



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 24 Word Count: 1,972

Book Summary

While readers may know something about Australia's boomerangs or its kangaroos, they may not know about the other interesting animals, such as koalas and platypuses, or the diverse groups of people, including the Aborigines, that live there. This informative book also provides an overview of the geography and history of this fascinating country.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of asking and answering questions to understand text
- Identify main idea and supporting details
- Identify and use adjectives
- Distinguish and use appropriate possessive pronouns/contractions

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—**Australia** (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- **Main idea and details, adjectives, possessives/contractions 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

- **Content words:**

Story critical: *colony (n.), continent (n.), convict (n.), hemisphere (n.), immigration (n.), threatened (adj.)*

Enrichment: *bauxite (n.), depression (n.), mammal (n.), nomads (n.), primate (n.), reef (n.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Involve students in a discussion about Australia. Create a KWL chart on the board and fill in the first column with things students know about Australia.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Ask and answer questions**

- Give students a copy of the book and have them preview the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers and offer ideas as to what kind of book this is and what it might be about.

- Model how to ask questions as you preview the book.
Think-aloud: *The first section tells about the geography of the country. I wonder if Australia has mountains or deserts, or maybe both. I'll write that question in the second column of the chart. I also want to know how big Australia is. I'll write that question on the chart, too.*
- Have students preview the rest of the book, looking at photos, captions, maps, and sidebar text. Have them add any questions they have to the chart.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out the word. They can look for base words and prefixes and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Write the word *hemisphere* on the board. Model how students can use the base word and prefix to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word. Review the meaning of the prefix *hemi* (half) and the base word *sphere* (a round body). Tell students that putting the meanings of the words together will give them an idea of the unfamiliar word's meaning—half of the earth. Have students turn to page 6 to confirm the meaning of the word. Explain that writers sometimes put the meaning of an unfamiliar word in parentheses to help readers understand the text.
- Remind students that they should check whether words make sense by rereading the sentence.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find the answers to the questions on the chart or any other questions they might have about Australia.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read the introduction and the first section. Ask them if they found the answer to the questions written on the KWL chart about Australia's landforms and size.
- **Think-aloud:** *The section title told me that I was going to read about Australia's geography. As I read the paragraph, I underlined the words, phrases, and sentences I thought were important. In doing so, I found the answers to both questions we wrote on the KWL. I found out that Australia has both mountains and deserts, and that it is the sixth-largest country in the world. I also learned that Australia has grasslands, and that it is an island.*
- Ask students if they had other questions as they read the introduction or first section. Write any questions on the KWL chart. Ask if any of the questions on the KWL chart have been answered. Put a check by any that have been.



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 share any other questions they had while they were reading. Discuss how questioning the text when reading keeps them actively involved in the reading process.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- **Introduce and model:** Explain that every writer has a main idea in mind for a book when he or she writes it. In addition, the writer has a main idea for each section or chapter of the book. The headings often provide clues as to what the main idea of each section or chapter is about.
- **Check for understanding:** Ask students what they think the main idea of the fifth section might be by looking at the table of contents.
- Give students the [main-idea-and-details worksheet](#) and have students fill it in with the main idea and important details for each section listed. Discuss their responses. As you discuss the main idea of each section, help students understand that the writer is providing facts about Australia while offering her opinion about some of them. Ask if they can identify the parts of the book that express the writer's opinions.



Extend the discussion: Instruct students to use the inside cover of their book to write whether or not the writer convinced them that Australia is an interesting place, and to tell if they would like to learn more about the country and why. Have students share with the group.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Possessive pronouns/contractions

- Write the words *your, you're, its, it's, who's* and *whose* on the board. Review or explain that the words *your* and *its* are possessive pronouns. Each shows who or what owns something. Review or explain that the words *you're, who's* and *it's* are contractions for the words *you are, who is,* and *it is*. Tell students that these words are often confused. Explain that there are two ways to check which word should be used in a sentence. First, try to use the two words that make the contraction in the sentence. If the sentence makes sense, the contraction is correct. Second, check to see if the pronoun *your, whose* or *its* comes before the name of something or someone. If one does, the possessive pronoun is used.
- Direct students to the last paragraph on page 9. Ask students to read the third sentence and to tell which words are contractions and which are possessive pronouns. Have students identify the thing each possessive pronoun shows ownership of (*head, front legs, neck*).
- Have students read the first paragraph on the same page to find other possessive pronouns. Ask them to identify the things each shows ownership of (*its ankle, its young*).
- Give students the [possessives/contractions worksheet](#) and explain the example.

Word Work: Adjectives

- Explain that writers use adjectives to describe nouns or pronouns. Adjectives answer the questions *what kind, which one, or how many*, and help the reader form a mental picture of the writer's words. Adjectives can also be used as a way of expressing an opinion about the topic. Write the following sentence on the board: *To learn more about the fascinating country called Australia, simply turn the page.* Ask students to identify the adjective that answers the question *what kind of country*. Point out that the adjective also expresses the writer's opinion.
- Reinforce by directing students to the first paragraph on page 8 and asking them to find the adjective that describes Australia's animals. Ask students to explain what this tells them about the writer's opinion of the animals.
- Hand out the [adjectives worksheet](#) and instruct students on how to complete it.



Have students underline adjectives in the book and circle the nouns or pronouns they describe.

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 the students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends.

Extend the Reading

Descriptive Writing Connection

Have students select an Australian animal and write a paragraph using adjectives that will persuade others that it is the best or most unusual animal. Provide additional resources for students to research Australia's wildlife. Have students illustrate their paragraphs and share with the group.

Visit [Writing A-Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on expository writing.

Science Connection

Have groups of students use clay or paper maché to make a landform map of Australia, an Australian animal, or another topic of interest. Provide resources that will enable students to research the topic.

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
- identify main idea and supporting details
- identify and use adjectives
- recognize and use appropriate possessive pronouns/contractions

Comprehension Checks

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