



## About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Personal Narrative Page Count: 16 Word Count: 829

### Book Summary

Tillie is so excited to visit her uncle at work—he is a firefighter, and she gets to visit him at the fire station! Come along with Tillie as her Uncle Jason shows her around the fire station, and Tillie tries on his gear, learns about his equipment, and even sees what happens when an emergency call comes in. Students will enjoy the close-up view of how a firefighter works and lives.

The book and lesson are also available at Levels J and M.

## About the Lesson

### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

### Objectives

- Ask and answer questions to understand text
- Sequence events in the text
- Identify vowel digraphs ea and ee
- Recognize and use contractions
- Identify and understand the use of suffix *-ing*

### Materials

Green text indicates resources are available on the website.

- Book—*My Uncle is a Firefighter* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Ask and answer questions, sequence events, contractions, suffix *-ing* worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

### Vocabulary

\*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](http://VocabularyA-Z.com).

- Content words:

Story critical: **emergency** (n.), **equipment** (n.), **firefighter** (n.), **rescued** (v.), **shifts** (n.), **tour** (n.)  
 Enrichment: **hydrant** (n.), **stow** (v.), **tinker** (v.)

## Before Reading

### Build Background

- Ask students to share what they know about firefighters and fire stations. Ask them if they know where the nearest fire station is and if they have ever visited a fire station.
- Show students the cover of the book and read the title. Tell them the girl on the cover is named Tillie, and she is going to visit her uncle at the fire station. Ask: *If you were Tillie, what questions would you ask your uncle about being a firefighter or working at a fire station?*
- Record their questions on the board.

## 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, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book and author's name).

### Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Ask and answer questions**

- Explain to students that good readers understand what they are reading by asking questions before, during, and after reading. Discuss with students how interacting with the text by asking questions will help them understand and remember what they read.
- Model how to ask questions.
- **Think-aloud:** *From what I see on the covers and title page, it appears as though this book is about firefighters. I'm curious to know what I will read about firefighters. When I look at the title, I see that it is titled My Uncle Is a Firefighter. This makes me wonder what this girl on the cover is going to get to do with her uncle. Before I read, several questions often come to mind about the topic. As I read, I enjoy looking for answers to my questions, which often sparks further curiosities and questions, to answer while I read.*
- Create or project a chart on the board similar to the ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Write your questions from the *Think-aloud* on it and any questions generated by students in the *Build Background* activity. Distribute the [ask-and-answer-questions worksheet](#) to students. Have them write their questions in the first section on their worksheet. Invite them to share some of their questions, and write them on the class chart.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

### Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Sequence events**

- Review or explain that knowing the order in which the events happen in a text is important to understanding the story. Ask students to think of a recent story they've read in which the events happened in order. If necessary, prompt with a familiar or well-known story such as *Cinderella*.
- Explain that the sequence of information in a nonfiction book is important also. In this book, the sequence of events helps us understand when and how firefighters live and work. Explain that the reader can look for signal words—such as *today*, *then*, *first*, and *after*—or time clues, such as dates, that can help them understand the order of the events. Using the photographs also helps us to remember the sequence of events in a text.
- Model using signal words to describe the sequence of a regular day in your life.  
**Think-aloud:** *I know my mornings usually follow a pattern, or sequence. First, I wake up and turn off my alarm clock. Then, I take a shower and get dressed. Next, I make the coffee and wake my kids up for school. After that, I feed them breakfast and get them to the bus stop. Last, I drive to work.*
- Ask students to share their morning routine. After volunteers have shared, ask students to recall what signal words the speaker used to tell the sequence of their morning routine.
- Explain to students that this book follows a sequence, or tells about events in the order in which they happened, and they will be using a graphic organizer later to help them recall the sequence of events in the text.

### Introduce the Vocabulary

- Introduce the content words listed in the vocabulary section of this lesson.
- Review the correct pronunciation for the multisyllabic words *emergency*, *equipment*, *firefighter*, and *rescued*.
- Turn to the glossary on page 16. Read the words, and discuss their meanings aloud.



