

# We Can Help



**Word Count: 16**

**High-Frequency Words:**

*are, can, help, to, want, we, you*

*Written by Kim Toffan*

*Illustrated by Steven Charles Manale*

**Text Type:** Fiction: Narrative — Comic

**Guided Reading Level:** C

**Summary:** A brother and sister, wearing Superhero cloaks, help family members overcome their difficulties.

## Text Supports

- ▶ illustrations support the text
- ▶ repeated language patterns (Are you ...? We can help.)

## Possible Text Challenges

- ▶ comic strip format
- ▶ speech balloons
- ▶ one speech balloon to indicate that two children are speaking at once
- ▶ illustration techniques indicate feelings (e.g., shooting lines indicate excitement, shaky lines indicate cold, radiating lines above baby's head indicate feeling upset, hearts indicate love)
- ▶ question marks, exclamation mark

## Reading Strategies

### Comprehension

- ▶ evaluating

### Working with Words

- ▶ using picture cues and initial letters to support word recognition
- ▶ identifying high-frequency words
- ▶ tracking print from left to right and top to bottom

## Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ form opinions and evaluate to gain meaning from the text
- ▶ navigate the comic format
- ▶ track print in speech bubbles
- ▶ use picture cues and initial letters to work out words
- ▶ identify high-frequency words

For Assessment Tools, see Monitoring Progress for Guided Reading in the Toolkit at [www.lpey.ca](http://www.lpey.ca) and in the Grade One Reading Guide.



# BEFORE READING

**Making connections**

## **Activating and Building Background Knowledge**

▶ Using your copy of the comic, look through the pages with the students and invite them to talk about any comics they may have seen or read.

*Let's look through this comic together. What do you notice? How is a comic different from a storybook? What's special about it?*

**Tracking print/making connections**

▶ Turn to the first page. Read the title out loud and use your finger to track print as you read.

*In this comic you're going to find out how two children help out at home. How do you help out at home? Share your ideas with a partner.*

### **ELL Note:**

Ask students to raise their hands if they help do chores at home: wash the dishes, set the table, feed the dog, tidy up toys and so on. Props such as cutlery or a dish towel can assist comprehension.

## **Discussing Supports and Challenges**

**Analyzing**

▶ Hand out copies of the comic to each student.

**Analyzing/infering**

▶ Ask students to closely examine the illustrations on the first page, paying focused attention to the small details of the pictures.

**Infering**

▶ Use prompts to discuss the comic's content, purpose, and features:

- In the first picture, do you see any clues that tell you these children want to help out around home? Why do you think that?

- In the second picture, what clues do you see about how Mom is feeling as she shovels the snow?

- How might the children help Mom feel better? What makes you think that?

*In the first two pictures you noticed the lines the illustrator had drawn to show how excited the children are feeling and how Mom is shivering in the cold air. Keep looking at the pictures for clues as you read the comic.*

**Making connections/synthesizing**

**Visual literacy**

▶ Point out that speech bubbles contain the dialogue in a comic.

*How do we know who's talking in each of these pictures? Yes, the children's words look as though they're coming out of their mouths in speaking balloons.*

**Text features**

▶ Reread the title, and ask students to identify where to start reading. After reading the first panel have students identify where to read next. Discuss how a comic is read from top to bottom on each page.

*Reading a comic isn't quite the same as reading a book. On the first page we see two parts ... one at the top, and one at the bottom. Point to where we start reading. Run your finger under the words and stop at the last word on this page.*

## Evaluating

### Setting a Purpose

- ▶ Focus the readers on the comprehension purpose.

*As you read the comic, think about whether the children are doing a good job of helping. Remember to look at the pictures as well as the speech balloons.*

**Teaching Tip:** You may decide to change the comprehension focus for this text. For information on how to modify a Guided Reading Lesson to match a new comprehension strategy, see the Guided Reading Teaching Plan Outline in the Toolkit at [www.lpey.ca](http://www.lpey.ca).



## DURING READING

- ▶ Ask each student to read the text independently, keeping in mind the purpose for reading.

**ELL Note:** When reading with the ELLs, use facial expressions and gestures to communicate the meaning of words like sad, hungry, cold, and tired. Use such words when prompting ELLs so they gain more exposure to these words. For example, “Is Mom cold?” “Is the dog hungry?” The ELLs answer, “Yes, Mom is cold.”

