

## About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Narrative Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,089

### Book Summary

*Word Smith, Private I* is a mystery story filled with wordplay, including anagrams, palindromes, Hinky Pinkys, tongue twisters, knock-knock jokes, and spoonerisms. When Hannah Eve Hannah receives three warnings in the form of riddles, she enlists the help of Word Smith, the famous Private I. They work together to crack the case and catch the PUNisher at his own game. Illustrations support the text.

## About the Lesson

### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Make, revise, and confirm predictions

### Objectives

- Make, revise, and confirm predictions to understand the text
- Identify author's purpose
- Understand and use compound adjectives
- Identify and form similes

### Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Word Smith, Private I* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Make, revise, and confirm predictions, author's purpose, compound adjectives, similes 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](http://VocabularyA-Z.com).

- Content words:

Story critical: **consonant** (n.), **palindrome** (n.), **phonics** (n.), **pun** (n.), **simile** (n.), **syntax** (n.)

Enrichment: **anagram** (n.), **fink** (n.), **grammar** (n.), **heiress** (n.), **red-letter** (adj.), **splitting infinitives** (n.)

## Before Reading

### Build Background

- Ask students if they've ever tried to say a tongue twister. Ask volunteers to give examples of tongue twisters they remember (Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers; Sally sells seashells by the seashore, and so on). Invite students to practice repeating the phrases faster and faster. Explain that tongue twisters are one form of wordplay, or a clever way to play with words.
- Ask students to share other forms of wordplay they know about, such as anagrams and palindromes. Invite students to share why authors might choose to use these in their writing.

## Preview the Book

### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. 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 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).
- Ask students to turn to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

### Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Make, revise, and confirm predictions**

- Explain to students that good readers often make predictions about what will happen in a book based on the series of events and what the characters say, do, and think in the story. As they read the story, readers make, revise, or confirm predictions based on what they learn from reading. Before reading a book, readers can use the title and illustrations as the basis for making predictions.
- Model using the title and cover illustrations to make a prediction.  
*Think-aloud: When I look at the front cover, I see a man holding a magnifying glass. The title of the book is Word Smith, Private I. I know that Private I is another name for a detective—someone who solves mysteries. The name Smith is common for a last name, so the first and last name of the man on the cover might be Word Smith. However, the name Word is unusual as a first name. Maybe Word Smith has something to do with the type of mysteries he solves. Perhaps he can break written codes. On the back cover, I see a man and a woman. The man appears to be the same as the one on the front cover. Perhaps the woman is in need of his help. I predict that the woman receives a letter written in code and needs the man's help to solve the puzzle.*
- Create a four-column chart on the board with the headings *Make, Revise, Confirm, and Actual*. Model writing a prediction in the first column, *Make*. (For example: The woman receives a letter written in code and needs help to understand it.)
- Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [make-revise-and-confirm-predictions worksheet](#). Invite students to make a prediction before they begin reading and record it on their worksheet in the *Make* column.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

### Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Author's purpose**

- Write the following terms on the board: *inform, entertain, persuade*. Invite students to share what they already know about the meaning of each of the words.
- Define each word for students and write the definitions on the board (*inform* means to give someone information about something; *entertain* means to amuse someone; *persuade* means to try to make someone think the same way you do).
- Model each purpose for writing by reading a brief passage from a science book; a fiction story, such as *The Three Little Pigs* or *The Tortoise and the Hare*; and an advertisement from a newspaper.
- *Think-aloud: Authors write for different reasons. Some write to give me facts about something. For example, the passage from the science book gave me information about \_\_\_\_\_. However, The Three Little Pigs did not provide me with facts. The purpose was not to teach me something. This story is meant to be entertaining, or fun to read. The purpose of the advertisement was to make me think that I need to have this item. Advertisements like this one use words and pictures to persuade me to buy something. Sometimes authors intend more than one purpose for their writing. In The Tortoise and the Hare, the reader is entertained by the story of how the slow but smart tortoise beats the hare at a race. However, the author also uses the story to inform the reader of a moral, or lesson, at the end: slow and steady wins the race.*

- Encourage students to share examples of stories they know that entertain, persuade, and inform readers.

## Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following words from the content vocabulary on the board: *palindrome* and *pun*.
- Give groups of students several pieces of blank paper. For each word, have them write what they know about the word. Create a definition for each word using students' prior knowledge.
- Write the word *mom* on the board. Have a volunteer come to the board and write the word backward. Ask students to share what they notice about the two versions of the word (they are spelled the same forward and backward). Explain that the word *mom* is an example of a *palindrome*. Invite students to share other words they know that are palindromes (*dad*, *pop*, *racecar* and so on).
- Write the following sentence on the board: *A spider in a cornfield makes cobwebs*. Ask students to explain what they think the sentence means. Explain that this sentence is an example of a *pun*, or a word or phrase that has more than one meaning. Point out that prior knowledge is often needed to understand the humor in a pun. For example, to understand the pun on the board, students need to know that spiders spin cobwebs, an individual piece of corn is called a kernel, corn kernels grow on a cob, and corncobs grow in a cornfield. Invite students to share any puns they know.

## Set the Purpose


- Have students read the book, making predictions about what will happen in the story based on what the characters say, do, and think. Remind them to revise or confirm their predictions as they learn more about the events of the story.

## During Reading

### Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 8. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.
- **Model confirming and making predictions.**  
**Think-aloud:** *Before reading, I predicted that the woman on the back cover received a letter written in code and needed the man's help to solve the puzzle. This prediction can be confirmed. The woman, Hannah Eve Hannah, received three messages. Each message was a type of wordplay: two palindromes and one anagram. For someone who does not understand word play, these messages might appear as though they were written in code. I will write a check mark next to this prediction under the heading labeled Confirm. I also read that Word Smith suspected that the PUNisher was sending the messages. Since Hannah Eve Hannah is the heiress of a fortune, the PUNisher might be trying to steal all of that money. I will write this prediction on my chart under the heading Make.*
- Review the events that happened so far in the story. Discuss what might be the author's purpose for writing the story. Write the examples on the board as students share them. (For example: the story *entertains* readers through humorous riddles, mysterious story line, and so on; the story *informs* readers by providing specific examples of anagrams and palindromes.)
- **Check for understanding:** Encourage students to use the information they've read and discussed to revise or confirm their prediction. Have them write any new predictions under the heading *Revise* on their worksheet and what actually happened under the heading *Actual*. Remind them that if their first prediction has been confirmed or has not yet been proven, they may write another prediction in the *Make* column of their worksheet. Model for students how to think through whether or not their predictions were confirmed, and if not, why not. Help them to think about whether or not their reasons for their prediction were valid. Reassure students by explaining that predicting correctly is not the purpose of this reading strategy.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [author's purpose worksheet](#). Have students write the information from the discussion on their worksheet.

- Have students read to the end of page 14. When they have finished reading, have them share their predictions and the outcomes of their predictions. Remind them to revise or confirm their predictions and write what actually happened on their worksheet.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Ask them to continue to make, revise, and confirm their predictions as they read the rest of the story.

 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 the word and figure out what it means.

## 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:** *I predicted that the PUNisher wanted to steal Hannah's fortune. This prediction is not correct. The PUNisher wanted to take all of the letters from the alphabet soup factory so he could control the use of words.*
- Have students complete their make-revise-and-confirm-predictions worksheet. Invite them to share their predictions, reasoning, and revisions, and how to tell their predictions related to the actual outcome of the story. Ask students to explain or show how the strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions helped them understand and enjoy the story.

## Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Ask students to explain how identifying the author's purpose helped them understand and remember different parts of the story. Review the three different purposes from their worksheet (to inform, to entertain, to persuade).
- **Check for understanding:** Ask students if they were entertained by the humor in *Word Smith, Private I*. Ask them to read examples in the text where they were entertained. (For example: *But what restaurant would serve a goose egg? A fowl place for sure. Imagine a world where people put "i" before "e" even after "c"—there would be chaos!*) Ask students if they were informed by this story. Ask them to tell the information that was shared (the author teaches about anagrams, palindromes, puns, Hinky Pinkys, spoonerisms, similes, and tongue twisters). Ask students if they were persuaded to do something as a result of the story.
- **Independent practice:** Have students choose which purpose(s) they think was the author's main intent for this book. Have them write a paragraph to persuade someone of their opinion, using examples from the book to support their idea. As time allows, meet with students individually to discuss their answers.
- **Enduring understanding:** *In this story, Word Smith's persistence and attention to clues helped him to solve the puzzle and defeat the PUNisher. Now that you know this information, what will you do next time you are faced with a puzzle you need to solve?*

## Build Skills

### Grammar and Mechanics: Compound adjectives

- Write the following sentence on the board: *He ate a jumbo hot dog.* Have a volunteer come to the board and circle the adjective in the sentence (*jumbo*). Then have him or her underline the noun that the adjective describes (*hot dog*). Review or explain that *adjectives* are words that describe nouns or pronouns and tell *which one, how many, or what kind*.

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Word Smith was a well-known detective*. Underline the word *detective*. Have a volunteer come to the board and circle the word that describes the detective (*well-known*). Explain that this word is an example of a *compound adjective*. Point out that each part of a compound adjective alone does not describe the noun. For example, it doesn't make sense to describe Word Smith as a *well detective* or a *known detective*, but together the words *well* and *known* create a compound adjective that correctly describes the noun.



**Check for understanding:** Write the following sentence on the board: *Today is a red-letter day*. Underline the word *day*. Have a volunteer come to the board and circle the word that describes the day (*red-letter*). Ask students to discuss with a partner the reasons why each word within the compound adjective could not describe the noun alone (it doesn't make sense to say a *red day* or a *letter day*).

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

## Word Work: **Similes**

- Review or explain that a *simile* makes a comparison by using the word *like* or *as*. Write the words *like* and *as* on the board. Tell students that these words are often signals that they are reading a simile.
- Have students turn to page 5. Read the last paragraph aloud as students follow along silently. Ask students to identify the two similes. (*She had me pegged like a wooden hatrack, nailed like a post to a fence*.) Ask students to explain the similes (they describe how Hannah correctly established Word Smith's identity). Have them identify the signal word (*like*).
- Point out the unfinished simile that followed: *cornered like a...like a...* Invite students to complete the simile.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 10. Read the last paragraph aloud as students follow along silently. Ask students to identify the simile. Write the following on the board: *like a third-rate stand-up comedian*. Ask students to explain the meaning of the simile (it describes how the waiter's jokes are as bad as those of a comedian who isn't funny). Have them identify the signal word (*like*).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [similes worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

## Build Fluency

### Independent Reading

- Invite students to read their book independently or with a partner. Encourage repeated timed readings of a specific section of the book.

### Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students explain to someone at home the author's purpose(s) for writing this story.

## Extend the Reading

### Writing and Art Connection

Review the events of the last paragraph of the story, in which the PUNisher yelled "I'll be back!" Brainstorm possibilities for another storyline, such as: *What does the PUNisher do next? Do Word Smith and Hannah join forces again to defeat the PUNisher?* Have students write another Word Smith mystery about the PUNisher's next caper.

### Social Studies Connection

Introduce and read the book, [Seeing the Evidence: Forensic Scientists at Work](#) (Level X). Discuss the types of science real-life detectives use to solve crimes.

## 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.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

## Assessment

### Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently use the strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions to comprehend text in discussion and on a worksheet
- thoughtfully analyze the author's purpose during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify compound adjectives used in the text and on a worksheet
- consistently identify similes in the book; explain and create similes during discussion and on a worksheet

### Comprehension Checks

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