- Remind students of the strategies they can use to sound out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out the word. They can look for words within words, prefixes, and suffixes. They can use the context to work out the meanings of unfamiliar words. For example, say: *If I did not know the meaning of the word shifts, I could read the definition in the glossary, but I could also turn to the page it's on and read the words and sentences around it. When I read the second paragraph on page 4, I can see that the word must mean the amount of time firefighters spend on the job.*

## Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about Tillie's uncle and his job. Encourage students to ask and answer questions while reading.


## During Reading

### Student Reading

- Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 3 to the end of page 5. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread. Ask students to go back and look at their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet, then circle or highlight any questions that were answered in this part of the text.
- Model answering a question and filling in the second section of the ask-and-answer-questions chart on the board.  
*Think-aloud: Before reading, more than one question came to mind about this book. I was curious about what this girl would get to do with her uncle. I also wanted to know what firefighters do at the fire station. While reading, I discovered that Tillie gets to visit her uncle at the fire station, and she finds out that her uncle stays there for a twenty-four hour shift. She also sees the kitchen and their three refrigerators! I will write these answers on the ask-and-answer-questions chart on the board.*
- Ask students to write answers to the circled questions and any additional questions they raised on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated as they read the book. Write shared responses on the class ask-and-answer-questions chart on the board.  
 Ask students to return to page 3 and look for a signal word that indicates when the sequence of this story begins (*today*). Then have students reread page 4 to determine what happened first when Tillie got to the fire station (Uncle Jason greets her, gives her a big hug, and introduces her to the other firefighters). Have them write the number 1 in the margin and circle it. Then ask them to turn to page 5 and write the number 2 and circle it next to the next thing Tillie gets to do (*I get a tour of the fire station*).
- Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 6 through 8. Have them write answers they found while reading on their worksheet and any additional questions that came to mind, for example, specific questions about where firefighters sleep, or what they do when there are no emergencies. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated as they read this section.  
 Ask students what Tillie does on her tour on pages 7 and 8 (gets to see Uncle Jason's bedroom and the day room where the firefighters hang out after chores). Have them number these events with a 3 and a 4 in the margins.
- Distribute, introduce, and explain the [sequence events worksheet](#). Have students transfer the first four events of Tillie's trip to the worksheet.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to look for and write answers to their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet questions. Encourage them to add new questions they might have to their worksheet as they read. Remind them to circle or highlight the important events that occur in Tillie's day at the fire station and add them to their sequence events worksheet.

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## My Uncle is a Firefighter

 Have students make a small 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

- Reinforce that asking questions before and during reading, and looking for the answers while reading, keeps readers interested in the topic. It also encourages them to keep reading to find answers to their questions and helps them understand and enjoy what they read.  
*Think-aloud: Before reading, I wanted to know what Tillie would get to do with her uncle, and what I would learn about firefighters. I now know what a day is like for a firefighter. I also know that firefighters do a lot more to help people than just put out fires.*
- **Independent practice:** Point out to students that all of their questions may not have been answered in this text. Brainstorm other sources they might use to locate additional information to answer their questions (e.g., websites, books, and so on). Invite students to write one or two more questions they still would like to know about firefighters. Ask students to share questions they added.

### Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Explain to students that ordering, or sequencing, takes place in many aspects of life and give examples (cooking, tying a shoe, opening an email, and so on). Explain that the order helps us to remember important events, as well as how to do certain activities.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the sequence events worksheet. If time allows, have them share what they wrote in the remaining boxes of their worksheet.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about a day in the life of a firefighter. Now that you know this information, what will you think about the next time you see a fire truck pass by when you pass a fire station?

