

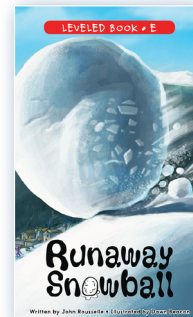
Focus Question:

What happens as the snowball rolls down the hill?

Book Summary

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy

In *Runaway Snowball*, a giant snowball gets away from Timothy, causing problems for everyone below him on the hill. The story supports emergent readers by providing colorful illustrations and a repetitive text. The book can also be used to teach students how to determine cause and effect as well as how to recognize and use comparative adjectives.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Retell to understand text
- ☐ Determine cause and effect
- ☐ Describe information provided by illustrations
- ☐ Discriminate initial sounds
- ☐ Identify initial consonant *sn*-blend
- ☐ Recognize and use comparative adjectives
- ☐ Identify and use compound words

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Runaway Snowball* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Cause and effect, initial consonant *sn*-blend, comparative adjective 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. Starred (*) words appear in the lesson but not the book.

- **High-frequency words:** *again, do, say*
- **Words to Know**
Story critical: *bigger* (adj.), *breaks* (v.), *hill* (n.), *rolls* (v.), *snowball* (n.), *snowman* (n.)
- **Academic vocabulary:** *cause* (n)*, *effect* (n)*

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Place a picture of a snowman on the board. Ask students if they have ever built a snowman. Have students discuss with a partner how to build a snowman. Invite volunteers to share their answers.
- Explain to students that building a snowman consists of making three giant snowballs. Discuss with students how to make a snowball and how they can make snowballs bigger by rolling them over and over in the snow.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Runaway Snowball*. 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, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Retell

- Explain to students that a way to understand and remember a story is to stop periodically and *retell* the details of the story in their mind. Explain to students that when they retell a story or event, they retell the details in the order in which they happened.
- Have students recall a time they played outside. Have them retell the experience to a partner. Invite volunteers to share their retelling with the class. Write the details on the board in order. Point out to students that by retelling the time they played outside, they can better remember the experience.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Cause and effect

- Write the words *cause* and *effect* on the board and have students repeat the phrase. Explain to students that *cause* is the action and *effect* is the result of the action. Remind students about their experiences building a snowman. Explain that when building a snowman, the *cause* is rolling the snowballs over and over in the snow and the

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

effect is creating snowballs large enough to build a snowman. Write these examples under the correct headings on the board.

- Have students turn to the last page of the story. Ask students to discuss with a partner the effect of the snowball getting to the bottom of the hill. Have students draw a picture of the effect on a sheet of paper. Invite volunteers to share their drawings with the class.

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 the runaway snowball. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- 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 is Timothy rolling a snowball?* (level 3) page 3
- *What happens after Timothy rolls the giant snowball?* (level 1) page 4
- *What happens to the snowball as it rolls down the hill?* (level 2) pages 5–11
- *How do you think Marcie feels when the snowball is coming toward her?* (level 3) pages 6–7
- *What is Sonya doing before the snowball rolls down the hill?* (level 1) page 8
- *Why did the kids say, “Let’s do that again!” at the end of the story?* (level 3) page 12

Text Features: Illustrations

Explain to students that the pictures in this story are illustrations because they are drawn. Explain that illustrations can assist readers by giving them additional details and information as well as by helping them decode unknown words in the text.

Have students look at the illustration on page 3. Explain that by looking at the picture, readers can see that Timothy is rolling a snowball. Then have students find the word *snowball* in the sentence. Point out to students that looking at the illustration may help them decode the word *snowball*.

Skill Review

- Review retelling by having students start on page 3 and retell the events of the story to a partner. Have volunteers share their retellings with the class. Remind students that it is important to retell the events in the correct order to better remember and understand the story.
- Model cause and effect.
Think-aloud: When we read stories, we often find many cause-and-effect relationships. Earlier, we learned that the cause can be the action and the effect is the result of that action. The cause in this story is Timothy rolling a large snowball that rolled away from him and went down the hill. The effect of the snowball rolling down the hill is that it rolled over people and animals, crashed at the bottom of the hill, and broke into pieces. Can you think of some causes and effects that happen in our classroom?
- Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class.
- Model how to complete the [cause-and-effect worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

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: Cause and effect

Review the cause-and-effect worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class. Remind students that they can identify cause-and-effect relationships both in stories and in their daily lives.

