



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 16 Word Count: 495

Book Summary

Horses are familiar animals, fewer people are familiar with the herds of wild horses that roam across the United States today. *Wild Horses* recounts the introduction of horses into the United States, describes life in a herd, and explains how the law has helped protect wild horses so they can continue to run free. Photographs, illustrations, and maps support the information in the book.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

Objectives

- Connect to prior knowledge to understand text
- Discriminate details as fact or opinion
- Identify vowel digraph *ai*
- Identify and use past-tense verbs
- Recognize and define homophones

Materials

Green text indicates resources are available on the website.

- Book—*Wild Horses* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Various photographs and illustrations of horses
- Sheets of paper
- Fact or opinion, vowel digraph *ai*, past-tense verbs worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

Vocabulary

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

- Content words:
Story critical: **herds** (n.), **mustangs** (n.), **pests** (n.), **plains** (n.), **sanctuaries** (n.), **tame** (v.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Place on the board various photographs and illustrations of horses, in different mediums. Have students call out the name of the animal. Write the word *horses* on the board and read it aloud with students. Ask them to take out a separate sheet of paper and spend one minute writing everything they know about horses, using key words or pictures.
- Have students share with a partner everything they wrote in their quick write. Invite volunteers to share information with the rest of the class, and record these details on the board.

- Discuss with students the difference between wild and tame animals. Have students share with a partner whether they think horses are tame or wild.

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, 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 Reading Strategy: **Connect to prior knowledge**

- Explain to students that engaged readers make connections between the information they are reading and what they already know about the topic. Point out that they will be able to better understand a book if they already know something about the subject. Explain to students that making connections to their prior knowledge will help them better understand and remember what they read.
- Model how to connect to prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: On the cover, I see a herd of horses running across a wide open space, a grassy plain beneath clear blue skies. The horses are different shades of brown, white, and gray. Their hair is streaming back in the wind, so I know they must be running fast. I know a bit of information about horses. I already know they are mammals, and they are extremely strong and very heavy. Lots of horses are tame and live on farms or ranches, but some horses are still wild and roam free. I know that tame horses wear saddles and are controlled by people, but wild horses care for themselves. My prior knowledge about horses helps me to understand that these horses are wild horses because they are roaming freely in a herd and seem to be living in the wild.
- Review with students the title page and table of contents. Remind students that a table of contents provides clues about the information in the book. Read the section titles with students and ask students to share with a partner if they have a better idea of what the book will be about. Have students preview the photographs and illustrations in the book.
- Have students share with a partner connections they can make between their prior knowledge and the information they previewed in the book. Remind students of the details they shared during the Build Background portion of the lesson, and point out that those details represent prior knowledge the class has about horses. Invite volunteers to share connections they made with the rest of the class.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Fact or opinion**

- Explain to students that readers need to evaluate information in a nonfiction book, and one way to do this is to discriminate details as fact or opinion. Remind students that a fact is a detail that is true and can be proven, and an opinion is a belief or judgment about a subject. Point out that facts can be verified, while opinions express how a person feels.
- Read page 4 aloud, and model discriminating between fact and opinion.
Think-aloud: This page informs me that huge herds of horses used to live on the plains of the American West, maybe as many as millions. They named the area "Wild Horses" on early maps. Both of these details can be verified by checking evidence such as old maps and historical records. These details are therefore facts. What would be an opinion about wild horses? An opinion expresses a feeling or a belief. To say that wild horses are scarier than tame horses shares a feeling, or an opinion. People can disagree with that statement, and it is not backed up with proof. As I read, I will keep track of which details are opinions and which are facts.

- Have students discuss in groups details about horses, drawing on information recorded on the board as a guide. Have each group choose three details they know to be facts. Ask groups to share a fact with the rest of the class and to describe how they know the detail is a fact. Point out that most people will agree on these statements because they are confirmed details supported by evidence.
- Have students think about their favorite type of horse, on the basis of color, breed, and so on. Invite volunteers to share their choice and record these details on the board. Have students discuss with a partner whether these details are facts or opinions. Point out that each person can have a different answer when they are sharing an opinion, or personal belief.
- Encourage students to weigh details as they read and determine whether they are facts or opinions.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words students will encounter. For example, while looking at the picture on the cover, you might say: *These horses are galloping across a plain. What does the word plain mean? That's right; a plain describes a piece of land that is flat or rolling, with few trees.*
- Remind students to use the picture and beginning letter with which a word begins to decode difficult words. For example, point to the word *herd* on page 4 and say the following: *If I am having trouble decoding this word, I can use the picture and the beginning letters to help myself decode it. In the pictures, I see three horses traveling in a group. The sentence does not describe a group of horses, however, because the word group begins with the /g/ sound, and this word begins with the /h/ sound. What other word could also mean a group of horses? I know we have many different words to describe groups of animals. Horses are called a herd when they are gathered together. The word herd begins with the /h/ sound and makes sense in this sentence. The word must be herd.*
- Write the story-critical vocabulary words on the board, and have students work with a partner to decode them.
- Have students write each word on a separate sheet of paper and discuss with a partner the meaning of the word. Ask students to draw a picture for each word that conveys the word's meaning. Invite volunteers to share their pictures and definitions with the rest of the class.
- Turn to the glossary on page 16. Remind students that a glossary contains a list of words and their definitions specific to the book. Read the words and discuss their meanings aloud. Discuss with students how the definitions compare with those they discussed with their partners. Have students revise their pictures as necessary.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about wild horses. Encourage them to connect the information they are reading to prior knowledge about horses and to discriminate between the facts and opinions in the book.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 4 to the end of page 7. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.

