

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,142

Book Summary

Samson: A Horse Story is written from the point of view of a ten-year-old girl's journal entries. She is devastated when her parents inherit a farm and she has to leave her friends to stay there for the summer. Not until she secretly reads her deceased aunt's journal does she realize the reason she's there. She grows to appreciate the farm as she becomes attached to Samson, the horse that was left to her. Illustrations support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Summarize

Objectives

- Summarize to understand fiction text
- Analyze characters in text
- Identify and understand the use of pronouns
- Identify and understand homophones

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Samson: A Horse Story* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Summarize, analyze characters, pronouns, homophones worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

- Content words:

Story critical: **coop** (n.), **galloping** (v.), **graze** (v.), **groomed** (v.), **pasture** (n.), **trough** (n.)

Enrichment: *family tree* (n.), *reins* (n.), *saddle horn* (n.), *stirrup* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Give students a copy of the book. Ask them if they've ever ridden a horse or watched someone else ride. Encourage them to share their experiences. Discuss why people would want to own a horse.
- Explain that caring for a horse takes a lot of time and energy, and the person who owns it needs to provide adequate space, shelter, food, and attention. Ask students to share their opinions and/or desires about caring for their own horse.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Guide students to the front and back covers of the book and read the title. Have them discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book this is and what it might be about.
- Preview the title page. Talk about 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 based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Summarize**

- Explain that one way to understand and remember information in a book is to summarize paragraphs, sections, or chapters mentally or on paper. Explain that a summary is a brief overview of the most important information in the text.
- Read page 4 aloud to students and model summarizing.
Think-aloud: To summarize, I need to decide which information is important from what I've read. Then, in my mind, I organize the information into a few words or sentences. For example, the information on page 4 is mostly about how the narrator becomes upset when an aunt gives her family a farm.
- Invite students to share information from page 4 that supports the summary.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Analyze characters**

- **Introduce the skill:** Explain that there are many ways to learn about a character in a story. One way is to think about a character's words or thoughts. Another way is to think about things the character does. Explain to students that a character's words, thoughts, or actions are how the author lets the reader get to know the character and form an opinion about him or her.
- **Model the skill:** Read page 5 aloud to students while they follow along silently. Discuss the narrator's thoughts, such as *Maybe, I thought, that would help me forget where I was*. Ask students what the narrator's thoughts might tell about her (she is unhappy, opinionated, not interested in trying new things, and so on).
- Discuss the narrator's actions, such as plugging her nose and dragging her suitcase up the stairs. Ask students what the narrator's actions might tell about her (she does not like being on the farm, she wants to go home, and so on).
- **Think-aloud:** *To get to know the characters in the story, I think about their words, thoughts, or actions. Then, in my mind, I use the information to form my own opinion about the characters. I know that I will understand more about the story when I do this, so I'm going to analyze the characters in this story as I read.*

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Have students locate the word *groomed* on page 10. Read this sentence aloud to students. Explain to students that sometimes the sentence before or after the sentence containing an unfamiliar word contains clues about its meaning. Ask a volunteer to read the sentences before and after the sentence containing the word *groomed*. Ask students if either of these sentences was helpful in understanding the meaning of the word. (The sentence before describes how Henry picked up the brush and started stroking the horse with it). Say: *Based on the clues that we found, I think the definition of the word groomed is to clean or brush something. Let's reread the sentence to see if this definition makes sense.*

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Samson: A Horse Story


- Explain to students that throughout the book they will encounter words like ***groomed*** that are written in bold print. Remind students that all bold-faced words in the text can be found in the glossary. Have students locate the word ***groomed*** in the glossary to confirm the definition.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out more about the narrator and Samson, stopping after every few pages to summarize the information in the story in their mind.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 11. Encourage those who finish before others to reread the text. When students are ready, discuss the information they summarized.
 - Model summarizing important information in the book.
Think-aloud: I made sure to stop after the first few pages to summarize what I read. First, I decided what events were important to remember. Then, in my mind, I organized the important information into a few sentences. I thought about how unhappy the narrator was to be visiting a farm for the summer. I also thought about her actions. She was avoiding her dad so she wouldn't have to help out on the farm.
 - **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 19. Invite them to share the important information they summarized. Ask what they learned about the narrator from her words, thoughts, and actions.
 - Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about the characters and important details of the story so they can summarize the information in their mind as they read.
-  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 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

