



About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy Page Count: 14 Word Count: 595

Book Summary

In this installment in the Hoppers series, the rabbit family is ready to spend their vacation money. After a brief setback when Snubby Nose loses his money, the Hoppers hop aboard a train for a ride. But when the train goes through a tunnel, scaring all four little Hoppers, Grandpa Grizzly must come to the rescue with headlamps and chocolate coins. Illustrations support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge


Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand text
- Sequence events
- Fluently read the long /a/ vowel digraph *ai*
- Recognize and understand the formation of past-tense verbs ending in *-ed*
- Identify common compound words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Vacation Time!* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Dictionaries
- Sequence events, past-tense verbs, compound words 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: *aboard, countryside, disappeared, explosion, frowning, glittering, headlamps, platform, vacation*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students about vacations they may have taken. Talk about what they did, and focus special attention on the mode of transportation they used. How did students feel about riding a long distance in a car, airplane, bus, or train?
- Ask students if they have ever been on a train. What was it like? What did they see from the train? What kinds of cabins or cars did the train have?
- Ask if students have read other Hoppers stories. Ask what makes them fantasy stories. Discuss the characters and their actions. Who has had troubles in previous books? Who has helped the Hoppers get out of trouble in other books? What trouble do students predict might be in this book? What kind of trouble might the Hoppers get into on vacation?

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 and what it might be about.
- Open the book to the title and copyright pages. Ask students about the information they find there. Have them make more predictions from the illustration on the title page. Point out the author information on the copyright page. Ask students if they know what an adaptation is. Tell them that some books have old-fashioned language that sounds strange today. Explain that the Hoppers books came from stories written almost one hundred years ago. Ask students to identify the original author. Explain that while the idea and the story came from the author, the language has been made more modern by the person who adapted the book they are holding.

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

- Explain that good readers use what they already know about a topic to understand and remember new information as they read a book.
- Model connecting to prior knowledge using the illustrations.
- **Think-aloud:** *The illustration on the cover shows a large rabbit holding out tickets for a small rabbit to see. Since the title of the book is Vacation Time! I think the tickets must have something to do with their vacation. I know that when planning a vacation, tickets are often purchased for travel by plane, train, or bus. This illustration makes me think about a time when my family had plane tickets to go on vacation to Mexico. I was so excited to see those tickets! I don't know how or where the Hoppers will travel, but I know I will find out when I read the book. I will be able to add new information about vacations to what I already know.*
- Have students return to the back cover and title page of the book. Ask them questions to facilitate the discussion: *What is in the illustration on the title page? What do you see on the back cover? What do you think this story will be about? What else do you know about vacations?*
- 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 that writers present the events of a story in a particular order. Signal words are often provided to help readers identify the order of the events. Ask students to identify examples of signal words (*today, first, next, then, last, finally, dates, and so on*).
- Model how to sequence events.
- **Think-aloud:** *I know that a process, like a story, has a sequence of events. For example, when I call someone on the phone, first I lift the receiver off the hook. Next, I dial the number using the number pad on the phone. Then, I hold one end of the receiver to my ear. Last, I speak into the other end of the receiver.*
- Have volunteers explain the order of a simple process, such as making a sandwich or getting ready for school. Use time and order words (*first, next, and so on*) to record the steps on the board.
- Show students an example of a timeline. Explain that timelines are created as events are listed in order. Tell students that they will be creating a timeline of events that are included in this book. Introduce and explain the [sequence events worksheet](#).

Introduce the Vocabulary

- As students preview the book, ask them to talk about what they see in the illustrations. Reinforce the vocabulary words they will encounter in the text.
- Write the following words from the content vocabulary on the board: *disappeared, frowning, countryside, and platform*.




- Give groups of students a large piece of blank paper. Have them divide the paper into four sections. For each word, have them write or draw what they know about the word. Require group collaboration, encouraging students to listen to other students' ideas. Have groups discuss and create a definition for each word using prior knowledge.
- Review or explain that a dictionary contains a list of words and their definitions. Model how students can use a dictionary to find a word's meaning. Give students dictionaries. Invite a volunteer to read the definition for *disappear*. Point out that the vocabulary word is *disappeared*, but that in the dictionary, words are listed without suffixes such as *-ed*.
- Have students compare the definition with their prior knowledge of the word. Then have them follow along on page 14 as you read the sentence in which the word *disappeared* is found to confirm the meaning of the word. Repeat the exercise with the remaining vocabulary words.



Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out more about the Hoppers' vacation. Remind them to think about what they already know about vacations and to notice the sequence of events from each section of the text as they read.

