



A DUSTY LIFE

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TEXT TYPE: Info-fiction: Description—Report
GUIDED READING LEVEL: 0

SUMMARY: Dust is everywhere—in the air, in our homes, and even on us! This info-fiction selection provides a factual reference on what dust is, types of dust, and the best ways to deal with dust; paralleling the information in the main text is a comic strip, detailing the adventures of a boy trying to rid his home of dust.

Note: You may want to focus only on a spread or a specific feature of the text rather than covering this info-fiction text in its entirety.

TEXT FEATURES

- glossary
- chapters
- text boxes
- bolded words
- ellipses
- comic strip

VISUAL LITERACY

- table of contents
- illustrations
- speech bubbles
- diagrams

TEXT SUPPORTS

- short chapters

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- use of ellipses
- layout of text; factual information and a comic strip occur side-by-side
- scientific explanation of how dust helps us see different colours
- reading text boxes

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- making connections: text to self, text to text

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- evaluating

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Think-Pair-Share strategy
- discussing with a partner
- discussing with a group
- responding to questions
- Radio Show (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- high frequency words: recognizes important words linked to other curriculum areas (e.g., science)

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- activate background knowledge
- link the author's ideas with their own experiences
- link the author's ideas with other texts they have read
- compare information from two or more sources

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Making Connections Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

First Session (pages 4–13)

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

ESL NOTE: In the centre of a piece of chart paper, write the word ‘DUST.’ Have students brainstorm what they know about dust and record their answers using the web format. Some example questions to initiate discussion: *What is dust? Where does dust come from? How can you help clean up dust in your home?*

Making Connections: Text to Self

- Begin the discussion by asking students if they feel they are neat or messy. Are there times when they are really messy? Are they messier in some places (school, home) more so than in other places? Ask students if they have to clean up their own rooms, help tidy the house or have seen their parents tidy up the house. Say, *Has there been a time when your room has been really messy? What caused the room to be messy? Allow students to share their experiences.* Ask, *Do you or your parents clean your room or your house when it is messy?* Introduce the word ‘dusty.’ Say, *We often hear the word dusty when people talk about tidying their home. What does the word dusty mean?* The prompts and questions will further help students draw connections to the text they are about to read and their own lives.

TEACHING TIP: To help students develop sensitivity and an understanding of respecting their own privacy and that of others, remind them of the importance of sharing experiences that would not embarrass others. A good way to encourage open dialogue while not sharing inappropriate examples is to tell students to think about how they would feel if someone was sharing the same story about them. Would they feel good if certain personal stories were shared about them? Would it hurt their feelings? It is important to encourage the idea of respect for others.

Evaluating

Introduce supports and challenges

- Say, *When we read a book, we all read it a little differently. The type of book we are reading also affects the way we read. We read a fiction book differently than a non-fiction book. Can anyone tell me why we read the two types of text differently (fiction is usually read for pleasure, non-fiction is usually read to find information)?* Providing students with the opportunity to think about how they read is an important part of the reading process. Allow students to discuss past experiences with reading fiction and non-fiction.
- Tell students the book they are about to read is called ‘info-fiction.’ Ask students what info-fiction means (contains both fiction and non-fiction). Direct students’ attention to pages 8–9. Ask, *Why do you think the text is organized this way? Do you think the format will help you in understanding the information presented in the text? Extend students’*

explanation by pointing out that each page in the book contains facts and information about dust, the other part of the page contains a fictional story in the form of a comic strip. The comic strip tells the story of a boy trying to rid his house of dust.

Text Features

- As a group, turn to page 8 and direct students to the text box. Ask, *Why do you think the author placed this information here? Why do you think he did not include it in the main text?* Remind students the information in the text boxes is very important and must be read. Encourage students to pay attention to the text boxes when they encounter them in the reading and to find a meaningful way to incorporate them and to help support their understanding of the book.
- Direct students' attention to the word 'microns' on page 7. Ask, *How can we find out what the word means?* Allow students to share appropriate strategies. Ask, *Is there a place in the book where you can look to find the meanings of words?* Refer students to the glossary on page 24. Ask students the purpose of a glossary. Demonstrate or ask for a student volunteer to show how to use a glossary. Depending on the familiarity of students with glossaries, turn to page 8 and let students practise finding another bold print word in the glossary.

