

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Realistic Page Count: 16 Word Count: 826

Book Summary

Meeting Father in Plymouth recounts the journey of a seven-year-old girl as she and her family leave England to join their father, who settled in Plymouth five months earlier. Although leaving England was difficult, she remains hopeful that Plymouth will be a good home for them where they will be free to follow their religion. Period illustrations support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Make, revise, and confirm predictions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions to better understand the text
- Identify story elements
- Recognize and use singular possessive nouns
- Recognize and understand the use of homonyms

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Meeting Father in Plymouth* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Prediction, story elements, possessive nouns, homonyms 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: *belongings* (n.), *limited* (adj.), *mature* (adj.), *reunion* (n.), *settlement* (n.), *tending* (v.)

Enrichment: *cramped* (adj.), *Handmaid* (n.), *journey* (n.), *planters* (n.), *Plymouth Colony* (n.), *Puritans* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Have students imagine that they have to leave their home to live somewhere else. Invite them to explain how they would feel. Discuss reasons why people move to new places. Encourage students who have moved to a new place to share the challenges they faced.
- Ask them to share what they know about the pilgrims settling in Plymouth. Discuss the hardships endured by those who crossed the Atlantic to settle in the new land.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their book. Guide them to the front and back covers of the book and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what kind of book this is 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: **Make, revise, and confirm predictions**

- Explain that good readers often make predictions about what will happen in a book based on what the characters say, do, and think in the story. As they read the story, readers revise or confirm their predictions based on what they learn from reading. Before reading a book, readers can use the title and illustrations as the basis for making predictions.
- Model using the title and cover illustrations to make a prediction as you preview the book.
Think-aloud: Let's look at the front cover. I see a woman and a girl waving to a man. It looks as though the man might be on some kind of boat. It seems as if they know each other. In the title I see the word Father. Perhaps the man on the cover is the father and all these people are a family. The title, Meeting Father in Plymouth, makes me wonder whether the father has traveled to meet his family in Plymouth or whether the family is coming to him. I'll have to read the book to find out what happens.
- Have students preview all the illustrations in the story. Have volunteers use the illustrations to create a possible beginning, middle, and end for the story.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Story elements**

- Ask students to identify the elements that are important in writing a fictional story. Write them on the board (characters, setting, problem, events, solution). Explain to students that the *characters* are the people in the story, and the *setting* is when and where the story takes place. The *problem* is something that is difficult to deal with or hard to understand and must be worked out or solved. The *solution* is the answer to the problem, and the *events* are the things that happen to the characters as they are finding the solution.
- Ask students to turn to page 3. Read the first page of the story aloud while students follow along silently. Have students discuss the characters and setting of this story with a partner. Invite students to share the information aloud (characters: Sarah, her father, her family; setting: on the *Handmaid*, a ship on the ocean). Explain that the characters and setting are often explained first to provide information to begin the story.
- Explain that story elements, such as problem and solution, often are not directly stated. Readers use story clues to identify this information.
- *Think-aloud: To better understand what is happening in this book, I use story clues to identify elements of the story. For example, on page 3, I read that the family is taking a ship across the ocean to meet the father. This might be a long journey, as well as a problem that the character faces. As I read, I will continue to identify story elements. This strategy will help me to organize the information as I read.*
- Have students explain how the long journey might be the problem (someone might get sick, the ship may not reach its destination, and so on).
- Point out that as the story progresses, students will learn more about the story elements.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Cut out the illustrations on pages 4, 10, 13, and 14 from the book. Create a three-column chart on the board with the heading *Plymouth Settlement*. Label the columns *Clothing*, *Transportation*, and *Shelter*. Explain that the Puritans were a group of people who moved to this country around four hundred years ago and formed a settlement called Plymouth.


- Show students the illustrations from the book, one at a time. Explain that these illustrations show what life was like in the settlement. Have students explain details about the clothing, transportation, and shelter from the pictures. List each detail in the appropriate column on the board. (For example, the boys wore short pants and the girls wore long dresses, people traveled long distances using wooden boats, and houses were made of tree trunks and bark.)
- Use this information to create a Venn diagram comparing life in Plymouth and modern life. When finished, discuss how people's experiences are shaped by the place and time period in which they live.
- Review that the glossary contains a list of vocabulary words, along with their definitions and the pages on which the words first appear. Have students use the dictionary to identify the definitions for *belongings*, *Plymouth*, *Puritans*, and *settlement* to provide further understanding of these words.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book, making predictions about what will happen in the story on the basis of what the characters say, do, and think. Remind them to revise or confirm their predictions as they learn more about the events of the story.
- Introduce and explain the [prediction worksheet](#). Invite students to fill out the first column, *What I predict will happen*, before they begin reading.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 10. Encourage students who finish early to go back and reread.
- **Model making, revising, and confirming a prediction.**
Think-aloud: *I predicted that the man on the boat might be the father of the two other people on the book's cover. This prediction was confirmed. I also predicted that either the father was joining the family in Plymouth or the reverse. As I read the first paragraph on page 3, I learned that the family was preparing to take a ship across the ocean to meet the father. My revised prediction is that the family will be meeting the father in Plymouth.*
- Have students think of pages 3–5. Say: *From the reading, I learned that the family left England for religious freedom. The father left for Plymouth before the rest of the family. That means that the woman and the girl on the cover were waving good-bye to the father as he was leaving. This makes me wonder why the father would leave without his family. I read that the father left with other planters, who work with crops. Maybe the father left early because there was not enough food in Plymouth, so they had to grow more before other people started to arrive. I will continue reading to find out.*
- Ask students to explain why Sarah's family's departure from England is important to the story (it is the story's problem). Have volunteers identify important events that occurred as a result of the problem (family began a long journey across the ocean to Plymouth, and so on).
- **Check for understanding:** Encourage students to use the information they've read and discussed to fill out the middle section of their worksheet, *Changes in my prediction*, to revise their predictions. Remind them that if their first prediction has already been proven correct, they may use this section to make another prediction about what might happen next in the story. Invite students to share their predictions.
- Invite students to read the remainder of the book. Encourage them to continue to make, revise, and confirm their predictions as they read the rest of 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

