



About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 16 Word Count: 208

Book Summary

Holidays are beloved days that light up the year for children. *Sam's Fourth of July* features one of the United States' brighter holidays, the Fourth of July, complete with fireworks, parades, and music. In this story, Sam is a dog who loves the Fourth of July. The town decides to make Sam the leader of the parade, and he loves every minute of it . . . until the loud fireworks begin. What's a dog to do? Use this inviting story, coupled with cute illustrations, to teach students how to retell, sequence events, and use simple sentences.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Retell


Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of retelling to understand text
- Sequence events
- Discriminate long vowel /a/ sound
- Identify vowel digraph -ay
- Recognize and analyze simple sentences
- Identify and use months of the year

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website.

- Book—*Sam's Fourth of July* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Pictures cut out from an extra copy of the book
- A calendar
- Sticky notes
- [Sequence events, vowel digraph -ay, simple sentences 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

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](#).

- High-frequency words: *him*, *was*
- Content words:

Story critical: *decorations* (n.), *fireworks* (n.), *Fourth of July* (n.), *mayor* (n.), *parade* (n.), *soldiers* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Draw some fireworks on the board and write the phrase *Fourth of July* beside them. Point to the phrase as you read it aloud to students.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Sam's Fourth of July

- Have students draw a picture showing what they do on the Fourth of July. Ask them to think about why people in the United States celebrate the Fourth of July. Give a brief history of the background of the U.S. national holiday.

Book Walk

Introduce the Book

- Show students the front and back covers of the book and read the title with them. Ask what they think they might read about in a book called *Sam's Fourth of July*. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Retell**

- Explain to students that good readers stop now and then while they are reading to retell in their mind what is happening in the story. Stopping to retell the events of a story helps readers understand and remember what they are reading.
- Explain that when people retell a story or event, they explain the details in order.
- Model retelling a familiar story in detail, such as *Little Red Riding Hood*. Write key words from the retelling on the board as you say them and draw pictures that illustrate those words.
Think-aloud: I am going to retell Little Red Riding Hood, using my own words to describe details from the story. In this tale, a young girl wearing a hooded red cloak sets off to see her grandmother, who is sick. She must walk through the forest, and her mother warns her not to stray from the path. The Big Bad Wolf sees Little Red Riding Hood walking down the trail and thinks that she looks like a tasty treat. He tricks her into telling him where she is going and tells her that he knows where she can pick beautiful flowers for her grandma. She leaves the path to find the flowers, and the Big Bad Wolf races ahead to her grandmother's house.
- Invite students to share more details that should be included in the remainder of the retelling. Remind them that the details must be told in the right order to make sense. Work as a class to finish retelling the story.
- Point out to students that the retelling includes the most important characters, the problem, and the solution. Remind them to use their own words in the retelling.
- Have students put sticky notes on pages 6, 9, 12, and 15. Explain that as they read, they should stop at these pages to think about what has happened so far in the story. Then, they will retell the story details in their mind.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Sequence events**

- Review or explain to students that stories are typically told in order from beginning to end. First one thing happens, then a second event happens, then a third event occurs, and so on. Explain that when things happen in a certain order, it is called a *sequence of events*.
- Write the words *first*, *second*, *third*, *fourth*, and *fifth* on the board. Explain to students that readers use these words to help place events in order.
- Refer to the words and pictures on the board from the retelling of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Model how to sequence events from that tale.
Think-aloud: Earlier, we retold the story of Little Red Riding Hood. When I did the retelling, I made sure to tell the events of the story in the correct order. Let's take a look at the proper sequence of events. We will sequence only the most important events in the story. First, a girl named Little Red Riding Hood sets off to visit her sick grandmother. Second, the Big Bad Wolf tricks Red Riding Hood into leaving the path, and he hurries to her grandmother's house ahead of her. Third, the wolf eats the grandmother and pretends to be her. Fourth, Red Riding Hood comes to the house, sees the Big Bad Wolf dressed as her grandmother, and realizes that he is tricking her. Fifth, Red

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Sam's Fourth of July

Riding Hood runs away from the Big Bad Wolf, and a woodcutter hears the noise and arrives in time to kill the wolf and save Red Riding Hood and her grandmother.