Visual Literacy Features

- Direct students' attention to the chapter 'Beautiful Dust' on page 10. Read the question at the beginning of the chapter: 'Did you know that dust can help to give us beautiful sunrises and sunsets'? Provide students with the opportunity to provide their ideas as to how they think this might be possible. Tell them the next 4 pages provide the answer to how dust helps us see colour. Highlight the diagrams on pages 12–13. Encourage students to read very carefully when they come to this chapter and use the diagrams to help them understand the scientific explanation for sunrises and sunsets. Remind them it is important to use and understand features like these diagrams. Ask them what they could do if they seem to be experiencing difficulty interpreting the diagrams.

Set a purpose for reading

- Say, *It can really help us understand a book if you think about how the topic relates to your own life. Making connections to yourself and a text is very important.* Tell students they have to look for examples from the text that relate to their real life experience with dust.

Provide for early finishers

- Any students who finish early can pair read by taking turns rereading aloud to a partner the text to promote oral reading and fluency.

Making Connections: Text to Self

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Ask each student to read independently to the end of page 13, while thinking about the purpose set.
- Listen to individual students read aloud to you. Have students used only one strategy? Have they changed strategies during the reading? If so, why? Helping students think and talk about their reading will help to promote better comprehension and understanding.

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the *Making Connections Strategy Checklist* and the *Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record* in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Observe students' use of the glossary in helping to solve the meaning of new words. Note any successful use of the glossary and encourage students who may not be using the glossary to utilize it if needed.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Ask students if the connections they made with the text were mostly from the comic strip or the information in the main text, or from both. Does the subject matter or theme of a book affect the connections students make with a text? Discuss how background knowledge and experience affects how students feel and connect with a text. Allow students to discuss the text-to-self connections they made. As a Think-Pair-Share activity (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*) have students discuss whether they think it is harder to make connections with fiction, non-fiction, or info-fiction.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Ask, *Was it hard reading the comic strip and the information text at the same time?* Revisit the list and ask students which strategies they used. Highlight the most successful strategies. Discuss why these strategies may have been more successful. Encourage students who had difficulty reading the text to think about trying a different strategy for reading the second part of the book.
- Review and discuss any challenges students experienced. Ask students if they understand the explanation given regarding how dust helps individuals see different colours (pages 10–13). Allow some of the students to provide an explanation in their own words.

Making Connections: Text to Self

Note successful strategy use

- Highlight a student who successfully read the text, e.g., *Irae really made good use of the glossary to help her figure out new words. I saw her turn to the glossary to find the words 'decomposed' and 'currents.'* However, when she came to the word '**particle**,' Irae did not turn to the glossary. When I asked her why she did not use the glossary for the word, Irae replied she remembered the word from science. She already knew the meaning of the word '**particle**.' That was a really good example of using the glossary when you need to.

Second Session (pages 14–24)

Making Connections: Text to Self and Text to Text

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Ask a student to retell what has happened in the comic strip portion of the text thus far. Ask students how the drawings and the words of the comic both help to tell the story. Discuss with students the features of a comic (illustrations, speech balloons, humour). Find out if students read comics and, if so, which comics are their favourites. Encourage students to talk about any features of their favourite comics which are similar to the comic strip in the book. Is the comic featured in the book different from the comics they are familiar with?
- Help students make relevant connections by modelling an appropriate connection: *The comic strip reminds me of another comic strip I read in the newspaper last week. In the comic, a boy was trying to do something and his sister was always interrupting him. On pages 12 and 13, the boy's sister runs through the dust and makes a bigger mess. He is really annoyed. The boy in the comic I read the other day was really annoyed with his sister as well. This is the text-to-text connection I made.*

TEACHING TIP:

Make sure students are making connections that are relevant and meaningful in order to help comprehension. Modelling text connections is one way to help students make appropriate connections to help their understanding.

