



THE ZARG RULE

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TEXT TYPE: Fiction: Narrative—Fantasy Story
GUIDED READING LEVEL: P

SUMMARY: A young girl named P149 questions the laws of this futuristic society, called Cratern, which only looks to the future under the rule of the Zarg. Her mother, L42, tells her that she should not question Zarg law. However when her grandmother, D18, shares a book with her that has the words 'Vox et praeterea nihil' written in it, P149 wonders what these words mean. When P149 discovers the meaning and power of these words, she is able to help the Cratern society free itself of Zarg law and become a free society.

TEXT FEATURES

- dialogue
- italics

VISUAL LITERACY

- supportive illustrations

TEXT SUPPORTS

- clear, sequential plot
- bright, dynamic layout

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- multi-syllabic words, e.g., 'identification,' 'anxiously,' 'disapproved,' 'fascinated'
- phrase in Latin ('*Vox et praeterea nihil*')
- extensive use of dialogue to relate the events of the story
- sentence complexity
- numerical names for characters

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- sequencing

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- predicting
- synthesizing

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Say Something strategy
- discussing with a group
- discussing with a partner
- sharing ideas
- tableau re-enactment of the story (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: able to effectively use strategies to read multi-syllabic words
- language predictability: integrates meaning, grammatic and visual sound cues effectively to word solve

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- retell the story in sequence accurately and with details
- develop and revise personal story predictions based on information gained through reading
- summarize key ideas in story to create a personal account of events
- recognize and analyze multi-syllabic words
- incorporate multiple strategies to word solve

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Sequencing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

First Session (pages 3–16)

Predicting and Making Connections: Text to World

Word Solving and Building and Language Predictability

Sequencing

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Show students the front of the book (but not the back cover) and read the title aloud. Ask students when this story may take place and what they know about rules. Hold a discussion about why we need rules and who makes up these rules. Create a list with students' responses.
- Based on the cover and the previous discussion on rules and authority, ask students if they can predict what the girl depicted thinks about rules. Add to the discourse by asking, *What do you think all those eyes on the cover mean? Why do you think there are so many cameras focused on the girl?*

Introduce supports and challenges

- On a white board, write out the following words: 'celebration,' 'nervously,' and 'insisted.' Demonstrate to students how they can break the words into syllables to read them. Instruct them to use this method when they encounter multi-syllabic words in the story.
- On a white board, write the Latin phrase '*Vox et praeterea nihil.*' Ask students how they might pronounce this phrase. Explain that it is written in another language and that in their reading, they will come across this phrase.

Set a purpose for reading

- Ask students to think about the sequence of story events that helps solve this mystery as they are reading pages 3–16. Be sure to encourage students to think about how the characters in this story interact with one another.

Provide for early finishers

- Ask any student who finishes reading early to jot down the order of events so far to help them infer the reasons behind the mysterious story of Cratern's society. They might discuss with another early finisher if there is time.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- As students read independently, have them read a portion of the text aloud to you. Where needed, assist with word-solving strategies for multi-syllabic words as demonstrated in the previous white board exercise. Ask a comprehension question about sequencing, such as: *How did this story begin? Can you explain in order the events that have happened so far in the story?*
- Ask students what the word ‘bugged’ could mean—is there more than one meaning? Read the second paragraph on page 4 aloud. Ask students what the word ‘bugged’ means in the context of this paragraph. Discuss with students how they decided which meaning of the word ‘bugged’ best made sense in this story. Point out to students that, as they read, they will need to think about the context of the story to make sense of it.
- Provide positive feedback to each student you listen to on their successes, and highlight an area they may need to work on.
- On your prompt, have students stop and turn to a partner and ‘Say Something’ using the predicting stems (see Oral Language Studies in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*).

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Sequencing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Note any successful reading strategies you observe, e.g., deconstructing multi-syllabic words in the story to figure out unfamiliar words.

