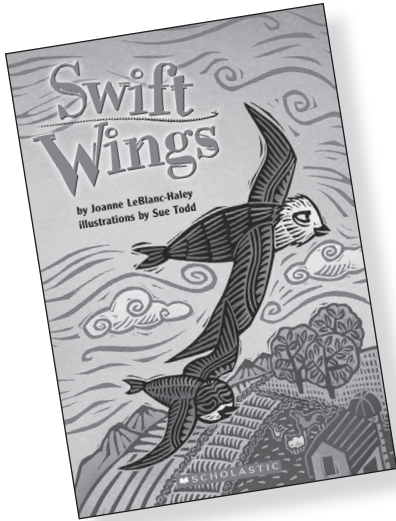


# Swift Wings



Written by Joanne LeBlanc-Haley

Illustrated by Sue Todd

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

**Guided Reading Level:** Q

**Summary:** Jake, a young chimney swift, is a competent solo flyer, but he must overcome his fear of flying in formation with other swifts. He learns to trust the ancient swift, Orac, and becomes a point flyer in a flying exhibition for the flock.

## Text Features

- ▶ table of contents
- ▶ chapter titles
- ▶ back cover excerpt
- ▶ information about author
- ▶ ellipses and dashes

## Visual Literacy

- ▶ uppercase, italic, and bold print
- ▶ woodcut illustrations
- ▶ indented print for effect

## Text Supports

- ▶ chapter titles support main idea of each chapter
- ▶ illustrations support the text

## Possible Text Challenges

- ▶ understanding context about chimney swifts
- ▶ multi-syllabic and/or descriptive vocabulary: *formation, confidence, glistening, gnarled, exceedingly, exhilaration, choreographed*

## Reading Strategies

### Comprehension

- ▶ making connections
- ▶ inferring
- ▶ synthesizing

### Working with Words

- ▶ using a range of strategies to solve unfamiliar words
- ▶ identifying root words and suffixes

## Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ make connections to character's experiences
- ▶ make inferences about character's actions and feelings
- ▶ synthesize the main ideas in the chapters and the theme of the story
- ▶ use a range of strategies to solve unfamiliar words

## Oral Language Opportunities

- ▶ discussing in groups and pairs

For Assessment Tools, see Monitoring Progress for Guided Reading in the Toolkit at [www.lpey.ca](http://www.lpey.ca) and in the Grade Three Reading Guide.

# First Session (pages 4-12)



## BEFORE READING

### Text features

#### Activating and Building Background Knowledge

- ▶ Show students the front cover of the book, and read the title and author and illustrator's names. Read the author information on page 32 to students, and explain that this author often writes stories with an animal character who must overcome a problem. Students may be familiar with the *Sidney* stories.

*The title of this book is Swift Wings, and the author is Joanne LeBlanc-Haley and the illustrator is Sue Todd. Joanne has written other novels with an animal as the main character that must solve a problem.*

- ▶ Read the excerpt on the back cover and identify a swift as a type of bird. Revisit the title and discuss the double meaning of the word "swift."

*Listen while I read the excerpt from the back cover, and see if you can tell me what you think the character's problem is in this story. Did you notice what type of bird Jake is? Have you heard that word before? Have you ever heard it to mean "fast"? Let's look at the cover again, and see if we can explain two meanings for the title.*

### Inferring

- ▶ Examine the cover and the illustration on the title page. Identify the younger, smaller bird as Jake, using information from the excerpt.

*Who do you think these characters are?... We know that Jake is having trouble flying, and in this illustration on the title page it looks like the larger bird is telling a younger bird something. I'm inferring that the younger bird is Jake, and this other character is trying to help him.*

### Word building/ making connections

- ▶ Hand out a copy of the book to each student and have them look at the back cover. Locate the word "formation" and identify the root word "form" and the suffix "-tion." Discuss the meaning of "perfect formation" and provide examples. View the inside illustration of the chimney swifts flying in formation on page 10.

*You'll see this word several times in this book and it is very important to the story. You probably know the word "form," and you can use that to help you read the rest of the word. What letters make up the "shun" sound at the end? When might we see a group doing something in perfect formation? I'm thinking of a marching band, or Canada geese flying south in a V-shape.*

**Teaching Tip:** You may wish to view a short video clip of chimney swifts roosting. A search of YouTube, using the term "Chimney Swifts Fredericton" will result in several short clips from the author's hometown.

