

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Tall Tale Page Count: 16 Word Count: 837

Book Summary

Meet a real American hero—Johnny Appleseed! This is the (tall) tale of Johnny growing up during the time of the American Revolution. Johnny wanted to plant apple trees for the pioneers moving westward so they would have apples to eat. Come along on Johnny's adventures as he heads west!

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Visualize

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of visualizing to better understand text
- Distinguish between reality and fantasy
- Identify *r*-controlled /o/ vowel
- Identify and use comparative and superlative adjectives
- Recognize and understand the use of similes

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Johnny Appleseed Heads West* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- **Visualize, reality and fantasy, adjectives 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: *celebrate (v.), clearing (n.), curious (adj.), respect (v.), scrawny (adj.), settlers (n.)*

Before Reading

Build Background

- Supply pictures of colonial America, settlers moving west, and people living during this time period.
- Ask students if they have heard the story of a legendary man named Johnny Appleseed. If not, tell students that, according to legend, Johnny Appleseed was a larger-than-life character who lived during America's early years. Explain that he supposedly walked across the midwest portion of North America, befriending wild animals and planting apple trees wherever he went. Some people believe Johnny was a real man named John Chapman.

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).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Visualize**

- Explain to students that good readers often visualize, or create pictures in their mind, while they read. Explain that visualizing is based on the words in the text and what a person already knows about a topic.
- Read page 3 aloud to students, but do not show them the illustration yet. Model how to visualize. *Think-aloud: Whenever I read a book, I always pause after a few pages to create a picture in my mind of the information I've read. Doing this helps me understand the ideas in the story. When I read about Johnny Appleseed on the first page, I pictured a big, strong man with muscular legs and feet. I pictured him barefoot because the text says he never wore shoes.*
- Reread page 3 to students. Invite them to share what they pictured in their mind while hearing the words read aloud. Show them the illustration on page 3. Point out that even though the picture in their mind may not be the same as the one in the book, they were each able to create a picture in their mind.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Reality and fantasy**

- Review or explain to students that books and stories can be about reality (things that are real) or fantasy (things that are imaginary). Remind them that imaginary things are not real and cannot happen in the real world.
- Tell students that it is important to understand and recognize what is real and what is fantasy when they read a book, play a game, or watch a movie or television show.
- Have students read the title of the book and look again at the cover illustration. Ask them if there are any clues to help them predict whether this story is realistic or a fantasy.
- Model how to identify reality and fantasy. *Think-aloud: To decide whether a story has realistic or fantasy elements, I ask myself questions as I read: Can this really happen? Is the setting a real place—one that exists here on Earth? Do the characters look real and behave like real people?*
- Explain to students that this story is an example of a genre called *tall tales*. Tall tales are humorous adventures, often about the American frontier. They usually contain a hero who has superhuman strength or abilities, and the story contains amusing exaggerations.
- Ask students if they are familiar with any other tall tales, such as the stories about Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, or Mike Fink.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following words on the board: *scrawny, clearing, respect, curious, impressed, jackrabbit, revolution, settlers, celebrate*. Point out to students that all of these words are multisyllabic and explain how to use word-attack strategies to read the words. For example, have students find the word *Revolution* on page 4. Suggest to students that they can look for base words, prefixes, suffixes, and other word parts to help them read a difficult word (such as *re-vo-lu-tion*).


- Remind students to look for clues to the word's meaning in the sentence that contains the unfamiliar word, as well as in sentences before and after. For example, point out the word *curious* on page 15. Read the first paragraph aloud. Ask students what the first few sentences are mostly about (a young boy who is very interested in Johnny and how his pot gets filled with food each day). Ask students to use that information to think about what the word *curious* means. Have them identify a word that means the same thing as *curious*, based on the context of those sentences (*interested*, *wondering*, and so on).
- Remind students that they should check whether an unfamiliar word makes sense by rereading the sentence in which it appears. Reread the sentences that contain the content words, one at a time, and ask students to substitute another word that might mean the same thing. Ask students if the word makes sense in the sentence.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to learn more about Johnny Appleseed. Ask them to visualize, or create mental pictures, as they read.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 6. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.
 - Introduce and explain the [visualize worksheet](#). Model visualizing a part of the book.
Think-aloud: When I finished reading page 5, I paused to picture in my mind how Johnny looked. At first I thought he must have been a big man, but now I am picturing him as scrawny. I pictured just how unusual he must have looked with a cloth sack for a shirt and a pot on his head! Creating a picture in my mind helped me connect to the story and helped to build my anticipation for what might happen next.
 - Guide students to use their worksheet to draw a simple sketch of what they visualized while reading. Invite them to share what they visualized.
 - Have students read to the end of page 10. Review with them what they have learned about Johnny so far, for example, what he looks like, what his abilities are, and what he does. Ask students to think about which aspects of Johnny seem realistic and which seem like fantasy.
 - Introduce and explain the [reality-and-fantasy worksheet](#). Reproduce the worksheet or project it on the board. Ask students to review the first few pages and to help you to brainstorm aspects of Johnny or events from the story that are realistic and fantasy. Record their responses on the board. Allow students time to copy your model onto their worksheet.
 - **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 13. Have them draw on their visualize worksheet what they pictured in their mind after reading this section. Invite volunteers to explain their drawings.
 - Ask students to add any additional examples of reality and fantasy to their reality-and-fantasy worksheet from the new pages they read. Monitor their written responses.
 - Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to create mental pictures as they read and to reflect on the realistic and fantasy elements.
-  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


