

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy Page Count: 10 Word Count: 98

Book Summary

The classic tale of rumor and panic is retold in this hilarious book. Students will delight in the snowballing effect of the story and the comic illustrations.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Retell


Objectives

- Use the strategy of pausing while reading to retell what has been read
- Sequence story events
- Discriminate sounds
- Identify short vowel Aa
- Understand that quotation marks identify a speaker's words
- Understand how to place words in alphabetical order

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*The Sky Is Falling* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Sequence events, short vowel Aa worksheets
- Word journal (optional)
- 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

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

- High-frequency words: *is*, *not*
- Content words:
 - Story critical: **bear** (n.), **deer** (n.), **fox** (n.), **mouse** (n.), **owl** (n.), **rabbit** (n.), **squirrel** (n.)
 - Enrichment: *falling* (v.), *head* (n.), *hits* (v.), *nut* (n.), *runs* (v.), *sky* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Discuss with students the kinds of things they can see in the sky (sun, clouds, birds, balloons, airplanes, stars, moon). Ask them what kinds of things can fall from the sky (rain, snow, and so on). Ask students what they would think and do if someone told them the sky was falling.

Book Walk

Introduce the Book

- Show students the front and back covers of the book and read the title with them. Ask what they might read about in a book called *The Sky Is Falling*. (Accept any answers students can justify). Ask students what they think the fox is saying to the bear.
- Show students the back cover. Ask who they see in this picture. Have students predict what the squirrel is saying to the deer.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Retell**

- Explain to students that one way to understand and remember what they are reading is to stop now and then during reading to retell in their mind what is happening in the story.
- Explain that when someone retells something, they explain the details of what happened in order. Point out that people retell stories as part of their daily lives, such as explaining what happened at a sports game. Ask students to share other examples of when people might give a retelling.
- Model retelling a familiar story in detail, such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.
Think-aloud: *In Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Goldilocks comes to a house in the forest that belongs to three bears: a mama bear, a papa bear, and a baby bear. The bears leave the house for a walk in the forest while their porridge was cooling. Goldilocks goes inside the house, even though no one is home. First, Goldilocks sees three bowls of porridge on the table. She tries each one. The first bowl is too hot, the second bowl is too cold, and the third bowl was just right, so she eats it all up. Next, she sees three chairs and sits in each one. The first chair is too hard, the second chair is too soft, and the third chair is just right. However, that chair breaks and Goldilocks falls to the ground.*
- Continue retelling in detail to the end of the story. Invite students to suggest information for the retelling of this story.
- Have students place sticky notes on pages 4, 6, 8, and 10. Explain that as they read, they should stop on these pages to think about what has happened in the story. Encourage students to retell in their mind what happens in the story as they read.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- As you preview the book with students, model the language patterns in the book. For example, ask: *Who gets hit from a nut? Yes, that's right. Rabbit is hit from a nut falling.* On page 4, ask: *What do you think Rabbit runs to tell Fox?*
- Ask students what sounds the word *rabbit* starts and ends with. Have a volunteer point to the word on the page. Ask how *rabbit* starts. Point to the word *it* within the word *rabbit* and explain that knowing this part of the word might also help them say the word *rabbit*.
- Encourage students to add the new vocabulary words to their word journals.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out whether the sky really fell. Remind them to stop reading at the end of each page with a sticky note to quickly retell in their mind the details of what has happened so far in the story.


During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Have a volunteer point to the first word on page 3. Read the word together (A). Point out where to begin reading on each page. Remind students to read words from left to right. Point to each word as you read it aloud while students follow along in their own book.
- Have them read to the end of page 4, using their finger to point to each word as they read. Encourage students who finish before others to reread the text.
- Ask students what has happened so far in the story. Model how you stopped to mentally retell the story.

Think-aloud: I stopped after a few pages to retell in my mind what I had read so far. First, I learned that a nut fell from a tree and hit Rabbit on the head. Rabbit ran to Fox and said that the sky was falling.

- Have students read to the end of page 6. Ask them to retell the events of the story to a partner.
- Have students read the remainder of the story. Remind them to pause after a few pages to think about what has happened in the story and to make sure they understand it.