During Reading

Student Reading

-  **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 7. Ask them to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they connected with prior knowledge. Encourage students who finish before everyone else to go back and reread.
- Model making connections using prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: *When I read about Snubby Nose losing his money on page 4, it made me remember when I lost money once. It made me very upset because I really wanted to spend that money on something special. I got so frustrated because I looked and looked for the money, but I never found it.*
- Ask students if any of them have ever lost money and, if so, how they felt about it. Ask if they had anyone help them find it the way Floppy Ears helped Snubby Nose. Ask students to share additional ways they connected to prior knowledge while reading the text.
-  Have students discuss and circle the events on pages 3 through 7 that are most important to correctly tell the story so far. Record the information in a timeline on the board, and have students write these events on their sequence events worksheet. (It was the first day of summer vacation. The Hoppers wondered where they should go and how they should spend their money. They discussed vacation ideas over breakfast. Papa Hopper showed them that he had train tickets for everyone.)
- Ask students to tell what the book is mostly about so far (vacation). Review the events on the timeline on the board. Point out that other information in the book includes details that make the story interesting but are not important to the sequence of the book. (For example: Snubby Nose thought he lost his money, but Floppy Ears found it.) Point out that supporting details are not included in a timeline; only the most important information is listed in the most concise wording possible. Explain that complete sentences aren't always necessary when writing notes for a timeline.
-  **Check for understanding:** Have students continue reading to the end of page 9. Ask students to circle additional important story events in the book. Discuss the important events as a class and write them on the board in order. Have students fill in their timeline on the sequence events worksheet. (Grandpa Grizzly surprised them at the train station. The Hoppers and Grandpa Grizzly boarded their own special cabin. The train moved fast through the countryside. The youngsters watched out the window.) Allow students to make additions and corrections in their book.

- Ask students to share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge while reading about the Hoppers' vacation.
-  Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about what they know about vacations as they read and to identify the sequence of events in each section. Have them continue to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they connected with prior knowledge.
-  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

- Discuss how making connections between information read and information known about the topic keeps readers actively involved and helps them remember what they have read.
- **Think-aloud:** *When I read page 11, it made me remember when I took a train to Canada. We went through a long tunnel, and it was very loud and dark, just as it was for the Hoppers on their train ride. I remember wondering how long we would be in the tunnel and noticing that the lights above my seat helped make me feel better. Thinking about what I know helped me to understand and remember this part of the story.*
- Have students share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge to understand the information in the book.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review the sequence of events that was identified and written on the board. Practice restating the events using sequencing words (first, next, then, after that, and so on). Point out how it is important for students to use their own words to write about each event.
- Ask students which additional important story events they circled in the book. Discuss the important events on pages 10 through 12. Write them in the timeline on the board while students add to their timeline on the sequence events worksheet. (The train got very loud and pitch dark. The young Hoppers were afraid. Grandpa told them they were in a tunnel. Snubby Nose still was crying. Grandpa gave everyone a headlamp to wear.) Allow students to make additions and corrections to their work.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the timeline on their sequence events worksheet, recording the important details from pages 13 and 14. When students finish, discuss their answers aloud.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you read about how Grandpa Grizzly gave the Hoppers headlamps for the tunnel, encouraged them to pretend they were miners, and bought them each a chocolate gold coin. Keeping this in mind, do you think the Hoppers had a more enjoyable vacation because of Grandpa's kind gestures? How can planning ahead help to make a vacation fun?

Build Skills

Phonics: Long /a/ vowel digraph ai

- Have students look at the illustration on page 9. Ask them to tell what they see (a train). Write the word *train* on the board and point to the letters ai. Tell students that the letters a and i together stand for the long /a/ vowel sound they hear in the middle of the word *train*.
- Explain that the ai letter combination is one of the letter combinations that can stand for the long /a/ sound (other combinations are: ay, ea, eigh, and ey). Tell students that this combination of letters is called a long /a/ vowel digraph.

- Write the word *wait* on the board. Point out the letter combination that stands for the long /a/ digraph sound and ask students to blend the letters a and i together to make the same vowel sound as in *train*. Point out that the long /a/ digraph sound comes in the middle of these words, but that it doesn't for every word (as in *aim*). Next, run your finger under the letters as you blend the three sounds in wait: w/ai/t. Point out that even though there are four letters, there are three sounds blended together to form the word. Then have students blend the word aloud with you as you run your finger under the letters.
- Write the words *brain* and *bran* on the board and say them aloud. Ask students which word contains the same vowel sound as in *train*. Make sure students can differentiate between the two vowel sounds. Give other examples as necessary.



