

# Isabella, Princess of the Pens

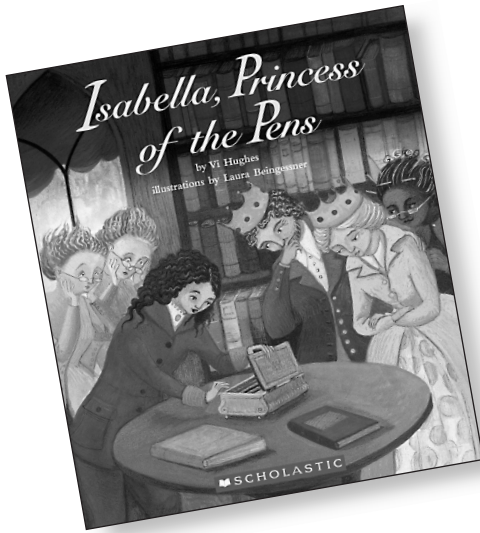
*Written by Vi Hughes*

*Illustrated by Laura Beingessner*

**Text Type:** Fiction: Narrative — Fairy Tale

**Guided Reading Level:** P

**Summary:** Although Princess Isabella has been adored and showered with gifts from the day she was born, she isn't happy. This story tells how her family, her fairy godmothers, and the villagers help her find happiness.



## Text Features

### Visual Literacy

- ▶ decorative text border suggesting fairy-tale genre
- ▶ illustrations clearly showing key ideas from text

## Text Supports

- ▶ highly predictable fairy-tale pattern
- ▶ story broken down into manageable chunks
- ▶ repetitive segue leading to next event or episode

## Possible Text Challenges

- ▶ challenging vocabulary
- ▶ fairy godmothers' names linked to their jobs

## First Session (pages 2-24)

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ synthesizing
- ▶ predicting

#### Working with Words

- ▶ using knowledge of genre, context cues, the rereading strategy, and illustrations to solve unfamiliar vocabulary
- ▶ using knowledge of suffixes to solve unfamiliar words

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ synthesize the story
- ▶ make and confirm predictions
- ▶ use multiple reading strategies to solve unfamiliar vocabulary
- ▶ use knowledge of suffixes to break down multi-syllabic words

### Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing features of fairy tales
- ▶ predicting the plot of the story
- ▶ synthesizing the story
- ▶ discussing the use of retelling and predictions



## BEFORE READING

### Making connections: text to text/analyzing

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

Say, *We will be reading a story that will seem familiar to you because you've listened to this kind of story from the time you were small. It's a fairy tale. What other fairy tales do you know? What do you know about fairy tales?* Review the features of a fairy tale, and record them on a chart like the one below:

Beginning	Setting	Characters	Problem	Ending
starts with "Once upon a time" or "Long, long ago"	long ago, often in the woods, a castle, or a town	usually clearly defined good or evil	often involves improving a character	ends "happily ever after"

**ESL Note:** Before introducing *Isabella, Princess of the Pens*, show students a few popular fairy tales, such as Cinderella and Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Flip through Cinderella page by page and have students take turns telling the storyline. Draw their attention to elements such as the opening sentence, the characters, the illustrations, and the happy ending. Introduce the chart dealing with features of a fairy tale, and ask students to complete the chart orally based on Cinderella.

### Predicting

Hold up the book and say, *This book is called Isabella, Princess of the Pens, and it was written by Vi Hughes. Based on what you know about fairy tales and the book's cover, how do you think this fairy tale begins?* Start students off by saying, *Once upon a time . . .* Jot down students' ideas. Show students the back cover and title page, and have them continue creating the tale. If necessary, prompt them using more picture cues.

### Word solving and building/ language predictability

#### **Overcoming Text Challenges**

Say, *Many words in this story are often used in fairy tales about kings and queens, princes and princesses.* Direct students' attention to the last sentence on page 2, pointing out the words *banished* and *bestowed*. Model using known reading strategies to figure out word meanings. Say, *The word banished has an "-ed" ending, which means it happened in the past. I know that fairy godmothers do nice things, so they might have sent away Isabella's nightmares. I'll read the sentence again to see if that makes sense.* Record the reading strategies so students can refer to them when needed. Continue modelling strategies for *cautioned* and *radiant* on page 5, if needed.

