

Focus Question:

How does the fish use its imagination to have fun?

Book Summary

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy

What's a bored fish to do when it lives in a tank all alone? *Fishtank Fun* is the story of one very imaginative fish and its creative solutions to living by itself. Students will enjoy colorful illustrations that support entertaining text. The book can also be used to teach students how to make inferences as well as to connect to prior knowledge.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Connect to prior knowledge
- ☐ Make inferences and draw conclusions
- ☐ Describe information provided by illustrations
- ☐ Discriminate short vowel /i/ sound
- ☐ Identify short vowel *i*
- ☐ Recognize and use exclamatory sentences
- ☐ Identify and use compound words

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Fishtank Fun* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Make inferences / draw conclusions, short vowel *i*, exclamatory sentences 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.

- **High-frequency words:** *can, has, my*
- **Words to Know**
Story critical: *alien* (n.), *astronaut* (n.), *fishtank* (n.), *pretend* (v.), *submarine* (n.), *warrior* (n.)
- **Academic vocabulary:** *least* (adj.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *bored* on the board and read it aloud to students. Engage students in a conversation about what it means to be bored and different situations where they have felt bored. Have students work in small groups to discuss how they remedy boredom such as playing with friends, playing a board game, and so on. Invite each group to share their discussions with the class.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Fishtank Fun*. 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, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy:

Connect to prior knowledge

Explain to students that engaged readers make connections between what they already know and new information they read. Explain that making these connections to their prior knowledge helps them better understand and enjoy what they are reading. Point out that the title and pictures in a story are the first things readers can use to make connections to a story. Have students share connections they made with the title or cover picture with a partner. Invite volunteers to share their connections with the rest of the class, and discuss how their connections are similar.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Make inferences / draw conclusions

- Explain to students that authors don't always use details to explain everything that happens in a story. Point out that sometimes they give readers clues to figure out what isn't said in the words and that readers must then use the clues from the story plus what they already know to make a guess.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Explain that this is called *making an inference* or *drawing a conclusion*.

- Review the cover picture and title with students. Have students work in groups to make inferences using the title and cover picture. Have volunteers share their conclusions with the class.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the “Words to Know” box on the copyright page. Point out that these words can be found in the story and that understanding the meaning of each word will help them better understand what they read. Read the words aloud to students and as a group, discuss the meaning of each word. On the basis of the definitions discussed, have students work in groups to illustrate each vocabulary word on a poster. Have students share their posters with the class.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about the fish in its tank. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- 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.

- *Why is the fish bored?* (level 1) page 3
- *How does the fish use the spaceship to have fun?* (level 1) page 6
- *How are the rocket and the submarine similar? How are they different?* (level 2) pages 8 and 11
- *How do the toys in the tank help the fish use its imagination?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *How might the fish and its new friend use their imaginations to have fun?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Illustrations

Explain that pictures, or illustrations, are important when reading stories because they provide readers with extra information needed to make inferences or to draw conclusions. Have students work with a partner to review the pictures on pages 5 and 6. Ask students the following: *What did you learn from these pictures that was not stated in the text? How do these illustrations help you better understand the story?* Have students review other pictures in the

story and discuss in groups what they learned from them. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the class.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you make connections as you read, and direct them to stop at several points during reading to share their connections with a partner. Invite volunteers to share their connections with the class. Discuss with students that their connections may be very different but must be related to the story.
- Have students work in groups to review the inferences they made. Have groups discuss their conclusions with the whole group.
- Model making inferences and drawing conclusions. **Think-aloud:** *As I read, I pause often to use the pictures in the story to help me make inferences and draw conclusions. For example, when I look at the picture on page 12, I can infer that the new fish is happy about joining the tank. Although this information is not written by the author, I can see in the illustration that both fish are happy to see each other. Illustrations in a story provide me with clues and additional information that is not stated by the author.*
- Model how to complete the [make-inferences / draw-conclusions worksheet](#). Have students look at the first picture on the worksheet and share a conclusion they made with a partner. Then, have volunteers share their conclusion with the whole group.

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

Graphic Organizer:

Make inferences / draw conclusions

Review the make-inferences / draw-conclusions worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the inferences they made. Discuss with students the justification for drawing these conclusions.

Comprehension Extension

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided to be used for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Students should respond that the fish uses its imagination by using the toys in the tank to play make-believe.)

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Comprehension Checks

- Book quiz
- Retelling rubric

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Short vowel /i/ sound

- Say the word *fish* aloud to students, emphasizing the short vowel /i/ sound. Have students say the word aloud and then say the /i/ sound. Have students practice saying the short vowel /i/ sound to a partner.
- Read pages 3 and 4 aloud to students have them stand up and jump each time they hear a word containing the short vowel /i/ sound.
- Say the following word pairs and have students work with a partner to identify the word in each set that contains the short vowel /i/ sound: *fin/fan*, *sip/sap*, *pit/put*, *bet/bit*.
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words one at a time and have students clap when they hear a word that contains the short vowel /i/ sound: *with*, *sit*, *pirate*, *in*, *shark*, *pretend*, *ship*, *knight*, *in*.

Phonics: Short vowel i

- Write the word *fish* on the board and read it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /i/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word *fish* as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letter represents the short vowel /i/ sound in the word *fish*.
- Write the following words on the board, leaving out the short vowel *i*: *sip*, *hit*, *stick*, *tip*, *spin*, and *trim*. Invite volunteers to come to the board and add the short vowel *i* to each word and read the word aloud.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to reread pages 10 through 12 to identify and circle all the words containing the short vowel *i*. Review students' findings as a class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [short-vowel-i worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics:

Exclamatory sentences

- Write the following sentence on the board and read it aloud with students: *My fishtank has a new fish!* Explain to students that every sentence has a signal at the end to show the reader where to stop reading. Ask students to point to the signal at the end of this sentence and explain that it is an exclamation mark. Have students trace an exclamation mark in the air.

- Explain to students that sentences ending in exclamation marks are called *exclamatory sentences*, which express strong emotions, such as surprise and excitement, or a warning. Ask students to discuss with a partner what feeling the sentence on the board is expressing (excitement).
- Model how to read an exclamatory sentence: first read the sentence in a normal tone of voice, and then read it with emotional emphasis. Have students practice reading the sentence on the board with appropriate expression.
- **Check for understanding:** Write several sentences on the board, including exclamatory and declarative sentences. Read the sentences aloud with students, and have them work in groups to decide whether to use a period or exclamation mark at the end of each one. Invite volunteers to come to the board and add the correct punctuation mark. Then, have students practice reading the exclamatory sentences aloud.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [exclamatory sentences worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Compound words

- Write the word *fishtank* on the board and read it aloud with students. Ask students what two words they see in *fishtank*. Explain that this word is a *compound word* because it contains two smaller words that are combined to make a new meaning. Remind students that the definition of the separate words can help students figure out the meaning of the new word.
- Write the following compound words on the board: *pancake*, *raincoat*, *baseball*, *fireworks*, *sunflower*, *moonlight*. Invite volunteers to the board to circle the two smaller words that create each compound word.
- Write the following words on notecards: *skate*, *board*, *ice*, *cream*, *foot*, *ball*, *cross*, *walk*, *butter*, *fly*, *rattle*, *snake*, *every*, *thing*. Invite students to the front of the room to display the cards to the class. Invite volunteers to pair words to create compound words.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work in pairs to reread the story and circle the compound words. Review students' findings as a class.

Connections

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