

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Historical Page Count: 20 Word Count: 1,581

Book Summary

Ghosts in the House, set in the northern United States in the 1830s, is a story about a young girl named Virginia who hears strange noises at night coming from her attic. Suspense builds as Virginia gets the idea that her parents know something about this but are keeping it from her. Illustrations support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Make, revise, and confirm predictions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions to understand the text
- Make inferences
- Identify contractions used in the text
- Identify compound words used in the text

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Ghosts in the House* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Prediction, make inferences, contractions, compound words worksheets
- Discussion cards



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

Vocabulary

Content words:

Story critical: *annoyed* (adj.), *devised* (v.), *fugitives* (n.), *haunted* (adj.), *lullaby* (n.), *rural* (adj.)

Enrichment: *cornhusks* (n.), *feverishly* (adv.), *quilt* (n.), *scolded* (v.), *Underground Railroad* (n.), *urgently* (adv.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *haunted* on the board. Ask students to describe a place that is haunted. Discuss the meaning of ghosts. Ask them to share reasons why some people believe in ghosts.

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.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).

- Ask students to turn to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. 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: **Make, revise, and confirm predictions**

- Explain to students that good readers often make predictions, or guesses, about what will happen in a book based on the series of events and what the characters say, do, and think in the story. As they read the story, readers make, revise, or confirm predictions based on what they learn from reading. Before reading a book, readers can use the title and illustrations as the basis for making predictions.
- Model using the book covers and title to make a prediction.
Think-aloud: When I look at the picture on the back cover, I see a little girl in a room with two adults. It appears as though she is running into the room. The people all have pajamas on, so the setting must be nighttime. The adults might be her parents. The curtains on the window are blowing. However, the window appears to be closed. I know that old houses sometimes have drafts and these drafts might be moving the curtains. Drafts can make strange noises. Since it is nighttime, perhaps these noises woke up the girl and frightened her. Since the title of the book is Ghosts in the House, the girl might think that the noises are ghosts. I predict that the girl thinks the noises caused by drafts are ghosts.
- Introduce and explain the **prediction worksheet**. Create a similar chart on the board. Model writing a prediction in the *Make* column, such as *the girl thinks the noises caused by drafts are ghosts*. Invite students to make a prediction before they begin reading and write it on their worksheet in the *Make* column. Share and discuss the predictions as a group.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Make inferences**

- Explain that not all information in a book is directly stated. Sometimes readers need to make inferences by using prior knowledge and the details in the story to understand ideas or events in the book. Explain that an *inference* is a conclusion drawn by connecting clues in text to information that a person already knows. Making inferences allows readers to understand the text on a deeper level.
- Write the following sentences on the board: *Sarah swam a few more feet and stopped to feel for the bottom of the lake. She thought for a second and turned back. Her mom had warned her to not swim in water over her head.*
- Create a two-column chart on the board with the headings *Text* and *Prior Knowledge*. Model making an inference.
Think-aloud: I know that authors do not always directly state all the ideas in a story and that I must make inferences to understand the story completely. In the story on the board, Sarah stopped swimming to feel for the bottom of the lake. I know that when I am swimming and stop to feel for the bottom of a lake, my purpose is to keep myself from swimming out into water that is too deep. Sarah's mom told her to not swim in water over her head. Sarah turned around and swam back in the direction from which she came. Based on these clues and from what I know, I can infer that Sarah was unable to feel the bottom of the lake. She had probably gone into water that was too deep.
- Ask students to identify information from the sentences on the board that supports this inference. Write this information under the heading *Text* on the chart. Ask students to identify information from prior knowledge shared during the discussion that supports the inference. Write this information under the heading *Prior Knowledge* on the chart.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the content vocabulary words on the board. (You may choose not to introduce *stationmasters*, *fugitives*, and *Underground Railroad* in order to avoid giving away the plot and destroying the suspense, an important element in this story. Those three content words can be discussed with students after the reading.)

- Explain to students that they may not always find context clues that define an unfamiliar word. Model how students can use the glossary or a dictionary to locate a word's meaning. Have a volunteer read the definition for *quilt* in the glossary. Have students follow along on page 6 as you read the sentence in which the word *quilt* is found to confirm the meaning of the word.
- Have students locate each of the remaining content vocabulary words in the glossary. Read and discuss their definitions as a class.
- Divide the group into pairs and assign one vocabulary word to each pair. Ask students to fold a piece of paper into three sections. In the first section, have them write their assigned word. In the second section, have students define the word. In the third section, have students use their assigned word in a sentence. Ask each pair to share their work.

Set the Purpose


- Have students read the book to find out whether there are ghosts in the house. Remind them to make, revise, and confirm predictions as they read.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 8 and then stop to think about what they have read so far in the story. Encourage students who finish reading before others to go back and reread the text.
- Model revising a prediction.
Think-aloud: *Before reading, I predicted that the girl in the story hears noises that she thinks are caused by ghosts, which are actually caused by drafts. My prediction is not completely confirmed. The text does say that Virginia lived in an old farmhouse and heard noises in her attic. She heard them again the night when wind was blowing leaves around. She thinks the noises might be caused by an animal. I know that farmhouses are often surrounded by fields. An animal, such as a raccoon or a mouse, might have climbed into the old house through a small hole. I predict that Virginia will go up to the attic and find an animal making all the noise. I will write this revised prediction next to my original prediction on the class prediction chart on the board.*
- Encourage students to use the information they've read and discussed to revise or confirm their prediction. Have them write any new predictions under the heading *Revise* on their worksheet and what actually happened under the heading *Actual*. Remind them that if their first prediction has been confirmed or has not yet been proven, they may write another prediction in the *Make* column of their worksheet. Model for students how to think through whether or not their predictions were confirmed, and if not, why not. Help them to think about whether or not their reasons for their prediction were valid. Reassure students by explaining that predicting correctly is not the purpose of this reading strategy.
- Ask students to use the information in the text and their prior knowledge to infer why Virginia decided not to ask her mother if she believed in ghosts. (She wanted to keep her mind off her growing worry. She was afraid her mother would think she was foolish.) Have students share information from the text that supports their inferences. (She made herself so exhausted that she fell asleep easily in the chair, she wanted to ask her mother and didn't, her father preached that there was usually a simple answer to a simple problem.) Have students also share information from their prior knowledge that supports their inference. (Some people do not like to talk about things that are bothering them because it makes them worry even more. People often hesitate to say something if they think they will be teased or not taken seriously.)
- Introduce and explain the [make inferences worksheet](#). Have students write the information from the discussion on their worksheet.

- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 13. Remind them to use the illustrations, sentences, and what they already know to make predictions as they read. When they have finished reading, have them make, revise, and/or confirm their predictions on their prediction worksheet. Discuss whether their predictions turned out to be true or whether they needed to be revised. Explain to students that this strategy is useful for aiding comprehension and enjoyment of literature even when the predictions do not turn out to be true.
- Based on the information in the book and their prior knowledge, ask students what they can infer about the reactions of Virginia's parents to her questions. (They don't want her to know what is going on.)
- Ask students to identify clues from the text that support their inference. (The parents keep glancing at each other and ignoring Virginia's questions. They won't look in her eyes when they speak to her. They tell her not to worry.) Ask students what experiences they have had that led them to this conclusion. (People often exchange glances with each other for support when something is difficult for them or when they share a secret.) Have students write the information from the discussion on their make inferences worksheet.

 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 the 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

- **Think-aloud:** *I predicted that Virginia would go up to the attic and find the animal that was making all the noise. This prediction was partially correct. Virginia did go up to the attic. However, she discovered that people, not animals, were the cause of the noises she heard. I will write this information on the class prediction chart on the board under the Actual column. I have enjoyed making, confirming, and revising predictions because these activities have kept me involved with making connections with the text and have made the reading more interesting.*
- Ask students to share questions they raised while reading, and ask them what questions were answered (or not answered) in the text. Have students write answers they found while reading under the appropriate heading on their prediction worksheet.
- Ask students to reflect on their use of the reading strategy. Ask them to explain how it added to their comprehension and enjoyment of the book.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill


- **Discussion:** Ask students what they can infer about Virginia's relationship with the people in the attic. (She will probably never see those people again. However, she cared about them.) Have students identify information from the text that supports their inference. (The people were fugitives escaping to Canada. She wanted to comfort the girl. She kept the cornhusk doll to give to other fugitives.) Ask students to identify information from their prior knowledge that supports their inference. (Canada is far from New Hampshire. People comfort and give gifts to people they care about.) Have students write the information from the discussion on their make inferences worksheet.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete their make inferences worksheet. If time allows, discuss their answers.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, Virginia's parents chose not to tell her about their efforts with the Underground Railroad. Now that you know this information, do you think Virginia's parents did the right thing by keeping this information from their daughter? Why or why not?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Contractions

- Write the following sentence from page 4 of the book on the board: *Sometimes she'd meet up with friends and they'd pass the time talking.* Circle the contraction *she'd*. Write the words *she* and *would* on the board. Explain to students that the contraction *she'd* is short for *she would*. Repeat the process with the word *they'd*.
- Write the following sentence from page 5 of the book on the board: *One day, Caleb told her that he had heard strange sounds while staying at his grandmother's house.* Ask a volunteer to make a contraction from the words *he* and *had*. Explain to students that the apostrophe in a contraction indicates that one or more letters have been left out.
- Ask students what the apostrophe in the word *grandmother's* indicates (possession). Explain the difference between possessive nouns and contractions.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following sentences from page 13 on the board: *She was leaning over the baby's cradle. Maybe Mother and Father know about the ghosts and don't want me to be scared.* Ask students whether the words with apostrophes in sentence one or sentence two are contractions. Ask them to tell which two words formed this contraction.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [contractions worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Compound words

- Review or explain that when two short words are combined to form a new word, the new word is called a *compound word*.
- Write the word *fireplace* on the board. Ask students which two words they see in *fireplace* (*fire* and *place*). Explain that this word is a compound word. A compound word has two parts that make up one word meaning.
- Have students turn to page 5 in the book. Point out and read the following sentence while students follow along in their book: *She too, lived in an old farmhouse with an attic.* Have students identify the compound word in the sentence (*farmhouse*). Explain that the definitions of the two separate words can help students figure out the meaning of the bigger word (a house that is on a farm).
-  **Check for understanding:** Have students identify and circle the other compound words on page 5 (*grandmother's* and *grandfather*). Have them write the two words contained in each compound word above the word. Ask them to use the definitions of the two separate words to explain the meaning of each compound word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compound words worksheet](#).

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. 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. Ask students to discuss with their parents whether or not they think they would have been stationmasters on the Underground Railroad if they'd had the opportunity.

Extend the Reading

Writing Connection

Have students read the book *Running for Freedom* (Level T). Ask them to think about the similarities and differences between the narrator of *Running for Freedom* and Virginia from *Ghosts in the House*. Have students write the information on a Venn diagram.

Social Studies Connection

Have students use the Internet to research famous faces of the Underground Railroad, such as Frederick Douglas, Levi Coffin, and Harriet Tubman. Have them locate information on each person's birthplace, childhood, education, family, work with the Underground Railroad, and influence on others. Have students use the information to write a report.

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 making, revising, and confirming predictions
- accurately use the text and prior knowledge to make inferences during guided reading, in discussion, and on a worksheet
- correctly identify and understand the use of contractions during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify and understand the use of compound words during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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