



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 22 Word Count: 723

Book Summary

Dogs at Work introduces readers to the many ways that dogs are trained to help people. The book explains a wide variety of canine jobs, some of which are quite unusual. Illustrations support the text.

Book and lesson also available at Levels G and M.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand nonfiction text
- Identify main idea and details
- Identify *r*-controlled /a/ vowel
- Identify plural nouns
- Understand how to alphabetize words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Dogs at Work* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Main idea and details, *r* controlled a vowel, plural nouns 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: *assistance dog (n.)*, *criminal (n.)*, *disability (n.)*, *guard dog (n.)*, *guide dog (n.)*, *therapy (n.)*
 Enrichment: *arson (n.)*, *chemicals (n.)*, *livestock (n.)*, *patient (n.)*, *seizures (n.)*, *warn (v.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Discuss what students already know about dogs and the kinds of things dogs can do.
- Ask students if they know the names of any types of working dogs and list their responses on the board. Tell students they will be reading about the different kinds of jobs dogs can do.

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, illustrator's name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students 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 any answers students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Connect to prior knowledge**

- Have students take another look at the cover of the book. Model making a connection to prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: The picture on the cover reminds me of a time when I saw a man walking down the street. He looked as if he was being led by a dog. The dog was wearing something similar to what the dog on the cover was wearing. I already know some information about this kind of working dog—it is called a seeing-eye dog. This type of dog helps people who are unable to see with their own eyes. The dog “sees” for them and guides them wherever they need to go. I wonder what other kind of working dogs will be in the book.
- Have students turn once again to the table of contents, and use it as a way to make connections to prior knowledge. For example, say: *The section titled “Guide Dog” makes me think about what I already know about people who might be helped by a dog. The dog on the cover seems to be guiding a person. I wonder why a person might need to be guided by a dog.* Ask students if they know anything about other dogs that might help people who need help.
- Together, read through the other section headings and ask whether they provide students with a better idea of what the book is about.
- Have students preview the rest of the book, looking at the illustrations.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- Explain to students that every book they read has a main idea. The main idea will have pieces of information that help to support it and make the story complete. The pieces of information are the details that go with the main idea.
- Model identifying the main ideas and details.
Think-aloud: When I think about the story of The Three Little Pigs, I know that there are three pigs that are brothers. All three pigs leave home to build homes of their own. The first pig builds a house of straw, the second pig builds a house of sticks, and the third pig builds his house with bricks. These pieces of information are just three details of the story—there are many other details. The main idea of the story is the three pigs leaving home to build homes of their own.
- Display and explain the **main-idea-and-details worksheet** on the whiteboard. Write the main idea of *The Three Little Pigs* (three pigs leave home to build homes of their own). Ask students to provide details for the main idea. Write them on the worksheet displayed on the whiteboard.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- While previewing the book, reinforce the vocabulary words students will encounter.


- Remind students to use context clues, or the words around the unknown word, the letters with which a word begins and ends to figure out a difficult word. For example, point to the word *smart* on page 5 and say: *I am going to check the other words in the sentence and think about what would make sense to figure out this word. The sentence is giving information about dogs. The other words read Dogs are _____. It goes on to read, They are fun pets and great friends. I know that this word is telling me something else that dogs can be. When I look at the first part of the word, it starts with /sm/. I also see that the word ends with a t. The letter t makes a /t/ sound. I know that dogs are smart animals. The word smart starts with the /sm/ sound and ends with the /t/ sound. The sentence makes sense with this word. The word must be smart.*

Set the Purpose

- Remind students to think about what they already know about dogs as they read the book.

During Reading

Student Reading

- Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 5 and then stop to think about what they already know about dogs in general and the types of things dogs are able to do.
 - Model making connections to prior knowledge.**
Think-aloud: When I read about dogs on page 5, it made me think of my own dog. I thought about how my dog runs to the door before the doorbell rings because she knows there is someone there, or how she gets her leash and brings it to me when it is time to go on her walk. My dog is pretty smart. I bet there are lots of dogs that can be taught to do all kinds of things. I wonder what kinds of jobs dogs can be taught.
 - Tell students the main idea of page 5 is *why dogs are able to do different types of work*. Have them write the main idea on their worksheet. Ask students to give details that support the main idea (smart, fun, great friends, hear and smell better than people, learn fast, helpful) and write these on their worksheet.
 - Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 6 through 9. Ask for volunteers to explain how using prior knowledge helped them to better understand what they read. Ask students what types of working dogs they have learned about so far (hearing, therapy, guide, assistance). Invite students to pick one section, and have them write the main idea and details for that section on their worksheet. Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about what they already know about dogs that will help them to understand what they are reading.
-  Tell students to make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in the discussion that follows.

