hattie?

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

Science Connection

Discuss why Fred the parakeet says he would like to fly south for the winter. Have students research why birds fly south for the winter, what types of birds do this, and how they fly.

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 retell information about the characters and events in the story to understand and remember information in text
- accurately summarize the most important characters and events in text
- correctly identify and use proper nouns on a worksheet
- accurately identify and use antonyms on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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