



## About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy Page Count: 16 Word Count: 726

### Book Summary

Pluto loves being the smallest planet and getting to play with all the other bigger planets until one day when they all decide that Pluto isn't a planet anymore! Pluto is sad until he finds new friends—other dwarf planets like him. Read to find out what Pluto has in common with his new set of pals!

## About the Lesson

### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Visualize

### Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of visualizing to understand text
- Identify main idea and details in the text
- Identify *r*-controlled /er/ vowel
- Identify and use proper nouns
- Identify and understand the use of homophones

### Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Pluto's New Friends* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Visualize, main idea and details, proper nouns, homophones 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: *ancient (adj.), asteroid (n.), myths (n.), orbit (n.), solar system (n.), universe (n.)*  
 Enrichment: *comet (n.), dwarf planet (n.), harvest (n.)*

## Before Reading

### Build Background

- Ask students to share what they know about the planets in our solar system. Show students a poster or diagram of our solar system that names the planets.
- Ask students what they know about Pluto, the planet that is smallest and farthest away. Tell students that scientists recently decided that Pluto isn't really a planet because of its small size and other characteristics.

### 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 the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that 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 what a person already knows about a topic, and what he or she reads.
- Explain to students that the author has made characters out of real-life objects in space and that this book has wonderful illustrations of them on all the pages of this book. As they read the book, students can draw pictures of what they visualized, too.
- Model how to use visualization when reading.  
*Think-aloud: Whenever I read a book, I always pause after a page or two to create a picture in my mind of what I've read. Doing this helps me to organize and understand the ideas and the plot in the book. Often, but not always, there are illustrations to help "show" what is happening. Being able to create "mind movies" or drawing my own pictures will help me when I read books that don't have illustrations.*
- Introduce and explain the **visualize worksheet**. Have students close their book. Then read page 4 aloud to students. Invite them to draw what they visualized from page 4. Have them share their drawing and then have them open their book to page 4 and see how the illustrator visualized the text on page 4.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.


#### Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- Explain to students that every book has a big idea that is the most important idea of the book. Review or explain that the main idea is often the title of the book. Have students take another look at the book covers, and ask them to predict the main idea of the book.
- Explain that each page gives supporting details that tell the reader more about the book's main topic (understanding Pluto).
- Read aloud the first section, "Brag and Tag," on pages 4 and 5 to students. Model identifying the details for this section.  
*Think-aloud: This book has a unique text structure to it—it is a fantasy story about the planets in space, but many true facts are woven into it. I will think about the fun fantasy parts of the story, but I will also think about the main facts and details I am learning about Pluto and the other planets as I read. For example, I read in the first section about the planets playing a game called "Brag and Tag." Most of the sentences describe Pluto and how the other planets ignore him because he is so far away. But he is proud of the fact that he is the smallest planet. Based on what I've read, I think the important detail of the section is: Pluto is the smallest planet.*
- Create a web similar to the **main-idea-and-details worksheet** on the board. Write the title of the book, *Pluto's New Friends*, in the Main Idea bubble. Say: *I can use this web to help me keep track of the most important details of each section of the book.*
- Write *smallest planet* in the first details bubble.

### Introduce the Vocabulary



- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words that students will encounter. For example, on page 7 you might say: *The text says, "You are too tiny to be a planet, and you have a messy orbit as well"... "B-b-but I orbit the Sun, just like the rest of you!" What clues does the paragraph provide to help you understand the meaning of the word orbit?"* (The word *orbit* is used in two different contexts. Help students to infer that *orbit* must mean the path that a planet travels around the Sun.)
- Remind students to look at the letters a word begins with or ends with, or break the words into chunks, as ways to figure out a difficult word. For example, point to the word *asteroid* on page 8 and say: *When I look at the parts of this word, I can break it into pieces to pronounce it: as-ter-oid. Then I can reread the sentence and listen to see if it sounds right or if it sounds like a word I've heard before.* Repeat this process with other multisyllabic or unfamiliar words from the text.

### Set the Purpose

-  Have students read to find out more about Pluto and the other planets. Encourage them to visualize while reading. Remind students to also think about the details of each section. Ask them to underline in their book important details within each section.

## During Reading

### Student Reading

-  **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 5 to the end of page 8. Encourage students who finish early to go back and reread. Ask them to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they visualized.
- Model visualizing.  
**Think-aloud:** *When I read the section titled "Bullies," I pictured in my mind how shocked and sad Pluto must have felt when the other planets teased him. I visualized Mars, Uranus, Saturn, and Mercury all orbiting around, saying mean things to Pluto.*
- Allow students a few minutes to draw what they visualized in the second box on their worksheet. Have them share and explain their drawing.
- Model identifying important details from this section of the text.  
**Think-aloud:** *As I read this section, it was fun to think about Pluto and the other planets as characters, but I learned some important information, too. I learned that Pluto is no longer considered a planet, and Mercury is now considered the smallest planet in our solar system. I also learned that Pluto's orbit is messy, not smooth like those of the other planets, and it has rocks and ice in it. Some scientists believe that Pluto could really be an asteroid.*
- Write these details in the second bubble of the web on the board.
- Distribute and explain the main idea and details worksheet, pointing out that it matches the one you have drawn/projected on the board. Allow students time to fill in their worksheet, using the web on the board as a model.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 9 through 11. Have them visualize and draw in the third box of their worksheet. Point out that they can use their drawings to identify the important details on the pages, too.
- Ask volunteers to share details they learned about Pluto. Record their responses in the third bubble of the web on the board.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to visualize as they read and to think about the important facts they are learning while enjoying the story of Pluto and his friends.
-  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