- Ask students to explain or show how the strategy of visualizing helped them understand and remember the story and how visualizing increased their enjoyment at the end of the story.
Think-aloud: When I got to the last page, saw the illustration, and read about how sad the animals were, I mentally compared that to the picture I had in my mind. When an author uses descriptive words and details, it helps the reader create mental pictures.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete their visualize worksheet. If time allows, ask them to explain their drawings, using the text to support their sketches.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review with students the characteristics of reality and fantasy. Now that they have read the whole book, ask them whether they would classify the story as realistic or fantasy. Remind students that sometimes a story can be both, and review with them the characteristics of tall tales.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the reality-and-fantasy worksheet, adding any more details from the story that they may have missed. If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about a great American legendary hero, Johnny Appleseed. Many people believe that he was a real man. Now that you have read this story, how do you think a story about a real person gets changed to include details that are not realistic? Why do you think it gets changed?

Build Skills

Phonics: **R-controlled /o/**

- Write the word *wore* on the board and say it aloud with students. Point to the letters *ore* in the word and explain that these three letters are one of the combinations that stand for a group of sounds called *r-controlled vowels*. These vowel sounds are neither long nor short and are sometimes difficult to hear. Tell students that the other *r-controlled /o/* letter combinations are *or* (as in *corn*), *our* (as in *four*), and *oar* (as in *roar*).
-  Have students turn to page 3 in their book and locate the word *wore*. Ask them to circle or highlight the *ore* in the word. Then have them scan page 4 for any other words that contain the *r-controlled /o/* sound (*born*).
- Create a four-column chart on the board with *wore*, *corn*, *four*, and *roar* as headers. Read the header words aloud while pointing to the *r-controlled /o/* letter combinations.
- Ask students to brainstorm and tell you any words they know with the *r-controlled /or/* sound in them. Write their responses under the correct header on the chart, modeling the correct spelling of the word and underlining the *r-controlled /or/* letter combination in each word.
- **Check for understanding:** Have student pairs scan the rest of the text for *r-controlled /o/* words. Ask volunteers to come to the board and record the words in the appropriate column of the chart.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Comparative and superlative adjectives**

- Have students explain what adjectives do (they describe nouns or pronouns). Review with students that an *adjective* tells *which one*, *how many*, or *what kind* of something. Ask them to turn to page 5 and identify the adjective in the first sentence (*scrawny*). Explain that the word *scrawny* is describing *what kind* of man Johnny was.
- Explain that sometimes adjectives describe a noun or pronoun by comparing it to something else. Hold up three pencils of different lengths and model comparative and superlative adjectives in oral sentences (for example, *This is a long pencil*; *This is a longer pencil*; *This is the longest pencil*). Write these sentences on the board. Underline the words *long*, *longer*, *longest*.
- Ask a volunteer to come to the board and underline the adjective in each sentence. Point out how the suffixes *-er* and *-est* were added to the adjective *long* to compare the second and third pencils to the first pencil.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Johnny Appleseed Heads West

- Create a two-column chart on the board. Label one side *Comparative* and the other side *Superlative*. Write the words *longer* and *longest* under the appropriate headings. Explain that adjectives that compare and end in the -er suffix are called *comparative adjectives*. Adjectives that compare more than two things and end in the -est suffix are called *superlative adjectives*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students identify the two comparative adjectives on page 3 (*strongest, widest*). Ask them which side of the chart these two adjectives belong (*Superlative*; they end in -est).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [adjectives worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Similes**

- Have students turn to page 3. Read the following sentence from the first paragraph aloud: *He was like a flying jackrabbit.*
- Write the phrase *like a flying jackrabbit* on the board. Explain to students that the phrase is an example of a *simile*. Point out that authors use similes to make their writing more vivid and enjoyable by comparing one thing with another using the word *like* or *as*. For example, instead of just saying Johnny was fast, the author compares him to a flying jackrabbit. This helps readers create a clear and enjoyable mental image. Explain that tall tales often have similes that are humorously exaggerated.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read page 5 and search for two other examples of a simile (*His arms and legs were as thin as tree branches but as strong as iron bars*). Ask students what two things the author is comparing (Johnny's arms and legs to tree branches and iron bars). Challenge students to find two more similes in the story (page 7).
- **Independent practice:** Ask students to work with a partner to create their own simile about Johnny's appearance or abilities. Have them write it on a separate piece of paper. Invite them to share their simile with the class.

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 them explain to their audience what is real and what is fantasy about Johnny Appleseed.

Extend the Reading

Tall Tale Writing and Art Connection

Gather a collection of tall tales to share with students. After brainstorming common elements of tall tales with students, ask them to write a tall tale of their own. Make sure students plan for a main character/hero with superhuman strengths, a setting in the American West during pioneer times, a problem that the hero overcomes, and a story element that brings joy or encouragement to the pioneers. Require a clean copy that can be posted or bound into a class book.

Social Studies Connection

Provide students with books and Internet sources to research whether Johnny Appleseed was a real man. In their research, ask them to find and record on index cards what is fact about Johnny Appleseed (also known as John Chapman). For example, he did live during the time of the American Revolution, he did walk over a great distance of the American Midwest; he did plant many appleseeds, 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.
- 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 visualizing to better understand and enjoy the text during reading; draw what they visualize on a worksheet
- understand and identify the difference between reality and fantasy in text during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify and use *r*-controlled /o/ words during discussion and in the text
- accurately identify comparative and superlative adjectives in text on a worksheet
- correctly recognize and understand the use of similes during discussion and in the text

Comprehension Checks

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