## Making connections

- ▶ Invite students to imagine what it must be like to be Jake. Ask if they have ever had to learn to do something with a group. Provide students with possible examples, such as playing on a team, singing in a choir, or performing in a play.

*When we're reading, we can sometimes use our own experiences to help us understand the character in a story. Have you ever had an experience like Jake's—trying to do something in a group, but you weren't very confident? What happens when you lose your confidence?*

## Text features/visual literacy

### Discussing Supports and Challenges

- ▶ Locate the Table of Contents and read the chapter titles together. Explain to students that every chapter has a title and an illustration to help them keep track of the main ideas.

*It's important to keep track of the main ideas in each chapter. The author and illustrator have worked together to help you understand the story by using titles for each chapter and including an illustration.*

## Analyzing

- ▶ Turn to Chapter 1 and the accompanying illustration. Ask students to work in pairs and skim page 5 to locate information which will help them describe the scene depicted in the illustration. Ask students to identify the characters and explain what is happening, using evidence from the text.

## Inferring

- ▶ Read the description of Jake's flight and have students follow along (see sixth paragraph on page 5). Emphasize the verbs and have students mime the actions with their hands.

*When you're reading, it will help you understand the story better if you can make a picture in your minds. This author uses interesting verbs and adds details to help you make a clear picture. Close your eyes for a minute and imagine Jake flying on his solo flight. How does he look? How do you think he is feeling?*

## Making connections

### Setting a Purpose

- ▶ Focus the readers on a comprehension purpose.

*Read about Jake's flights in Chapters 1 to 3 and try to imagine yourselves in his situation. Remember that the titles and illustrations will help you to keep track of the main ideas.*



## DURING READING

## Word solving and building

- ▶ Ask students to read the text independently, keeping in mind the purpose for reading.
- ▶ Observe and listen to students as they read quietly, assisting them as needed. Some may require help word solving and with word meanings while others may need encouragement to self-monitor for understanding. Respond to questions and offer prompts to help them problem solve. Possible prompts:
  - I'll say this part of the word and you finish it.
  - Take off the ending and read the root word.
  - What other words in the sentence might help you figure out the meaning?

## Self-monitoring

- What is happening to Jake on this page?
- Have you understood what has happened so far?

### ELL Note:

Pair English Language Learners with more fluent English readers. Students can take turns reading, and the more proficient reader can assist the ELL with comprehension of the story and unfamiliar vocabulary.

- ▶ If some students finish early, ask them to reread and make note of “tricky” words they were able to figure out.
- ▶ Note successful reading strategies and any remaining reading challenges.



## AFTER READING

### Making connections

- ▶ Revisit the purpose for reading: Imagine yourself in Jake’s situation.

*Jake is afraid of flying in formation with the other swifts. If I were Jake, I’d be feeling really dejected at this point in the story.*

### Making connections

- ▶ Read a few lines from the story and ask students if they can identify a time when they had a similar experience or feeling.
  - page 5: “He had a good feeling. He was confident!”
  - page 7: “Jake felt his confidence slipping away.”
  - page 11: “Jake’s stomach was churning in fear.”

### Synthesizing

- ▶ Use the chapter titles and illustrations to identify a main event in each chapter.

*I’ll read the chapter title while you look at the illustration. Tell what happened in the chapter in just a sentence or two.*

### Inferring

- ▶ Ask students to read the last paragraph of Chapter 1, and use the information to explain how Jake must feel at the end of Chapter 3.

*This information about chimney swifts helps us understand the importance of the flight. Can you imagine how Jake feels when he causes the flight to fail?*

### Inferring

- ▶ Ask students to locate words or sentences that helped them visualize the flight. Note the description of the point flyers (see page 9), and the use of uppercase letters and the dash (see page 11).