### Build Skills

#### Phonics: Vowel digraphs **ea** and **ee**

- Write the word *greet* on the board. Have students find the word on page 4, and read the sentence in which it is found.
- Ask students what vowel sound they hear in the middle of the word (long /e/ sound). Circle the *ee* in the word, and review that the letters *ee* and *ea* can stand for the long /e/ sound, as in *greet* and *each* (first sentence in paragraph 2). Write the word *each* on the board next to *greet*. Blend the words aloud as you run your finger under the words. Have a volunteer circle the letters in *each* that represent the long /e/ sound.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students look on page 5 to find four other words with *ea* or *ee* representing the long /e/ sound (*three, keep, eat, cream*).
- **Independent practice:** Have students search the book for other examples of words that have the long /e/ sound represented by *ea* or *ee*. Have volunteers write examples on the board. If time allows, discuss their answers.

#### Grammar and Mechanics: **Contractions**

- Write the following sentences on the board from page 3 of the text: *My name's Tillie; My uncle's a firefighter.* Circle the contractions. Explain that sometimes in written and spoken language we combine two words to make a *contraction*. When these two words are joined, some of the letters are taken out and replaced by an apostrophe. In this example, *name's* comes from *name is* and the *i* is taken out. An apostrophe takes the place of the *i* and helps the reader to see that this word is a contraction.

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## My Uncle is a Firefighter

- Point out the word *doesn't* on page 4, and explain to students it stands for *does not*.
- Ask students if they can name other common contractions, and write a list on the board.
- Have students turn to page 8. Ask them to find the following sentence: *Most of the time, though, they're busy helping people and making sure their equipment is ready.* Ask volunteers to identify the contraction (*they're*). Ask what two words make up the contraction *they're* (*they are*). Discuss which letters have been removed and the location of the apostrophe.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 12 and circle all the contractions on the page. Ask them to turn to a partner, and take turns telling what two words make up each of the contractions.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [contractions worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers aloud after students finish.

### Word Work: **Suffix -ing**

- Write the word *waiting* on the board. Ask students to identify the root word (*wait*), and write it next to *waiting*. Have students use both words in a sentence.
- Explain or review that a suffix is a syllable, or group of letters, added to the end of a word to alter or change its meaning or its verb tense. An example of a suffix is *-ing*.
- Write the words *play*, *jump*, and *kick* on the board. Have volunteers add the *-ing* suffix to each word (*playing*, *jumping*, *kicking*). Discuss how, when the suffix is added, it changes the verb tense of the words. The words describe an action that is happening right now, or in the present tense.
- Have students turn to page 5, and read the third sentence aloud. Point out the phrase *firefighting shift*. Write the word *firefighting* on the board, and circle the word *fight*. Discuss with students how adding the suffix *-ing* changed the word to an adjective by its use with the noun *shift* (*firefighting shift*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have student pairs search for other words with the *-ing* suffix throughout the book. Have them take turns explaining what the root word is, and if it changed the tense of the verb, or changed the word to an adjective.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [suffix -ing worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers aloud after they are finished.

## 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 students demonstrate how a reader asks questions, then reflects on the answers while reading.

## Extend the Reading

### Informational Writing and Art Connection

Provide print and Internet resources for students to further research the role of firefighters and the career of firefighting. Citing information from their research and the book, have them create a brochure with at least three sections, such as education or training needed, daily routines, types of "calls," and so on. Encourage them to add illustrations or photographs to their brochure. Require an error-free final copy.

Visit [WritingA-Z.com](http://WritingA-Z.com) for a lesson and leveled materials on informational writing.

### Social Studies Connection

Invite the local fire department to come and present to the class on various topics such as fire safety or firefighting as a career (most local fire departments have available presentations or curriculum). If possible, arrange a field trip to the local fire department, and compare your experience to Tillie's.

### 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:

- consistently use the strategy of asking and answering questions to comprehend the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately understand and identify sequences of events in the text, during discussion, and on a worksheet
- accurately identify long /e/ vowel digraphs ea and ee in the text and during discussion
- correctly identify contractions and the words they represent in the text, during discussion, and on a worksheet
- accurately identify and understand the use of the suffix *-ing* in the text, during discussion, and on a worksheet

### Comprehension Checks

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