- Ask students to explain how the strategy of making, revising, and confirming predictions helped them understand the story.
- **Think-aloud:** *I predicted that the father left before the rest of the family because there was not enough food in Plymouth. I did not find enough information in the book to confirm this prediction. However, I learned that Sarah's father had been working as a planter, builder, hunter, and cook. The family's new house was made of trees. This information leads me to think that the father built their house. Maybe there was nothing much in Plymouth before the family arrived, so the father had to leave early to help build the settlement.* Ask students to share their thoughts about why the father left before his family.
- Ask students to share their predictions about what they thought might happen in the story. Ask them to compare their predictions with what actually happened in the story and to share any predictions that were confirmed. Reassure students by explaining that predicting correctly is not the purpose of this reading strategy. Making, revising, and confirming predictions are a way to organize information to understand and remember what they have read.
- **Independent practice:** Have students fill out the last column of their worksheet, *What actually happened*.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Remind students of the story elements already identified in previous discussions (character, setting, events, problem, solution). Now that they have finished the story, ask them to tell if those elements were added to or expanded upon (the characters have remained the same from the first page, Plymouth is an additional setting, and so on).
- Ask students to recall the problem of the story (the family left England to seek religious freedom). Discuss some of the events leading to the solution of Sarah's problem: the family endured a long journey, Sarah and her family were reunited with the father, the family had to get used to living in a new place, and so on. Ask students to identify the final solution to the problem (her family was all together and safe in Plymouth, free from the King's rule).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **story elements worksheet**. When students are done, discuss their responses aloud.



Extend the discussion: Ask students to predict what might happen next in the story. Have students explain how Sarah's feelings about moving to a new place have changed throughout the story.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Singular possessive nouns**

- Direct students to page 5. Read the first sentence of the third paragraph aloud, pointing to the word *father*. Ask a volunteer to explain whose father the sentence is referring to (Sarah's). Explain that the word *Sarah's* shows that the father belongs to Sarah.
- Review or explain that words like *Sarah's* are called **possessive nouns**. A possessive noun is formed by adding an 's to the end of a word to show ownership, or possession.
- Have students find another possessive word in the same paragraph on the page (*king's*). Ask a volunteer to explain what belongs to the king (the decision).
- Review or explain that a contraction using 's is not the same as a possessive. For example, *it's* is a contraction for *it is*, and does not show ownership. Write the following sentence on the board: *It's been very hard*. Have students identify the example contraction (*it's*, short for *it is*).



Check for understanding: Have students circle the possessive nouns in the book and underline the item that each one owns (page 8: *mother's arm*, *ship's deck*; page 10: *ship's side*; page 11: *Sarah's mother*; page 12: *Sarah's father*; page 13: *Sarah's new house*; page 15: *Sarah's brothers*).

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [possessive nouns worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss student responses once everyone has finished working independently.

Word Work: Homonyms

- Have students turn to page 14 and read the following sentences: *The next day Sarah helped her mother cook and sew, just as she had back in England... With so many people of all ages helping, they were done in a couple of days.*
- Ask students which words in the sentences sound the same but are spelled differently and have different meanings (*sew* and *so*). Write these words on the board.
- Explain to students that words that sound the same but have different meanings and spellings are called *homonyms*. Ask students to explain the difference between the meanings of the two words.
- Have students turn to page 8. Read the sentence *For more than eighty nights she closed her eyes and on eighty mornings opened them to see nothing but the sea.* Ask a volunteer to identify the homonym pair (*see*, *sea*). Have a student explain the difference between the meanings of the two words.
- Invite students to share other homonym pairs they may know.



Check for understanding: Have students turn to page 6. Point to the words *new* and *there*. Discuss the meanings of the two words. Have students write a homonym for each word next to the original word. Then have them use each word in a sentence about the story. (For example: Sarah *knew* the journey would be long. Sarah's mother gathered *their* belongings.)

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [homonyms worksheet](#). If time allows, have students discuss their answers.

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. Have students write the story elements and their definitions on index cards to take home. Have them practice identifying story elements with someone at home using a familiar story.

Extend the Reading

Realistic Writing and Art Connection

Discuss with students the point of view from which this book was written (third person). Talk about how *Meeting Father in Plymouth* was written through the eyes of Sarah. Have students write a story about the same journey through the eyes of Sarah's father or mother. If time allows, invite students to illustrate their work, including period clothing and settings as shown in the book.

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

Social Studies Connection

Have students use the information provided in the book to compare and contrast the cultures of England and the Plymouth settlement. Students may also use print and Internet resources to research additional details about these two places. Have them locate information on the clothing, transportation, food, shelter, and pastimes. Have them share their findings in the form of an oral presentation.

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:

- make logical predictions based on available pictures and text; revise and/or confirm predictions as they preview and read the book; complete a worksheet
- correctly identify story elements during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify singular possessive nouns in text and use them correctly on a worksheet
- correctly identify homonyms in text; use homonyms in sentences to distinguish between the meaning of each word in homonym pairs

Comprehension Checks

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