Check for understanding: Have students turn to page 9. Instruct them to find and circle the words that contain a long /a/ digraph ai (*train* and *rails*).

Grammar and Mechanics: Simple sentences

- Direct students to the first line on page 12. Ask them to identify the verb (*reached*). Explain that this is a past-tense verb that describes something that happened in the past. Write the term *past tense* on the board.
- Write the term *present tense* on the board. Explain that present-tense verbs describe something that is happening in the present, or right now. Ask students to name the present-tense form of *reached* (*reach*). Write these examples under the appropriate categories on the board.
- Point out that the verb is changed to a past-tense verb by adding the suffix *-ed*. Discuss the fact that this is an example of a *regular past-tense verb*. Explain that not every verb is changed to its past tense by adding *-d* or *-ed*, and that *irregular past-tense verbs* will be studied in another lesson (for example: *take* changes to *took*).
- Explain that when adding the suffix *-ed* to make a regular past-tense verb, sometimes it is necessary to double the consonant before adding the *-ed*. If the word's last two letters are a vowel followed by a consonant, the final consonant is doubled before adding the suffix (for example, *flip* becomes *flipped*). Read the third sentence on page 12 aloud: *He flipped a switch, and a bright light shone from Snubby Nose's forehead*. Write the present-tense verb *flip* and its past-tense form, *flipped*, in the appropriate categories on the board.
- Explain that when adding the suffix *-ed* to a verb ending in *-y*, such as *cry*, the *-y* is first changed to *-i* before adding the *-ed*. Write the word *cry* and its past-tense form, *cried*, in the categories on the board.
- Explain that when adding the suffix *-ed* to a verb ending in *-e*, such as *move*, the *-e* remains, and a *-d* is added. Write the word *move* and its past-tense form, *moved*, in the categories on the board.



Check for understanding: Ask students to turn to page 5 and underline the regular past-tense verbs (*leaned*, *whispered*, *stopped*). Have them write the present tense of these verbs (*lean*, *whisper*, *stop*) in the left-hand margin. Discuss their answers aloud and write these examples on the board under the *present tense* and *past tense* headings.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [past-tense-verbs worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud after students finish.

Word Work: Compound words

- Review or explain that when two separate words are combined to form a new word, the new word is called a *compound word*.
- Write the word *thunderstorm* on the board. Explain that the definitions of the two separate words can help students figure out the meaning of the bigger word (a *storm* with *thunder*).
- Have students turn to page 4 in the book. Read the following sentence: *Snubby Nose threw himself on the bed and sobbed*. Have students locate the compound word (*himself*). Ask students to identify the two separate words that make up the compound word (*him* and *self*). Review the concept of compound words (combining two separate words to make a new word).

- **Check for understanding:** Have students look for compound words on page 5 (*downstairs, breakfast*). Encourage students to think of other compound words they know. Create a poster titled *Compound Words* and fill it with all the compound words found in the text and from prior knowledge. Post it on the classroom wall and add to it as more words are found or remembered later.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **compound words worksheet**. Discuss their answers aloud once everyone has finished working independently.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently or with a partner. 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 them compare with someone at home prior knowledge about vacations.

Extend the Reading

Fantasy Writing Connection

As a class, write a new Hoppers story in which the family goes on another kind of trip. Decide together if they go on a plane trip, boat ride, bus ride, car trip, a ride on a Ferris wheel, or even a trip on a rocket ship. Have students brainstorm something that might happen while the Hoppers are on their trip. The boat might go through a storm, or the car might go over a high bridge. Ask students how the characters will react to the problem. Have students brainstorm how Grandpa Grizzly could help the Hoppers solve their problem. How could Grandpa Grizzly make them feel better? Have students follow the model of *Vacation Time!* Write the story on poster paper as they compose the ideas as a group. Each student can then provide an illustration for the story. Post the finished product in the classroom or hallway.

Social Studies Connection

Show students a topographical map of a local area and/or different areas of interest to them. Show students how the lines on the map represent the height of the land. Point out that the mountains have many lines that are very close together going up to their peaks. Explain that flat areas have widely spaced lines and that water is usually blue. Have students plot a train route over the landforms. Have them identify when the train will pass over mountains, along flat plains, over plateaus, and across bodies of water.

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:**

- use the strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand the text during discussion and independently
- accurately sequence events in the text during discussion; create a timeline on a worksheet
- fluently read the long /a/ vowel digraph *ai* during discussion and independently
- identify and understand the formation of past-tense verbs during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify common compound words during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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