Text Features

Introduce supports and challenges

- Direct students to the ellipses on page 15 in the comic strip. Ask, *Does anyone know the name for this form of punctuation? Why is it used?* Explain to students that an ellipsis is used to show a brief pause, an idea or thought that has been left out, or the text will continue on. Have students seen an ellipsis in other texts? Ask students how an ellipsis affects how they read. Alert students to the fact there is an ellipsis found in the main text as well (on page 18).

High Frequency Words

Making Connections: Text to Text

- Turn to page 14 and ask students to find the word ‘**asteroid**.’ How many students know the meaning of the word? Ask, *Where have you heard or seen the word ‘asteroid’ before?* Explain to students the section they are about to read contains many scientific words they may be familiar with (‘**comet**,’ ‘**environment**,’ ‘**static electricity**,’ ‘**allergies**’). Scan the text and allow students to use their knowledge of science to recognize any familiar words.

Set a purpose for reading

- Explain to students that as they read the remainder of the comic strip, they should try to make a text-to-text connection. In order to provide students with support, ask if the comic strip reminds them of another comic they have read, another book they have read, or any other type of text.

Provide for early finishers

- Students who finish early can pair up and share their text-to-text connections.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Continue to ensure all portions of the text (main information, comic strip, text boxes) are being read.
- Have different students read to you and provide them with appropriate comprehension prompts, e.g., *Have you read another book like this one? Is the way the word ‘environment’ is used here different from the way you have seen it used before?*
- Provide support to students in word solving and vocabulary. Ensure students are using a variety of strategies, including both the glossary and recognizing familiar scientific words and applying them to new reading experiences, as well as appropriate strategies from other sessions. If a student is struggling with a specific word, using multiple strategies may be effective, e.g., using the glossary and recalling previous exposure to a scientific word.

Observe

- Pay attention to students reading when they encounter an ellipsis. Offer assistance if it is required.
- Give feedback on any successful use of strategies you observe. Highlighting the strategies discussed prior to reading can support individual students that might experience any difficulty in comprehension.

**Making Connections:
Text to Text**

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Ask students to share other texts this book reminds them of. Was it a connection to another comic or a book? Allow students to discuss the connection they have made to the book and other texts. Make sure students are sharing connections that might aid in their understanding of the text. Provide prompts to aid students in the discussion. Ask, *How does this book remind you of another book? Did the other book provide the same information?*

Check on outstanding challenges

- Your observations will help you work out other challenges students experienced. Did students see the purpose of the ellipses and respond appropriately to them during the reading?
- Ask students if they found any familiar science words in the text. High frequency science words should be noted by students. Did they need to check the glossary? Was the word used the same way in the text as they had seen or heard it before?

Note successful strategy use

- Explain a successful reading strategy you observed, e.g., *On page 14, Madison read the word 'comet.' I asked her how she knew the word. She told me she learned the word during a unit on space. She also told me she heard the word on a television show about space. She said she had never heard it described as a 'dirty snowball' before, as it had been described in the text.*

FOCUSED REREADING

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

Written

- Provide students with title 'My Dusty Day.' Ask students to divide a legal size piece of paper into 8 individual boxes. (Hint: The best way to do so may be to fold the paper in half once, fold it in half a second time, and fold it in half one last time). Ask students to create a comic strip where they are the main character and have to deal with a dusty situation. Be sure students are aware of the features of a comic (strong illustrations, speech balloons, humour) and include them in the comic. Provide feedback to students on what parts could be improved on (organization, relevance, and depth of content).

**Making Connections:
Text to Self**

Artistic

Synthesizing

- Direct students' attention to the diagrams on pages 12–13. Explain to students they will be using the information and the diagram to create a piece of art. Allow students to create a picture (paint, crayons, leads, pastels) to show the various shades of blue in the sky (page 12) on a bright sunny day, or the shades of red (page 13) at sunrise or sunset.

Oral/dramatic

Synthesizing

- Working in pairs, students will write and perform a short radio show about dust to read to other classmates. One partner will be the interviewer, the other will be an interviewee. The show will be a science information show. The interviewer will ask the interviewee, an expert on dust, questions about dust. Remind students to use information from all sections of the text. The interview can be taped and played to the entire class.