What Am I?

Written by Fiona Bayrock

Illustrated by Réjean Roy
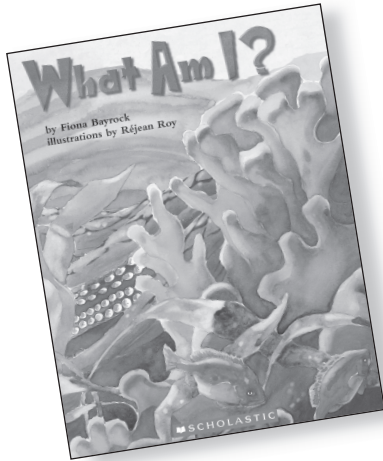
Text Type: Non-fiction: Description — Riddle

Summary: An octopus is hidden in illustrations depicting ocean life. The text uses a question-and-answer format to help students figure out the identity of the octopus.

Audio Available Online
www.lpey.ca

Text Features

Visual Literacy

▶ flaps revealing print and illustrations

Print Concepts

▶ exclamation mark
▶ question marks
▶ sentences arranged over one to two lines

First Reading

Reading Strategies

Comprehension

▶ predicting
▶ making connections: text to world

Working with Words

▶ attending to print (tracking across lines)
▶ language predictability: associating meanings to words (vocabulary)

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

▶ attend to print
▶ join in with repeated phrases
▶ use background knowledge to make predictions
▶ make connections between information in text and own knowledge of the world

🐝 BEFORE READING

Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

Text features/ print concepts

Read the title and the names of the author and illustrator. *The author's name is Fiona Bayrock and the illustrator's name is Réjean Roy. The title of this book is a question,* What Am I? *What mark shows us it is a question? Let's see if we can answer the question.*

> **ESL Note:** Play several games of "Who Am I?" in the days prior to reading this book to acquaint students with the concept of accumulating clues to guess an object. Students may also want to try their hand at being the one to lead the game.

Predicting

Point out the picture on the back cover and read the caption. Invite students to guess the identity of the hidden creature. Encourage students to use the cover illustration and their knowledge of the ocean to inform their predictions. Ask students to share their predictions with a partner.

> **ESL Note:** Be sure to point out objects on the front and back cover as students name them.

Setting a Purpose

Predicting

Let's read the book to find out if were right about the answer to the question.

🐝 DURING READING

Tracking print

Track print as you read the book. (Pages vary from one line of print to five lines of print. Emphasize movement to new lines, as well as the flow of sentences across two lines of print.)

Building confidence

Invite students to join in as you read, especially on the repeated phrase, *"What am I?"*

Predicting

Each page contains an additional clue. Pause after reading the first page and ask students if their prediction could still be true. *This page tells us the creature is not a fish. Who has a prediction that could still be true?* Invite students to share their predictions and record them on a chart.

As new information is read, check students' predictions and eliminate those that could no longer be true.

Predicting/visual literacy

Note the flaps on pages 6 and 9. The identity of the creature is revealed under the flap on page 9. Before revealing the answer to the riddle, invite students to add any new predictions to the chart. Encourage use of background knowledge and textual information with prompts such as, *You are doing a good job thinking about the information. Do the illustrations help you think about ocean creatures you know?* Read the information under the flap and revise or confirm students' predictions.

Making connections: text to world

Remind students to use information in the text as well as what they know about ocean creatures. Invite students to answer the final question in the text, *Can you see me?* Ask students why the octopus might want to hide. Use prompts such as, *What makes you think that? How did you know that?* to encourage students to explain their ideas. Model the process of making connections by thinking aloud, *It doesn't tell me in the book, but I can use what I know about animals to help me understand why the octopus wants to hide.*

Language predictability

Make sure students understand specialized vocabulary related to sea creatures (e.g., *fins, suckers*). Ask questions to explore meaning and use the illustrations to support students' understanding of these words.

Teaching Tip : Make available picture dictionaries of ocean dwellers to support comprehension.

