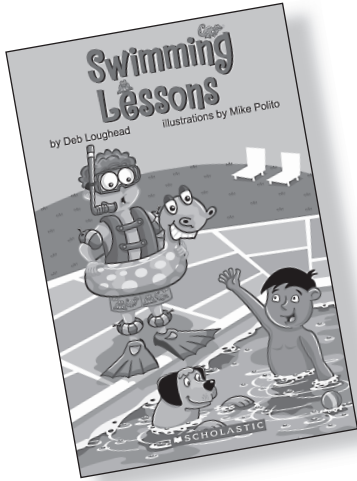


# Swimming Lessons



*Written by Deb Loughead*

*Illustrations by Mike Polito*

**Text Type:** Fiction: Narrative — Realistic Story

**Guided Reading Level:** M

**Summary:** Steve finds out his mother has enrolled him in swimming lessons. Steve is beside himself with worry because he is scared of the water, and afraid his friends will make fun of him for taking lessons with the little kids. This amusing story tells how Steve's family and his best friend try to help him get over his fear.

Note: Do not use this book for both Guided Reading and Reading Club for the same student.

## Text Features

- ▶ table of contents
- ▶ chapter titles

## Visual Literacy

- ▶ thought bubbles

## Text Supports

- ▶ some illustrations to support text
- ▶ sentences are fairly short
- ▶ chapter titles explain action

## Possible Text Challenges

- ▶ multi-syllabic words (compound words, words with suffixes)
- ▶ story is written in first-person narrative form
- ▶ extensive use of dialogue with quotation marks, speaker not always identified

## First Session (pages 5-13)

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ inferring
- ▶ predicting

#### Working with Words

- ▶ using chunking and word parts, such as suffixes, to read unfamiliar words
- ▶ using picture or context cues to solve unfamiliar words

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ make predictions about characters
- ▶ make inferences
- ▶ understand the use of quotation marks in reading dialogue and identifying speakers
- ▶ break compound words into parts, such as suffixes, to read unfamiliar, multi-syllabic words

### Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing with a partner or a group
- ▶ relating similar personal experiences
- ▶ reading dialogue expressively

**Teaching Tip:** When assessing students' learning, make sure you observe them throughout the Guided Reading lesson and not just at the end.



## BEFORE READING

### Predicting

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

Distribute books to students. Look at the cover, the table of contents, read the author's and illustrator's names and the title, and ask for predictions concerning what the story is going to be about. Then read the blurb on the back cover together. Ask, *Why do you think the boy does not want to take swimming lessons?* List students' ideas on the board or chart paper.

### Making connections: text to self

Ask, *Have any of you ever felt like the boy in the story?* Discuss your personal experiences.

### Predicting

Have students turn to the title page and table of contents, and pair-share with a partner to make further predictions about what might happen in the story. As an option, students can write down their predictions and compare with the actual events after they have finished reading the book.

### Inferring

Have students read page 5 to themselves. Ask, *Who do you think is telling the story?*

### Word solving and building

Write the word *downstairs* on the board or chart paper. Ask, *What if I didn't know how to read this long word? What strategy could I use?* Discuss how compound words can be broken into parts for word solving.

### Inferring

#### **Setting a Purpose**

Tell students that as they are reading, they are to try to discover why Steve doesn't want to take swimming lessons.

**ESL Note:** With a partner, have students retell/discuss portions of what they have read to ensure comprehension.



## DURING READING

Have students read Chapters 1 and 2 with a partner or small group. Then ask each student to read the book independently, thinking about the purpose that has been set. Remind them that inferring means reading between the lines and to ask themselves, *What is the problem here? How do I think it will be solved?* to help them practise the strategy.

Observe students' reading behaviours, noting their use of dialogue. Assist them with word-solving strategies. Partners can help each other read unfamiliar words by suggesting strategies.



