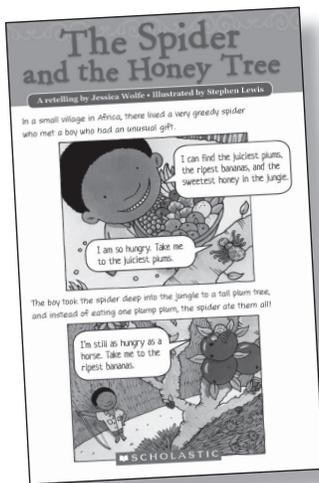**SCHOLASTIC**
Literacy Place
for the Early Years

The Spider and the Honey Tree

Retold by Jessica Wolfe
Illustrated by Stephen Lewis

Text Type: Fiction: Narrative — Folk Tale/Comic

Guided Reading Level: K

Summary: This African folktale, presented in comic form, describes how a greedy spider learns a lesson and now shares food with others.

Word Count: 288

Text Features

▸ comic format with two frames per page
▸ narrative text between comic frames
▸ two different styles of type

Visual Literacy

▸ comic-style illustrations in frames
▸ speech bubbles

Text Supports

▸ clear sequencing of narrative text and comic frames
▸ illustrations support the written text
▸ repeated sequence of events
▸ repeated phrases: "Take me to…" and "I'm still as hungry as…"

Possible Text Challenges

▸ need to integrate written narrative and comic frames
▸ speech balloons may be unfamiliar
▸ some challenging vocabulary e.g. *unusual, delicious, juicy, juiciest, enough, squeeze(d)*

Reading Strategies

Comprehension

▸ predicting
▸ inferring

Working with Words

▸ understanding similes, e.g., hungry as a horse
▸ using various strategies to solve unfamiliar words
▸ attending to word endings, e.g., deep/deeper, squeeze/squeezed, juicy/juiciest

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

▸ predict events based on textual information, pictures, and personal knowledge
▸ make inferences using text and picture cues
▸ solve challenging vocabulary

Oral Language Opportunities

▸ discussing in a group
▸ dramatizing in small groups or pairs

For Assessment Tools, see Monitoring Progress for Guided Reading in the Toolkit at www.lpey.ca and in the Grade Two Reading Guide.

BEFORE READING

Activating and Building Background Knowledge

Predicting

▶ Tell the students they will be reading a comic book African folk story called *The Spider and the Honey Tree*. Ask them to predict what they might find in the comic.

▶ Ask questions to help students connect to possible content and to the comic book's format.

> *What do you think the spider is going to do? Why do you think that? Will the characters talk to each other? How do they do that in comics?*

Predicting/evaluating

▶ Hand out copies of the comic book and tell students to only look at the first page. Ask them to think about their predictions.

> *Do you see what you expected to see in a comic on this first page? Was there anything that surprised you?*

ELL Note: Ensure that students understand the meaning of the word "greedy," and elicit examples of greedy behaviour. Post the word on the word wall.

Teaching Tip: Students shouldn't preview the entire comic when predicting is the comprehension strategy, to ensure that they don't see possible Purpose for Reading answers for their predictions before reading begins.

Discussing Supports and Challenges

Inferring

▶ Point to the print between the title and the comic frame on the first page and ask students to infer its purpose.

> *Why do you think the author might have written this sentence here, before the boy and the spider talk to each other?*

Text features/visual literacy

▶ Identify and talk about the various parts of the comic, e.g., the linking narrative text, illustrations, and speech balloons, and ensure that students know who's talking at any given time.

> *We've got two speech balloons in this first illustration (pointing to the first frame on page one). Who do you think is speaking first? Why do you think that?*

Print concepts

▶ Ask students to skim-read down the first page to find an exclamation mark, and ask why the author might use it.

> *What does an exclamation mark tell you about how the storyteller or speaker feels?*

Setting a Purpose

Predicting

▶ Focus students on the comprehension purpose. Read the title and first line of text aloud, and ask students to predict what might happen to the greedy spider.

> *"The Spider and the Honey Tree… In a small village in Africa, there lived a very greedy spider." Hmm, a greedy spider and a honey tree. What do you think might happen when the spider reaches the honey tree?*

Explain to students that you'll jot their suggestions on the board and, when everyone is finished reading, you'll check to see if any of the ideas match what the author said. Tell early finishers not to reveal whether their predictions matched the author's conclusion.

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.

DURING READING

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

▶ Observe and listen to students as they read quietly, giving support as needed. Some may require help navigating comic features or self-monitoring for ongoing comprehension, vocabulary, and word solving. Offer problem-solving prompts such as:

Predicting/inferring
- p. 2 What do you think the honey tree might look like? Tell me why you think that?

Inferring
- p. 3 Why do you think the spider is so greedy? What makes you think that?

Self-monitoring
- p. 4 I noticed that you paused on this word (pointing at 'stomach')… you said "st"… checked the picture… then said "st"… "stomach." Well done! Tell me what you were thinking as you worked that word out.

▶ Remind early finishers not to talk about what happened to the greedy spider until everyone has finished reading. They can think about how closely their prediction matched what happened in the story then reread the comic independently or with a partner.

▶ Note successful reading strategies and any remaining reading challenges.

ELL Note: Using visuals of fruit and other items, build a word family chart focusing on comparatives/superlatives with the vocabulary from the text— *juicy, juicier, juiciest; sweet, sweeter, sweetest,* etc. Then have students add "greedy" to the chart.

AFTER READING

Predicting/self-monitoring
▶ Revisit the purpose for reading.

You were reading to find out if your prediction, about what happened when the spider reached the tree, matches what the author wrote about. Let's check the board to see if any of your predictions match.

▶ Extend comprehension by offering prompts to initiate discussion:

- Do any of you think that your prediction for what might happen when the spider reached the tree is better than the author's? Why or why not?

- Will that spider ever be greedy again? What makes you say that?
- Do you think the other insects might show the spider where to look for good things to eat? What makes you think that?

- Might the spider and the boy become friends? Why do you think that?

▶ Comment on effective reading strategies that you observed.

> *I noticed that Sam read "one plum plum." That didn't make sense to Sam, so he went back and reread "one plump plum." Well done, Sam! What does the word 'plump' tell us about that plum?*

Rereadings

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

Focused Follow-Up

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

Create a Comic

▶ Invite students to create a 'learning how to share' comic based on the simile "I'm as hungry as a…" (horse, bear, plus three other animals), or on the simile "I'm as greedy as a/an…" (elephant eating peanuts, plus three or four other animals eating different foods). The comic can consist of narrative text and comic frames, or just frames.

Dramatize

▶ In twos or threes, have students dramatize either The Spider and the Honey Tree or a similar story that they create with different characters.

Visualizing Similes

▶ Talk about the comic's similes with the students, and encourage them to visualize what each might look like in real life (e.g., being as: "… hungry as a horse/bear," or "… greedy as an elephant eating peanuts"). Ask students to visualize and generate similes for the phrases:
- I'm as big as…
- I'm as happy as…
- I'm as wet as…
- I'm as angry as…

Compound Words

▶ Remind students that some words consist of two small words that make a larger word. Ask them to find the three compound words they read in the comic, i.e., beehive, peanuts, whenever. Invite them to make compound words using the following short words: post, bed, dish, stand, bunk, washer, sea, card, under, weed.