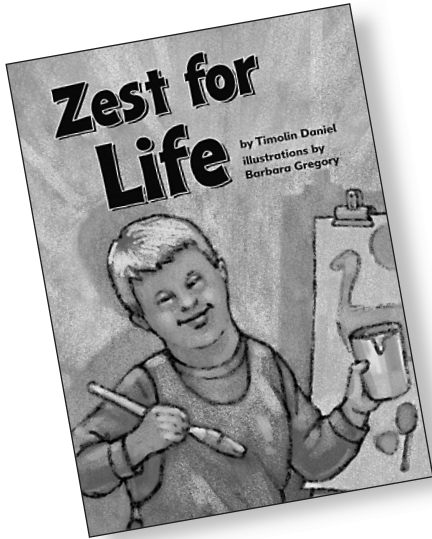


Zest for Life



Written by Timolin Daniel

Illustrated by Barbara Gregory

Text Type: Non-fiction: Retell — Personal Account

Guided Reading Level: J

Summary: The challenges of Down syndrome do not stop Michael from living a full and happy life. His enthusiasm and energy shine through as he tells the readers about his daily activities and his “Zest for Life.”

Word Count: 477

Text Features

- ▶ illustrations support text
- ▶ consistent placement of text

Text Supports

- ▶ illustrations support the text
- ▶ vocabulary close to students’ oral language

Possible Text Challenges

- ▶ some difficult vocabulary, e.g., *Down syndrome, exciting, exploring, instrument, challenge, zest*

Reading Strategies

Comprehension

- ▶ analyzing
- ▶ synthesizing

Working with Words

- ▶ integrating visual and meaning cues to unlock unfamiliar words
- ▶ using word parts to read unfamiliar words
- ▶ breaking words into syllables

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student’s ability to:

- ▶ analyze illustrations and story events
- ▶ synthesize story events for a fuller understanding
- ▶ make connections from the text to real-life situations
- ▶ use visual and meaning cues and word parts to read unfamiliar words

Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing the story before and after reading



BEFORE READING

Analyzing

Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

Look at the front and back covers of the book. Discuss with students what they think it means to have a “zest for life.” Prompt them by asking what the boy in the illustrations is doing. How do they think he feels? Use their responses to create a web on a piece of chart paper.

Show the back cover and read the summary of the story. What do students know about Down syndrome?

Teaching Tip: Information about Down syndrome can be found at the National Down Syndrome Congress (<https://www.ndsccenter.org/programs-resources/>).

ESL Note: Show students photos of people with different disabilities. Ask them what it would be like to live with these challenges and why. Then ask them if they personally knew someone in their country who had similar challenges, and if they would be willing to share their stories with the class.

Analyzing

Overcoming Text Challenges

Distribute copies of the book and say, *Let's look at a few pages together and see what we can find out about Michael.* Invite students to turn the pages slowly, looking at the pictures. Say, *What do you see Michael doing?* Refer to the web that shows students' ideas about what "zest for life" means. Ask, *Does Michael look as if he has a "zest for life"? How do we know?* Work through the book, adding ideas and discussing the pictures.

Word solving and building/ language predictability

Remind students to stop when they come to a word they don't know, and use one of the strategies they learned for unlocking unknown words. They can look for a little word inside a big word. Then ask, *What would make sense here?* Find the word *syndrome* on page 2 and ask students to tell you how they would work it out, if they didn't know this word. Point out that the letter "y" can sometimes sound like the letter "i." Discuss the meaning of *syndrome*.

Synthesizing

Setting a Purpose

Tell students that, as they read the story, they are to look for all the ways in which Michael shows his "zest for life." They will add their ideas to the web after finishing the book, so they need to be on the lookout for ideas.



DURING READING

Ask each student to read the book independently, thinking about the purpose for reading.

Observe and listen to students as they read the text, assisting them with word-solving strategies, vocabulary, punctuation, and comprehension queries. Note students' ability to decode unfamiliar words and any difficulties they encounter.

Take time to listen to one or two students read aloud. Notice their ability to read with fluency and expression. Encourage students who finish quickly to reread. They may start their own list of ideas to add to the web about Michael.



AFTER READING

Analyzing/synthesizing

Once all students have finished reading, remind them about the ideas recorded on the web. What have they discovered from reading? What new ideas can they now add about Michael's "zest for life?" Ask them to think about what Michael likes to do, what is fun for him, and what he enjoys most.

Making connections text to self

Ask, *How is Michael the same as all of us? How is his life different?* Ask students to discuss this question in pairs and then share their answers with the group.

Turn to page 8. Ask, *How does Michael feel? What can we do to make sure that someone like Michael will not be hurt by teasing?* Then ask, *What have we learned about Down syndrome? What have we learned that will help us be better friends to people who face challenges?*

Rereadings

Provide opportunities for each student to reread the book independently or with a partner.

Focused Follow-up

The follow-up activities are optional. Choose those that best meet the needs of your students.

Analyzing

Writing an Article

Write a persuasive article explaining to other students about Down syndrome. Convince them of the need to be a good friend to a person with special needs. Think of reasons why such people should be treated with respect and care. This could be formatted as a pamphlet helping others understand Down syndrome. Use the Internet to visit websites to discover more about Down syndrome.

Making connections: text to self

My Greatest Challenge

Hold a discussion with the whole class about the challenges people face. Perhaps it is being the youngest in the family, or having a physical challenge. Students should share what is hard for them and how it makes them feel. After the discussion, students could write an account of the challenges they face in life, entitled, "My Greatest Challenge."

Analyzing

Michael's Zest for Life

On one side of a T-chart, have students list the ways in which Michael shows his "zest for life." On the other side of the chart, list the ways in which Michael's life is challenged by Down syndrome.

Zest for Life

Name: _____



Michael's Zest for Life	Michael's Challenges