

Focus Question:

What happens to our bodies when we sneeze?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

The Reason for Sneezing explains how this common reaction to dust or sickness occurs in our bodies. The rhyming text and whimsical illustrations will engage students as they think about the interesting process of sneezing. This book can also be used to teach students to visualize to understand text and to sequence events.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Visualize to understand text
- ☐ Sequence events
- ☐ Describe information provided by labels
- ☐ Discriminate initial consonant *sn*-blends
- ☐ Identify initial consonant *sn*-blends
- ☐ Recognize and use exclamatory sentences
- ☐ Identify and use the high-frequency word *out*

Materials

- ☐ Book: *The Reason for Sneezing* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Sequence events, initial consonant *sn*-blends, exclamatory sentences 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:** *get, out, way*
- **Words to Know**
Story critical: *contract* (v.), *defense* (n.), *diaphragm* (n.), *lungs* (n.), *rejects* (v.), *sneezing* (v.)
- **Academic vocabulary:** *because* (conj.), *information* (n.), *reason* (n.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students whether or not they have ever sneezed before. Ask students to share with a partner what kinds of things cause them to sneeze and what happens to their body when they sneeze. Have volunteers share their answers with the class. Make a list on the board.
- Invite students to draw a picture of sneezing, including the reason for sneezing and what their body looks like when they sneeze. Have volunteers share their drawings and ideas with the whole class.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *The Reason for Sneezing*. 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: Visualize

Explain to students that engaged readers visualize, or create pictures in their mind, as they read. Explain that readers make visual images using information from the text and what they already know about the subject. Point out that the pictures in a book can also provide information to add to visualizations. Have students close their eyes as you read page 3 aloud. Ask students to draw a representation of what they visualized. Invite volunteers to share their visualization with the rest of the class, and discuss how their pictures compare to the picture in the book.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Sequence events

- Explain to students that some books organize the details in a certain order so the information makes sense to the readers. Explain that a sequence of events is a series of events or details arranged in a certain order. Point out that authors often use transition words to clarify the sequence of events.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Write the words *first*, *next*, *then*, and *finally* on the board.

- Model sequencing the steps in a familiar process, such as brushing teeth. Ask students to think about brushing their teeth. Have them describe the process to a partner, focusing on the correct order of events. Invite volunteers to share their sequence of events with the rest of the class. Encourage students to use transition words as they describe the order of events.

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 sneezing. 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.

- *What usually causes someone to sneeze?* (level 1) page 3
- *What body parts are involved in a sneeze?* (level 2) pages 5–7
- *How powerful is a sneeze?* (level 1) page 8
- *How does a sneeze protect us when we are sick?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *Why did the author write this book about sneezing?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Labels

Explain that labels clarify pictures, or illustrations, by identifying specific parts of the illustration. Have students work with a partner to review the illustrations and labels on pages 5 and 6. Ask students: *How do the labels in the picture support the sequence of events in this section? How do labels*

clarify visual information? How do labels help you understand the information presented in the text? Have students review other pictures in the book and discuss in groups where they would add labels and why. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you create visual images as you read, and direct them to stop at several points during reading to draw a representation of what they visualize. Invite volunteers to share their pictures with the rest of the class. Discuss with students how their pictures compare with the pictures in the book.
- Have students work in groups to periodically review the sequence of events and discuss why the order of events is important in describing the process of sneezing. Have groups use the illustrations cut from an extra copy of the book to arrange the events in the correct order.
- Model sequencing events.
Think-aloud: The author of this book organized the details in a certain sequence so the reader would understand the steps involved in sneezing. I read that first dust causes the nose to tickle, and then the body sends a message from the lungs to the brain. When I read these steps, I understood that the tickling in the nose triggers the body to send the message from the lungs to the brain. This is the beginning of a sneeze. Sneezing usually happens so quickly that it is hard to think about the many steps involved.
- Model how to complete the [sequence events worksheet](#). Have students use the pictures from the book to write the sequence of events from the book in order. Encourage them to use transition words.

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: Sequence events

Review the sequence of events worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the events they included. Have students retell the sequence of events to a partner if time allows.

Comprehension Extension

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided for extension activities.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Students' responses should include the following steps: *Your nose gets a tickle, and information is sent from the lungs to the brain to take in air. Many muscles contract including the diaphragm and muscles in the belly and chest. Your eyes shut, and your tongue goes to the roof of the mouth. The breath is forced out of your nose at one hundred miles per hour.*)

Comprehension Checks

- Book quiz
- Retelling rubric

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness:

Initial consonant sn-blends

- Say the word *sneeze* aloud to students, emphasizing the initial /sn/ sound. Have students say the word aloud and then say the /sn/ sound. Have students practice saying the /sn/ sound to a partner.
- Say the words *sake* and *snake* aloud. Have students discuss with a partner the difference between the two words. Point out that the words have different beginning sounds.
- Have students work in groups to generate words that begin with the /sn/ sound. Have students share some of the words generated with the whole group.
- **Check for understanding:** Say the following words one at a time, and have students clap their hands when they hear a word that begins with the sn-blend: *snare, chest, sneak, dust, snow, snoop, sick, sniff, and snap*.

Phonics: Initial consonant sn-blends

- Write the word *sneeze* on the board and read it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /sn/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word *sneeze* as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letters represent the /sn/ sound in the word *sneeze*.
- Say the words *sake* and *snake* aloud, emphasizing the initial sounds, and have students write the words on a separate sheet of paper. Have students compare their words with a partner's. Reinforce with students the difference in sound between the initial consonant /s/ sound and the initial consonant sn-blend.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board, leaving off the initial consonant blend: *snowman, snap, snore, and snack*. Invite a volunteer to come to the board and add the initial consonant blend.

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

Grammar and Mechanics:

Exclamatory sentences

- Write the following sentence on the board and read it aloud with students: *A sneeze is very powerful!* Explain to students that every sentence has a signal at the end to show the reader where to stop reading. Ask students to point to the signal at the end of this sentence and explain that it is an exclamation mark. Have students trace an exclamation mark on the top of their desk.
- Explain to students that sentences ending in exclamation marks are called *exclamatory sentences*, which show strong emotions, such as surprise and excitement, or a warning. Ask students to discuss with a partner what feeling the sentence on the board is expressing (surprise).
- Model how to read an exclamatory sentence: first read the sentence in a normal tone of voice, and then read it with feeling. Have students practice reading the sentence on the board with appropriate expression.
- **Check for understanding:** Write several sentences on the board, including exclamatory and declarative sentences. Read the sentences aloud with students. Have them work in groups to decide whether to use a period or exclamation mark at the end of each sentence. Invite volunteers to come to the board and add the correct punctuation mark. Then, have students practice reading the exclamatory sentences aloud to a partner.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [exclamatory sentences worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: High-frequency word out

- Write the word *out* on the board and read it aloud with students. Explain to students that they will often see this word in books they read, and they should memorize it so they can decode it right away.
- Spell the word aloud while students write each letter on top of their desk.
- Write the following sentence on the board: *The breath comes out of your nose*. Read it aloud with students and discuss with them the meaning of the word *out*.
- Have students practice spelling *out* with magnetic letters.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work in pairs to create oral sentences using the word *out*. Call on students to share a sentence with the rest of the class, and ask other students to give a thumbs-up signal if they used the word *out* correctly.

Connections

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