

Focus Question:

Who was Abigail Adams, and why was she important?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Biography

Abigail Adams introduces readers to the second First Lady of the United States. Students will learn about Abigail's ideas and how she helped shape the future of America. The simple text and interesting pictures will keep students engaged while supporting emergent readers. This book can also be used to teach students the skill of sequencing events as well as asking and answering questions to better understand text.

The book and lesson are also available for levels K and N.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to understand text
- ☐ Sequence events from a text
- ☐ Use captions to understand text
- ☐ Segment syllables
- ☐ Identify consonant *sh* digraph
- ☐ Recognize and use proper nouns that name people
- ☐ Place words in alphabetical order

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Abigail Adams* (copy for each student)
- ☐ KWLS / ask and answer questions, proper nouns, alphabetical order 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. (*) word appears in the lesson but not the book

- **High-frequency words:** *away, many, was*
- **Words to Know**
Story critical: *colonies (n.), First Lady (n.), Great Britain (n.), shape (v.), vice president (n.), war (n.)*
- **Academic vocabulary:** *became (v.), event (n.)*, sequence (v.)**

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Place a picture of George and Martha Washington on the board? Ask students to turn to a partner and discuss what they know about the Washingtons. Invite volunteers to share their ideas with the class.
- Next, place a picture of John and Abigail Adams on the board. Repeat the same process. Students will most likely not have as many facts to share about the Adamses, but explain that they will learn about Abigail Adams in this lesson.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Abigail Adams*. 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. Pass out the [KWLS / ask-and-answer-questions worksheet](#) and explain what each section on the KWLS chart stands for. Have students think about Abigail Adams and fill out the "What I Know" section on their worksheet. Then, have students think about what questions they have about her and fill out the "What I Want to Know" section on their worksheet. Explain that students will look for the answers to these questions while reading in order to better understand the text.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Sequence events

- Explain to students that a story is a series of events that happen in a particular order. First one thing happens, then something else, and so on. The way the events happen is called the sequence.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

- Remind students that readers organize information from a story in different ways. Point out that one way to organize the information is to focus on the correct sequence of events. Have students share with a partner why they predict the sequence of events will be important when reading a biography of someone's life.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about Abigail Adams. 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.

- *How did Abigail learn to read and write?*
(level 1) page 5
- *Why was John often away from home?*
(level 2) pages 7–9
- *Why did Abigail write letters to John?*
(level 1) page 11
- *Why do you think Abigail told people her ideas, even though they didn't want to hear them?*
(level 3) page 14
- *What examples from the book show that Abigail was a strong and independent woman?*
(level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Captions

Explain that captions are helpful when reading because they clarify pictures and provide the reader with more detailed information. Have students turn to the last picture in the book and cover the caption. Have students guess what the picture is showing.

Then, have students uncover the caption and read about the picture. Repeat with multiple pictures from the text. Explain that reading captions is an important part of understanding the text, and all captions should be read to give students a better understanding of the text.

Skill Review

- Review with students the questions from the "What I Want to Know" section of their KWLS chart. If any questions have been answered, have students write the answers in the "What I Learned" section. Periodically review this chart while students are reading.
- Have students work in groups to review the sequence of events from this story.
- Model sequencing events from a story.
Think-aloud: I know that sequencing events from a biography is important because it tells the events from someone's life in chronological order. This book starts out by telling the reader when Abigail was born and what she was like as a child. Then, it tells about Abigail marrying John Adams, and continues telling events from Abigail's life in the correct order. I will continue reading to see what happens as Abigail gets older.
- Have students stop periodically to review the sequence of events of Abigail's life and share them with the class.

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

Have students answer all of the questions from their KWLS chart in the "What I Learned" section. If any questions remained unanswered, have students circle them. Have students brainstorm a list of new questions they have based on the book and list them in the "What I Still Want to Know" section. Encourage students to investigate the answers to these questions to continue learning about this topic.

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. Students should include that Abigail Adams was married to John Adams, was the second First Lady of the United States, and worked hard to share her ideas in order to make the United States a better place.)

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Comprehension Checks

- Book quiz
- Retelling rubric

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Segment syllables

- Explain to students that every word contains one or more parts. These parts are called *syllables*.
- Say the word *Abigail*. Clap at each syllable: *Ab-i-gail*. Explain to students that you clapped three times because there are three parts, or syllables, in this word. Read the following words and have volunteers clap the number of syllables: *Adams, president, America*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work together to count the number of syllables in various words in the book. Give students a number of syllables, such as two, and have them search for words with two syllables. Repeat with another number of syllables.

Phonics: Consonant digraph sh

- Write the word *shape* on the board and read it aloud to students. Ask what sound they hear at the beginning of the word *shape* and what letters make this sound. Underline the consonant *sh* digraph.
- Explain that the letters *Ss* and *Hh* together make the /sh/ sound. Write the following words on the board, leaving out the consonant *sh* digraph: *shoe, shout, wish, flash, shirt, show*. Invite volunteers to the board to add the consonant *sh* digraph and read each word aloud as a class.
- **Check for understanding:** Review page 4 with students and have them circle all of the words containing the consonant *sh* digraph. Invite volunteers to share their findings with the class.
- **Independent practice:** Have students review pages 5 through 15 in small groups and circle all of the words containing the consonant *sh* digraph. Invite volunteers to share their findings with the class.

Grammar and Mechanics:

Proper nouns: Names of people

- Review or explain to students that words used to tell the names of specific people, places, or things are called *proper nouns*. Explain that these words begin with a capital letter.
- Write the names of five students on the board, using lowercase letters only. Ask for volunteers to explain why the names are written incorrectly, and invite students to come to the board and correct the mistakes.

- Place students into small groups. Give each group a list of ten words, each written on a note card or strip of paper, that all begin with lowercase letters (five should be proper nouns that name people, such as *Jill* or *Sam*, and five should be common nouns that name people, such as *girl* or *man*). Have students sort the words into common nouns and proper nouns first, and then rewrite the proper nouns correctly. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Write five common and proper nouns on the board, using all lowercase letters. Have students write the proper nouns correctly on a separate piece of paper.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [proper-nouns worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Alphabetical order

- Review or explain the process of putting a list of words in alphabetical order.
- Write the words *colonies, shape, and war* on separate pieces of paper and display them on the board. Discuss how to put these words in alphabetical order, reminding students to look at the first letter in each word. Have a volunteer move the words into the correct order.
- Put students into small groups, and give each group the following six words: *charge, fight, wife, leader, ruler, and grow*. Have students work together to put these words in alphabetical order. Invite volunteers from each group to share their answers.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the words *president, America, idea, letters, and help* on the board. Have students write the words in alphabetical order on a separate sheet of paper and share their answers with a partner.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [alphabetical-order worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

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