



THE DISCOVERY OF FIRE

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TEXT TYPE: Non-fiction: Report—Informational
GUIDED READING LEVEL: M

SUMMARY: This informational text provides an overview of the discovery of fire. It describes the context for the discovery and offers examples from research about the first time people were able to control fire. The text goes on to explain the many ways in which fire enabled people to develop, such as providing light and heat and helping brains and bodies to evolve. Several of the topics covered in the main body of the text are supported on the second page with photos.

TEXT FEATURES

- two-column text format
- boxes with captions and graphics

VISUAL LITERACY

- boxed text
- photos

TEXT SUPPORTS

- subheadings to separate sections
- graphics
- cardinal dates

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- many new multi-syllabic vocabulary words, e.g., ‘prehistoric,’ ‘researchers,’ ‘nutrition,’ ‘ancestors’
- some long and complex sentences
- several proper nouns
- introductory clauses and prepositional phrases
- sophisticated punctuation, e.g., colon, question mark, brackets, and hyphens

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- synthesizing

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- predicting
- making connections: text to self

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- sharing ideas
- making predictions from text and picture cues
- rap or short poem (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- applies range of word solving strategies to read multi-syllabic words (Word Solving and Building)
- uses knowledge of root verbs to read simple past and continuous past tenses
- recognizes the power of adjectives to add descriptive details

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student’s ability to:

- read independently and silently when reading for meaning
- process some lengthy, complex sentences
- connect ideas to background knowledge
- identify and verbalize the main ideas in the text
- use context clues to solve unknown words

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Synthesizing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

BEFORE READING

Making Connections

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Tell students that they are going to be reading about the history of fire—when and how it was discovered and some of the important things it allowed people to do. Ask students to discuss in pairs what they already know about fire. Have them share facts and then choose one each to report back to the group. When reporting, ask students, *Where and when did you learn this fact? Can you explain why you believe it is true?*

ESL NOTE: Comprehending a non-fiction text and recalling details is much more challenging than fiction as most of the vocabulary is content based. To check for comprehension, allow students to read with a partner and have them reiterate some of the facts on each page.

Text Features

Introduce supports and challenges

- Invite students to look at the piece. Ask, *Do you think this is a fiction or non-fiction text? Why do you think so?* Encourage students to look at the graphics, layout, and opening paragraph to support their answers.
- Ask students to look closely at the photos on the front and the section headings. Ask, *What do you notice on this page? Look carefully at the images. What do you think this text might be about?* Direct students to look at the second page. Ask, *Does this page give you any more clues about the text? Do you think it will be easier or harder to find information on page two?* Have students share specific examples to support their ideas.

Making Connections and Predicting

- Write the word ‘prehistoric’ on the board and have the students read the word. Say, The prefix ‘pre’ means ‘before.’ Ask, *What other word can you see in the word ‘prehistoric’? What do you think this word might mean? What do you think it means if something is described as ‘prehistoric’?*
- Write the words ‘wildfires’ and ‘firefighters’ on the board and have the students read the words. Explain to the students that these words are called compound words because they are made up of two words joined together. Ask, *What other compound words can you think of?* Have students provide examples and say what two words have been joined together. Make a list on the board and ask students whether the meaning of the two root words helps us to understand the meaning of the compound word. Ask students to explain their reasoning.

Word Solving and Building

Set a purpose for reading

- Say, *As you read this text, I would like you to think about the author’s main idea in each section.* (Students can be encouraged to jot these down as they read through the text). Once they have finished reading, ask students to write down a sentence or two which summarizes the main idea of the entire text.

Synthesizing

Provide for early finishers

- Encourage students to make a list of all of the adjectives, or describing words, the author uses. Ask them to come up with a synonym, or similar word, for each example that they find.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have individual students read aloud portions of the text to you. Assist with word solving, comprehension, and vocabulary. Provide appropriate comprehension prompts:
 - *What do you think a 'controlled' fire is? How is this different from a wildfire?*
 - *How is it possible for fire to change our brains? What do you think about that scientific idea? Give some examples from the text to support your thinking.*
- Give feedback to students on their success in comprehending, decoding, or analyzing words.

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Synthesizing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Note any successful reading strategies you observe, e.g., using context within a sentence or paragraph to work out the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary, using graphics and illustrations to predict meaning of words.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Ask, *What do you think the main ideas in the text were? Give specific examples and explain why.* (Students can refer back to their jot notes of the main ideas from reading each section.)
- Ask, *What new information have you learned? What else would you like to know, now that you have read this text?* Again, ask students to give specific examples from the text to explain what they would like to find out.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Your observations while students were reading will help you to identify particular challenges. At this point, discuss and clarify, e.g., a difficult word or comprehension issue. Have students had difficulty with words seldom used in oral language? How have they attempted to read them and solve them for meaning?

Note successful strategy use

- Comment on any particularly successful strategy use, e.g., *I liked the way that Henry used the meaning of the whole paragraph to figure out what 'nutrition' meant. He thought about the connection with food and cooking from the paragraph. Looking at the context helps you to infer the meaning of new words.*

FOCUSED REREADING

The following options are provided for focused rereading in the next Guided Reading lesson. Choose an activity that meets the needs of your students, or select a Reader Response activity from the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.

**Synthesizing and
Predicting**

Written

- Ask students to draw a timeline of the history of fire, and to add on their predictions for the uses of fire in the next 100/1000/10 000 years.

**Synthesizing and
Predicting**

Artistic

- Ask students to use the information from the text, or from their predictions on their timeline, to design a new entry to add to page 2 of the existing report.

Synthesizing

Oral/dramatic

- Students could write a rap or short poem to either describe fire or summarize the history of fire. Have them rehearse and perform their rap or poem to the group.