Analyzing

After the identity of the octopus is revealed on page 9, continue reading to learn more about the octopus. Model reading for facts by occasionally using prompts such as, *I didn't know that! Did you know that?* Help students verify information by using the illustrations (e.g., locate the suckers on the arms, note differences in appearance between octopus swimming and octopus walking).

AFTER READING

Predicting

Revisit the title *What Am I?* and confirm with students that they found the answer to the question. *We had some different ideas when we first started reading. What helped you make your final prediction?* Share something that helped you (e.g., a clue or illustration). Ask students to think of a clue that helped them and have them share the clue with a partner.

Second Reading

Reading Strategies

Comprehension
- analyzing
- synthesizing

Working with Words
- attending to print (tracking across lines and down pages)
- recognizing question marks

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:
- join in on repeated and predictable phrases
- attend to print
- analyze to find facts
- synthesize
- locate question marks

BEFORE READING

Analyzing

Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

We know the answer to the question, "What Am I?" don't we? What do we know about the octopus now? Draw a quick sketch of the octopus and record students' ideas with key words. Label where appropriate (e.g., beak, suckers, arms).

Making connections: text to world

Students may contribute ideas that come from personal background knowledge, rather than the text. Praise their thinking about the topic and ask them how they learned the information. (You may wish to investigate the information further as an extension activity.)

Synthesizing

Setting a Purpose

Let's read the book again to see what other facts we can find out about the octopus. When we're done, I want you to think about the most important thing you learned.

DURING READING

Tracking print

Read the book, tracking print. Emphasize the repeated question, "What am I?" Draw students' attention to the individual words in the question. Invite students to join in the reading. The repeated words, "I have…" offer similar opportunities.

Analyzing

As you read each fact, ask students if they need to add anything to the chart to record their learning. Add additional information where necessary.

Language predictability

Invite students to frame the words *what, am*, and *I* when they appear in various locations in the text.

Teaching Tip : For framing words, students can use masks or their two index fingers.

Print concepts

Point out question marks when they appear in the text. Discuss how they indicate a question.

AFTER READING

Analyzing

Comment on the number of facts students learned. Say, *What other facts about the octopus did we find out?*

Evaluating

Talk about the difference between information books (non-fiction) and fiction books. *When we read a book like this, we're not reading a story about an octopus. We're learning information about an octopus.*

Synthesizing

Review the chart with students. Ask them to share the most important thing they learned with a partner.

Third Reading

Reading Strategies

Comprehension

▶ evaluating
▶ synthesizing

Working with Words

▶ attending to print (tracking across lines and down pages; tracking sentences across two lines)
▶ recognizing high-frequency words

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

▶ join in on repeated words and phrases
▶ track print
▶ evaluate: give opinions and understand difference between fiction and non-fiction
▶ synthesize
▶ locate high-frequency words

BEFORE READING

Synthesizing

Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

Review the chart containing facts about the octopus. Have students tell you all the things they have learned about the octopus.

Evaluating

Ask students how they think the author learned all the information to write this book. Record their ideas in a list. Ask, *Do you think everything in the book about the octopus is true? What makes you think that?*

Evaluating

Setting a Purpose

The author told us some interesting things about the octopus. Some things might be hard to believe! When we read today, think about what surprised you the most!

DURING READING

Tracking print/ building confidence

Read the text with students, inviting students to join in. Invite some students to track print with you.

Print concepts

Emphasize a few places in the text where the sentence goes across two lines. Also emphasize text that goes across five lines, on page 10. Identify the capital letter at the beginning of the sentence and the punctuation mark at the end.

High-frequency words

Pause occasionally at the high-frequency words (e.g., *I, can*) and invite students to frame the words.

AFTER READING

Evaluating

Say, *Were there things about the octopus that you found hard to believe? What were they? Why was that hard to believe?* Ask students to think about all the things they have learned about the octopus. Have them share with a partner the fact that surprised them the most.

