

### About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy    Page Count: 20    Word Count: 1,834

### Book Summary

Morty Mouse couldn't believe he finally had a chance to become a newspaper carrier. His friend Ben asked him to cover his route for three days, and if Morty did a good job, he just might get his own job. Will Morty see his dream of being a newspaper carrier become a reality? Students will learn about the importance of dependability and honesty as Morty discovers if he is ready for the responsibility of having a job. Illustrations support the text.

### About the Lesson

#### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Make, revise, and confirm predictions

#### Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions to understand the text
- Understand and identify cause-and-effect relationships
- Identify compound sentences used in text
- Identify and use homophones

#### Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Morty and the Mousetown Gazette* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Dictionaries
- Prediction, cause and effect, compound sentences, homophones worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the 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: **convince** (v.), **deadline** (n.), **delivery** (n.), **mistake** (n.), **responsibility** (n.), **route** (n.)

Enrichment: **diligence** (n.), **familiar** (adj.), **funeral** (n.), **refund** (n.), **shrill** (adj.), **tip** (n.)

### Before Reading

#### Build Background

- Ask students if their actions have ever let down a friend, even if it wasn't intentional. Invite them to share their experiences and feelings. Ask them to share what they did to try to make amends.
- Explain to students that in this story, Morty and his family are mice who live their lives much as humans do. Discuss the element of fantasy in this story, and have students list other stories that humanize animals (*The Three Little Pigs*, *Stuart Little*, and so on). Ask students if they have read *Chef Morty's Party Surprise* (Level S), and tell them that this book is based on the same main character.

### 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).

#### 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 revise or confirm their 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 illustrations to make a prediction.  
*Think-aloud: When I look at the illustration on page 3, I see a young mouse looking at himself in the mirror. I see that he is wearing a canvas bag on each hip, and he is smiling. The title of the book is Morty and the Mousetown Gazette. I know that a gazette is a newspaper, so I wonder if the canvas bags are for carrying newspapers. I wonder if the story is about a mouse named Morty who is delivering a newspaper called the Mousetown Gazette. Because he is smiling, I think that he is excited about it. I predict that Morty just started delivering the Mousetown Gazette and is very excited about it. I'll have to read the book to confirm or revise my prediction.*
- 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: Morty just started delivering the *Mousetown Gazette*, and is very excited about it.)
- Introduce and explain the [prediction worksheet](#). Have students review the covers of the book and the title page. Ask them to make a prediction before they begin reading and write it on their worksheet in the *Make* column. Discuss with students that the reasons behind their predictions are what make their predictions valuable. Invite individual students to share their prediction and why they think that event might happen.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

#### Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Cause and effect**

- Review or explain that a *cause* is an event that makes something happen, and the *effect* is what happens because of, or as a result of, the event. Create a two-column chart on the board with the headings *Cause* and *Effect*. Write the following sentence on the board under the *Cause* heading: *I hit a baseball through a window.*
- Model identifying a series of cause-and-effect relationships.  
*Think-aloud: If I hit a baseball through a window, the window might break and I might have to pay for the window. If I had to pay for the window, I would have to take money out of my savings. If I had to take money out of my savings, I wouldn't have enough money to buy the item I was saving money for. Sometimes a cause and its effect cause other events to happen.*
- Retell the series of cause-and-effect relationships about the baseball. Ask students to identify the causes and effects. Write each cause and its effect on the chart on the board. When finished, point out how each cause-and-effect relationship leads to other cause-and-effect relationships.

#### Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following words from the content vocabulary on the board: *affected, deadline, diligence, refund, route, subscribers.*

- Give each student three index cards. Have them choose three words that they are unfamiliar with from the list on the board. Instruct them to write each of their chosen words in large, clear handwriting on one side of a card. Tell them that they will create flash cards to help them memorize the meaning of each word. Model how to write the word *diligence* in large, clear handwriting on an index card.
- Review or explain that a dictionary contains a list of words and their definitions, along with their pronunciations.
- Model how to use a dictionary to find a word's meaning. (Point out that this book does not contain a glossary. Invite a volunteer to read the definition for *diligence* in the dictionary. Help students create a clear, concise definition and write it on the reverse side of the example card that says *diligence*. Then have students follow along on page 5 as you read the sentence in which the word *diligence* is found to confirm the meaning of the word. Have students repeat the exercise with the vocabulary words they have written on their index cards.
- Give students time to work on memorizing the definitions on their flash cards. Have them work with a partner to check their memory when ready. Once they have committed each of their vocabulary words to memory, encourage them to trade cards with another student to learn three new words.
- After reading the book, quiz students using each of the six flashcards to check for understanding and retention of the vocabulary.
- 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 from the beginning of the story to the end of page 8. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread these pages.
- Model revising a prediction.  
**Think-aloud:** *I predicted that Morty just started delivering the Mousetown Gazette and is very excited about it. As I read, I learned that Morty is taking over his friend's delivery route for three days. I think that his friend Ben might be a little concerned about leaving Morty with such a big responsibility. I inferred this information because of Ben's facial cues in the illustration on page 4. On page 6, Ben tells Morty that it is really, really important that he doesn't mess up. I'm revising my prediction to: Ben is nervous that Morty might mess up his service record, but Morty works hard to not let his friend down. I will write this prediction on my chart next to my original prediction in the Revise column.*
- Encourage students to use the information they've read and discussed to revise or confirm their prediction. Have them write their new prediction under the *Revise* heading on their worksheet. 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 their reasons for their prediction were valid.
- Create a cause-and-effect chain on the board. Write *Ben has to leave town for three days* under the *Cause* heading. Ask students to use the text and think-aloud discussion to identify the effect of this cause. (He asks Morty to take over his paper route until he returns.) Write this information on the chart under the *Effect* heading.
- Introduce and explain the **cause-and-effect worksheet**. Ask students to write the information from the board on their worksheet. Have them identify and write on their worksheet a cause-and-effect relationship that happened as a result of Morty taking over the paper route. (*Cause:* Morty wakes up early and works hard to deliver the papers correctly; *Effect:* Morty realizes how hard a paper delivery job really is.) Point out how the chain connects the first cause-and-effect relationship with the second (the effect, *He asks Morty to take over his paper route until he returns*, is connected to the next cause, *Morty wakes up early and works hard to deliver the papers correctly*).

- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 11. When they have finished reading, have them share their predictions and the outcome 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. Encourage 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 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

- **Think-aloud:** *I predicted that Ben was nervous that Morty might mess up his service record, but Morty worked hard to not let his friend down. My prediction was partially correct. I read that Morty got up at 4 a.m. and worked hard to deliver the papers just the way Ben had told him to. However, on the third day, he overslept and messed up Ben's perfect service record. He had to apologize to Ben's customers and convince his supervisor that Ben still deserved the trip to Magic Mouseland. I will write this information next to my prediction under the Actual heading.*
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete their prediction worksheet. Invite them to share their predictions, reasoning, and revisions, and to tell how their predictions related to the actual outcome of the story. Ask students to explain how the strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions helped them understand and enjoy the story.

### Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Discuss with students the information on their cause-and-effect worksheet. Point out the last effect in their chain. (*Morty realizes how hard a paper delivery job really is.*) Have students reread page 11 to identify the cause-and-effect relationship that led to Morty realizing he didn't want his own paper route. (*Cause:* Morty stayed up too late the night before; *Effect:* He overslept by three and one-half hours.)
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the cause-and-effect worksheet. If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you read about Morty letting his friend down and then working hard to make amends. Now that you know this information, how does this make you feel about the importance of taking your responsibilities seriously? How do you think Morty felt when he realized that he failed in his efforts to uphold Ben's perfect delivery record? Do you think he did the right thing in the end? Do you think you could have done the same thing to make amends?