- Ask students to explain or show how the strategy of summarizing helped them understand the story.
- *Think-aloud: I know that summarizing keeps me actively involved in what I'm reading and helps me understand and remember what I've read. I know that I will remember more about Samson and his owners because I summarized as I read the book.*
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [summarize worksheet](#). If time allows, have them read their summaries aloud when finished.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Direct students to pages 8 through 10. Ask them to identify the two characters (the narrator and Henry). Ask how they got to know the characters on these pages (through the characters' words, thoughts, and actions).
- Ask students what the narrator's words and actions tell about Henry (he is kind, welcoming, understanding, and so on). Have students explain what the character's words, thoughts, and actions tell about the narrator (she is uninterested in what Henry has to tell her, she is disagreeable, and so on).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [analyze characters worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.


- **Extend the discussion:** Discuss how analyzing the characters helps readers understand and remember what they have read. Ask students if they would rather be friends with Henry or the narrator and to tell why. Have them use examples of character traits from the text to support their opinions.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Pronouns

- Explain or review that a *pronoun* is a word used *in place of a noun*. Write examples of pronouns on the board: *I, he, she, him, her, it, they, and we*. Write the following on the board: *He filled the trough with water*. Ask a volunteer to replace the words *the trough* with a pronoun. (*He filled it with water*.)
- Invite students to discuss the reason authors use pronouns in place of nouns (to make the writing flow better, to avoid repeating the same words, and so on).
- Ask students to turn to page 4. Write the following sentence from the book on the board: *Why would she leave Dad a stinky old farm?* Ask a student to identify the pronoun (*she*) and underline it on the board. Ask which proper noun *she* replaces (*Aunt Rita*). Ask students to identify the proper noun within the sentence (*Dad*). Have a volunteer repeat the sentence using a pronoun on the board in place of the proper noun *Dad*. (*Why would she leave him a stinky old farm?*) Write that sentence under the first example.
- Invite a volunteer to find a sentence from the book with two or more nouns and to write the sentence on the board. Have him or her rewrite the sentence, replacing the nouns with the appropriate pronouns.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students choose two sentences from the book that contains two or more nouns. Have them rewrite the sentences on a separate piece of paper, replacing the nouns with the appropriate pronouns. Allow time for discussion.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [pronouns worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: Homophones

- Write the words *there* and *their* on the board. Invite students to share how the word *there* is both similar to and different from the word *their* (the words are spelled differently but sound the same when pronounced aloud). Explain that these words are called *homophones* and are often confused with each other. Remind students that the word *there* often refers to a place, while the word *their* is a pronoun showing possession. Have students turn to page 11. Ask them to identify the sentence in which an example of the homophone *there* is found. (*I remembered what Henry said—that there was probably interesting stuff in Aunt Rita's house.*) Have them turn to page 22. Ask students to identify the sentence in which an example of the homophone *their* is found. (*Mom and Dad need to get their classrooms ready for the new school year.*) Discuss the meaning of the words in the two sentences.
 **Check for understanding:** Have students use the inside front cover of their book to write a sentence containing both homophones in correct context. For example: *Their mother told them to stay away from there.*
- **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, partners can 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.

Extend the Reading

Writing and Art Connection

Provide notebooks for students to use to create their own journal. Assign them the task of journaling each day at the end of class to summarize their thoughts, feelings, and actions for the day. Continue the assignment for two weeks. Supply art materials for students to decorate the covers of the notebooks. Encourage them to continue journaling after the two-week assignment is complete.

Social Studies Connection

Have students locate Kentucky on a map of North America. Provide resources for them to research the state's sources of income. Ask students to determine the importance of farming in Kentucky and how much of the state's land is devoted to it. Discuss the different ways a farm can create income, such as agriculture, livestock, dairy, poultry, and so on.

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 summarizing to comprehend text while reading and on a worksheet
- accurately analyze the words, thoughts, and actions of the characters in the book during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly understand and use pronouns within sentences during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly recognize the different uses of the homophones *there* and *their* during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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