

### Focus Question:

*How does Sonia change during the story?*

### Book Summary

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic

*Try, Try Again* is based on the true story of a girl named Sonia. Sonia watched other kids going across the monkey bars, but when she tried to cross the monkey bars herself, she was unsuccessful. Will Sonia ever be successful at crossing the monkey bars? Detailed illustrations and repetitive text support beginning readers. Students will also be able to connect to prior knowledge and analyze characters in order to better understand the story.



### Lesson Essentials

#### Instructional Focus

- ☐ Connect to prior knowledge to better understand text
- ☐ Analyze characters in a story
- ☐ Describe information provided by illustrations
- ☐ Recognize and identify syllables
- ☐ Identify initial consonant *tr*-blends
- ☐ Recognize and use past-tense verbs
- ☐ Recognize and use the high-frequency word *make*

#### Materials

- ☐ Book: *Try, Try Again* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Analyze character, initial consonant *tr*-blends, past-tense verbs 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](http://VocabularyA-Z.com). (\*) word appears in the lesson but not the book

- **High-frequency words:** *but, little, make*
- **Words to Know**  
**Story critical:** *failed* (v.), *monkey bars* (n.), *muscles* (n.), *stronger* (adj.), *studied* (v.), *tried* (v.)  
**Academic vocabulary:** *analyze* (v.), *character* (n.)\*

### Guiding the Reading

#### Before Reading

##### Build Background

- Ask students to think of a time when they tried something new but were not successful in the beginning. Have students think about what they did to become successful. Students can either write about their experience in their journal or discuss with a partner.
- Discuss with the class qualities make a person successful (hard-working, doesn't give up, tenacious, and so on.). Make a list of these qualities on the board.

##### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Try, Try Again*. 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, illustrator's name).

#### Introduce the Reading Strategy:

##### Connect to prior knowledge

Explain to students that effective readers make connections between what they already know and new information they read. This is called *connecting to prior knowledge*. Remind students that thinking about their own similar experiences while reading a story will help them better understand what they read. Have students look at the title and cover picture of this book. Invite students to share how they connect to prior knowledge on the basis of the title and cover picture. Have students share their connections with a partner. Invite volunteers to share their connections with the class.

#### Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

##### Analyze character

- Explain to students that we can learn more about a character by analyzing that character's words, thoughts, and actions. When we analyze

### Guiding the Reading (cont.)

a character, we are able to better understand and connect to that character, which will help us better understand the story.

- Review the list of qualities that make a person successful on the board. Point out that these qualities and others might be displayed the main character in this book. Remind students to focus on the main character's words, thoughts, and actions while reading this story.

### Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Point out that these words can be found in the story and that understanding the meaning of each word will help them better understand what they read. Read the words aloud to students and as a group, discuss the meaning of each word. On the basis of the definitions discussed, have students work in groups to illustrate each vocabulary word on a poster. Have students share their posters with the class.

### Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about how the main character, Sonia, changes during the story. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- 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.

- *What did Sonia want to do at the beginning of the story?* (level 1) page 3
- *How many friends did Sonia watch cross the monkey bars?* (level 2) pages 4–12
- *How did Sonia feel watching her friends cross the monkey bars?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *What changed that enabled Sonia to cross the monkey bars?* (level 3) page 10
- *How and why did Sonia help Zaki?* (level 2) page 12

#### Text Features: Illustrations

Explain that illustrations are drawings that add details to and clarify the story. Show students the photograph of Sonia on the copyright page and compare it to the illustrations on pages 3 and 4. Ask students: *How is the photograph similar to and different from the illustrations? How do the*

*illustrations give more details about the story than the text alone?* Explain that illustrations clarify information from the story and help the reader better understand the text.

### Skill Review

- Model for students how you connect to prior knowledge as you read. Share personal connections with accomplishing goals that were difficult when you first tried them. Invite volunteers to share their personal connections with the class.
- Discuss with students that the main character in this story is Sonia. Write the name *Sonia* on the board and circle it. Then, draw a web extending out from Sonia's name. Ask students to think about Sonia's words, thoughts, and actions so far in the story.
- Model analyzing character.  
**Think-aloud:** *I know that the main character in this story is Sonia. Sonia is a determined person. I know this because she tries to cross the monkey bars every day, and even though she doesn't make it, she never gives up. I think Sonia is determined based on what I've read about her words, thoughts, and actions so far in the story.*
- In one of the circles extending out from Sonia's name on the board, write a detail from the think-aloud about her character.
- Model how to complete the [analyze character worksheet](#), using evidence from the text to analyze Sonia.

### 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

#### Graphic Organizer: Analyze character

Review the analyze character worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class. Ask students to share how analyzing Sonia helped them to better understand the story.

### Comprehension Extension

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided for extension activities.

### Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Reasons should include Sonia became stronger every time she practiced, and this made it possible for her to cross the monkey bars. Sonia never gave up and was eventually able to accomplish her goal.)

### Guiding the Reading (cont.)

#### Comprehension Checks

- Book quiz
- Retelling rubric

### Book Extension Activities

#### Build Skills

##### Phonological Awareness: Identify syllables

- Explain that all words are made up of *syllables*, or word chunks. Model how to identify syllables using the word *across*. Clap to identify each syllable in the word *across* (2 syllables). Repeat the process with the word *monkey* (2 syllables).
- Have students practice identifying syllables by clapping out the syllables in the following words with a partner: *watched*, *studied*, and *her*.
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words one at a time, and have students clap their hands to show the number of syllables: *make*, *tried*, *way*, *Sonia*, *muscles*, and *little*.

##### Phonics: Identify initial consonant tr- blends

- Write the word *try* on the board and read aloud with students.
- Have students say the /tr/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word *try* as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letters represent the /tr/ sound in the word *try*. Repeat this process with the word *trade*.
- Say the words *track* and *tray* aloud, emphasizing the initial sounds, and have students write the words on a separate sheet of paper. Have students compare their words with a partner's.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *trip*, *tan*, *tape*, *train*, and *take*. Say the first word aloud, and have students wiggle their fingers in the air if the word begins with the *tr-* blend. Repeat with the remaining words.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [initial-consonant tr-blends worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

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

- Review with students that *past-tense verbs* are words that name an action that has already happened. Oftentimes these words end in -ed. Adding -ed shows that the action happened in the past. Write the word *wanted* on the board, and ask students to turn to a partner and decide whether the verb is past tense or present tense. Have students use the word correctly in an oral sentence.

- Write the word *jumped* on the board. Have students decide whether the verb is past tense or present tense and explain how they know. Have students generate a list of past-tense verbs and write them on the board. Underline the -ed of the words on the list.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students look through the book to locate the past-tense verbs. Ask them to share with a partner five past-tense verbs in the book.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [past-tense-verbs worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

##### Word Work: High-frequency word make

- Write the word *make* on the board and read it aloud with students. Explain to students that they will often see this word in books they read, and they should memorize it so they can recognize it right away.
- Spell the word *make* aloud while students write each letter in the air. Have students practice spelling *make* on their desk.
- Write the following sentence on the board: *She wanted to make it all the way across*. Read it aloud with students, have them identify the word *make* in the sentence, and discuss with them the meaning of the word *make*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work in pairs to create oral sentences using the word *make*. Call on students to share a sentence with the rest of the class, and ask other students to give a thumbs-up signal if they used the word *make* correctly.

##### Connections

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