### Build Skills


#### Grammar and Mechanics: Compound sentences

- Write the following sentence on the board: *I'll only be gone for three days, but I need someone to do my paper route.* Ask students to identify two separate sentences within this longer sentence. (*I'll only be gone for three days. I need someone to do my paper route.*)
- Point out that the original sentence is an example of a *compound sentence*. Review or explain to students that a compound sentence is a sentence consisting of two or more simple sentences separated by a comma and a conjunction. A simple sentence contains its own subject and verb.
- Review with students examples of conjunctions (*and, as, but, for, nor, or, so, and yet*). Write these examples on the board. Ask students to identify the conjunction that joined the two parts of the original sentence (*but*).

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## Morty and the Mousetown Gazette


- Discuss why the author chose to join together two sentences of similar content (compound sentences with conjunctions help writers make their writing more fluent).
- Have students turn to page 13 and read the first sentence: *Morty couldn't concentrate in school, and he didn't feel like eating lunch.* Have students point to the conjunction in the sentence (*and*). Ask a volunteer to identify the two sentences the conjunction connects. (*Morty couldn't concentrate in school. He didn't feel like eating lunch.*)

 **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 7 to find and underline the compound sentence. (*He set his Mega Mouse alarm clock for 4:00 a.m., but he couldn't sleep.*) Have them circle the conjunction that connects the two sentences (*but*). Check students' books for individual understanding.

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

### Word Work: **Homophones**

- Have students turn to page 7. Read the following sentence aloud: *He had to count the papers and make sure he only delivered to the right houses.* Ask students to explain what the word *right* means (correct).
- Have students turn to page 16. Read the following sentence aloud: *Morty continued, "I would like to write a letter to Ben's customers and apologize."* Ask students to explain what the word *write* means (to form symbols on a surface).
- Ask students to identify which words in the sentences sound the same but are spelled differently and have different meanings (*right, write*). Write these words on the board. Explain to students that words that sound the same but are spelled differently and have different meanings are called *homophones*. Repeat the process for *threw* (page 9) and *through* (page 10).
- Invite students to share other homophone pairs they may know. Write these pairs on the board.
- Have them turn to page 7 to find a sentence containing a matching homophone pair. (*He set his Mega Mouse alarm clock for 4:00 a.m., but he couldn't sleep.*) Point out that the number 4 can also be spelled out: *four*.

 **Check for understanding:** Have students work in pairs to find and circle all of the homophones they find on pages 3 and 4. Have them write the homophone pair in the margin next to the word (*tool/to, weight/wait, reel/reel, belbee, in/inn, for/four, do/dew, you/ewe, one/won, to/two, scene/seen, I/eye*).

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

### **Build Fluency**

#### Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, allow partners to read 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 also take home their prediction worksheet and explain to someone at home the process of making, revising, and confirming predictions.

### Extend the Reading

#### Fantasy Writing Connection

Have students write a continuation of the story of Morty Mouse and Ben. Remind them to give the mice human-like attributes, as this book does, and encourage them to use quotation marks to indicate dialogue. Have them tell about what happens next: Does Ben earn his trip to Magic Mouseland? Does Morty spend all of his money refunding Ben's customers, or is he able to buy something with his earnings? How do Morty's parents feel about his actions when he worked to save Ben's perfect delivery record?

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

#### Social Studies Connection

Provide print and Internet sources or, if possible, visit or call a local newspaper to find out more about delivery routes. Have students generate questions to ask an employee of the newspaper. Questions should relate to ideas presented in the story of Morty Mouse (age of delivery person, time of newspaper delivery, how newspapers are delivered, etc).

#### 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 make reasonable predictions and then modify and/or confirm those predictions during discussion and on a worksheet
- understand and identify cause-and-effect relationships in the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- recognize and understand compound sentences during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify and understand the use of homophones during discussion and on a worksheet

#### Comprehension Checks

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