- Model connecting to prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: *In the first part of the book, I read about Spanish explorers bringing horses across the ocean to America and how some of the horses escaped or were left behind, eventually becoming wild horses. My prior knowledge about horses usually involves farms or stables. I know horses are used around the world, for riding and for work. I also know that some horses roam free, but when I think of horses, I think of domesticated animals working with people. I was surprised to learn that wild horses in America originally were tame horses, which escaped and survived as wild animals. Because I know horses are strong and smart, it made sense to me that they could survive on their own. My prior knowledge helped me to understand the new piece of information I learned about wild horses.*
- Have students discuss with a partner any prior information or experience they have with the details shared in the first part of the book. Have students draw a picture that represents one connection they made with prior knowledge. Invite volunteers to share their picture and explain the connection to the rest of the class.
- Write the following two sentences on the board: *Native Americans thought horses were strange and amazing. Spanish explorers crossed the Atlantic Ocean five hundred years ago.* Read them aloud with students, and have them discuss with a partner which detail is a fact and which is an opinion. Ask students to point to the fact on the board, and invite a volunteer to come and underline it.
- Ask students to discuss in groups how they know the sentence is a fact. Ask groups to discuss how they know the other sentence is an opinion.
- Point out to students that facts often involve objective information, such as dates and numbers. Ask students to call out the number from the sentence on the board. Remind them that opinions express thoughts or emotions.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 8 through 12. Have them write on a separate sheet of paper the connections to prior knowledge they made while they read. Invite volunteers to share their connections with the rest of the class.
- Have students work with a partner to review page 12 and choose one fact. Call on random students to share their fact with the rest of the class. Invite a volunteer to justify each sentence as a fact.
- Ask students to work with their partner and find one opinion on page 11 (people thought of wild horses as pests). Invite a volunteer to share the opinion with the rest of the class, and have students discuss with partners how they know the detail is an opinion.
- ✍ Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to make connections as they read, and have them draw another picture representing a connection they made to prior knowledge. Ask students to keep track of the opinions they find as they read.
- ✍ 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

- Have students draw one final picture representing a new connection they made between prior knowledge and information in the book. Have students discuss their picture with a partner. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class a connection they made to the text and describe how it helped them understand what they were reading.

- **Think-aloud:** *When I read about horse sanctuaries, I thought about other animal sanctuaries that I know of. In my town, we have a cat sanctuary. This place takes in cats that are abandoned or given up by people, and it provides a safe and loving home for the cats for the rest of their lives. The sanctuary has buildings for cats to stay in and open spaces for cats to run and play. Cats never have to worry about being hurt or put to sleep. My prior knowledge about animal sanctuaries helps me to understand and visualize what the horse sanctuaries might be like.*
- Have students discuss with a partner how making connections to prior knowledge helped them to understand and remember what they read. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the class.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Have students discuss in groups the facts they learned while reading. Invite volunteers to share a fact with the rest of the class, and record these details on the board using key words and pictures. Ask students to think about opinions they formed concerning the information they learned from facts in the book. Have students share at least one opinion with a partner.
- Have students discuss in groups how they can discriminate between facts and opinions. Discuss with students why it is important to recognize the difference between these two types of details.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [fact-or-opinion worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers aloud.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about the history and current situation of wild horses. Do you believe we should continue protecting wild horses? What is the importance of these animals?

Build Skills

Phonics: **Vowel digraph ai**

- Write the word *plains* on the board and read it aloud with students. Have students find the word on page 4 and read aloud the sentence in which it is found.
- Ask students what vowel sound they hear in the middle of the word (the long /a/ sound). Ask students to share with a partner the letters that create the long /a/ sound in the word *plains*. Have students point to the letters in the word.
- Invite a volunteer to come to the board and circle the letters *ai*. Explain to students that the letters *ai* can create the long /a/ sound when joined together, such as in the word *plains*. Write the word *nail* on the board. Blend the word aloud as you run your finger under the letters.
- Write the words *make* and *lay* on the board and read them aloud with students. Have students discuss with a partner how these words are different from the word *plain*. Remind students that there are several ways to create the long /a/ sound in a word, and the vowel digraph *ai* is one of those methods.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board, leaving out all vowels: *same*, *hair*, *rain*, *May*, *pair*, *take*, and *chair*. Read the words aloud. Have students discuss with a partner which words use the vowel digraph *ai* to create the long /a/ sound. Ask students to point to the appropriate words, and invite volunteers to come to the board and add the missing vowels to those words. Have other students give a thumbs-up signal if they agree the word has the correct spelling.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [vowel digraph ai worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Past-tense verbs**

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Settlers worked with wild horses*. Read the sentence aloud with students. Ask them to point to the verb in the sentence, and remind students that a verb is a word showing action.

