

Focus Question:

What animals drink blood?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

A Taste for Blood is a fascinating and engaging look at many different animals that drink blood to survive, including vampire bats, mosquitoes, and leeches. Students will be captivated by the detailed photographs and interesting text. This book can also be used to teach students how to compare and contrast as well as to ask and answer questions to better understand text.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to better understand text
- ☐ Compare and contrast ideas from a text
- ☐ Describe information provided by captions
- ☐ Discriminate initial consonant /t/ sound
- ☐ Identify initial and final consonant Tt
- ☐ Recognize and use verbs
- ☐ Identify and use antonyms

Materials

- ☐ Book: *A Taste for Blood* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Compare and contrast, verbs, antonyms worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

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

- **High-frequency words:** *have, some, these*
- **Words to Know**
 - Story critical:** *blood (n.), insects (n.), lampreys (n.), leeches (n.), mammals (n.), mosquitoes (n.)*
- **Academic vocabulary:** *another (adj.)*

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Place on the board a photograph of a fictional vampire. Ask students to discuss with a partner what they know about vampires. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class (including that vampires are known to drink blood). Remind students that vampires are fictional characters and do not exist in real life.
- Ask students if they know of any animals that exist in real life that do drink blood. Make a list of these animals on the board. Have students discuss with a partner how these animals are similar to vampires and how they are different. Invite volunteers to share their ideas with the class.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *A Taste for Blood*. 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, 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).

Introduce the Reading Strategy:

Ask and answer questions

Explain to students that engaged readers ask and answer questions while reading in order to better understand a text. Draw a KWLS chart on the board and explain what each section stands for (*What I Know, What I Wonder, What I Learned, What I Still Wonder*). Have students think about animals that drink blood and share facts for the *What I Know* section on the board. Then, have students think about what questions they have about animals that drink blood and share questions for the *What I Wonder* section on the board. Explain that students will look for the answers to these questions while reading in order to better understand the text.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Compare and contrast

- Explain to students that readers better understand a story when they compare and contrast details such as characters, settings, and subjects. Explain that to *compare*, readers look at how things are alike and to *contrast*, readers look at how they are different.
- Remind students of how they compared animals that drink blood with vampires at the beginning of the lesson. Explain to students that they were comparing and contrasting by sharing ideas of how these animals and vampires are alike and how they are different. Encourage students to compare and contrast the animals in this story while they are reading.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the “Words to Know” box on the copyright page. Point out that these words can be found in the story and that understanding the meaning of each word will help them better understand what they read. Read the words aloud to students and as a group, discuss the meaning of each word. On the basis of the definitions discussed, have students work in groups to illustrate each vocabulary word on a poster. Have students share their posters with the class.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about animals that drink blood. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer.
- 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 a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *Why do all animals need to eat to live?* (level 3) page 3
- *What is a lamprey?* (level 1) page 5
- *How are vampire bats and vampire finches the same and different?* (level 2) pages 6 and 9
- *Why is it common to find ticks on dogs?* (level 3) page 7
- *Why did the author write this book about animals that drink blood?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Captions

Explain that captions are helpful when reading because they clarify pictures and photographs and provide the reader with more detailed information. Have students turn to the photograph on page 3 and cover the caption. Have students guess what the photograph is showing. Then, have students uncover the caption and read about the photograph. Repeat with multiple photographs from the text. Explain that reading captions is an important part of understanding the text and that all captions should be read to gain a better understanding of the text.

Skill Review

- Draw students’ attention back to the questions on the board in the *What I Wonder* section of the KWLS chart. Discuss any questions that have been answered from the reading and record these answers in the *What I Learned* section. Remind students to continue looking for answers to the remaining questions as they read.
- Have students stop now and then to compare two pictures on consecutive pages (for example, the lamprey on page 5 and the vampire bat on page 6).
- Model comparing and contrasting.
Think-aloud: On pages 5 and 6, I see a lamprey and a vampire bat. These two animals are alike because they both drink blood to survive. These two animals are different because the lamprey is a fish and lives in the water while the vampire bat is a mammal and lives on land. I also know the vampire bat sleeps during the day and flies out to feed at night.
- Model how to complete the [compare-and-contrast worksheet](#). Have students choose two animals from the book to compare and contrast.

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.

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: Ask and answer questions

Review the questions students generated in the *What I Wonder* section of the KWLS chart on the board. Fill in the answers to the remaining questions in the *What I Learned* section. If there are any questions that have not been answered, transfer these questions to the *What I Still Wonder* section on the board. Then, ask students to generate more questions that they would like to investigate and record these in the *What I Still Wonder* section. Emphasize the importance of asking and answering questions in order to better understand a text.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Example: *There are many animals that drink blood, such as vampire bats and leeches.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness:

Initial consonant /t/ sound

- Say the word *taste* aloud to students, emphasizing the initial /t/ sound. Have students say the word aloud and then say the /t/ sound. Have students practice saying the /t/ sound to a partner.
- Read pages 3 and 4 to students. Have students stand up when they hear a word that begins with the /t/ sound.
- Say the following word pairs, and have students identify the word in each pair that begins with the /t/ sound: *thankful/happy, tomato/banana, mouse/tiger, telephone/computer.*
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words one at a time, and have students give the thumbs-up signal when they hear a word that begins with the /t/ sound: *tornado, ghost, fox, tapping, grapes, truck, trust, and piano.*

Phonics: Initial and consonant Tt

- Write the word *taste* on the board and read it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /t/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word *taste* as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letter represents the /t/ sound in the word *taste*.
- Repeat with the word *insect*. Ask students how the words *taste* and *insect* are the same and how they are different. Point out that the words *taste* and *insect* both have the /t/ sound, but *taste* has the /t/ sound in the beginning of the word while *insect* has the /t/ sound at the end of the word.

- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *trap, bought, elephant, and tadpole.* Say each word, one at a time, and have students stand up if they hear the /t/ sound at the beginning of the word and give the thumbs-up signal if they hear the /t/ sound at the end of the word.

Grammar and Mechanics: Verbs

- Review or explain that *verbs* are words that name actions. Have each student name at least one verb. Write the verbs on the board. Select several verbs for the class to act out.
- Have students read page 7 aloud with you. Ask them to identify the verbs (*drink, hide, grab, walk*).
- Write several sentences from the book on the board; use examples that have easy-to-identify verbs. Invite volunteers to come to the board and circle the verb in each sentence. Have the class say the verbs aloud.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students locate and circle the verbs in the book. Have volunteers share one verb they found with the rest of the class. Have the rest of the class act out that verb.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **verbs worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Antonyms

- Review or explain that a word that means the opposite of another word is called an *antonym*.
- Write the following sentence on the board: *Vampire bats sleep during the day.* Guide students in producing an antonym for the word *day* (*night*).
- Put students into small groups, and give each group the following three words: *short, small, and loud.* Have students work together to come up with antonyms for each word. Invite volunteers from each group to share their answers.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the words *nice, white, and bad* on the board. Have students come up with an antonym for each word and share their ideas with a partner. Invite partners to share their answers with the class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **antonyms worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.