



POCKETFUL OF FUR

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TEXT TYPE: Fiction: Narrative—Realistic Story

GUIDED READING LEVEL: P

SUMMARY: This book is about a family who rescues wild animals. Max's parents bring home an orphaned baby squirrel, Woody. Woody manages to cause trouble at their home, as well as problems in the neighbourhood. Max and his neighbour, Mrs. Baxter, save the day by transferring Woody to a safe, wooded area.

TEXT FEATURES

- chapter headings

VISUAL LITERACY

- illustrations

TEXT SUPPORTS

- narrative story structure
- illustrations

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- difficult vocabulary, e.g., 'ornithological,' 'enthusiastic,' 'sympathetically'
- compound and hyphenated words, e.g., 'sunflower,' 'woodwork' 'mini-dachshund,' 'good-sized,' 'free-range,' 'part-time'
- complex sentence structures

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- making connections: text to self, text to text, text to world

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- predicting
- synthesizing

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Say Something strategy
- discussing with a group
- creating a tableau from a scene in the story (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- language predictability: uses context and strategies such as background knowledge, reading on, and using a dictionary to determine word meanings
- word solving and building: uses a range of strategies to read multi-syllabic words, including chunking words into parts and noticing a familiar word embedded within the longer word
- word solving and building: recognizes and understands a wide range of compound and multi-syllabic words and is able to chunk less familiar ones into single words

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- combine prior knowledge with information from the text
- make inferences
- confirm predictions
- use multiple words strategies to solve unknown words and determine their meaning

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Making Connections Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

First Session (pages 2–17)

BEFORE READING

ESL NOTE: Introduce some vocabulary and expressions that are found in the text: ‘got up with the birds,’ ‘flower child,’ ‘terrariums,’ ‘urban legend.’

Making Connections: Text to Self, Text to Text, and Text to World

Word Solving and Building and Language Predictability

Making Connections: Text to Self, Text to Text, and Text to World

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Show students the front cover of the book. Read the title, author’s and illustrator’s names, and back cover text. Using the Say Something strategy and the Making Connections stems provided, (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*) have students complete and record each sentence stem based on their own experiences. Then ask, *How did you complete the sentence starter, ‘This reminds me of...’?* Discuss responses.

Introduce supports and challenges

- Point out the word ‘ornithological’ on page 4. Ask, *How would you say this word? What strategies would you use? How could you find out what it means?* With students’ assistance, solve the word using chunking, syllabication, and prior knowledge of word parts. Instruct students that they can read on to discover the word’s meaning, or they can use a dictionary.

Set a purpose for reading

- Remind students how they completed the sentence starter, ‘This story reminds them of ...’ Have students read pages 2–17 to confirm similarities or differences.

Provide for early finishers

- Ask students to find another word within the first two chapters with a meaning they do not know, and to look it up using a dictionary.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Monitor students as they read aloud, assisting them with word solving, vocabulary, punctuation, and comprehension queries. Provide prompts such as, *I noticed you had difficulty with ‘well-tended.’ Do you recognize any of those words? How do they help you understand the meaning of the entire word?*

Observe

- Note any successful reading strategies you observe, e.g., students making a connection to the text.

Making Connections: Text to Self, Text to Text, and Text to World

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Have students compare their completed stem sentences with what occurred in the first two chapters. Confirm similarities and/or differences.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Point out other challenging words, such as ‘plummeted’ and ‘triumphantly’ on page 6. Have students describe the strategies they used to understand those words.

Note successful strategy use

- Explain a successful use of strategy you observed, e.g., *I liked how Arif read ‘migration’ and then read the next sentence to help him figure out the word.*

Optional Approach

Making Connections: Text to Self

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). It is recommended that you do some diagnostic work with students or hold a book discussion halfway through to check their comprehension of the text.

Setting a Purpose

As students read the text, they are to keep in mind how they completed the sentence starters from the Say Something activity. As students read through the text, have them note any similarities and differences.

Second Session (pages 18–23)

Synthesizing

Making Connections: Text to Text and Text to World

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Review with students what has occurred in the first two chapters. Create a sentence that summarizes each chapter and add the sentences to a summary chart.
- Read aloud the sentence starter, ‘This character Woody is like _____ because...’ Ask, *How would you complete this sentence? What character does Woody remind you of?* Compare Woody to other animal characters, such as Curious George and The Cat in the Hat, and complete the sentence starter using students’ suggestions.

Visual Literacy Features

Making Connections: Text to Text and Text to World

Making Connections: Text to Text and Text to World

Introduce supports and challenges

- Look at the illustration on page 21. Ask students, *What does it have to say about this part of the book?*

Set a purpose for reading

- Have students read pages 18–23, noting any similarities or differences between Woody and their chosen character.