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 story to answer the Focus Question. (Answers should include variations of knocking people down, getting bigger and bigger, and finally breaking at the bottom of the hill.)

Comprehension Checks

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

- Book quiz
- Retelling rubric

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Initial sounds

- Say the word *sad* aloud to students, emphasizing the initial /s/ sound. Have students repeat the word *sad* and then say the initial /s/ sound aloud.
- Repeat this process with the word *tap*.
- Explain to students that the *initial sound* is the first sound of a word. Say the following words aloud and have students say the initial sound of each aloud as a class: *sit, turn, sound, spider, tiger, sand, tag*.
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words aloud: *sub, sand, tick, toss, set, toe, sew*. Have students raise their hand when they hear a word that starts with the initial /s/ sound. Then repeat with the words: *table, sun, take, smile, tear, teddy*. Have students raise their hand when they hear words that start with the initial /t/ sound.

Phonics: Initial consonant sn-blends

- Write the words *snow* and *snack* on the board. Read them aloud and have students repeat the words. Discuss with students what the two words have in common.
- Have students say the /sn/ sound and run your finger underneath the letters. Explain to students that the combination of the letters *sn* is a blend that is found at the beginning of many words.
- Say the words *sneeze* and *snore* aloud. Invite a volunteer to come to the board and underline the letters that stand for the /sn/ sound. Have students say the /sn/ sound aloud and then say both words aloud.
- **Check for understanding:** On a separate sheet of paper, have students copy the words: *snake, sneak, snap, snag, snail, sniff*, without the initial *sn*-blend. Give students a card with *sn* written on it and have students work with a partner to create new words by placing the card in front of each ending. Encourage partners to decode the words; then read the words aloud as a class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [initial-consonant-sn-blend worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics: Comparative adjectives

- Have students turn to page 3, find the word *big*, and point to it. Then have students find the word *bigger* and point to it. Have students discuss with a partner the difference between the two words. Invite volunteers to share their answers.
- Write the two words *big* and *bigger* on the board

and underline the -er ending. Explain to students that with -er added to the word, it is now a *comparative adjective*. Remind students that an *adjective* is a *word that describes a noun*. Explain that comparative adjectives are words used to compare two nouns.

- Place or draw a picture of a tree on the board. Underneath the tree, write the word *tall*. Then place or draw a picture of a tree that is noticeably taller. Underneath that tree, write the word *taller*. Read both words aloud with students.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students draw a circle on a separate sheet of paper and guide them to write the word *small* underneath the circle. Then have students draw a smaller circle, and have them write the word *smaller* underneath it independently. Repeat by having students draw two squares a space apart. Have them write the word *close* underneath. Next, have students draw the two squares touching, and encourage students to think of the correct comparative adjective independently.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [comparative adjectives worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Compound words

- Write the words *rain* and *coat* on the board. Draw a picture of rain above the word *rain* and a coat above the word *coat*. Have students read both words aloud. Then write *rain* and *coat* together to make the word *raincoat*.
- Remind students that a *noun* is a person, place, or thing. Explain that when two nouns are put together they can make a new word called a *compound word*.
- Write the word *basket* on the board and ask students to draw a picture of a basket on a sheet of paper. Then repeat with the word *ball*. Write the word *basketball* on the board and remind students that *basketball* is a compound word. Point out that when the words are separate, they have different meanings from when they are put together to form the compound word.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work together to verbally create compound words. Say the following words aloud one at a time: *snow, rail, cross, pepper, and grass*. Encourage pairs to come up with the endings of each compound word, guiding them if needed. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class. The compound words can be *snowball, railroad, crosswalk, peppermint, and grasshopper*.

Connections

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