

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,444

Book Summary

Talking to Each Other is about a young girl named Amanda, her stepfather Chris, and her mother. While Amanda and Chris are able to communicate with few words, Amanda and her mother don't seem to communicate at all. This book provides an opportunity to discuss the importance of talking and listening to one another.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Retelling

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of retelling to understand and remember text
- Understand and identify character's thoughts, feelings, and actions
- Use quotation marks
- Recognize and use sensory words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Talking to Each Other* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Character analysis, sensory words 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: *apologize (v.)*, *camouflage (v.)*, *disappointed (v.)*, *divorce (v.)*, *feedback (n.)*, *radioactive (adj.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Involve students in a discussion about how people communicate with each other. Discuss different types of communication, such as verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., body language)

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students a copy of the book and have them preview the front and back covers and read the title. Ask them what the pictures tell about the characters in the story.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Retelling**

- Model retelling as you preview the book.
Think-aloud: Since I haven't read the story, I don't have much to retell. I do know that the title of the book is Talking to Each Other, so I think it may be about the characters on the front cover. I'll have to read the book to find out who and what the author is referring to.
- Ask students what they think the book will be about. Write their responses on the board.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary



- Remind students of the strategies they can use to sound out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out the word. They can look for base words, and prefixes, and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Write the word *radioactive* on the board and direct students to page 13 to find the word. Model how they can use context clues to find the meaning of the unfamiliar word. Explain that by reading around the unfamiliar word, they can infer that *radioactive* means something dangerous.
- Remind students that if they are unable to determine a word's meaning from context clues, they can look in the glossary or a dictionary, or ask you what the word means.

Set the Purpose

- Have students think about how they'll retell the story once they've read it.

During Reading

Student Reading

-  **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 11. Tell them to underline the words or phrases in the book that tell the names of the characters, where and when the story takes place, and any important events. If they finish before everyone else, they can go back and reread.
- Have students tell what they underlined. Use the information generated above to model retelling a story.
Think-aloud: In the first part of the story, I learned that Amanda and her stepfather, Chris, seem to be able to communicate with one another using few words. Amanda does not communicate with her mother as well. During a shopping trip that Amanda isn't interested in, she finds out that her mother isn't happy with Chris's inability or unwillingness to talk to her. I'll have to keep reading to find out if their lack of communication leads to problems.
- Tell students as they read the remainder of the book to think about how they can retell 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

- Reinforce how thinking about how to retell the story keeps students actively involved in the reading process and helps them understand and remember what they have read.
- Discuss the author's purpose for writing the story. Have students tell what they think the author wanted them to understand about how people communicate with each other.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Character analysis**

- **Discussion:** Review or explain that some writers let their readers get to know the characters through the characters' words, thoughts, and actions. Explain that writers often change a character's personality as the story develops.
- **Introduce and model:** Have students tell what they learned about Amanda from reading page 4. Use a think-aloud strategy to guide the students.
- **Think-aloud:** *From reading this page, I learned that Amanda is comfortable with her stepfather. As he watches a game on TV, she is able to relax and look at the sky without feeling the need to fill in the quiet with extra chatter.*
- Have students tell what they learned about Chris from reading the same page. (He doesn't mind watching a ball game with Amanda.)
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read the fifth paragraph on page 5. Ask them to tell what this paragraph tells about Amanda and Chris (they don't need words to communicate).
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the [character analysis worksheet](#). Discuss their answers.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Quotation marks

- Review the punctuation of dialogue with students. Write the following sentence on the board: *"I like having Chris around," Amanda said.* Underline the words *Amanda said* and review that this is called a *dialogue tag*. Circle the comma and review that it is always placed between the spoken sentence and the dialogue tag. Tell students that the comma is always placed inside the quotation marks. Review that a period is always placed at the end of the sentence.
- Write the following sentences on the board: *"Why do I have to go shopping?" whined Amanda.* and *"This is so unfair!" she cried.* Point out that the question mark and exclamation mark are placed inside the quotation marks because the first sentence asks a question and the second sentence expresses emotion.



Have students use the inside cover of their book to write sentences that need quotation marks and punctuation. Have students exchange books with a partner and punctuate each other's sentences. Monitor students' progress, and provide additional examples if needed.

Word Work: Sensory words

- Review or explain that writers often use *sensory words*, or words that appeal to the five senses, to help readers see, touch, taste, smell, or hear the words in their stories. Read the following sentences to students, and ask which sentence helps them "see" the words. *The bug crawled on a blade of grass* and *The tiny red bug crawled on a blade of dew-kissed grass.*
- Have students find the first paragraph on page 5. Ask them to find a word that helps them "hear" the writer's words (*jingle*).
- Have students turn to page 9. Ask them to find a word that helps them "feel" the writer's words (*itchy*).
- Have students brainstorm lists of words that help them use their senses. For example, sight: *shiny, dark, brilliant*; hearing: *screeching, clinking, rattling*; touch: *slimy, fuzzy, velvety*; smell: *rotten, lemony, flowery*; taste: *spicy, bitter, sweet*.
- Give students the [sensory words worksheet](#) to complete. Have students share their sentences when finished.

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 books to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends.

Extend the Reading

Writing Connection

Have students work with a partner to write the next chapter in the book. Tell them to build on the information they have read, to add new characters if they wish, and to end on a note that leaves the reader wondering what will happen next. Have students share their chapters with the group.

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

Science Connection

Show students a video, book, or magazine article about Koko, the gorilla who has a vocabulary of more than 1,000 signs. Discuss how people learn to communicate with each other. If possible, ask a sign language interpreter or a language translator to speak to the class about differences in communication styles.

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 strategy of retelling to understand a story
- understand characters through actions, words, and thoughts; complete a worksheet
- understand why and when quotation marks are used, and identify where exclamation, question marks, and commas are placed inside them
- recognize and use sensory words on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

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