



About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy Page Count: 12 Word Count: 170

Book Summary

This book shares the story of Groundhog Day—from the groundhog's perspective. Gus the groundhog can't remember the last time he saw his shadow, and he is getting worried. Will Gus be able to find his shadow or something even more exciting? Students will ask their own questions and think about the difference between reality and fantasy as they read the groundhog's tale.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of asking and answering questions to understand text
- Discriminate between reality and fantasy
- Discriminate consonant digraph /sh/ sound
- Identify consonant *sh* digraph
- Recognize and use questions marks
- Identify and use question words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Groundhog Goes Outside* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Photograph or realistic illustration of a groundhog
- *Reality and fantasy, consonant sh digraph, question marks 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: *it, my, you*
- Content words:

Story critical: *burrow* (n.), *cheer* (v.), *gathered* (v.), *grinned* (v.), *shadow* (n.), *worried* (adj.)

Enrichment: *deep* (adj.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *groundhog* on the board and point to it as you read it aloud. Repeat the process and have students say the word aloud. Tape an illustration or a photograph of a groundhog to the board.
- Ask students to share what they know about groundhogs.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Groundhog Goes Outside

- Relate the story behind Groundhog Day: if the groundhog sees its shadow, it will hide in its burrow and winter will continue for six more weeks, but if it doesn't see its shadow and comes out of its burrow, winter weather will soon end.
- Have students give the thumbs-up signal if they think the folktale is true and the thumbs-down signal if they do not.

Preview the Book

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 *Groundhog Goes Outside*. (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: **Ask and answer questions**

- Explain to students that good readers often ask themselves questions both before and during reading, on the basis of information from the story, and then look for answers to those questions as they read. Seeking answers to questions helps readers to better remember and enjoy the story.
- Model asking questions using the information on the cover.
Think-aloud: The title of this book is Groundhog Goes Outside, and the picture on the cover shows a groundhog outside in snowy weather. This information makes me think of several questions about what I am going to read. Why does the groundhog go outside? Who are those people, and why are they cheering? I will look for answers to these questions as I read.
- Invite students to share questions they have after reading the title and looking at the pictures on the cover and title page. Record their questions on the board.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Reality and fantasy**

- Write the words *Reality* and *Fantasy* on the board and point to the words as you read them aloud. Have students read the words with you.
- Explain that readers often separate the details of a story into these two categories. *Reality* describes details of the story that could happen in the real world; *fantasy* describes details of the story that could never happen in the real world.
- Model how to discriminate between reality and fantasy using a fairy tale familiar to the class, such as "Goldilocks and the Three Bears."
Think-aloud: Remember the story "Goldilocks and the Three Bears"? In that story, a little girl with blond curls breaks into a house owned by three bears. She eats their porridge, sits in their chairs, and sleeps in their beds. When the bears come home, they ask each other who has been eating their porridge and breaking their chairs. They find Goldilocks sleeping in Baby Bear's bed, and she gets scared and runs away. In this story, Goldilocks is a little girl with blond curls, and I know there are little girls with blond curls in the real world. That detail belongs in the Reality category. She eats porridge, sits in chairs, and sleeps on a bed, and all of these details are realistic, too. However, in this story, three bears own a house. Bears don't own houses like people! Nowhere in the real world does a bear own a house; they live in nature. That detail belongs in the Fantasy category. The bears also talk to each other with words, and real bears don't use the same words as people. That detail also belongs in the Fantasy category.
- Write each detail from the think-aloud under the appropriate category, *Reality* or *Fantasy*. Ask students to share with a partner other details from the story "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" that are real or fantasy. Invite volunteers to share these details with the class, and add them to the board.

