



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Biography Page Count: 16 Word Count: 837

Book Summary

The first Hispanic female Supreme Court justice, Sonia Sotomayor, is an American role model. She has set new standards for what women can do and achieve in the world and is proof that hard work and belief in oneself can help a person overcome any obstacle. This informative book, filled with photos of Sotomayor, chronicles her life from childhood to her 2009 appointment to the Supreme Court.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of asking and answering questions to understand text
- Sequence events to gain understanding in a biographical text
- Identify and categorize *r*-controlled vowel sounds
- Identify simple and complete subjects and predicates in sentences
- Identify and find synonyms in a thesaurus

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Sonia Joins the Supreme Court* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Thesauruses
- **Ask and answer questions, subjects and predicates, synonyms 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: *advisers (n.), cases (n.), confirm (v.), investigated (v.), lawyer (n.), majority (n.)*
 Enrichment: *diabetes (n.), oath (n.), representative (adj.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students to share what they know about the three branches of American government or how the U.S. government works. If possible, show students a chart or visual of the three branches. Compare the branch in which the president operates and the Supreme Court.
- Show students a map of the United States and point out Washington, D.C. Show students a picture (easily found on the Internet) of the Supreme Court building in Washington, D.C. Ask volunteers what they think might take place in the Supreme Court.

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 (genre, text type, fiction or nonfiction, 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, based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

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

- Discuss how asking and answering questions while reading can help readers understand and enjoy reading the information in a book.
- Model asking questions.
Think-aloud: From what I see on the cover and title pages, it appears as though this book is all about a woman named Sonia Sotomayor. I'm curious to know what is special about her. When I look at the table of contents, I see that one section is titled "The Dream Comes True." This makes me wonder what kind of dream the author is talking about. Before reading a book, several questions often come to mind about the topic. As I read, I enjoy looking for answers to my questions, which often sparks further curiosities and questions to answer while I read.
- Create or project a chart on the board similar to the [ask-and-answer-questions worksheet](#). Write your questions on it. Introduce and explain the ask-and-answer-questions worksheet to students. Ask students what about Sonia Sotomayor they are curious about. Have them write their questions in the first section of their worksheet. Invite them to share some of their questions. Write them on the class chart.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Sequence events**

- Review or explain that writers present the events of a story in a particular order. Signal words are often provided to help readers identify the order of the events. Ask students to identify examples of signal words (*today, first, next, then, last, finally, dates, and so on*).
- Model how to sequence events.
Think-aloud: I know that a process, like a story, has a sequence of events. For example, when I call someone on the phone, first I lift the receiver off the hook. Next, I dial the number using the number pad on the phone. Then, I hold one end of the receiver to my ear. Last, I speak into the other end of the receiver.
- Have volunteers explain the order of a simple process, such as making a sandwich or getting ready for school. Use time and order words (*first, next, and so on*) to record the steps on the board.
- Show students an example of a timeline and a flowchart. Explain that timelines and flowcharts are created as events are listed in order. Timelines can show and organize information about many topics, including a person's life. Flowcharts show a sequence of events in a process.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- As students preview the book, ask them to discuss what they see in the photographs. Reinforce vocabulary words they will encounter in the text.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Direct students to page 4. Have them find the bolded word *diabetes*. Model how they can use context clues before and after an unfamiliar word to figure out its meaning. Explain that the sentence after the unfamiliar word tells that diabetes is a serious disease. Point out the word *scholarships* on page 5. Show students how the author included the definition of scholarships (money for school) right in the text.

- Model how students can use the glossary or a dictionary to find a word's meaning when there are no context clues. Have students find the bolded word *representative* on page 9. Have a volunteer read the definition for *representative* in the glossary to confirm the meaning of the word. Remind students that they should always check whether a word makes sense by rereading the sentence in which it occurs. As time allows, repeat the exercise with other bolded words in the text.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about Sonia Sotomayor. Encourage them to ask and answer questions while reading.


During Reading

Student Reading


- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 7. Remind them to look for information about Sonia Sotomayor and the events of her life that will answer questions on their worksheet. Encourage students who finish early to go back and reread.
- When students have finished reading, have them circle any questions on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet that were answered.
- Model answering a question and filling in the second section of the ask-and-answer-questions chart on the board.


Think-aloud: *Before reading, more than one question came to mind about this book. I was curious about what was special about this woman. I also wanted to know what Sonia has to do with government. She is shown in the book with several presidents. While reading, I discovered the answers to some of these questions. The book is divided into sections that take a close look at her life and accomplishments. I read that she was a lawyer and that she went to Princeton and Yale, even though she was poor. I will write these answers on the ask-and-answer-questions chart on the board.*


- Ask students to write answers to the circled questions as well as additional questions they raised on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated as they read the book. Write shared responses on the class chart on the board.

 Have students discuss and circle the events in their book on pages 4 through 7 that are most important to correctly tell the story of Sotomayor's life so far. Record the information in a timeline on the board (diagnosed with diabetes at age 8; father died when she was 9; got good grades and won many scholarships; attended Princeton and Yale; became a lawyer, then a federal judge in 1991; President Obama selects Sotomayor for Supreme Court justice in 2009).

- Ask students to tell what the book is mostly about so far (Sonia Sotomayor's life). Review the events on the timeline on the board. Point out that other information in the book includes details that make the story interesting but are not important to the sequence of Sonia Sotomayor's life. Explain that supporting details are not included in a timeline; only the most important information is listed in the most concise wording possible. Point out that complete sentences aren't necessary when writing notes for a timeline.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 8 and 9. Have them write answers they found while reading on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet as well as any additional questions that came to mind. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated as they read the book.