- Point to the transition words on the board as you sequence the events. Emphasize that not all details from the retelling were used in the sequencing of events—only the most important details.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words that students will encounter. For example, while looking at the picture on page 3, you might say: *What holiday is this story about? That's right, the Fourth of July. You can tell by all the flag decorations. Point to the words Fourth of July on this page. Remember, the name of the holiday is three words.*
- Remind students to look at the picture and the letters with which a word begins or ends to figure out a difficult word. For example, point to the word *decorations* on page 5 and say: *I am going to check the picture and think about what would make sense to figure out this word. The sentence says that the town is filled with something that starts with the /d/ sound. The picture shows balloons, flags, and confetti all over the town. However, when I look at the first part of the word, it starts with /d/ sound. None of those words starts with that sound. Balloons, confetti, and flags are all decorations for a Fourth of July parade. The word decorations begins with the /d/ sound. The sentence makes sense with this word. The word must be decorations.*

Set the Purpose

- Remind students to stop at the sticky notes and retell in their mind the details of the story up to that point. Have them think about the events that happened first, second, third, and so on.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Have a volunteer point to the first word on page 3 (*Sam*). Point out to students where to begin reading on each page. Remind them to read the words from left to right.
- Ask students to place their finger on the page number in the bottom corner of page 3. Have them read to the end of page 6, using their finger to point to each word as they read. Encourage students who finish before others to reread the text.
- Model retelling.
Think-aloud: After reading page 6, I stop to retell what has happened so far in the story. Sam is a dog who loves the Fourth of July so much that the town put him in the front of this year's parade. They dress him in a suit of stars and stripes. Everyone comes to see him lead the parade. Sam barks when the band plays.
- Have students point to the sticky note in their book and remind them that it is time to stop and retell. Invite students to retell what they have read so far and remind them to use their own words in the retelling.
- Review the sequenced events of the *Red Riding Hood* tale. Explain to students that just as they sequenced the events of this story in the correct order, they can also place the events from *Sam's Fourth of July* in the proper sequence, using the most important events that a person would need to tell the story correctly.
- Cut out the pictures from an extra copy of the book and place the pictures from pages 3 through 5 along the chalkboard ledge.
- Point to the picture from page 3. Explain that the first important event in the story is that the town decides to put Sam, a dog, at the front of the Fourth of July parade. Tape this picture under the word *first* on the board. Beneath the pictures, write key words or draw images that describe the event.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Sam's Fourth of July

- Point to the picture from page 4 and ask students to describe what important event happened next in the story (they dressed Sam in a suit with stars and stripes). Tape the picture beneath the word *second* on the board and write key words that describe the event beneath the picture. Repeat this process with the picture from page 5.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 9. Encourage them to work with a partner to share their own retelling of the story in their own words. Remind them to retell details of the story in the correct sequence. Invite partners to share their retellings with the class.
- Place the pictures from pages 6 through 9 along the chalkboard ledge in the wrong order. Have students work in groups to sort the pictures in the proper sequence. Invite volunteers to come to the board and tape the pictures under the proper transition words *fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh*.
- Call on students and have them describe the important events that occurred in this sequence of events. Write key words under each picture.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to take breaks when they reach the pages with sticky notes to retell the important events of the story in their own words, and encourage them to tell all events in the right order.



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 the discussion that follows.

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:** *As I read this story, I stopped every few pages to think about what had happened. After I had read the entire book, I could retell the whole story in my own words. I included all the important events and made sure to include characters, problem, and solution. In this story, Sam was a dog who loved the Fourth of July. The town dressed him up in a suit of stars and stripes so he could lead the Fourth of July parade! He barked and danced when the band played. That is how I started my retelling of the story. How would you start yours?*
- Have students retell the story from the beginning with a partner.
- Ask students to explain how retelling helped them to understand and remember the story.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review the sequence of events taped to the board. Place the pictures from the remainder of the book out of order along the chalkboard ledge. Have students sequence the remainder of the book with a partner. Call on students to select which event comes next and describe it. Tape each picture on the board in the correct sequence and write a description of the important event beneath it.
- Take down the pictures and erase the descriptions. Place the pictures back along the chalkboard ledge in the wrong sequence and have students try to retell the story to a partner using the wrong sequence. Ask students to explain why it is important to keep events in the proper sequence (the story does not make sense out of order).
- **Independent practice:** Take down all the pictures from the board. Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [sequence events worksheet](#). Encourage them to refer to their book for assistance. If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, Sam has the chance to participate in activities for a holiday he loves. Why do you think we like to celebrate holidays? If you could be involved in an event for a holiday, like Sam and his involvement with the parade, what would you do and why?

