

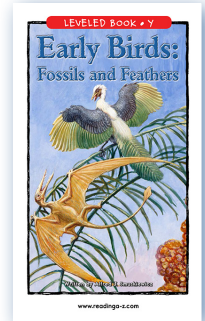
Focus Question:

What can we learn from fossils?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

Could it be that when you look out the window and see a common songbird, you are actually viewing a living dinosaur? *Early Birds: Fossils and Feathers* addresses the exploration of how paleontologists use fossils to help them better understand the connection between dinosaurs and modern birds. Students will have the opportunity to practice the skills of identifying main idea and details as well as summarizing to understand the text.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Determine main idea and supporting details
- ☐ Describe information provided by graphics
- ☐ Recognize and use past-tense verbs
- ☐ Identify and use content vocabulary

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Early Birds: Fossils and Feathers* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Main idea and details, past-tense verbs, content vocabulary words 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.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *adapt* (v.), *decomposition* (n.), *descended* (v.), *impressions* (n.), *paleontologists* (n.), *species* (n.)

Enrichment: *carnivorous* (adj.), *meteorite* (n.), *rudimentary* (adj.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *classify* (v.), *compare* (v.), *prove* (v.), *reveal* (v.), *variety* (n.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

Use the graphic on page 15 of the text to create a horizontal timeline that includes each era and each period in correct sequence. Discuss with students the difference between an era and a period. Display images of various life forms (as seen in the graphic) and invite volunteers to the board to place the images in correct order according to era and period. Invite the class to work together to decide the correct sequence for the life forms. Once complete, invite students to work in small groups to discuss their reasoning behind placing the life forms in the correct order. Have students share their conversations with the class. Explain to students that they will be reading a book that helps explain the transition from dinosaurs to modern-day birds.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Early Birds: Fossils and Feathers*. 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).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Main idea and details

- Explain to students that every book has a *main idea*, which is the most important idea of the book. Point out that *details* are the information in the book that supports the main idea. Invite students to review the title and cover pages of the book. Have them turn to a partner and make a prediction about the main idea of *Early Birds: Fossils and Feathers*.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

- Have students turn to page 3 and review the table of contents. Point out that oftentimes in a nonfiction book the text is broken into sections and that these sections are listed in the table of contents. Explain that each section of the book contains a main idea and supporting details and that the title of each section is often a good clue about the main idea. Have students work with a partner to predict the main idea of each section on the basis of the information in the table of contents. Invite students to share their findings with the class.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Summarize

- Remind students that engaged readers pause while they are reading to consider the most important details in the text and summarize what they have read. Review with students that a summary of a nonfiction book always includes main ideas and the most important supporting details. Point out that a summary also includes information such as *who*, *what*, *where*, *why*, and *when*. Explain that a summary may be created for the entire book or for each section of the book.
- Read the introduction aloud to students. Have students work in small groups to identify the main idea and supporting details of this section. Remind students to include transition words, such as *first*, *next*, *then*, *finally*, and so on. Have students work with their group to create an oral summary of this section. Have students share their summaries with the class. Discuss with students whether each summary includes the main idea and important supporting details and effectively captures *who*, *what*, *where*, *why*, and *when*.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the “Words to Know” box on the title page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

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

- 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.

- *By what process does an animal become a fossil?* (level 2) pages 5 and 6
- *How do paleontologists determine the age of a fossil?* (level 2) pages 7 and 8
- *In what ways was Archaeopteryx similar to a bird? How was it different?* (level 2) pages 9 and 10
- *Why do paleontologists theorize that birds developed from reptiles?* (level 1) page 11
- *How do scientists know what Compsognathus ate?* (level 1) page 13
- *Why do you think scientists are interested in the connection between birds and dinosaurs?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Graphics

Explain that graphics are helpful when reading because they provide the reader with important information that expands upon the text. Have students work with a partner to review the graphic on page 6. Ask students: *Why would the author choose to include this graphic in this section of the book? How does this graphic help you to better understand what you are reading?* Have students review other graphics in the book and discuss in small groups why the author chose to include each one. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Skill Review

- Reread the section titled “Prehistoric Birds” with students. Invite them to work in small groups to identify the main idea of the section. Ask students how they were able to identify the main idea. Next, have volunteers offer details from the text that support the main idea.
- Have students work with the same group and assign each group a section from the book. Explain that every group will identify the main idea of the section and at least three supporting details. Have students share their findings with the class.
- Model identifying key details of the text to create a summary.
Think-aloud: *As I read a book, I pause often to think about the most important details and summarize what I just read. Effective readers pause at the end of each section of the book to summarize. When summarizing, I will be sure to include the main idea and the most important*

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

supporting details. For example, after reading the section titled "Prehistoric Birds," we identified the main idea to be: Fossils show that many of the types of birds we know today developed about 35 million years ago. As I summarize this section, I will include the main idea in addition to relevant details that will explain who, what, where, why, and when.

- Have students work with their group to create a written summary of the section of the book in which they identified the main idea and supporting details. Invite each group to share their summary with the class.
- Model and discuss how to complete the **main-idea-and-details worksheet**, using evidence from the text. Have students discuss the details they noted with a partner.

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

Worksheet: **Main idea and details**

Review the main-idea-and-details worksheet that students completed. Invite volunteers to share their summary with the class. Discuss with students how identifying the main idea and supporting details helps create an effective and concise summary.

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 but should include the following information: *Fossils show how new kinds of species developed over time.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

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

- Review or explain that a *verb* is an action word. Have students provide examples of verbs. Point out that by adding the suffix *-ed* to a verb, it becomes a *past-tense verb*, or a word that explains an action that happened in the past. Have volunteers provide several examples of regular past-tense verbs.

- Write the words *roam* and *impact* on the board. Ask a volunteer to come to the board and turn each verb into a past-tense verb by adding the suffix *-ed*. Invite volunteers to use each past-tense verb in a sentence. Have students work in small groups to reread page 14 and circle all the past-tense verbs ending in *-ed*. Have students share their findings with the class and record the words on the board.
- Point out that past-tense verbs are not always created by adding the suffix *-ed* to a verb. Write the following words on the board: *sing, bring, catch, take*. Invite a student to the board to change the word *sing* to its past-tense form (*sung*). Repeat the process for the remaining words. Explain that verbs whose spelling changes for the past-tense form are called *irregular past-tense verbs*. Point out that one way of deciding if the irregular past-tense verb is correct is to use it in a sentence and listen carefully to notice if it sounds correct.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students return to pages 11 and 12. Invite them to work in their small groups to underline the irregular past-tense verbs. Have volunteers share their findings and record the words on the board. Then invite students to identify the present-tense form of each word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **past-tense-verbs worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Content vocabulary**

- Explain to students that many of the words they read in *Early Birds: Fossils and Feathers* will help them to better understand the connection between prehistoric animals and modern-day birds. Have students turn to page 8 and locate the word *descended*. Point out that the word is in boldface print because the author feels that it is important for the reader to understand the meaning of the word. Have students turn to a partner and locate the part of the text that helps define the word *descended*. Point out that oftentimes the author will either provide a direct definition of a boldface word or will give clues as to its meaning.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *meteorite, carnivorous, species, adapt*. Invite students to work in small groups and provide each group a piece of chart paper. Have them fold the chart paper into four sections and label each section with one of the content vocabulary words on the board. Have students draw or write a definition for each word and then share their findings with the class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **content vocabulary worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

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