

Focus Question:

What makes some plants strange?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

Do you know that some plants eat meat? Some even steal food from other plants. *Strange Plants* is an informative look at unusual plants that exist in the world. Detailed photographs accompany an engaging text about extraordinarily strange plants. The book can also be used to teach students how to identify main ideas and details and the proper use of adjectives.

The book and lesson are also available for levels K and N.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Identify main ideas and details to understand a text
- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Describe information provided by photographs
- ☐ Recognize and use adjectives
- ☐ Identify compound words

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Strange Plants* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Main idea and details, adjectives, compound words worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *attracted* (adj.), *carnivorous* (adj.), *digests* (v.), *emits* (v.), *host* (n.), *moisture* (n.), *nutrients* (n.), *organisms* (n.), *plants* (n.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *another* (adj.), *common* (adj.), *different* (adj.), *instead* (adv.), *protect* (v.), *through* (prep.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

Guide students through a discussion about plants using the following questions: *Where do you usually see plants? What are the main parts of a plant? What are the names of some of the plants you know? Do you know of any strange plants? What makes these plants strange?*

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Strange Plants*. 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, author's name).

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Main idea and details

- Explain to students that all books have a main idea, or a general topic that is the subject of a book. Discuss how the extra information or descriptions that help explain the main idea are the details of the book. Point out to students that the title of a book often provides clues about the main idea.
- Have students read the title and preview the photographs in the book. Have them discuss with a partner their predictions about the main idea of the book. Invite students to share their predictions.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Summarize

- Explain to students that one way to understand and remember information in a book is to summarize the most important information. Explain that when readers summarize, they do not tell everything in a book, only the most important information. Point out that a summary often answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.
- Create a chart on the board with the headings *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, and *Why*. Read page 8 aloud and model summarizing that page while writing information in the corresponding columns on the chart.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the “Words to Know” box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about what makes plants strange. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer.
- 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 a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *How do air plants and stone plants compare?* (level 2) pages 5 and 11
- *How would you summarize meat-eating plants?* (level 2) pages 6–8
- *How do dodder plants affect their host plant?* (level 2) page 9
- *How would you classify a cactus?* (level 2) multiple pages
- *What would happen if stone plants grew only above ground?* (level 3) page 11
- *What conclusions can you draw about ant plants?* (level 3) page 14
- *How would you adapt a characteristic to create a different strange plant?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Photographs

Explain that photographs are pictures taken with a camera and they help readers know exactly what something looks like. Have students work with a partner to read page 12. Have students review the photograph on page 12. Ask students: *How does the photograph support details in the text? Did the photograph match the image in your mind? Why are photographs important features in a book?* Have students review other photographs in the book and discuss in groups

the details they provide. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you summarize as you read, and direct them to stop at several points during the reading to answer the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*. Have students read page 5 with a partner. Ask students to summarize what they read in groups. Invite volunteers to share their summaries with the rest of the class. Assign student pairs a page from the book to summarize.
- Review with students their predictions for the main idea of this book. Model identifying main idea and details.
Think Aloud: *This book is providing me with information about strange plants. Before I began reading, I used the title of the book and the photographs to make a prediction about the book’s main idea. After reading the beginning of the book, I know that there will be many different plants discussed. What I learn about each of these plants are details that support the main idea, which is that plants can be strange. I will continue to search for more details as I read.*
- Model how to complete the **main-idea-and-details worksheet**. Have students identify details from the book and circle them. Then, have students discuss the details with a partner and determine the main idea for the book.

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.

Skill Review

Worksheet: Main idea and details

Review the main-idea-and-details worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the details and main ideas they chose. Discuss with students the justification for choosing these details and how they connect to the main idea of the book.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Reasons should include characteristics that make some plants strange. Samples: *Some plants grow in the air, eat meat, or have fur.*)



Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Comprehension Checks

- Book quiz
- Retelling rubric

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Adjectives

- Write the following sentence on the board: *They eat insects, spiders, and even some other small animals.* Ask students to tell the word that describes the animals (*small*). Explain to them that *small* describes the animals. Review or explain to students that a word that describes a noun is an *adjective*. Remind them that adjectives are words that describe people, places, and things. Ask students to name the noun in the sentence (*animals*).
- Have students read page 7 to find two adjectives (*moist, small*) and the nouns they describe (*environments, trigger hairs*). Ask them to suggest alternative adjectives for the same nouns (*harsh environments, fuzzy trigger hairs*) and alternative nouns for the same adjectives (*moist sponge, small pencil*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students name five nouns. Write the list of nouns on the board. Have them write an adjective for each noun on a separate piece of paper. Invite students to share their list of adjectives. Write the adjectives for each word next to the noun.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [adjectives worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Compound words

- Write the word *rootlike* on the board. Review or explain to students that when two words are combined to form a new word with a new meaning, the new word is called a *compound word*.
- Have students turn to page 9 in the book. Read the following sentence: *It sends slender rootlike stems into another plant.* Have students put their finger on the word *rootlike*. Explain that the definitions of the two separate words can help students figure out the meaning of the bigger word (*like* and *root*).
- Have students think of and share some compound words. Write these words on the board. Have students search the text and find the compound words in the book. Write these words on the board and discuss their meanings (*into, sundew, daytime, nighttime, underground*).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compound words worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.