 Have students 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, 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

- Retell in detail with students the events of the story from pages 7 and 8, using the pictures in the book as a guide.
- **Think-aloud:** *After Bear told Squirrel that the sky was falling, Squirrel ran to tell Deer that the sky was falling. Then Deer ran to tell Mouse that the sky was falling.*
- Have volunteers retell the events to the end of the book, using the pictures in the book as a guide. Then have them retell the story to a partner, starting at the beginning. Listen for whether students include the following: correct events in detail, events in order, main characters.
- Ask students how pausing to retell the story in their mind helped them remember what was happening in the story.
- Discuss additional strategies students used to gain meaning from the book.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: Sequence events

- **Discussion:** Ask students whether they liked the story and why or why not. Discuss the differences between Rabbit's and Owl's character.
- **Introduce and model:** Tell students that a story is a series of things that happen in a particular order. First one thing happens, then something else, and so on. Explain that the order in which the things happen is called the *sequence*. Point out the sequence in this story.
- **Think-aloud:** *In this story, the first thing that happened was that a nut fell on Rabbit's head. Then Rabbit told Fox that the sky was falling. Then Fox told Bear. I don't include all the details of the story, as I would in a retelling. I only tell the most important events in order to tell the story correctly.*
- **Check for understanding:** Have students share the sequence of events through the end of the story. If necessary, use the pictures in the book as a guide.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the sequence events worksheet. If time allows, discuss their answers.



Instruct students to use the last page of the book to draw a picture that shows what might happen next to some of the characters in the book. Have students share their pictures.

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Sound discrimination

- Say the words *fox* and *lot*, stretching the sounds in each word. Tell students that both words have the same middle sound: /o/. Have them listen again for the sound.
- Tell students that you are going to say groups of three words. Two words have the same middle sound and one word doesn't. Have them show the thumbs-down signal for the word that does not have the same middle sound as the other two words. Say the following groups of words one at a time, stretching the sounds in each word: *game/faint/deer*; *click/clack/chill*; *lamp/huge/mule*; *cot/stop/told*; *dish/slid/bed*; *duck/chess/hen*.

Phonics: Short vowel Aa

- Write the letter *Aa* on the board and ask students to name the letter. Have them turn to page 3 to find the word *rabbit*. Read the word together. Point out that the letter *a* stands for the short /a/ vowel sound in this word. Have them put their finger on the letter *Aa* and say the short /a/ vowel sound.
- Write the following words on the board, leaving out the letter *a* in each word: *man, fat, ran, cab, nap*. Have volunteers complete the words by writing the letter *a* in the blank spaces. Have students blend the sounds in the words together as you run your finger under the letters.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [short vowel Aa worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Grammar and Mechanics: Quotation marks

- Direct students to the second sentence on page 4. Point to the set of quotation marks on the page and explain that the marks before and after Rabbit's words mean that these are the words that Rabbit said.
- Tell students to look at page 5. Ask them to point to the sentence that shows that Fox is talking. Have them circle the quotation marks on the page.



Have students find and circle the quotation marks on each page in the book. Have them underline who is speaking in each sentence.

Word Work: Alphabetical order

- Write the words *fox* and *bear* on the board. Read the words aloud with students. Ask students to identify the first letter in each word (*f, b*).
- Ask students to identify which letter, *f* or *b*, comes first in the alphabet. Invite them to explain which word would come first in alphabetical order (*bear*). Explain that the word *bear* would come first in an alphabetical list because the first letter, *b*, comes before the first letter, *f*, in the word *fox*.
- Write the words *bear* and *rabbit* on the board. Read the words aloud with students. Invite volunteers to circle the first letter in each word. Have students explain which word would come first in alphabetical order and why.
- Write the words *fox, rabbit, bear, owl, deer, and mouse* on the board. Read the words aloud with students. Have them write the words in alphabetical order on a separate piece of paper. If time allows, discuss students' responses.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, allow partners to 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

Tell students to pretend they think the sky is falling. Ask them to draw and label pictures of all of the people they would tell.

Science Connection

Provide resources for students to research what types of trees drop nuts or cones. Tell students to draw pictures (or provide magazines that can be cut up) on poster board to illustrate what they learned. Ask students to share what they learned with the class.

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 or dictate a response.
- 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:

- pause to mentally retell the story as they read
- correctly sequence story events on the graphic organizer in the order in which they happened
- correctly tell which word in a group of three words heard orally has a different middle sound
- accurately associate the letter Aa with the short /a/ vowel sound
- correctly point to the quotation marks on the page that show a character is speaking
- correctly place words in alphabetical order on a separate piece of paper

Comprehension Checks

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