## Analyzing/infering

## Evaluating

## Self-monitoring

## Predicting

- ▶ Observe and listen to students as they read quietly, and assist them with navigating the comic’s features, word solving, vocabulary, and punctuation. Respond to students’ comprehension and word recognition queries as needed, and offer prompts to help them problem solve. Possible prompts:
  - How did the children help their mother?
  - Why did the boy ask the dog “Are you hungry?”
  - Did that make sense? Reread that part and think what would make sense and sound right.
- ▶ If students finish early, ask them to reread independently or with a partner. Ask them to discuss what else the children could do to help their family.
- ▶ Note successful reading strategies and any remaining reading challenges.



## AFTER READING

## Evaluating

## Analyzing/evaluating

## Synthesizing

## Evaluating/making connections

## Making connections

## Predicting

- ▶ Revisit the purpose for reading: Did the children do a good job of helping?
- ▶ Extend comprehension by offering prompts to initiate group discussion:
  - Why do you think the children are wearing cloaks?
  - Check out the pictures at the bottom of page 2 and the top of page 3. Who do you think built the tower of blocks? Why do you think that?
  - Who is talking in the bottom picture on page 4? How do you know?
  - If there was another page in this comic, what do you think the two children might do to help out next?

*How did the children help? Did they do a good job? Why do you think so?*

## Analyzing/making connections



### Home Links

Provide students with a copy of the take-home text. See [www.lpey.ca](http://www.lpey.ca).

## Making connections/evaluating

## High-Frequency words/word solving and building

## Word solving and building

## Word solving and building

- ▶ Comment on any effective reading strategies you observed.

## Rereadings

- ▶ Provide opportunities for each student to reread the text independently or with a partner.

*Kyle did a great job noticing the clues in the last picture. Kyle said the children are smiling because the baby's feeling better. The hearts show how much the children love the baby. The exclamation mark shows how happy the children are.*

## Focused Follow-Up

The following activities are optional. Choose those that best meet your students' needs.

### **Create a Superhero Helper Comic**

- ▶ Ask students to create their own one page comic that shows them as Superheroes helping out at home. Offer to scribe if needed, and encourage students to read their comics to other group members on completion.

### **Tell an 'I Can Help at School' Story**

- ▶ Invite students to take turns telling a 'How I can help at school' story. Students may wish to act out their story using a hand puppet.

### **Dramatize an Action**

- ▶ Have students work in twos or threes to dramatize one of the action segments depicted in the comic, e.g., helping Mom to keep warm.

### **Word Building**

- ▶ Provide students with plastic or card letters and ask them to rebuild some of the high-frequency words from the comic. Ask them to use as many words (e.g., 'are,' 'help,' 'to,' 'want,' 'we,' 'you') as possible to build a sentence. For example, 'We want to help you.'
- ▶ Ask students to build words that rhyme with 'can' (e.g., 'Dan,' 'fan,' 'man,' 'Nan,' 'pan,' 'ran,' 'tan,' 'van').
- ▶ Invite students to choral read the comic, tapping once on their desk or table for each word they read.

# We Can Help



Written by Kim Toffan

Illustrated by Steven Charles Manale

**Text Type:** Fiction: Narrative — Comic

**Summary:** A brother and sister, wearing Superhero cloaks, help family members overcome their difficulties.

For more information on Small-Group Shared Reading, see the Toolkit at [www.lpey.ca](http://www.lpey.ca) and the Grade One Reading Guide.

## Text Features

### Visual Literacy

- ▶ illustrations are highly supportive of text
- ▶ illustration techniques indicate feelings (e.g., shooting lines indicate excitement, shaky lines indicate cold, radiating lines above baby's head indicate feeling upset, hearts indicate love)
- ▶ sequential illustrations
- ▶ speech balloon

### Print Concepts

- ▶ one line of text in each speech balloon
- ▶ repeated language patterns (Are you ...? We can help.)
- ▶ environmental print (dog food label)
- ▶ question marks
- ▶ exclamation mark

## First Reading

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ evaluating

#### Working with Words

- ▶ using picture cues and initial letters to support word recognition
- ▶ identifying high-frequency words
- ▶ recognizing the repeated language patterns

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ form opinions and evaluate to gain meaning from the text
- ▶ navigate the comic format
- ▶ track print
- ▶ recognize the predictable language patterns
- ▶ recognize high-frequency words
- ▶ use picture cues and initial letters to help recognize unfamiliar words

For Assessment Tools, see Monitoring Progress for Small-Group Shared Reading in the Toolkit at [www.lpey.ca](http://www.lpey.ca) and in the Grade One Reading Guide.



## BEFORE READING

Making connections

Tracking print/making connections

### Activating and Building Background Knowledge

- ▶ Using your copy of the comic, look through the pages with the students and invite them to talk about any comics they may have seen or read.
- ▶ Turn to the first page. Read the title out loud and use your finger to track the line of print as you read. Connect students with the topic by asking them how they might help their family members and pets.

