

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,084

Book Summary

Mesa Verde National Park is located where the states of Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico meet. *Ancient Cliff Dwellers* tells about the people who have lived in this area from prehistoric times to the present. It traces the history of the Paleo-Indians, Ancient Puebloans, and their modern-day descendants to tell how their way of life has changed over time.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of asking and answering questions to understand informational text
- Identify main ideas and details in informational text
- Recognize and form plural nouns
- Recognize and use content vocabulary

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Ancient Cliff Dwellers* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- KWL, main idea and details, content vocabulary 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

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

- Content words:
 Story critical: **adapt** (v.), **adobe** (n.), **ancestors** (n.), **artifacts** (n.), **prehistoric** (adj.), **pueblo** (n.)
 Enrichment: **archaeologists** (n.), **arid** (adj.), **kiva** (n.), **petroglyphs** (n.), **pictographs** (n.), **pit house** (n.), **sipapu** (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Have students tell what they know about archaeology and ancient cliff dwellers. Create a KWL chart on the board and fill in the first column (K) with things students know about the topic. Give students the [KWL worksheet](#) to fill in as you discuss what they already know about the topic.
- As a group, brainstorm some things students would like to know about the topic and have students fill in the second column (W) of their worksheets. Record shared ideas on the class chart by way of example.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students a copy of the book and have them preview the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers and offer ideas as to what kind of book this is and what it might be about. Model how to ask questions as you preview the book.
- Show students the title page, photos, maps, time line, glossary, and index.
- Have students turn to the index. Explain that the alphabetized list and page numbers tell where they can find information about topics in the book.

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

- Direct students to the table of contents. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. After reviewing the section titles, model using them as a way to think of questions. Then ask students to share questions they have about ancient cliff dwellers, based on the covers and table of contents. Record your and students' questions in the second column of the KWL chart. Remind students to write their questions on their worksheet.
- Model asking questions.
Think-aloud: I can use the section titles to think of questions I'd like to have answered about ancient cliff dwellers. For example, the third section is titled Paleo-Indians. This makes me wonder if these people lived in the cliffs. I think this is a good question. I'll write it on the chart. I'd also like to know where these cliffs were located. I'll write that question on the chart, too.
- Encourage students to use the photos, glossary, and everything else that has been previewed to help them think of questions to add to their KWL charts.
- Tell students that they might use the index to find the answers to some of their questions. For example, tell them if one of their questions is about the tools these ancient people used, they can find information about them in the index. Have students tell the page numbers where they would go to find out about tools.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work 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 base words, prefixes, and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Have students find the bold word *petroglyphs* on page 5. Tell students that they can look at the letter the word begins with and what they know about syllables and vowels (one vowel sound per syllable) to sound out the rest of the word. Tell students to first look for a clue to the word's meaning in the sentence.
- Model how they can use the glossary or a dictionary to find the word's meaning. Have a volunteer read the definition for *petroglyphs* in the glossary. Have students follow along on page 5 as you read the sentence in which the word *petroglyphs* is found to confirm the meaning of the word.
- Preview other vocabulary, such as *archaeologists*, *artifacts*, and *prehistoric* in a similar fashion before students begin reading.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find factual answers to their questions about ancient cliff dwellers.

During Reading

Student Reading



Guide the reading: Have students read to the end of page 13. Tell them to look for facts about ancient cliff dwellers that will answer their questions. Have them underline important words or phrases in the book. If they finish before everyone else, they should go back and reread.