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: *The story tells us that Gus was worried. Look at the expression on Gus's face. How do you think he feels? That's right, he looks upset and nervous. The word worried does mean upset that something bad might happen.*
- Remind students to use all of their word-decoding strategies to figure out a difficult word. Explain that one strategy is to skip the word, read the rest of the sentence, and then come back and see what word makes sense in the sentence. For example, point to the word *grinned* on page 11 and say: *I am going to check the rest of this sentence and think about what would make sense to figure out this word. The sentence says Gus did something from ear to ear. What can we do that goes from ear to ear? In the picture, Gus smiled. We can smile from ear to ear! But smiled starts with the /sm/ sound, and this word starts with the /gr/ sound. Another word for smiled is grinned, and grinned starts with the /gr/ sound. The sentence makes sense with this word. The word must be grinned.*

Set the Purpose

- Have students ask questions about the story and look for answers as they read. Remind them to think about what is real in the groundhog's story and what is fantasy.

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 (*It*). 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 a finger on the page number in the bottom corner of page 3. Have them read to the end of page 5, using their finger to point to each word as they read. Encourage students who finish before others to reread the text.
- Review with students the questions they created for this story.
- Model asking and answering questions.
Think-aloud: Before I started reading this story, I had some questions that I wrote on the board. I don't have enough information to answer any of my questions, but I am starting to think that the groundhog goes outside because of his shadow. I will keep thinking about these questions as I read. Now that I've read more, I have another question, though. Where is Gus's shadow? I will look for the answer to that question as well as I read.
- Discuss with students whether they found answers to any of their questions. Record any answers on the board under the corresponding question.
- Ask students to think of at least one more question. Have them share their question with a partner. Invite volunteers to share with the class, and record these questions on the board.
- Erase the details listed under *Reality* and *Fantasy* (from the earlier think-aloud). Divide students into two groups. Have one group discuss examples of reality and the other group discuss examples of fantasy.
- Have a spokesperson from each group share their findings. Have the other students give the thumbs-up signal for every detail that they agree is reality and the thumbs-down signal for every detail that they agree is fantasy. Record the details under the appropriate category, *Reality* or *Fantasy*, after confirming that each detail fits the description.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 8. Encourage them to share their questions on the basis of the new pages of the story. (Accept all answers that show students understand how to ask questions on the basis of the story.)
- Ask students to think of one new detail that shows reality and one new detail that shows fantasy. Ask volunteers to share their details. Record these on the board under the proper category.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Groundhog Goes Outside

- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to continue asking and answering questions as they read.



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:** *Now that I have read the story, I can answer some of my questions. I found out that Gus went outside because he was looking for his shadow. I also discovered that the people on the cover were people standing outside, and they cheered because they saw Gus. I never did learn where Gus's shadow went, but I wasn't upset because I knew that it was more important to ask questions and look for answers than to always find the answers. Since the story didn't answer my question, I used clues from the story to guess an answer. I guessed that his shadow was gone because there was no sunshine. Thinking about these questions and searching for answers kept me very interested in the story and made it easier for me to remember what I read.*
- Review the questions recorded on the board. Discuss the answers that students found to these questions. For questions for which they didn't find answers, lead students in brainstorming possible answers using clues from the story.
- Ask students to explain how asking and answering questions helped them to understand and remember the story.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review the lists of details under the Reality and Fantasy headings on the board. Lead the class in a discussion about why a writer would want to include examples of both reality and fantasy in the same story.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [reality-and-fantasy worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, Gus was worried because he lost his shadow. How does this story connect with the tradition of Groundhog Day?

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: **Consonant digraph /sh/ sound**

- Say the word *shadow* aloud to students, emphasizing the initial /sh/ sound. Have students say the word aloud and then say the /sh/ sound.
- Have students make the shush gesture (place finger against the lips and make a /sh/ sound). Point out that this is the same sound as the sound at the beginning of the word *shadow*. Explain that many words use this sound.
- Read pages 7 and 8 aloud to students. Have them make the shush gesture when they hear a word that begins with the /sh/ sound.
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words, one at a time, and have students make the shush gesture if the word begins with the /sh/ sound: *shout, worry, shop, sound, lost, she, and shoe*.