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Long /a/ vowel sound

- Ask students to listen carefully as you say words that contain the long /a/ vowel sound (*pay, maid, trade, say, and clay*), stretching the words out as you say them. Ask students to identify the vowel sound that all these words share.
- Explain to students that when words have more than one syllable, each syllable can have a different vowel sound. Say the following words aloud: *parade, maybe, mayor, today, and birthday*. Have students hold up one finger if the first syllable has the long /a/ sound or two fingers if the second syllable has the long /a/ sound.
- **Check for understanding:** Explain to students that they are going to play a sound game. You are going to say a series of words, and every time they hear a word that contains the long /a/ sound, they will give the thumbs-up signal. Encourage students to use the thumbs-up signal even if the word has two syllables and only one long /a/ sound. Use the following words: *age, baby, aim, wait, lady, cake, shaky, and scared*.

Phonics: Vowel digraph -ay

- Review with students the long /a/ vowel sound. Write the word *play* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the long /a/ sound aloud. Then run your finger under the letters in the word *play* as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which two letters represent the long /a/ sound in the word *play* (*ay*).
- Point out that there are different methods of creating the long /a/ sound in words and that the letter combination *ay* is one of those methods.
- Remind students that if a word has more than one syllable, the vowel digraph *-ay* may be in just one syllable of that word. Write the word *mayor* on the board and underline the first syllable. Ask students how they would read that syllable. Then read the word *mayor* aloud with students.
- Have students practice writing the *ay* letter combination on a their desk while saying the long /a/ sound.



Check for understanding: Have students work with a partner to find and circle all the words that contain the vowel digraph *-ay*. After finding and circling each word, have pairs say the word aloud to each other.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **vowel digraph -ay worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics: Simple sentences

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Sam leads the parade*. Ask students to identify who the sentence is about (Sam). Ask students to describe what Sam is doing (leading the parade).
- Remind or explain to students that the *subject* of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about, and since this sentence is about Sam, Sam is the subject of the sentence. Circle the word *Sam*.
- Remind or explain to students that the *predicate* of the sentence tells what the subject is doing. Underline the phrase *leads the parade* in the sentence, and point out that since that phrase explains what Sam is doing, *leads the parade* is the predicate of this sentence.
- Explain to students that sentences that contain one subject and one predicate are called *simple sentences*.
- Write several simple sentences on the board and read them aloud with students. Have students point to the subject of each sentence. Invite volunteers to come to the board and circle the subject or underline the predicate.



Check for understanding: Have students turn to page 7 and read the two sentences with a partner. Working with their partner, have students circle the subject and underline the predicate.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [simple sentences worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: Months of the year

- Have students call out loud the name of the current month. Record it on the board. Have students call out the name of the month in which the story is set (July). Record that on the board, too.
- Point to the words on the board and explain that these words describe the months of the year.
- Bring out a calendar. Have students count the number of months in the year. Record the number on the board. Call on students and have them share the name of one month. Continue calling on students until all months have been named and recorded on the board.
- Separate students in groups of twelve. Assign each student a month name, and have the groups work together to line up in the order that the months of the year proceed. After all the groups have lined up, have each group share by going down the line while the students say the month they represent. Have the class decide whether the months are proceeding in the correct order for each group.
- Write a list on the board of the twelve months in the correct order.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work in groups to think of things they do in specific months, like celebrating the Fourth of July in July or going to the beach in June. Have partners use the months of the year in oral sentences to describe activities people commonly do during each month.

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 them retell the story to someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Realistic Fiction Writing and Art Connection

Ask students to imagine an adventure that they could have on the Fourth of July. Have them write several sentences that describe their fictional Fourth of July adventure. Ask them to illustrate their sentences with a picture.

Visit WritingA-Z.com for a lesson and leveled materials on realistic fiction writing.

Social Studies Connection

Place a picture of the original Declaration of Independence on the board. Ask students to raise their hand if they recognize this image. Have them take turns describing the picture to a partner. Explain to students that the Declaration of Independence is an important document in United States history. Explain that the United States commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4 of every year. Bring in several different illustrations of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and of the writers of the document (John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert R. Livingston and Robert Sherman). Assign student groups one of the writers to research. Have the groups include information such as where the writers were from, what their profession was, and other important historical information about them. After a period of time, have all the groups pass the material around in a circle until all groups have had a chance to look at all of the material. Lead a discussion on why the signing of the Declaration of Independence is celebrated in the United States.

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 retell story events to understand text
- accurately sequence events in a story during discussion and on a worksheet
- consistently discriminate long vowel /a/ sound during discussion
- correctly identify and write the vowel digraph -ay representing the long /a/ sound during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately analyze simple sentences during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify and use months of the year during discussion

Comprehension Checks

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