## AFTER READING

### Synthesizing

Bring students back together for a discussion about what they read. This may occur in the same reading lesson or on another day, depending on the time allotted.

### Analyzing

Ask the following question as part of the discussion: *Why was Steve afraid of swimming?* Have students find the place in the story that provides proof (Chapter 2, page 12).

### Inferring

Ask, *If Steve was so afraid of swimming, why had his mother signed him up for swimming lessons?*

### Synthesizing

Ask, *Why didn't Steve tell his mom why he didn't want to take swimming lessons?*

### Word solving and building

Comment on individual students who you observed using a reading strategy successfully. For example, *Brett, I noticed you used a strategy to read the word sometime. Can you explain to the class how you figured it out?*

Students who were observed using good expression in reading dialogue and words in italics might be asked to read a sentence as a model for others.

## Optional Approach

You may wish to have students read the rest of the text independently. Set a purpose for reading and choose a date to come back together to discuss and work with the text using the Optional After Reading session (see page 8). You may choose to do some diagnostic work with students or to hold a book discussion halfway through to check their comprehension of the text.

### **Setting a Purpose**

### Inferring

Ask, *What is the main problem in this book? How do you think Steve finally learns how to swim?*

# Second Session (pages 14-22)

## Reading Strategies

### Comprehension

- ▶ inferring
- ▶ analyzing
- ▶ evaluating

### Working with Words

- ▶ using chunking and word parts such as suffixes to read unfamiliar words
- ▶ using picture or context cues to solve unfamiliar words

## Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ make inferences
- ▶ analyze information
- ▶ evaluate character's actions
- ▶ break multi-syllabic words into parts
- ▶ use picture or context cues to solve unfamiliar words

## Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing with a partner or a small group
- ▶ relating similar personal experiences
- ▶ reading dialogue expressively



## BEFORE READING

### Sequencing

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

Have students recall the main events from the previous chapters. Ask, *What was Steve's problem at the beginning of the story?*

### Predicting

Ask, *At the end of Chapter 2, Zain has a plan. What do you think it will be?*

### Analyzing

#### **Setting a Purpose**

Ask students to read Chapter 3 to find out what Zain's plan was and whether or not it worked.

### **Teaching Tip:**

Write the purpose for reading on chart paper or a board so it is visible to all students in the group. This will help them focus as they read and encourage independence when they finish reading.



## DURING READING

Note students' use of reading strategies, assisting them where necessary. Are they successfully chunking word parts in compound words and words with suffixes?

As you listen to students read, ask them if they have found the answers to the questions posed in the "Setting a Purpose" section. Observe whether they are able to find proof in the text to support their answers. Assist them if they are having trouble doing this.

Students who finish before others have completed the reading may choose to reread a portion on their own. They could select a part of the story to rehearse for reading aloud to the class.

When all students have finished reading, bring them back together to discuss the chapters. This may occur in the same reading lesson, or on another day, depending on the time allotted.



## AFTER READING

Ask the following questions. Allow students to discuss the answers in pairs before responding to the whole group. Perhaps assign a question for individual groups to respond to.

Ask if anyone helped a partner use a strategy. Have them give an example.

### Synthesizing

Ask, *What was Zain's plan?*

### Evaluating

Ask, *Did his plan work? Why or why not?*

### Inferring

Ask, *Why was Steve shivering when he wasn't wet?*

### Inferring

Ask, *Why do you think Steve answered "Great" when his mom asked if Zain was a good teacher?*

## Third Session (pages 23-31)

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ synthesizing
- ▶ inferring

#### Working with Words

- ▶ using chunking and word parts, such as suffixes, to read unfamiliar words

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ make inferences
- ▶ synthesize main ideas and connect story events
- ▶ use chunking and word parts to read unfamiliar words

### Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing with a partner or a small group
- ▶ reading dialogue expressively



## BEFORE READING

### Synthesizing/inferring

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

Have students recall the main events from the previous chapters. Ask, *What did Zain and Dad do to try to help Steve? Why did their plans not work?*

### Inferring

#### **Setting a Purpose**

Say, *The next chapters are called "Lily's Lesson" and "Matt's Lesson." Discuss with your partner what you think might happen in these chapters.*



## DURING READING

Ask each student to think about the purpose that has been set. Remind them of how they learned to infer in the first two chapters and to practise those strategies here.