- Ask students to explain or show how the strategy of visualizing helped them understand and remember the story.
- **Think-aloud:** *When I read page 13, I imagined what the Kuiper Belt might look like with all that ice and rock floating through it. I could see it in my mind as I thought about how our solar system may have begun. Visualizing that scene in the book will really help me to remember this story.*
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete their visualize worksheet, choosing what they would like to draw in the last box. Have volunteers explain their drawings while using the text to support their sketches.

### Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Discuss how stopping to review the important details helped students remember the facts and better understand the information in the book. Ask how the details they identified support the main idea of the book.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete their main-idea-and-details worksheet, using the last two bubbles to fill in details they learned from the last two sections of the book.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned that Pluto is no longer considered a planet but is now called a dwarf planet. Now that you know this, why is it important for scientists to continue to study and do research, even when they believe something that has been true for a long time? Why is it important for all of us to continue learning?

### Build Skills

#### Phonics: **R-controlled /er/ vowel**

- Have students turn to page 5 and find the word *weather*. Write the word *weather* on the board and circle the *er*. Tell students that the letters *e* and *r* together stand for the vowel sound they hear at the end of the word *weather*.
- Explain that the *er* letter combination is one of the letter combinations that stand for a group of sounds called *r-controlled* vowels. These vowel sounds are neither long nor short and are sometimes difficult to hear.
- Have students read the rest of page 5. Ask them to circle the words *over*, *everyone*, *others*, and *whispered*. Write these words on the board. Point out the letter combination that stands for the *r-controlled* vowel sound and ask students to blend the letters *e* and *r* together to make the same vowel sound as in the word *weather*. Run your finger under the letters as you blend the sounds in these words.



**Check for understanding:** Assign student pairs to pages in the book. Provide highlighters and ask them to highlight any words on their assigned pages that contain the /er/ combination. Monitor and check their findings for accuracy.

#### Grammar and Mechanics: **Proper nouns**

- Review or explain that a *noun* is a person, place or thing. Ask students to turn to page 9 and give examples of nouns from the page (*comet, days, moon, planets*).
- Review or explain that a *proper noun* is the name of a *specific* person, place, or thing. A proper noun always begins with a capital letter. Write examples of proper nouns from page 9 on the board (*Pluto, Charon*).
- Remind students not to confuse the capital letter in a proper noun with the capital letter used at the beginning of a sentence or in the title of a book chapter or section. Point out instances in the book where capitals are being used, but a proper noun is not present.

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## Pluto's New Friends

- **Check for understanding:** Write the following nouns in a column on the board: *girl, boy, street, month, holiday, planet*. Ask volunteers to give examples of proper nouns for each word. Record their responses next to the regular nouns (*Mary, Joe, Hudson Street, July*, and so on).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [proper nouns worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

### Word Work: Homophones

- Have students turn to page 7 and follow along as you read the sentence *You are too tiny to be a planet, and you have a messy orbit as well*. Write the word *too* on the board. Ask students to explain the meaning of the word *too* (also).
- Write the word *to* on the board. Ask students how this word is different (it is spelled differently; it has a different meaning).
- Repeat the process above for the words *knew* (page 10), and *new* (page 12).
- Write the sentence *Let's get to know each other with a game*. Explain to students that, when they are writing, homophones can be tricky, and they have to know which spelling of the homophone to use. Knowing the meaning of the word and the meaning of the sentence will help them.
- Ask students if they can think of another word that sounds like *know* but is spelled differently and means something different (*no*). Ask a volunteer to use *no* in a sentence. Write the sentence on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following sentences on the board: *Then \_\_\_\_ day, he looked up and saw someone like him; He had \_\_\_\_ the Brag and Tag game*. Write the words *one* and *won* below the sentences. Ask volunteers to tell you which of homophone goes in which blank. Ask them how they knew.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [homophones worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud after they are finished.

## 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 students point out how the author wove true facts about Pluto into the story.

## Extend the Reading

### Fantasy Writing Connection

Ask students to pretend that they are the planet Pluto. Using the information and details they learned from the story, have them write a letter to a new dwarf-planet friend. Have them include as many details as they can to describe themselves to their new friend. Require a clean, edited copy. Bind their letters into a book titled *Planet Pen Pals*.

### Science Connection

Provide students with research and Internet resources (including [spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/pluto/](http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/pluto/)) and have them find out more about what makes a planet a planet. Ask them what things the planets in our solar system have in common, and have them find out more about why scientists decided to classify Pluto as a dwarf planet.

### 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
- understand and identify main idea and details in text during discussion and on a worksheet
- Identify *r*-controlled /er/ vowel and the sound it represents in text and during discussion
- recognize and use proper nouns during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify and understand the use of homophones during discussion and on a worksheet

### Comprehension Checks

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