*Let's look through this comic together. What do you notice? How is a comic different from a storybook? What's special about it?*

*You're going to be reading about two children who help out at home. Have you helped anyone at home? Tell us about it.*

### ELL Note:

Ask students to raise their hands if they help do any of the following chores at home: wash the dishes, set the table, feed the dog, tidy up toys, etc. Props such as cutlery or a dish towel can assist comprehension.

Evaluating

### Setting a Purpose

- ▶ Focus the readers on a comprehension purpose.

*Let's read this comic together to find out whether the children are doing a good job of helping.*



## DURING READING

Analyzing

Visual literacy/analyzing

Tracking print/analyzing

Making connections/evaluating

Analyzing/making connections

Analyzing/making connections

Inferring/predicting

- ▶ Hand out copies of the comic to each student.
  - Ask students to closely examine the illustrations on the first page, paying focused attention to the small details in the pictures.
- ▶ Use prompts to point out some of the special features of the comic as you read it together.
  - Let's look at the first frame. How do we know who is talking?
  - Where do we begin reading? Where do we read next?
  - In the first frame on page 3 why do you think Dad and the baby are looking happy?
  - What did you notice about the words the children use on the first three pages?
  - What looks different on this last page?
- ▶ Emphasize comprehension further by pausing to ask:
  - How did the children make their mom feel better? What clues did the illustrator give us?
  - Why did the children want to help their dad? How do you know?

*What clues do you see in the first picture that tell you these children want to help out around home? Why do you think that?*





## AFTER READING

### Evaluating

- ▶ Provide a prompt related to the purpose for reading.

*Did the children do a good job of helping? Why do you think so?*

### Inferring

- ▶ Expand the discussion. Possible prompts might include:
  - How is the dog feeling? How do you know?
  - How do you think the boy and girl are feeling? What makes you think that?

## Second and Further Readings

For rereading, give each student their own copy of the comic and choral read the text. Depending on the needs of your students, focus on a balance of the following three areas.

### Tracking print/print concepts

### Print Concepts, Print Tracking, and Media Text Awareness

- ▶ Continue to support the development of print concepts, tracking, and media text awareness by using your copy of the comic to demonstrate and to verbalize key ideas (e.g., tracking print from left to right and top to bottom on the page, identifying the speakers by looking at the speech balloons, noting the predictable language patterns, identifying environmental print, and pointing out the question and exclamation marks)

*Let's take a look at these words at the bottom of this picture. What do they say? What clues has the illustrator used to help us figure out those words?*

### Focusing on Comprehension

- ▶ Invite students to reread the comic with a focus on making connections.
- ▶ During reading, pause and offer prompts:
  - These children are wearing cloaks. Who do they remind you of? What makes you think that?
  - Have you ever cleared snow? What did you use? How did you feel?

*When we read together, think about what you would have done if you wanted to help out your family.*

**Teaching Tip:** You can change the comprehension focus each time you read to help students focus on different ideas. For example, to highlight Predicting, you may decide to ask, "If this story went on to another page, what else might the two children do to help out?" For more information, see the Small-Group Shared Reading Teaching Plan Outline at [www.lpey.ca](http://www.lpey.ca).

Word solving and building

Phonological and phonemic awareness



### Home Links

Provide students with a copy of the take-home text to read chorally with family members. See [www.lpey.ca](http://www.lpey.ca).

Analyzing/evaluating

High-Frequency words/word solving and building

## Working with Words

- ▶ Focus on word recognition by:
  - using picture clues and first and last letters to work out words that indicate feelings (e.g., 'cold,' 'tired,' 'hungry,' and 'sad')
  - taking a word like 'cold' and doing oral rhyming with it.

## Rereadings

- ▶ Provide opportunities for students who are sufficiently comfortable with the text to reread the comic with a partner. They can take turns finger tracking.

## Focused Follow-Up

The following activities are optional. Choose those that best meet your students' needs.

### *Dramatizing*

- ▶ Students can work in twos or threes to dramatize one of the action segments depicted in the comic, e.g., helping Mom to keep warm.

### *Drawing How 'I Can Help at School'*

- ▶ Students can draw a picture about how they can help at school and then share their ideas orally with a partner or a small group of classmates.

### *Creating a Superhero Helper Comic*

- ▶ Ask students to create their own one-page comic that shows them as Superheroes helping out when they're at home. Offer to scribe if needed and encourage students to read their comics to other group members on completion.

### *Word Building*

- ▶ Provide students with plastic or card letters and ask them to rebuild some of the high-frequency words from the comic. Ask them to use as many words (e.g., 'are,' 'help,' 'to,' 'want,' 'we,' 'you') as possible to build a sentence. For example, 'We want to help you.'