Provide for early finishers

- Have students jot a comparison or difference they noted between Woody and another animal character they know about.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have a student read a portion of the text aloud. Provide prompts, e.g., *Was there anything in this section that you connected with? How does that help you understand the story better?*

Observe

- Note any successful reading strategies you observed, e.g., *I noticed that when Lia read ‘Maximum’ she recognized ‘Max’ and broke the rest of the word into syllables.*

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Have students compare their completed sentences, ‘This character Woody is like _____ because...’ to the events in pages 18–23. Continue to confirm similarities and differences.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Your observations will help you work out other challenges students experienced. Discuss and clarify a difficult word or a comprehension issue.

Note successful strategy use

- Highlight an observed successful reading strategy, e.g., *I think Andre made a good connection when comparing Woody to Curious George and the trouble he got into.*

Third Session (pages 24–50)

Synthesizing

Visual Literacy Features

Making Connections: Text to Self

Making Connections: Text to Self

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Review with students what has occurred in chapter 3. Create a sentence that summarizes the chapter and add it to the summary chart.

Introduce supports and challenges

- Have students look at the picture on page 33. Ask, *Does this picture help you understand what might have happened?*

Set a purpose for reading

- Have students read pages 24–50, keeping in mind how they think they relate to Woody. Remind them to note any similarities or differences between themselves and Woody as they are reading.

Provide for early finishers

- Encourage students to locate a sentence that demonstrates how they relate to Woody.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have a student read aloud a portion of the text about one of the characters. Ask, *Can you relate to this character? Why do you think you feel this way?*

Observe

- Observe and listen to students as they read the text, noting their ability to decode unfamiliar words and their use of word-solving strategies.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Have students compare their completed sentences, ‘I can relate to this character because...’ to the events in pages 24–50. Discuss students’ reasons for identifying with their chosen characters, including Woody.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Review and discuss any difficulties students experienced. Have students use dictionaries or other reference materials to help them solve unfamiliar and challenging words, e.g., ‘abandoned,’ ‘competition,’ and ‘cauldron.’

Note successful strategy use

- Note any successful reading strategies you observed, e.g., students looking at pictures to assist in understanding the text's content.

Fourth Session (pages 51–63)

Synthesizing

Word Solving and Building

Making Connections: Text to Self

Making Connections: Text to Self

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Review with students what has occurred in chapters 4–8. Create a sentence that summarizes each chapter and add these sentences to the summary chart.

Introduce supports and challenges

- Ask students to scan page 52 for the compound word 'environmental-protection.' Solve its meaning together using multiple strategies, such as chunking, using known or embedded words, syllabication, and context clues. Continue for other words, such as 'complaint' (page 54) and 'pest-control' (page 55).

Set a purpose for reading

- Have students read pages 51–63, keeping mind what they think this story is similar to. Connections might include enjoying time with a neighbour or enjoying their grandmother's baking.

Provide for early finishers

- Encourage students to note a sentence that relates to a personal experience.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have a student read aloud a portion of the text about Mrs. Baxter. Ask, *Can you relate to this character? Why do you think you feel this way?*

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*.)

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Have students compare their completed sentences, 'This story is similar to...' to the events in pages 51–63.

Fifth Session (pages 64–72)

Check on outstanding challenges

- Discuss difficult sentence structures, for example, on page 59, ‘I was just exaggerating, adding some extra quirks for effect’!

Note successful strategy use

- Ask students to describe for the group the reading strategies they used to overcome difficulties that arose.

Synthesizing

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Review with students what has occurred in chapters 9 and 10. Create a sentence that summarizes these chapters and add these sentences to the summary chart.

Introduce supports and challenges

- Ask, *What have you learned so far from the story? Create a record of students’ responses on a board for students to refer to as they are reading.*

Predicting

Set a purpose for reading

- Have students predict how they think the book might end. Have them record these predictions and keep them in mind while reading

Provide for early finishers

- Have students note a text passage that confirms or disproves their prediction.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Give students feedback on their successes and any areas that may need attention.

Observe

- Note and commend any successful use of reading strategies, e.g., successfully using a word-solving strategy discussed to figure out the meaning of an initially unfamiliar word.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

Predicting

- Confirm any successful predictions.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Your observations will help you work out challenges that continue to pose difficulty to some students.

Note successful strategy use

- Highlight a student who remembered to follow up on their initial prediction.

Optional After Reading

Synthesizing

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.

Compare how Max felt about Mrs. Baxter at the beginning of the story to how he felt at the end.

Evaluating

Ask students to discuss the following statement using information from the text to support their responses: Animals born in the wild should live in the wild. Ask, *Has your opinion changed from before you read this story?*

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

Synthesizing

- Have students write a newspaper article about this human interest story using the 5 Ws and H. Encourage students to compose sentences of different lengths, using conjunctions such as ‘because’ and ‘if.’

Artistic

Making Connections: Text to Self

- Have students conduct research on the Internet or other sources on how they can help Canadian wildlife in their own backyard or community. Then students can create a poster or brochure. Encourage students to include pictures to capture the reader’s interest. Display completed posters or brochures.

Oral/dramatic

Inferring

- Have small groups of students take on the roles of characters in the book. Ask each group of students to recreate a scene from the story and create a tableau. Each student represents their character, using the appropriate expressions and body language. Each group takes a turn presenting their tableau while the rest of the class identifies the scene in the story.