

# Joe's Big Surprise

Written by Joanne Stanbridge

Illustrated by Kirsti Anne Wakelin

**Text Type:** Non-fiction: Retell — Biography

**Guided Reading Level:** N

**Summary:** This is the story of Joseph Tyrrell, after whom the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology in Drumheller, Alberta is named. His curiosity about all things in the natural world and his sense of adventure led him to amazing discoveries during his 99-year life.

## Text Supports

- ▶ retelling is told in 3–5 sentences per page
- ▶ illustrations highly supportive of text
- ▶ summary on pages 23–24

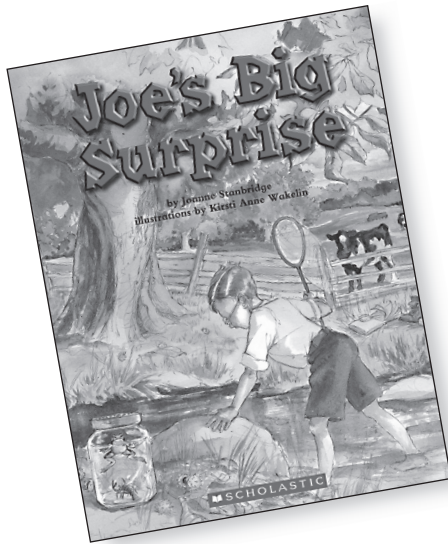
## Possible Text Challenges

- ▶ words with “-ed” endings
- ▶ use of ellipses
- ▶ content knowledge related to story's time frame
- ▶ difficult vocabulary, e.g., *university, laboratory, microscope, dresser, scientists, Ottawa, fossil, territory, coal, furnaces, Philadelphia*

## Text Features

### Visual Literacy

- ▶ illustrations with captions
- ▶ fossilization sequence of four pictures
- ▶ cut-outs throughout text



## First Session (pages 1-13)

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ predicting
- ▶ evaluating

#### Working with Words

- ▶ using multiple word-solving strategies to read and understand unfamiliar words
- ▶ using knowledge, past tense, and suffixes to solve unfamiliar words

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ make and confirm predictions
- ▶ evaluate the author's craft
- ▶ use multiple word-solving strategies to read and understand unfamiliar words
- ▶ use knowledge, past tense, and suffixes to solve unfamiliar words

### Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing and idea sharing



## BEFORE READING

### Making connections: text to self

#### **Activating and Building Prior Knowledge**

Say, *Think about the times you've written true stories about your life. Telling about your life is called an autobiography. Auto means self and biography means the written story of a person's life. What have you written in your autobiographies?* Chart features offered on a horizontal line (timeline) entitled "Autobiographies," for example:

#### **Autobiographies**



(This timeline will be used in session 2 for reference).

### Predicting

Tell students, *True stories about people are called biographies. Name a true story about someone that you have read or watched a show about.* Have a few biographies handy in case students can't recall any.

Before giving out *Joe's Big Surprise*, have an "I See or Read/This Means" chart ready to record predictions. To create this chart, fold chart paper into eight squares and hang vertically so the chart has two squares across and four squares down. Number the sections 1,2; 3,4; 5,6; 7,8. Paperclip page 13 to the back cover before handing the book out to students.

Hand out the books and say, *Biography writers work hard to get readers quickly interested in others' lives. Why?* (to persuade the reader to keep on reading!) *Let's see how quickly Joanne Stanbridge and Kirsti Anne Wakelin get us interested in this biography of someone named Joe Tyrrell.* Direct students to survey the cover. Ask, *What does the cover picture make you think of? Do you wonder what the boy is doing? Do you wonder what the "big surprise" will be? What have the author and illustrator done to "hook" us?* Establish that the title and picture pique readers' curiosity so they want to find out immediately what the big surprise is. Ask students to predict what the big surprise is, based on what they see or read on the cover. Record a few predictions on the "I See or Read/This Means" chart, for example:

I See or Read	This Means
1. Joe is in a pond with a net.	1. The surprise is catching a fish.
2. The boy lives by a farm.	2. The surprise will be about an animal.

### Self-monitoring

Read the back cover blurb out loud. Ask students to predict, based on what they read or see on the back cover. Ask if any students would like to revise their predictions from the front cover. Add new predictions and revisions to the “I See or Read/This Means” chart.