### Synthesizing/predicting

Read aloud the first few pages of the story, stopping at the end of each page or two to model synthesizing the plot and making predictions. Mention the fairy godmothers so students get the idea that they carry the plot of the story. After page 2, you might say, *The king and queen had a baby and named her Isabella. She had fairy godmothers who helped look after her. The Getting Baby Off To*

## Synthesizing/predicting

*A Good Start godmothers sent away her nightmares and gave her a nice smile. Hmmmm... I think something is going to interfere with the happiness of the king and queen or Isabella. I think the fairy godmothers will protect Isabella.*

Invite students to participate in thinking aloud after a few pages, gradually turning responsibility over to them for synthesizing and predicting at the end of each page.

### **Setting a Purpose**

Tell students that as they read the story, they should stop at the end of each page to quickly retell the events to themselves. Then they should predict what they think will happen next and write it down before reading on.



## **DURING READING**

Tell each student to read independently to the end of the story, keeping in mind the purpose that was set.

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, say, *Can you read on to understand what word would make sense? Try substituting other words that make sense. Can you cover up the ending of the word to find the base word? Can you take apart the word to help you solve that word?*

Note students' successful use of reading strategies and any difficulties they encounter.

Remind students to stop to summarize and make predictions every one or two pages.

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



## **AFTER READING**

### **Analyzing**

When all students have finished reading, ask, *How did stopping often to summarize or retell help you understand the story better? How did knowing about fairy tales help you predict what would happen next? Give an example. What surprised you in this story? Use your predictions to help you remember.*

### **Word solving and building/ self-monitoring**

Select a few of the words that were challenging for students. Emphasize using multiple reading strategies to solve unfamiliar words. For example, say, *I noticed Megan using the strategy of covering up the endings of long words, like possession, that she was having trouble reading. She also read on to see what word would make sense. Megan, please think aloud to show us how you solved one of the long words.*

**ESL Note:** To help students grasp the meaning of new vocabulary, provide them with synonyms, but give them very obvious clues, for example, say, *On page 2, find a word that means the same as sent away as in “they sent away nightmares.” Now tell me a word that means gave as in “they gave her the most beautiful smile.”*

## Second Session (pages 2-24)

### Reading Strategies

#### Comprehension

- ▶ analyzing
- ▶ evaluating

#### Working with Words

- ▶ using knowledge of suffixes to solve unfamiliar words

### Assessment Opportunities

Note each student’s ability to:

- ▶ summarize the story
- ▶ analyze information in the text
- ▶ evaluate the purpose of the author’s techniques
- ▶ use multiple reading strategies to solve unfamiliar words
- ▶ use knowledge of suffixes to solve unfamiliar words
- ▶ infer the underlying meanings

### Oral Language Opportunities

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



## BEFORE READING

### Synthesizing

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

Have students summarize what they read in the first session.

### Analyzing/evaluating

#### **Overcoming Text Challenges**

Say, *The author, Vi Hughes, introduces many fairy godmothers throughout the story and gives them unusual names. Please scan page 2 to find the name of the first godmothers we meet and what their jobs are.* Record students’ findings on a chart with the headings “Names of Godmothers,” and “Their Jobs.” Repeat this for pages 4 and 5. Ask, *Why do you think the author used the godmothers’ jobs to name them?* (She wanted to make readers pay attention and help them understand the story. She wanted to add humour.) Say, *How did the author use the godmothers to move the story along?* Establish that the godmothers introduce every new event in the story.

### Self-monitoring

Refer students to the chart of reading strategies created during the first session. Remind them that they can refer to it when they come to words they don’t know.

## Analyzing/evaluating

### Setting a Purpose

Give each set of partners four sticky notes. Say, *With a partner, scan the rest of the story, finding at least four fairy godmothers and their jobs. Use the sticky notes to mark the places in the story where you find your information. Think about how the fairy godmothers move the story along, and record this on the sticky note. Some fairy godmothers move the story along more than once.*



## DURING READING

Tell students to scan the story with their partners, thinking about the purpose that has been set.

Observe and listen to students as they read, assisting them with scanning and word-solving strategies. Encourage students to use the strategy of covering up the suffixes of long, unfamiliar words like *possession* as was demonstrated during the last lesson.