🐝 FURTHER READINGS

Many texts benefit from being reread with students. The readings suggested in this plan can be expanded to include further readings. Participation will increase when a book becomes familiar, and students will become more comfortable taking turns and using a pointer to track print.

For each rereading, we recommend that you select a balance of Print Concepts, Focusing on Comprehension, and Working with Words strategies from the following suggestions. Make your selections based on the needs of students in your class.

Print Concepts, Book Handling, and Text Features

Text features

Review the title, author, illustrator, and back cover synopsis.

Tracking print

Continue to track print but offer individual students roles in print tracking during rereadings. Offer as much support as necessary, e.g., by guiding the pointer with students who need assistance.

Add concepts that offer learning opportunities for the range of students in the classroom, e.g., *Where do we start reading? Where do I go now?* Include the flaps on pages 6 and 9, as well as the arrangement of illustrations and text on page 11.

Print concepts

Review the question marks. Invite students to join in reading the repeated "What am I?" question using appropriate expression.

Focusing on Comprehension

Making connections: text to world

Ask if anyone has any questions about the octopus. Model the process with a think aloud such as, *We read about the octopus using a beak to eat. I'm wondering what food it eats, so that's my question: What does an octopus eat?* Record students' questions. Discuss how they might find the answers to the questions. Extend this activity by providing opportunities for further research (e.g., books, video, or "expert").

Making connections: comparing

Compare the octopus with other sea creatures. Model the process with prompts such as, *An octopus and a fish both live in the sea, but a fish has fins and an octopus has arms.*

Evaluating

Discuss with students how an information book is different from a fiction book. *If this were a story about an octopus, what might have happened in the book?*

Self-monitoring

Emphasize the strategy of self-monitoring, e.g., *Good readers ask themselves questions as they read.* Model self-questioning, e.g., *I wonder how the octopus's suckers help it catch food?*

Working with Words

Phonological and phonemic awareness

▸ Several pages offer opportunities to sort words by initial sounds. The most common include "f," "b," and "s" (pages 2–5—*fish, fins, feet, fingers, feel*; pages 6, 10—*beak, bird, bend, bones*; pages 10–11—*suckers, sometimes, swim, sea*). As you read these pages, ask students to listen for words with the target sound.

▸ Clap the syllables in *octopus*. Compare with the number of syllables in other words from the text. *Are there any other words with three syllables? Can we find any words with two syllables?*

Letter knowledge

Name the letters in *octopus*. Locate and frame each letter as it occurs in another place in the text.

High-frequency words

Frame a selection of high-frequency words (e.g., *a, can, in, I, no, the)* to introduce or review the words. (See list of high-frequency words recomended for kindergarten in the Working with Words Guide.)

RESOURCE LINKS

Writing

Invite students to illustrate one fact each about an octopus and compile the illustrations in a class book.

During Shared Writing, use the riddle pattern to create class riddles. These might be based on classmates or familiar objects, e.g., *I have brown hair and I like to wear a red hat. Who am I?* or *I ring when it is time to go home. What am I?* Reinforce the use of words encountered in the text by having students "share the pen" to record words such as *I, have, who, what, am.* See the Descriptive text-type study in the Writing Guide.

Use the repeated "I can" phrases from the text as a base for students' independent writing (e.g., *I can swim, I can walk, I can feel, I can taste).* Students can create their own "I can" phrases or extend those provided, e.g., *I can walk to school.*

Independent Reading

Make the six small versions of *What Am I?* and the online audio available for students. Invite students to use these materials to read the book independently.

Teaching Tip : The online audio for this book includes a cloze reading of the text. In this reading, selected words have been omitted. Students listening to the cloze reading have the opportunity to chime in with the missing words.

Gather a selection of books describing sea creatures for individual or partner reading.

Gather a selection of riddle books for individual or partner reading.

Place the texts created during Shared/Independent Writing based on *What Am I?* in the class library.

Working with Words

Once concepts have been introduced in context, see the focused lessons in the Working with Words Guide for more direct instruction for those students who need it.

Read Aloud

Read to the class other examples of riddles.