- Have students discuss with a partner whether the verb in this sentence describes action happening in the present or in the past. Explain to students that a *past-tense verb* is a word that describes *actions that happened in the past*.
- Cover the *-ed* ending on the word *worked*, and ask students to read the new word aloud. Point out that *work* is the present-tense form of the verb, as it describes action happening in present time. Explain to students that most verbs are changed to the past tense by adding the suffix *-ed* to the end of the words.
- Ask students to turn to page 7 and work with a partner to find and circle all examples of past-tense verbs. Call on random students to share a verb with the rest of the class, and record them on the board (*tamed, did, used, ran, were, needed, and joined*).
- Invite volunteers to come to the board and underline the suffix *-ed* in the words *tamed, needed, and joined*. For each word, cover the suffix *-ed* and have students read aloud the present-tense form of the verb.
- Have students point to the word *used*. Explain to students that when a verb ends in the letter *e*, they just add the suffix *-d* to the end of the word to create the past tense. Have students discuss with a partner the reason for this rule (the word already has an *e* at the end). Explain to students that when a verb ends in the letter *y*, they change the *y* to an *i* before adding the suffix *-ed*.
- Ask students to identify the verbs on page 7 that don't follow the rule of adding the suffix *-ed* (*did, ran, and were*). Explain to students that these words are irregular verbs. Explain that some verbs take an entirely different form when they change from present to past tense. Write the verb pairs *do/did, run/ran, and are/were*. Have students discuss with a partner which verbs are in the past tense in those pairs, and invite volunteers to come to the board to circle them. Point out to students that they will need to memorize these irregular verbs as they read, but they should still recognize them as verbs, even if their endings are unfamiliar, because they are words that describe actions.
- Write the following verbs on the board: *adopt, pass, and roam*. Have students write the words on a separate sheet of paper. Ask students to work with a partner to change the verbs into their past-tense form. Point to each word on the board and have students call out its past-tense form.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *jump, smiled, called, paint, like, and walked*. Have students determine whether each verb is in the past- or present-tense form. Have students rewrite the verbs on a separate sheet of paper so that present-tense verbs are now in the past tense and past-tense verbs are now in the present tense. Point to a verb on the board, and invite a volunteer to designate it as present- or past-tense, and then have the volunteer share how to change the verb to the other tense.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [past-tense-verbs worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud.

Word Work: Homophones

- Write the following sentences on the board: *Wild horses live in a herd. I heard about them from my teacher.* Read both sentences aloud, and ask students to listen for the words that sound exactly the same. Have students identify with a partner the words that have the same sound.
- Underline the words *herd* and *heard*. Have students discuss with a partner the meaning of each word. Invite volunteers to share the definition with the rest of the class.
- Explain to students that *homophones* are words that *sound the same but are spelled differently and have different meanings*. Point out that *herd* and *heard* are homophones.
- Have students read the last sentence on page 9 and point to the word *their*. Explain to students that the word *their* is a homophone. Have students work in groups to think of two other words that have the same sound but different meanings. Write the words *there* and *they're* on the board, and discuss with students the definitions for all three words.

- Ask students to work in groups to brainstorm to generate a list of other words that are homophones. Invite volunteers to share homophone pairs they know. If necessary, provide one word (such as *bear*, *nose*, and *two*) and have students discuss in groups the homophone for that word.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *weight*, *grate*, *shoo*, *aunt*, and *knight*. Discuss the meanings of the words with students. Have students work with a partner to think of a homophone for each word. Invite volunteers to come to the board and write the corresponding homophone beside each word. Have students choose three pairs of homophones and use them in oral sentences that accurately reflect the words' meanings.

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 demonstrate how a reader connects to prior knowledge while reading to someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing and Art Connection

Have students draw a picture of a wild animal of their choice. Ask students to research their animal to discover where it lives, what it eats, and how the animal raises its family and protects itself. Provide a graphic organizer for students to record information. Have students write five sentences describing the wild animal of their choice. Invite volunteers to share their picture and paragraph with the rest of the class. Visit WritingA-Z.com for a lesson and leveled materials on informational writing.

Social Studies Connection

Read with the class several books on the historical American West. Show an age-appropriate movie presenting life in the West, and display art work that represents that time period. Ask students to pay attention to the horses in every scenario presented. Discuss with students the role horses played in that historical time. Ask students to role-play various life stations from that time, such as a Native American, a sheriff, a settler, a store owner, and so on. Create a class Venn diagram that compares and contrasts life in the American West with current-day life.

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 connecting to prior knowledge to comprehend the text during discussion
- accurately discriminate between facts and opinions during discussion and on a worksheet
- consistently identify vowel digraph *ai* during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly use past-tense verbs during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately use homophones during discussion and in oral sentences

Comprehension Checks

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