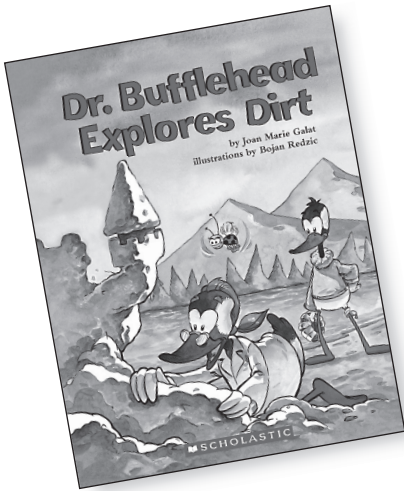


Dr. Bufflehead Explores Dirt



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Text Type: Info-fiction: Narrative — Fantasy Story

Guided Reading Level: L

Summary: Chico needs to find a way to fix a broken bird's nest for a science fair project. With some help from his friends, Dotty and Dr. Bufflehead, Chico mends the bird nest and learns about different kinds of soil.

Text Features

- ▶ glossary

Visual Literacy

- ▶ illustrations of definitions in glossary

Text Supports

- ▶ colour illustrations support the text
- ▶ repetitive language patterns
- ▶ glossary From Dr. Bufflehead's notebook

Possible Text Challenges

- ▶ new words, e.g., *nutrients, minerals*
- ▶ words with “-y” endings: *gritty, grainy, slippery, spongy, sticky, gooey*
- ▶ multi-syllabic words, e.g., *component, magnifying*

Reading Strategies

Comprehension

- ▶ predicting
- ▶ synthesizing

Working with Words

- ▶ solving words with “-y” endings
- ▶ using a variety of strategies, including context cues, chunking, and the glossary to determine word meanings

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ predict appropriate solutions for solving the problem
- ▶ confirm or change predictions
- ▶ synthesize: summarize the main ideas
- ▶ self-monitor reading strategies and make adjustments when needed

Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ offering predictions
- ▶ stating facts
- ▶ asking questions
- ▶ responding to questions

Teaching Tip: Making students aware of the glossary before reading can help them with some of the new words they encounter in the story.



BEFORE READING

Analyzing/predicting

Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

Display the front and back covers of the book, then read the title and the names of the author and illustrator. Focus students' attention on the word *explores*. Ask, *What does it mean to explore?* Encourage students to share any experiences they may have had exploring some place or thing.

Ask students what they think the book could be about based on the front cover illustration and the title. Discuss why Dr. Bufflehead might want to explore dirt. Ask, *Are there different kinds of dirt? Can you think of another word for dirt?*

ESL Note: Allow pairs of students to write down difficult words on a T-chart (e.g., word/meaning) and guess the meaning of the words from context.

Language predictability

Overcoming Text Challenges

Read the following sentences on page 4: "Soil is made up of many things, including sand. Each component of soil feels different. For example, sand feels gritty." Ask students what the word *component* means. After allowing for responses, ask students how they arrived at the suggested meanings of the word.

Explain to students that context cues can help them figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words. Tell students that context cues are hints about the meaning of an unfamiliar word that are provided in the words, phrases, and sentences that surround the word. Focus on the first sentence. Focus students' attention on the words *made up* and *many things*. Reread the last sentence, as well. Explain to students that examples can also help them figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Word solving and building

With students, search the text to find words ending in "y." In particular, identify *gritty*, *rainy*, *slippery*, *spongy*, *sticky*, and *goeey*. Ask, *What sound does the "y" make at the end of these words?*

Word solving and building

Point out other words in the text that may be challenging, e.g., *sandcastle*, *underwater*. Tell students, *These are called compound words. Divide these words into two parts to solve them.*

Synthesizing

Setting a Purpose

Tell students to read and find out if Chico mends the nest and, if so, how he does it.



DURING READING

Ask each student to read the book independently, thinking about the purpose that has been set.

Encourage students to pay attention to the different suggestions concerning the mending of the nest and the different types of soil being described. Invite students to use context cues, as modelled earlier, to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Observe and listen to all students, checking to see what specific strategies students use to decode unfamiliar words. Encourage students to use the glossary from Dr. Bufflehead's notebook if they have difficulty understanding the differences between the soil types.

Students who finish early can reread the selection and identify the different kinds of soils they read about.



AFTER READING

Predicting

Ask, *Did the suggestions made for mending the nest work?* (duct tape, sand, wire). Allow students to explain why or why not the suggestions worked or did not work.

Synthesizing

Ask students what the problem was in the story. *How did the characters in the story solve the problem?* Remind students that there were several different kinds of dirt described in the selection. Ask them to recall what they learned about the different kinds of dirt. Ask, *Which kinds of soil should Dr. Bufflehead have in his garden? Why?*

Word solving and building/ language predictability

Ask students if they found any words challenging during the reading of the story. Discuss any strategies they may have used to decode unfamiliar words. Commend any students you observed during the lesson who used positive reading strategies. For example, say, *It was really good to see that John used the strategy we discussed earlier. John looked for context cues when he came to the word nutrients to help him figure out the meaning of the word.*

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.

Listing Solutions

Inferring

Ask students to list three solutions from the story for mending the nest that did not work. Have students tell, in their own words, why they thought one of these solutions did not work.

Dr. Bufflehead's Soil Chart

Synthesizing

Provide students with the BLM. Ask them to fill in the names of the four kinds of soil. Then, in the space provided, they should draw a picture of each kind of soil. In the section "Describe the soil," write a brief description about each type of soil.

Dr. Bufflehead's Soil Chart

Name: _____

Name the soil	Draw a picture of the soil	Describe the soil

