

# The Gran Plan



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**Text Type:** Fiction: Narrative — Humorous Story  
**Guided Reading Level:** N

**Summary:** In this story, a family devises a plan to cheer up their grandmother after she recuperates from an operation. When Josh, one of the sons, decides to alter the plan and create a water garden for Gran, things take a hilarious turn.

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

## Text Features

- ▶ illustrations under chapter headings and throughout story

## Visual Literacy

- ▶ environmental print

## Text Supports

- ▶ illustrations that support the text

## Possible Text Challenges

- ▶ idioms: *spring chicken*, *silly goose*
- ▶ challenging vocabulary (e.g., *suggestions*, *triumphantly*, *scowling*, *trudged*, *wriggled*, *fidgety*, *triumphantly*, *wedging*, *bothersome*, *surveyed*, *devastation*)
- ▶ transliteration of words pronounced with an accent: *vill*, *vonder*

## First Session (pages 3-22)

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ predicting
- ▶ analyzing
- ▶ inferring
- ▶ evaluating
- ▶ synthesizing
- ▶ sequencing

#### Working with Words

- ▶ solving unfamiliar vocabulary using different strategies, such as context cues
- ▶ discussing the meaning of idioms

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ make connections between their own experiences and the text
- ▶ predict what the book will be about
- ▶ analyze information in the story
- ▶ make inferences based on information in the story
- ▶ evaluate humorous scenes and whether the Gran plan was successful
- ▶ synthesize the author's message
- ▶ sequence the main events of the story

### Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing with a partner, a group, and the whole class



## BEFORE READING

### Making connections: text to self

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

Have students share some activities they like to do with their grandparent(s) or other senior citizens. Ask, *If you have a grandmother, what name do you call her?* After several students respond, say, *In the book we're going to read, the children call their grandmother "Gran."*

### Text features/predicting

Show the front cover of the book. Read the title, and author's and illustrator's names. Ask students to examine the cover illustration. Using the Think-Pair-Share strategy, have students predict what they think the book will be about. Then show the back cover and read the text there aloud. Say, *This is a summary of the story. We now have more clues about the story. What do you think the plan for Gran might be?*

**ESL Note:** Show ESL students the front cover, pointing out that the grandmother looks sad. Invite students to share a time when a family member was feeling sad and what they did to help in that situation.

### Predicting/visual literacy

Invite students to make predictions about the upcoming events in Chapters One, Two, and Three by examining the chapter heading illustrations. Point out the print in the illustration on page 8, and ask, *Who do you think wrote this? Why do you think that?*

### Language predictability

#### **Overcoming Text Challenges**

Tell students, *There will be some tricky words in this book. A useful strategy is to skip the word, read to the end of the sentence, and then go back to see if you can figure out the tricky word. If you still cannot figure out the word, continue on with your reading.* Instruct students to record any tricky words they are unable to solve while reading.

### Language predictability

Point out the idioms *spring chicken* and *silly goose* on pages 4 and 5. Say, *These are expressions. Have you ever heard them before?* Discuss the meanings. Point out that authors like to use expressions like these in dialogue to make the characters seem real.

### Evaluating

Point out the words *vill* and *vonder* in the second paragraph on page 5. Have a student read the sentence containing these words, then ask, *What word does vill stand for? What about vonder? Why has the author used these words instead of the usual ones?* Elicit from students that the author has used these spellings to indicate that Josh is using an accent. The purpose is to create humour.

### Predicting/analyzing

#### **Setting a Purpose**

Tell students they are going to read the first part of the book to find out if their predictions about the plan for Gran are correct.



## DURING READING

Ask students to read Chapters One to Three independently, thinking about the purpose that was set.

Observe students as they read the text, assisting them with word-solving strategies, vocabulary, and comprehension queries. After individual students have finished page 19, ask, *Do you think Josh will come up with a better idea for cheering up Gran? If so, what do you think it might be?*

Encourage students who finish reading early to think about any sources they could use to figure out the meaning of tricky words.



## AFTER READING

### Predicting/analyzing

Ask, *Was your prediction about the plan for Gran correct? What was the plan?*

### Inferring

Ask, *What do you think the author meant by the phrase fidgety silence on page 10? Once several students have responded, ask, What do you think Josh meant when he said, "It was like all the Gran-ness had gone out of her" on page 20? Then ask, Why do you think Josh felt bad about doing the yard work?*

### Language predictability

Invite students to share any tricky words they recorded. Discuss sources to find the meaning of the words (e.g., Word Wall, charts around the room, other students, a dictionary). Remind students that, when reading, they should try not to get stuck on a tricky word for a long time. Tell them to try reading the sentence again. If they still can't figure out the word, they should continue on with their reading and get help with the word afterwards.

**ESL Note:** Make a list of challenging expressions on chart paper to see letter-sound connection (i.e., *spring chicken, silly goose*, etc.). Review students' meanings to ensure comprehension.

**Teaching Tip:** Readers at Guided Reading Level "N" need to practise fluency. Stopping at every difficult word can slow the process down and affect the flow of the reading, as well as meaning making.

### Predicting

Ask, *What do you think Josh's plan will be? Why?*

## Optional Approach

Analyzing/evaluating

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 6). You may choose to do some diagnostic work with students or hold a book discussion halfway through to check their comprehension of the text.

### **Setting a Purpose**

Tell students to read the rest of the book on their own to find out what Josh's plan was and whether it was successful.