*When you read about Jake’s flight, what words helped you make a picture in your mind? How do you know what “point flyers” are?... Why do you think the author wrote “SWOOP” with uppercase letters? In the third paragraph, how did you read the sentence with the dash?*

### Word solving and building

- ▶ Write the words *agreement*, *movement*, *formation*, and *instruction* on chart paper or a whiteboard. Identify the root word in each example. Provide a few more examples of common words, and ask students to explain how knowing “-ment” and “-tion” can help them read new words (e.g., *treatment*, *argument*, *payment*; *action*, *addition*, *eruption*, *infection*).

### Self-monitoring

- ▶ Comment on any effective reading strategies you observed.

*I noticed that when Satinder came to the word “destroyed,” she looked at the word part she knew, “destroy,” and added the other word part.*

## 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 hold a book discussion halfway through to check their comprehension of the text.

Synthesizing

### Setting a Purpose

- ▶ Ask students to read to find out what Jake learns about flying in formation.

## Second Session (pages 13-25)



### BEFORE READING

Predicting

#### Activating and Building Background Knowledge

- ▶ Reread the last sentence from Chapter 3, and ask students what they think will happen to Jake.

*We left Jake at the end of his failed practice flight. Will he be able to enjoy flying? Do you think everything will be fine? What makes you think that way?*

Inferring

- ▶ Read the first paragraph of Chapter 4 (page 13) to the students and ask them to follow along. Ask a student to perform the actions of Jake walking, stopping and sighing. Ask students how Jake is feeling.

*The author hasn't told us how Jake is feeling, but we can tell by his actions. What is he doing and how does that show what he is feeling?*

Word solving and building

#### Discussing Supports and Challenges

- ▶ Ask students to locate the description of the ancient swift on page 13. Identify the descriptive words—*raspy, silvery, gnarled, frail*—and discuss meaning using context clues.

Predicting/visual literacy

- ▶ Preview the illustrations in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Ask students to use the illustrations to help them predict the role of the ancient swift. Use the phrase “*apart, but together*” to describe the illustration on page 18.

*You probably have some ideas about this new character—the ancient swift. What have you read so far that is making you think that way? Do the illustrations confirm your predictions?*

Inferring

#### Setting a Purpose

- ▶ Focus the readers on a comprehension focus. Have students visualize Jake's flights to help them understand the events in the story and to infer Jake's feelings.

*Use the descriptions to make a picture in your mind of Jake flying. Remember the phrase “*apart, but together*” when you are imagining Jake and the ancient swift. Note how Jake is feeling throughout these chapters.*



## DURING READING

- ▶ Ask students to read Chapters 4, 5, and 6 independently, keeping in mind the purpose for reading.
- ▶ Observe and listen to students as they read quietly, noting their ability to solve unfamiliar words and self-monitor for comprehension.
- ▶ If any students finish early, ask them to reread and find words that describe Jake’s flying.
- ▶ Note successful reading strategies and any remaining reading challenges.



## AFTER READING

### Inferring/synthesizing

- ▶ Revisit the purpose for reading: Use the descriptions and the illustrations to make a picture in your mind to understand the events and Jake’s feelings.

*What descriptions helped you to figure out what was happening and how Jake was feeling in Chapters 4, 5, and 6?*

### Inferring

- ▶ Draw students’ attention to the phrase “apart, but together.”

*Why do you think Orac and Jake keep repeating this phrase? How does it help Jake?*

### Synthesizing

- ▶ Use the titles and the illustrations to identify the main idea in each chapter.

*We can make sure we understand the events in a book by stopping and telling what has happened so far.*

### Analyzing

- ▶ Ask students to locate the ancient swift’s directions to Jake on pages 17 and 19.”

*What did the ancient swift do to teach Jake about flying? What rules did he give him?*

### Text features

- ▶ Direct students’ attention to page 21. Ask them to point to the bolded words. Discuss why the author arranged the words on the page this way. Have them read about the fall with a partner, using the bold words and exclamation marks to help them add expression.

### Inferring

- ▶ Ask students how they think Jake is feeling at the end of Chapter 6. Have them locate descriptions of Jake’s actions on page 24 to support their ideas, e.g., *exhilaration*, *swallowed hard*, *lump come into his throat*, *tears*.