#### **Overcoming Text Challenges**

Refer students to page 3. Say, *The author used an interesting kind of punctuation to make us read in a special way on pages 3 and 4.* Find the ellipses (...) after Tyrrell on page 3 and at the beginning of page 4. Read the sentence out loud. Ask, *How does the author expect us to read these sentences?* Establish that the author uses these to slow the reader down and build suspense. Say, *When you read today, watch out for more ellipses. Let’s add ellipses to our chart of author techniques that make us sit up and pay attention.*

### Predicting

Hand out a letter-sized paper to each student. Demonstrate how to fold it into six sections and number it just like the one used in Before Reading. Have students read to the end of page 3 silently and then together, jot down what they “See/Read” in square 1, and then what “This Means” in square 2. If you think students require more practice, continue to work together predicting until they are ready to read alone. You may also want to use the think-aloud strategy to model “What I See or Read/This Means,” if students need more support.

### Predicting

#### **Setting a Purpose**

Say, *Read Joe’s Big Surprise up to page 13 to see if you can find any more clues about what Joe’s surprise is going to be. Pause three or four times to use the “I See or Read/This Means” strategy. Jot down new predictions on your paper or add to your old predictions as you read along.*



## DURING READING

Tell each student to read independently to the end of page 13.

Observe and listen to students as they read, assisting them with word-solving strategies and vocabulary queries. Offer prompts to help students problem-solve as they read. For example, *Can you cover up the ending, or suffix, of the word to find the base word? Do you recognize a part of that word from science words? Did you try scanning the illustrations for clues?*

Note students’ successful use of reading strategies and any difficulties they encounter. Remind students to stop and make a prediction on their papers every few pages.

If students finish before others have completed the reading, have them compare and discuss their predictions.



## AFTER READING

### Predicting

When all students have finished reading, consolidate their final predictions on the “I See or Read/This Means” chart started in the Before Reading activity. Ensure that students give the “I See or Read” evidence for their predictions

and not just the predictions in order to explain how they came up with logical guesses. This thinking is important for other students to hear and see.

### Evaluating

Remind students that a biographer's job is to interest and intrigue readers with the subject's story so that readers want to continue reading. Ask students to browse through the first 13 pages of the book and tell how the author and illustrator made them pay attention. Some techniques and elements may be: title and cover illustration; suspense built through the first 13 pages; repeated sentence—*Far away, the big thing waited*; lots of animals; cut-outs on many pages; diagrams with captions (take a moment to read the captions together and talk about when readers should read captions—before or after the text of the story [either way is fine]); etc. Chart the author's and illustrator's techniques offered by students.

### Word solving and building

Select a couple of the challenging words you noticed during the reading—*university, laboratory, microscope, dresser, scientists, Ottawa, fossil, territory, coal, furnaces*—or any other challenging words. Ask students what strategies they used to work these out, referring to the text if the strategy involved visual cues.

### Self-monitoring

Emphasize using multiple-reading strategies to solve unknown words, for example, *I noticed Chris using the strategy of covering up the “-ed” suffix of words like piled on page 8 that he was having trouble reading. Chris, please show the group how you did this and think aloud how it helped you solve the word*

## Second Session (pages 14-24)

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ sequencing
- ▶ synthesizing

#### Working with Words

- ▶ using multiple word-solving strategies to read and understand unfamiliar words
- ▶ using knowledge, past tense, and suffixes to solve unfamiliar words

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ retell in sequence
- ▶ synthesize by connecting facts, events, and ideas
- ▶ use multiple word-solving strategies to read and understand unfamiliar words
- ▶ use knowledge, past tense, and suffixes to solve unfamiliar words

### Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing appropriate events for timeline inclusion



## BEFORE READING

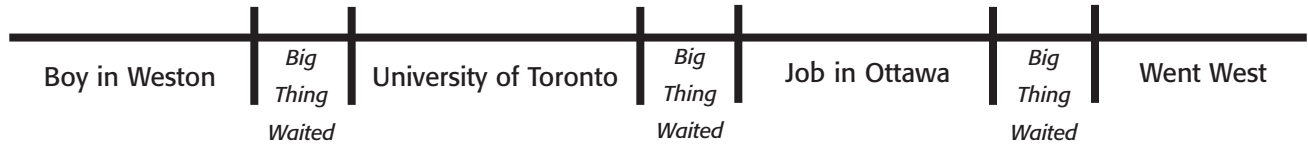
### Making connections: text to self

#### Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

Tell students, *In the last session, you read and predicted what was waiting for Joe. Today we will be reading to find out if your predictions were close. Before we begin, there's something else you need to know about biographies.* Refer students back to the timeline created in the last session that shows what they have written about themselves in autobiographies over the years. Tell students, *Like*

autobiographies, biographies are often told in order, beginning when the person was young until present time or when they died. We can take the important events in Joe's life and put them on a timeline, too. Give Joe's Big Surprise to students. Say, Let's make a timeline on Joe's life from when he was a boy until he was just about to find the big surprise. Lead students through the story, modelling and thinking aloud what to put on the timeline, for example:

### Joe's Timeline



Establish during the modelling and think aloud that the timeline just gives the important points in time, while the written biography gives the details of what happened during and between the events.