After Reading

- Ask students what words 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

- Discuss how making connections between what they are reading and what they already know keeps them involved in the reading process and helps them understand and remember what they have read.
- Think-aloud:** *When I read about dogs chasing geese away from airports and golf courses, I thought about when I take my dog to the park and how she loves chasing away the birds that land on the ground. Reading that and seeing the picture in my mind made me smile as I read. I also understand how a dog could do a job like the one described.*
- Have students share a section of the book they enjoyed reading and explain how using the strategy of connecting to prior knowledge helped them to better understand and enjoy the book.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Tell students that thinking about the main idea and details of a book helps to break the reading into smaller parts. This helps readers to better understand, remember, and enjoy what they have read.
- **Independent practice:** Have students pick two more sections and write main idea and details for those sections. Have them share their work in small groups.
- **Enduring understanding:** In the book, you read about many important jobs that dogs do for humans. Now that you know this information, what does this make you think about animals and how they learn and communicate with humans? Do you think animals use their brains like humans do? Do animals think?

Build Skills

Phonics: **R-controlled /a/ vowel**

- Write the word *cat* on the board. Ask students to say the sound that the letter *a* makes in the word *cat*.
- Say: *Let's change the t in the word cat to the letter r. What sound does the letter a make with the letter r behind it?*
- Explain to students that when the vowel *a* is followed by the letter *r*, the vowel loses its sound, and what they hear is a sound made by the two letters together: /ar/. Have students turn to page 5 and read the first sentence. Ask for a volunteer to identify the word that has the /ar/ sound (*smart*).



Check for understanding: Have students work with a partner to identify all of the /ar/ sound words in the book by underlining each pair of letters that make the sound.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **r-controlled-a-vowel worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their responses.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Plural nouns**

- Explain that nouns can be singular or plural. A singular noun represents one of something, and a plural noun represents more than one of something.
- Hold up a pencil and write the word *pencil* on the board. Say: *I have one pencil*. Now hold up three pencils and write the word *pencils* on the board. Say: *I have three pencils*. Point out to students that adding an *s* to the end of the noun *pencil* shows that there is more than one pencil.
- Write the word *dress* on the board. Ask: *How would we make this noun plural?* Allow students to give responses. Say: *If a word ends with any of the following endings: -s, -ch, -sh, -x, or -z, then you add -es to the word to make it plural. Dress ends with s, so we will add an -es to the word to make it dresses.*
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board and have students volunteer to add the appropriate ending to the word to make each plural: *brush, fox, stick, marker, latch, bush, airplane*.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **plural nouns worksheet**. Review student answers aloud after everyone has finished.

Word Work: **Alphabetical order**

- Explain to students that words are sometimes placed in a list in alphabetical order. Words are placed in alphabetical order by first looking at the beginning letter of each word and then deciding which letter comes first in the alphabet.
- Write the words *special* and *hunter* on the board. Underline the first letter in each word. Ask students which letter comes first in the alphabet, *s* or *h*. Explain that the word *hunter* would come first in an alphabetical list because *h* comes before *s* in the alphabet.

- Write the word *stadium* next to *special* and *hunter*. Say: *When you have two or more words that begin with the same first letter, you must look at the second letter of each word to determine which comes first when written in alphabetical order.* Underline the second letter of the words *special* and *stadium*. Ask students which letter comes first in the alphabet, *p* or *t*. Say: *Since p comes before t in the alphabet, the word special would come before the word stadium in alphabetical order.*
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *chemicals, warn, therapy, guide, assistance, alert, criminal, seizures*. Have students write the words in alphabetical order on a separate piece of paper. When they have finished, discuss their answers.

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. Have students discuss the main idea and details of the book.

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing Connection

In addition to the information presented in the text, provide students with print and Internet resources on the various types of working dogs. Have students choose one type of working dog to research and write a report on. They may use a prewriting tool, such as an outline, to organize their report. Ask that their writing include a beginning paragraph and ending paragraph and that the middle section include at least three facts about the type of working dog chosen. Allow students time to present their report in a small- or large-group meeting.

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

Social Studies Connection

Invite one or several owners of working dogs (if possible, the dogs also) to visit the class to discuss what kind of work their dog does and how the dog was trained. Before each visit, have students investigate the type of working dog that will be visiting and brainstorm in small groups a list of questions they would like to inquire of the visitor. Have small groups take responsibility for interview questions. After the visits, have students make a classroom book that includes the questions and answers as well as illustrations or actual photographs of the visitors.

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:

- use the reading strategy of making connections to prior knowledge to understand nonfiction text
- identify main ideas and details in the text
- accurately identify *r*-controlled vowel *a* during discussion and on worksheet
- understand how to make a singular noun plural and correctly change singular nouns to plural on a worksheet
- understand alphabetizing by first and second letters and accurately alphabetizing on a separate sheet of paper

Comprehension Checks

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