### Word solving and building

- ▶ Write the words *exceedingly*, *certainly*, *elderly*, *gracefully*, and *exhilaration*. Identify the root word in each example. Students may require assistance with the meaning of *exceedingly* (page 15) and *exhilarating/exhilaration* (pages 23 and 24). Use context clues to assist students with working out meaning.

## Third Session (pages 26-32)



## BEFORE READING

### Synthesizing

#### **Activating and Building Background Knowledge**

- ▶ Review the main events from Chapters 4, 5, and 6, using chapter titles and illustrations.

## Making connections

- ▶ Ask students to think of a time they were getting ready for a performance and to use this experience to understand how Jake is feeling.

*We talked about how Jake was feeling at the end of Chapter 6. Turn and tell a partner about a time you were getting ready for a performance. How did you feel? Did you feel anything like Jake?*

## Predicting

### **Discussing Supports and Challenges**

- ▶ Invite students to explain why they think Chapter 7 is called, “The Great Orac.”

*Why do you think the author chose this for the chapter title? What do you think we will find out?*

## Word solving and building

- ▶ Brainstorm with students some of the vocabulary the author has used to describe the swifts’ flying. Tell students the author compares the swifts to dancers and acrobats in this chapter. Have students turn to page 29 and locate the words *choreographed*, *dance*, and *acrobat*. If students are unfamiliar with the term “choreography” explain the meaning.

## Synthesizing

### **Setting a Purpose**

- ▶ Focus the readers on a comprehension purpose.

*I want you to read the final chapter to find out what important lesson Jake has learned.*



## DURING READING

## Word solving and building

## Self-monitoring

- ▶ Ask each student to finish the book independently, keeping in mind the purpose for reading.
- ▶ Observe and listen to students as they read quietly, noting their ability to solve unfamiliar words and self-monitor for comprehension.
  - Read the next sentence and see if you can work out the meaning of that word, e.g., “ascend.”
  - Take off the ending “-ly” and read the root word.
  - Is this what you expected to happen? Is it making sense?
- ▶ If any students finish early, ask them to reread to see how many times they can find the phrase “apart, but together.”
- ▶ Note successful reading strategies and any remaining reading challenges.



## AFTER READING

## Synthesizing

- ▶ Revisit the purpose for reading. If students have difficulty identifying a lesson or theme, direct their attention to the phrase “apart, but together.”

*What lesson do you think Jake learned? Did you notice how many times the author repeated the phrase “apart, but together?” Sometimes if an author wants to give a message to the reader, she or he will repeat an important line many times.*

## Synthesizing/ making connections

- ▶ Ask students to use their experiences doing something in a group to understand the importance of the phrase “apart, but together.”

*I’m thinking of the way our class has to work together, but everybody has to do their part. Do you have other examples?*

**Inferring/text features**

**Word solving and building**

**Visual literacy**

- ▶ Ask students to turn to page 27 and locate the ellipses and dash. Ask how the author uses these to show how the instructor was feeling.
- ▶ Have students use context clues to identify the meaning of *rattled* (page 27), *ascend*, (page 29), *humbly* (page 30), and *cease* (page 30).
- ▶ Ask students to use the text on page 30 to describe what is happening in the last illustration.

## Optional After Reading

**Synthesizing**

**Synthesizing**

**Word solving and building**

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 students to use the chapter titles and illustrations to retell the main events of the story.
- ▶ Ask students to explain the meaning of the phrase “apart, but together.”
- ▶ Ask students to locate one of the descriptions of Jake’s flying (e.g., on page 21 or page 29). As a class, create a list of descriptive words the author uses. Discuss the meaning of any unfamiliar words.

## Rereadings

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

## Focused Follow-Up

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

### **Research Project**

- ▶ Ask students to research chimney swifts and create a small poster showing what they have found out about this bird. Students can include an illustration or photograph, as well as a few facts.

### **Descriptive Paragraph**

- ▶ Invite students to use some of the descriptive language from the text to tell what is happening in one of the illustrations. Challenge students to incorporate vocabulary used by the author.

### **Advice Column**

- ▶ In pairs or small groups, ask student to discuss how Jake changed from being the bird that caused the failure of the flight to being the point flyer in the flying exhibition. Then have students write a list of tips to someone who is getting ready for a performance.