- When they have finished reading, have students tell what each section is about and the interesting facts they found. Circle any questions on the KWL chart that were answered and add any new questions students have. Model answering a question on the KWL chart and writing it in the final column (L).
- **Think-aloud:** *I wanted to know where the Paleo-Indians lived. I found out that during the Ice Age, their ancestors crossed a land bridge from northern Russia to get to North America. Hundreds of years later, they traveled to the Four Corners area, which now consists of Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico. I also found out that the Paleo-Indians were hunters and gatherers. I'd like to learn more about that. What questions did you find answers to?*
- Have students tell questions they found the answers to while reading. Record their responses on the KWL chart on the board, and instruct them to fill in the last column of their own KWL charts.
- ✍️ Tell students to read the remainder of the story. Remind them to look for answers to the other questions on their KWL charts and to think of other questions to add to it as they read. Tell them to write down any questions they have in the page margins of their book and to underline any information that answers a question on the KWL chart.
- ✍️ 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 what other questions they came up with for their KWL chart as they finished reading and ask them what questions they answered. Discuss how keeping their questions in mind helps them stay involved in the reading process and helps them understand and remember what they have read.
- **Think-aloud:** *I wanted to know more about the hunting and gathering that the Paleo-Indians did. I read in the book that the men used large spears to hunt huge animals. I can write the answer on my chart. There are other questions I have that the book didn't answer. I'm going to have to look other places, such as the Internet or an encyclopedia, to find those answers.*

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Main ideas and details**


- **Discussion:** Ask students what they thought of the ancient cliff dwellers described in the book. What detail about each group did they think was the most interesting? Ask students what they admired about the different ancient peoples.
- **Introduce and model:** Review or explain that many books are about one thing. Tell students that it is easy to tell what a book like this one is about because the topic, or main idea, is the title of the book. Direct students to the table of contents. Explain that each section in this informational book contains details about ancient cliff dwellers. Have students look at the fifth section title. Explain that the main idea of this section is Ancient Pueblos. The section provides details about their lives, such as how they built the cliff dwellings and why they left. Explain that finding details and checking to see if they've been able to answer a question they've asked, or ask a new question about what they've read, helps them understand and remember what the book is about.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students look at the sixth section title. Ask who the section is about. Have students look at the KWL chart to find questions that might be answered by the details in the section.
- **Independent practice:** Give students the [main-idea-and-details worksheet](#). Discuss their responses.

- **Extend the discussion:** Ask students if they would like to visit Mesa Verde National Park and what they would expect to see there.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Plural nouns

- Review or explain that a singular noun names one person, place, or thing. Write each of the following words on the board and ask students to provide the plural forms: *basket*, *American*, *brush*, *glass*. Have volunteers explain why the plural forms of the first two words are formed by adding -s, and the plural forms of the second two words are formed by adding -es. (Add -es to nouns that end in *s*, *ch*, *sh*, *x*, or *z*.)
- Write the noun below on the board. Tell students that the plural of this noun is formed by changing the *y* to an *i* and adding -es.
enemy *enemi + es = enemies*
- Write the following nouns on the board: *lady*, *berry*, *supply*. Have a volunteer come to the board and show how each word is changed to a plural using the format written above. Remind students that if they are unsure about how to form the plural of a noun, they can look in the dictionary.

 **Check for understanding:** Direct students to page 5 and have them identify the plural nouns. Tell them to circle the plurals formed by adding -s (*corners*, *records*, *remains*, *mountains*, and so on) and to underline the plurals formed by adding -es (*mummies*). Check their responses.

Word Work: Content vocabulary

- Tell students that many of the words in the book are used to tell about things archaeologists and historians have learned about the cliff dwellers. Provide opportunities for students to talk about difficult words, such as *pueblo* and *sipapu*.
- **Check for understanding:** Provide opportunities for students to say the new vocabulary words from the book and to use the words in sentences.
- **Independent practice:** Give students the [content vocabulary worksheet](#). Each worksheet gives students the opportunity to work with two vocabulary words. Supply multiple copies for students to continue working on more words if they have time.

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.

Extend the Reading

Writing Connection

Have students research national parks anywhere in the world and select one to write a brief report about. Tell them to present the information in the same format as the book, giving both its history and modern-day attractions. Bind in a book titled "National Parks" and display on the classroom bookshelf for everyone to read.

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

Social Studies Connection

Discuss the need for the Archaic People to adapt to the many changes in their lives, such as extinction of certain animals and the increasingly dry land. Talk about the changes in their tools, crops, and hunting techniques over time.

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:

- use the strategy of asking and answering questions to understand informational text
- identify main ideas and details in the book
- recognize plural nouns formed by adding -s and -es
- understand and use content vocabulary

Comprehension Checks

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