### Predicting

Say, *It's time to find out what's been waiting for Joe. Start on page 14 and read until you can put your finger on the name of what was waiting for Joe (page 15). Don't say a word!* When all have their finger on a word, ask, *What was waiting for Joe?* After students give a choral "dinosaur!", check out students' predictions from the "I See or Read/This Means" chart.

### Word solving and building

#### Overcoming Text Challenges

Tell students, *Some words in this retelling are like the ones we read in Science. Show the challenging words from page 6: University, laboratory, microscope, scientists. Ask, What do you notice about these words? (many syllables, can find words inside them, three have suffixes, etc.). Ask, What strategies could you use to read the word and understand what it means?* Two "fix-up" strategies that should be highlighted or modelled using think-aloud are: 1) Scan the illustrations available on both pages to "get in the ballpark" with unknown words. 2) Look for familiar word parts or syllables and then think about a science word students have read or used.

Tell students that this story is written in the past, so many words end in "-ed," or are in past tense. Ask for strategies for reading words ending in "-ed," (look for the "-ed" ending, cover it, and focus on the root word).

### Synthesizing

#### Setting a Purpose

Give two or three sticky notes or small papers to each student. Say, *As you read up to page 22 today, you'll find more important events in Joe's life that we can add to the timeline. Use your sticky notes to mark anything else you think should be added to his timeline.*



## DURING READING

Tell each student to read *Joe's Big Surprise*, thinking about the purpose that has been set.

Observe to see if they place any new sticky notes in sequence. Observe and listen to students as they read, assisting them with reading and word-solving strategies. Encourage students to try using the strategy of covering up words

with the “-ed” suffix, like *buried* (page 15), as “Chris” demonstrated during the last session.

Note students’ successful use of reading strategies and any difficulties they encounter (use the Self-Monitoring checklist found in the *Reading Guide*).

If students finish before others have completed the reading, have them continue reading the summary of Joe’s life on pages 23 and 24, or share their ideas of what important events in Joe’s life should be added to the timeline.



## AFTER READING

### Sequencing

Ask students to share the important events from Joe’s life they selected from the reading, adding them to the timeline. Help students discern what events are major enough to be added to the timeline and where on the timeline they belong.

An additional timeline activity entails the summary of Joe’s life on pages 23 and 24. Tell students, *Turn to page 23. The author has used another interesting technique to give us more information in this retelling. She provides us with a summary of Joe’s life that gives us more facts about him. What other books have you read that provide more facts at the end? You may want to have a few handy to remind students of this technique used in some information texts. Say, As I read “More About Joe and His Find,” listen for another important event we should add to his timeline. You can read along with me. After reading page 23 aloud, stop and ask students to give events. Add them to the timeline where they fit. Repeat for page 24.*

### Synthesizing

Say, *Our timeline shows many things Joseph Tyrrell did in his life. Why was he so important that a museum was named after him? Providing some pictures of the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology would be helpful, if students don’t know about it. Some pictures can be found at the following Web site: <http://www.tyrrellmuseum.com>. Help students connect facts from the text with their ideas to give logical answers.*

### Rereadings

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

### Focused Follow-up

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

### Sequencing

#### ***Family Member Timeline***

On the BLM, have students make a timeline on a family member, recording important events from that individual’s life. Remind them that a timeline holds only important events of the subject’s life. Set a minimum number of events to enter on the timeline, e.g.,

*Make a timeline of your \_\_\_\_\_’s life with at least five events along it.*



Students may have to interview their subjects to complete their timelines. A note can be sent home explaining the assignment. The story about the events and between the events is written as an autobiography or retelling. Students may write an anecdote or retelling about one of the events on their timelines.

### **Synthesizing/sequencing**

#### ***Performing Joe's Life***

Select scenes that lend themselves to be dramatized, such as Joe's childhood (pages 3–5), travelling west (pages 10–11), finding the fossil (pages 12–14), or how a fossil is made (page 15). All students in the reading group could be involved in scripting and performing one or two of these brief scenes. The scenes could even be acted out in sequence.

### **Word solving and building**

#### ***Dinosaur Names***

A story about dinosaurs presents the perfect opportunity to investigate the origins of dinosaur names. Print a number of dinosaur names on cards, including the three from *Joe's Big Surprise*—dinosaur, Albertosaurus, and Tyrannosaurus Rex. Have students use dinosaur resources and dictionaries to:

1. break the word into 2 parts (*saurus* and the first half), and
2. find the meaning of the each part.

Visit the Web site <http://www.enchantedlearning.com> for a kid-friendly, online resource with many dinosaur entries.

# Family Member Timeline

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