Phonics: **Consonant sh digraph**


- Write the word *ship* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /sh/ sound aloud. Then run your finger under the letters in the word as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letters represent the /sh/ sound in the word *ship*.
- Remind students that the /sh/ sound is like telling someone to be quiet—"shh."

Lesson Plan *(continued)*


Groundhog Goes Outside

- Have students practice writing the letters *sh* with their fingers on their desk.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words that begin with the /sh/ sound on the board, leaving off the initial consonant digraph: *shade, shed, shop, sheep, and shin*. Say each word, one at a time, and have volunteers come to the board and add the initial *sh* to each word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [consonant digraph sh worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Question marks**

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Where is my shadow?* Read the sentence aloud with students.
- Remind students that every sentence has a signal at the end so readers will know when to stop reading. Have students point to the signal at the end of the sentence and ask a volunteer to come to the board and circle it.
- Explain that this signal is called a *question mark*. Have students say the phrase *question mark* aloud. Explain that this signal marks the end of the sentence, and it also shows readers that a question is being asked. Have students draw question marks in the air.
- Reread the sentence aloud to students. Emphasize how the voice is inflected at the end of a question sentence. For contrast, read the sentence as if it were a statement and ask the class if that sounded right to them.
- Write several sentences on the board, including both questions and statements, leaving off the punctuation at the end. Read the sentences aloud to students. Have students give the thumbs-up signal every time the sentence sounds like a question. Then have volunteers come to the board and add a question mark to the correct sentences. Reread the sentences with students, using the proper inflection.
-  **Check for understanding:** Have students locate and circle all the sentences in the book that end with a question mark. Have them read the questions to a partner.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [question marks worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: **Question words**

- Have students share with a partner the name of the signal that shows that a sentence is a question (*question mark*). Have students trace the answer in the air.
- Explain that sentences often use special question words, along with a question mark, to indicate that the sentence is a question. Reread the sentence on the board: *Where is my shadow?* Underline the word *Where*. Point out that the word *Where* is a question word, a special word used to ask questions.
- Read the second sentence on page 4 aloud to students. Have students put their finger on the question word (*When*), and then have everyone whisper the word out loud.
- Lead the class in a brainstorming session about other question words. Compile a list of words, such as *who, what, when, where, why, and how*. Write these words on the board.
-  **Check for understanding:** Have students choose several words from the list. Ask them to use their chosen words in questions they ask of a partner. Each student in the pair will take turns asking and answering questions.

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. Have them discuss the difference between reality and fantasy in the story with someone at home.

Extend the Reading
Narrative Fiction Writing and Art Connection

Have students choose a favorite animal. Ask them to imagine that the animal can talk and act just like a person. Guide them in imagining a problem that their animal might have and what it would do to solve the problem. Have students draw a picture that shows the animal solving its problem. Have them write four to six sentences to accompany their picture. Require students to include details that show both reality and fantasy.

Visit [WritingA-Z.com](https://www.writinga-z.com) for a lesson and leveled materials on narrative fiction writing.

Social Studies Connection

Bring in nonfiction books about Groundhog Day and groundhogs. Read one story about Groundhog Day with the class and use the information about this special day to discuss why the people cheered when Gus came out of his burrow. Have students work in groups to discuss why they think people created this tradition. Explain that the class will learn more about the animal that created this tradition. Then pass out the books on groundhogs to the groups. Have each group create a list of facts about groundhogs, on the basis of the books they read, and have the groups share with the class what they learned.

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 ask and answer questions to understand text
- accurately discriminate between reality and fantasy during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately discriminate consonant digraph /sh/ sound during discussion
- accurately identify and write the letter symbols that represent the /sh/ sound during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly use question marks during discussion and on a worksheet
- properly use question words in oral sentences

Comprehension Checks

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