Remind students that as they read, they should practise the chunking strategy, and notice the compound words and words with endings like “-ed” and “-ing.”

Note students’ use of reading strategies, assisting them where necessary. Are they reading dialogue expressively?

Students who finish before others have completed the reading may choose to reread a portion on their own.



## AFTER READING

### Word solving and building/ self-monitoring

When all students have finished reading, bring them back together to discuss the chapters. This may occur in the same reading lesson, or on another day, depending on the time allotted. Ask if anyone came across a word they were not able to use a strategy to read. Discuss possible alternative strategies.

### Inferring

Ask, *How do you think Steve felt when he watched Lily having such a good time in the pool?*

### Inferring

Ask, *What finally made Steve decide to go in the wading pool?*

### Evaluating

Ask, *Do you think Matt was being a good friend to Steve? What would a good friend have done and said?*

## Fourth Session (pages 32-48)

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ synthesizing
- ▶ inferring

#### Working with Words

- ▶ using chunking and word parts, such as suffixes, to read unfamiliar words

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student’s ability to:

- ▶ make inferences
- ▶ synthesize main ideas and connect story events
- ▶ break compound words into parts, such as suffixes

### Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing with a partner or a small group
- ▶ reading dialogue expressively



## BEFORE READING

**Synthesizing/predicting/  
inferring**

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

Have students review the events from the previous lessons. Ask, *Do you think Steve will ever learn to swim? How do you think he is feeling after all that has happened so far? Do you think he will give up?*

**Synthesizing**

### **Setting a Purpose**

Ask, *What life lessons does Steve learn by the end of the book?*



## DURING READING

Ask students to think about the purpose that has been set.

Note students' use of reading strategies, assisting them where necessary. Remind them to help each other read tricky words by suggesting a strategy first. As you listen to students read, ask them to recall the strategies they used to figure out different words.

Students who finish before others have completed the reading may choose to skim through the book and reread a favourite part.



## AFTER READING

**Analyzing**

When all students have finished reading, bring them back together to discuss the chapters. This may occur in the same reading lesson, or on another day, depending on the time allotted.

Ask, *How did each of Steve's friends and family help him?*

**Analyzing/synthesizing**

Ask, *Who do you think helped Steve the most? Give reasons why you think as you do.*

**Making connections:  
text to self**

Ask, *If you had been Steve's friend, what would you have done to help?*

## Optional After Reading

### Inferring

If students have completed the text independently, use the following After Reading discussion and activity suggestions to support comprehension, word solving, and good reader strategies.

Ask, *Why was Steve afraid of swimming? In what ways did Steve show he was scared?*

### Making connections: text to self/synthesizing

Ask, *If you had a friend who was afraid to try something, what would you do to help them?*

### Predicting/synthesizing

Have students make an entry in their notebooks after every two chapters, giving a brief summary of the main events and telling their predictions for what might happen in the next two chapters.

### Synthesizing

Students can make a storyboard, listing one or two main events for each chapter, with a brief caption.

## Rereadings

Provide opportunities for students to reread favourite parts of the book with a partner or small group. A possible focus would be using good expression for dialogue. Students can do a Reader's Theatre of different chapters of the book, with characters and a narrator.

## Focused Follow-up

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

### Synthesizing/inferring

Ask students to write a diary for Steve over several days, outlining the events of each day, including how he feels as the events unfold.

### Synthesizing

Have students draw a comic book using the main events of the story, complete with dialogue bubbles and thinking clouds.