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

If pairs of students finish reading before others, have them share with other pairs which godmothers they found and how they moved the plot along.



## AFTER READING

### Evaluating

As a whole group, add at least four new fairy godmothers to the chart. When student pairs volunteer the answers, have everyone turn to the spot in the story being evaluated. Again, point out that Vi Hughes made us pay more attention to the fairy godmothers and helped us understand the story by her naming technique.

### Inferring

Say, *Authors don't always say exactly what they mean in stories. They want us to think deeply to understand the story. Vi Hughes wants us to read between the lines, or look for the deeper meaning, to learn many things in this book. Discuss some of the following inferences with the whole class. Refer to the text to help with understanding, if needed.*

- ▶ Why is Isabella unhappy, even though she has been given everything in the kingdom? (beginning of story)
- ▶ Why did it help Isabella to give the presents back? (middle of story)
- ▶ What gifts did Isabella give her people? (middle to end of story)
- ▶ What gifts did the people give Isabella when she was teaching them to read and write? (end of story)

**ESL Note:** Help students read between the lines by using detailed questioning. For example, ask, *On page 4, why do the godmothers say that Isabella will grow to be unhappy? Would you be unhappy if you received presents all day long every day? Do you think Isabella would ever get bored of getting presents all the time? Why? In the picture on page 5, I see another child. Is that Isabella's friend? Do you think Isabella has friends? How do you think she feels?*

## Evaluating

You may want to introduce the use of metaphor in this story. Tell students, *Vi Hughes wants to make a clear picture in the readers' minds. Did anyone notice something about the sky that lets us know when Isabella is unhappy?* References to the clouds are made on pages 6–7, 16–17, 18–19, and 22. Establish that the author uses the clouds to show Isabella's mood. Discuss the fact that because we know that it's dark and gloomy when it's cloudy, the author uses the clouds to show us how unhappy Isabella is.

## Rereadings

To improve their fluency, give students opportunities to reread the book with a partner or take the book home to read with family members.

## Focused Follow-up

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

## Synthesizing

### Character Poem

Give students copies of the BLM. Introduce students to a character poem by modelling one based on your own character. Next, have them use the frame to make a character poem about themselves. Finally, have students create a character poem about *Isabella, Princess of the Pens* (see example below). They should use their books and the charts from the Guided Reading sessions to help them complete their poems.

Isabella  
Beautiful, dark-haired  
Daughter of king  
Sad, gloomy, unhappy, lonely  
Who wishes to be happy  
Teaches people to read  
Better to give  
Happy, radiant  
Princess

## Analyzing

### Fairy Tale Genre Chart

Have students work in pairs to complete a chart about the features of *Isabella, Princess of the Pens*. They should model their chart on the one introduced in the Before Reading in the First Session.

Beginning	Setting	Characters	Problem	Ending
starts with "Once upon a time"	tiny kingdom, a castle, a village	Isabella, king, queen, fairy god-mothers, and village people	Isabella isn't happy, even though she has a castle full of gifts.	Isabella falls for the man who has the fourth pen. They live happily ever after.

**Synthesizing**

**Language predictability/  
word solving and building**

**Reader's Theatre**

Select scenes that lend themselves to being dramatized, such as pages 4 and 5, 6, or 8. All students in the reading group could be involved in writing a script and performing one or two of these short scenes.

**Princess Isabella's Word Wall**

Give students a blank card. Have them select an unfamiliar word from the story (e.g., *banished, bestowed, cautioned, radiant, summoned, musty, dutifully, miracle, marvelled, forthcoming, merchants, courtiers, dispatched, emerged, merely, possession, imagination*). Using context cues from the story and dictionaries, have each student copy and complete the following on the card:

Word: _____ Page: _____
Sentence from the story: _____
It means: _____
Here is a picture of it:

Post the cards on Princess Isabella's Word Wall in the classroom.

# Character Poem

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

**Line 1: 1 word for name of person**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Line 2: 2 words describing appearance**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Line 3: 3 words about family (daughter or son of)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Line 4: 4 words describing personality**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Line 5: 5 words describing a wish**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Line 6: 4 words describing a hobby or job**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Line 7: 3 words describing a lesson learned**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Line 8: 2 words describing personality**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Line 9: 1 other name for person**

\_\_\_\_\_