 Ask students to circle additional important story events in the book. Discuss the important events as a class and write them on the board in order.

 Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to look for and write answers to their worksheet questions. Encourage them to add new questions they might have to their worksheet as they read and to circle the important events.

 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

- Reinforce that asking questions before and during reading, and looking for the answers while reading, keeps readers interested in the topic. It also encourages them to keep reading to find answers to their questions and helps them understand and enjoy what they read.
- **Think-aloud:** *I wanted to know how a person becomes a judge on the Supreme Court—the highest court in the United States! I learned that after the president chose Sotomayor, a committee investigated her and asked her a lot of questions before confirming President Obama’s choice. Then the Senate voted, and a majority of senators voted for her. I will record this information on my chart.*
- **Independent practice:** Point out to students that all of their questions may not have been answered in this text. Brainstorm other sources they might use to locate additional information to answer their questions (websites, books, and so on). Invite students to fill in the last section of their worksheet with information they still would like to know about the Supreme Court or Sonia Sotomayor. Ask students to share questions they added to their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet while reading.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Tell students that ordering or sequencing takes place in many aspects of life and give examples (cooking, tying a shoe, opening an email, and so on). Explain that the order helps people to remember important events as well as how to do certain activities.
- **Independent practice:** Have students turn to the flowchart on page 12. Have them use the chart to write a paragraph about how a Supreme Court justice is appointed.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about Sonia Sotomayor’s many accomplishments. Now that you know this information, how do you feel about her motivation to succeed? How did her experiences shape her as a person?

Build Skills

Phonics: Identify *r*-controlled vowels


- Write the word *girl* on the board. Have students find the word in the photo caption on page 4.
- Explain to students that, in some words, when the letter *r* comes after a vowel, it can affect the sound of the vowel. For example, the *i* in the word *girl* is not making its short or long sound but rather an /er/ sound.
- Create a four-column chart on the board. Explain to students the most common spellings/ groupings for words in which the vowel may be affected by the letter *r* (write as column headings on the chart).
 - er, ir, ur* (as in *her, bird, fur*)
 - or, ore* (as in *for, more, and Sotomayor*)
 - ar* (as in *car*)
 - are* (as in *care*)
- **Check for understanding:** Have students brainstorm other examples that belong in each category. Record their responses in the correct columns.

- **Independent practice:** Assign the pages of the story to pairs of students to have them locate further examples of *r*-controlled vowel sounds. Have student pairs record their examples under the appropriate spelling patterns on the board.
- Review the chart on the board as a group when finished. Emphasize spelling patterns for *r*-controlled words that students may encounter repeatedly.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Simple and complete subjects and predicates**

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Sonia Sotomayor studied hard in school.* Review or explain that every sentence has two parts—a *simple subject* and a *simple predicate*. Review that a *simple subject* tells who or what the sentence is about, and a *simple predicate* is a verb that tells who or what the subject is, says, or does. Ask students to identify the simple subject and simple predicate (*Sonia/studied*).
- Underline the words *Sonia Sotomayor* and explain that this is the complete subject of the sentence. The *complete subject* is all of the words that tell about the subject. Underline *studied hard in school* and explain that this is the complete predicate. The *complete predicate* is all of the words that tell what the subject is, says, or does.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students identify the simple and complete subjects and predicates in the last sentence on page 7 (*justices/make; The nine justices of the Supreme Court/make decisions that affect many people*). Remind students that the word *nine* is an adjective that tells how many justices the sentence is about.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [subjects-and-predicates worksheet](#). Discuss their responses after they have finished.

Word Work: **Synonyms**

- Review or explain that a word that means the same or almost the same thing as another word is called a *synonym*. One reason writers replace words with synonyms is to make a piece of writing more interesting.
- Point out the word *disease* on page 4 and show students a thesaurus. Explain that a thesaurus is a book that contains synonyms. Look up *disease* and model how to use a thesaurus. If the word can be more than one part of speech (for example, some words can be a noun or a verb) make sure to model how the part of speech can affect the meaning, and remind students to use the correct synonyms listed in the thesaurus.
- Give each student a thesaurus. Ask them to find the word *disease* and confirm the synonyms suggested.
-  **Check for understanding:** Have students read the second paragraph on page 5. Ask them to circle the word *good*. Have students use the thesaurus to replace *good* with a synonym to make the sentence more interesting. Remind them, when using a thesaurus, to choose words that do not change the meaning or the tense of the sentence (for example, *buy* versus *bought*). Have them write the sentence using the new word at the bottom of the page. Encourage students to share their sentences.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [synonyms worksheet](#). Discuss answers aloud after they are finished.

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 students demonstrate to someone at home how a reader asks questions and then reflects on the answers while reading.

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing Connection

Provide print and Internet resources for students to further research the Supreme Court of the United States. Citing information from their research and the book, have them create a brochure with at least three sections, such as history, location, a map or floor plan of the building, the current justices, and so on. Encourage them to add illustrations or photographs to their brochure. Require an error-free final copy.

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

Elements of Nonfiction Connection

Discuss the photographs and captions throughout the book. Invite students to reflect on the information in each caption. As a class, discuss the purpose of incorporating captions into a text and the importance of the information (to provide clarification, to draw conclusions from the text, and to enhance or provide additional information).

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 use the strategy of asking and answering questions to comprehend the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- understand and identify sequence of events in text and charts during discussion
- read and categorize *r*-controlled vowel words from the text and during discussion
- correctly identify the simple and complete subject and predicate of sentences during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify and understand the use of synonyms during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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