## Second Session (pages 23-39)



### BEFORE READING

Predicting

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

Say, *Turn to page 23 and look at the illustration. Does this picture give you clues about what Josh's plan might be?* Establish that the plan is to build a water garden.

Language predictability

#### **Overcoming Text Challenges**

Have students find the word *spades* in the third paragraph on page 24. Ask one student to read out loud from the sentence that begins "We have work to do" and continue to the end of "Stop laughing and start digging." Ask, *Do you know now what a spade is used for?* Remind students, *When you come to a word you don't know, continue reading to see if you can figure out the meaning of the word just as we did for the word spade.*

**ESL Note:** Post pictures related to gardening on the blackboard (i.e., flower beds, rake, wheelbarrow, water garden, etc.). Discuss how they are used to help build a garden. Invite students to share how gardening tools are similar and different in their native countries. Some students might have helped their family with a garden or on a farm. Invite them to share their experiences.

Evaluating

#### **Setting a Purpose**

Say, *Some funny things happen in the next part of the book. See which scenes you think are funny.*



### DURING READING

Ask students to read Chapters Four to Six independently, thinking about the purpose that has been set. Observe students' ability to read the text independently and sustain interest and focus.

Give each student some sticky notes and say, *If you finish reading before the others, go back to the beginning of Chapter Four. Scan through Chapters Four to*

Six, and put a sticky note on any of the funny moments. We will be talking about the funny parts in our discussion afterwards.

Check individual students' ability to evaluate after they finish reading page 32 by asking, *What part did you find the funniest so far? Why?*



## AFTER READING

### Evaluating

Ask, *In Chapters Four to Six, what were some of scenes that you thought were funny? Why?*

### Synthesizing

Ask, *What message do you think the author is trying to get across? What do you think is the most important thing that happened in these chapters? Why?*

### Language predictability/ word solving and building

Ask, *Did anyone come across any words they didn't know? Did you figure out the words? How did you do it?* You may wish to create a list entitled "What Good Readers Do When They Read." Each time you meet with students for Guided Reading, you could elicit new strategies from students and add them to the list.

## Third Session (pages 40-48)



## BEFORE READING

### Making connections: text to self

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

Ask, *Have you ever been involved with a project that didn't go as planned?* Invite students to share their experiences, giving details as to how their plan deviated from the original idea.

### Predicting

Say, *In the final two chapters of The Gran Plan, you will discover that the plan to cheer up Gran changes. How do you think it will change? Do you think the plan will be successful?* Record students' responses for reference after reading.

### Evaluating

#### **Setting a Purpose**

Tell students they are going to read the last two chapters to find out whether the Gran plan was successful.



## DURING READING

Ask students to read Chapters Seven and Eight independently, thinking about the purpose that was set.

While students read, observe their ability to use context cues to solve unfamiliar vocabulary. Once students finish reading page 44, check individuals' ability to evaluate by asking, *Do you think Josh's plan was better than the original plan? Why or why not?*

Tell students who finish reading before the others to choose a passage of text and practise reading it quietly, smoothly, and with expression to a partner.

Listen to each student read a paragraph aloud to check for fluency and expression.

**ESL Note:** Partner ESL students in the earlier stages of English acquisition with more advanced students who can read to them.



## AFTER READING

### Evaluating/predicting

Ask, *Was the Gran plan successful? How do you know?* Have students revisit the predictions they made before reading and note any differences in how things worked out.

### Inferring

Ask, *Why do you think Gran was happy at the end?*

### Language predictability/ word solving and building

Have students share any words they found difficult and the strategies they used to figure them out.

### Sequencing/synthesizing

On a board or chart paper, use a story map, flow chart, or story frames to record the main story events from start to finish. This can be done using pictures, words, or a combination of both. Have students decide which are the main events. This may turn into a discussion since students will likely have differing opinions.

**ESL Note:** Create a story map illustrating the sequence of events when Josh had the “Gran plan” to create a water garden to his grandmother’s reaction at the end of the story. Invite students to draw pictures for each event to ensure understanding.

## Optional After Reading

### Analyzing/evaluating

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, *What was Josh’s plan? How did it go? Do you think it was successful? Why or why not?*

### Word solving and building/ language predictability

Ask students if they found any words challenging while they were reading and how they figured them out. Discuss effective reading strategies.

### Making connections: text to self

Ask students to recall a time when they cheered someone up or someone cheered them up. Have several students share their experiences.

## Rereadings

The book should be made available for students to reread during Independent Reading.

## Focused Follow-up

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

### Sequencing

#### ***A Comic Strip***

Show students a comic strip from the newspaper, and point out how the dialogue is enclosed in speech bubbles. Have students write and illustrate *The Gran Plan* as a comic strip.

### Language predictability

#### ***Wacky Expressions***

Review with students the idioms in the text. Using the BLM, have students create a page for an illustrated class idiom book. Their picture should show the literal meaning of the expression. Invite students to find other idioms in their own reading and add them to the class book.

### Text features/synthesizing

#### ***Acting Out a Scene***

Have students work in small groups to act out brief vignettes from the story, such as:

- ▶ the conversation at the dinner table at the beginning of the book
- ▶ Josh's attempt to get Gran interested in the dragonfly
- ▶ Josh first getting his idea for the Gran plan
- ▶ the result's of Josh's plan, including Gran's reaction

Remind students to use expression in their voices that matches the punctuation marks in the text.

# Wacky Expressions

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

**Expression:**

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**My picture:**



**This expression means:**

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