AFTER READING

ESL NOTE: Some students may come from countries with strict laws enforcing how people dress, what they read, where they go, who they talk to, what they say, and so on. Ask, *What would happen if people broke any of the rules?* Discuss the similarities and differences between the characters living under the futuristic Zarg rule in the story and laws enforced around the world today.

Sequencing

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Ask students to share what they have learned about the sequence of events that have occurred so far in the story that might help them solve the mystery of the Zarg. On chart paper, record students’ responses (be sure to save this chart for the next session).

Check on outstanding challenges

- Discuss with students how the author has used a lot of dialogue to move the story along. Ask students if they think this was the best way to write the story. Be sure students provide reasoning for their answers.
- Discuss and clarify any other challenges students experienced that you noted from your observations.

TEACHING TIP: Have students think about their predictions and see if they would like to alter them. Next, with a partner, students share their predictions, explaining why they have made them. In a larger group, have students share their current predictions and reasons for them.

Note successful strategy use

- Invite students to share a strategy they used to overcome any challenges as they were reading.
- Explain a successful reading strategy you observed, e.g., *I noticed that as Miriam came across the word ‘Artifacts,’ she had difficulty reading it and chose to break it into smaller, more manageable chunks. After she had done this, she reread the sentence so that she was able to make sense of what she had read.*

Second Session (pages 17–32)

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Ask students what they discovered about rules and rule-makers in relationship to the story.
- Have students provide a brief summary of events thus far in the story, referring to the sequencing charts created during the previous After Reading session. Discuss with students what they think they know about the story’s plot and the relationships between the characters.

Introduce supports and challenges

- On a white board, write the following words from page 17: ‘identification,’ ‘researching,’ and ‘validated.’ Review with students how they can break these words into syllables to help them when reading multi-syllabic words.

Evaluating

Sequencing

Word Solving and Building

Sequencing

Set a purpose for reading

- Continue filling in the first session's sequencing chart. Students will need to continue to think about the sequence of events to help solve the mystery.

Provide for early finishers

- Students who finish reading early can continue to think about the sequence of events and jot down a basic timeline to demonstrate the series of important events in the history of Cratern. They can share their work later when the class completes the story sequence chart together.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- As students read independently, have them read a portion of the text to you. Where needed, assist with word-solving strategies for multi-syllabic words, as demonstrated in the Before Reading session. Ask comprehension questions about sequencing, such as: *How have the middle events helped with solving the mystery? Can you explain, in order, the events thus far in the story?*
- Read the following sentence from page 17 aloud: *'P149's fingers trembled on the keyboard.'* Ask students to explain what kind of keyboard the author is referring to and how they know it isn't another type of keyboard. Ask, *What other kind of keyboards are there?* Remind students that, as they read, they need to be thinking about the context of the story so that they are better able to comprehend it.
- Provide positive feedback to each student you listen to on their successes and an area they may need to work on.

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Sequencing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Note any successful reading strategies you observe, e.g., consideration of context when synthesizing words that have more than one meaning.

AFTER READING

Sequencing

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Complete the story sequence chart as a class. Ask early finishers that might have worked on their own timelines to share their ideas to help complete the chart.

ESL NOTE: Simplify the story sequence chart for ESL students in the earlier stages of English acquisition by reducing the chart to two or three headings (e.g. Problem and Solution) or changing the headings to Beginning, Middle, and End. Add a final box asking students to show how Cratern life might be now that the Zarg rule has ended.

- Do students think the sequence of events makes a difference in the telling of this story? If the story were told from the very beginning of Cratern's creation, would there still be mystery for readers?

Check on outstanding challenges

- Discuss with students the effectiveness of using the unexplained Latin phrase within the story. *Would it have been as interesting if the author had told us the meaning of this phrase right at the beginning?*

Note successful strategy use

- Invite students to share a strategy they used to overcome any challenges as they were reading.
- Point out a successful reading strategy you observed, e.g., *I really thought Dominic did a great job of using the context of the story to help him understand the meaning of the word 'viruses' on page 22.*

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 and Predicting

- Have students pretend to be one of the characters from the story. Write four different journal entries as that character, explaining how the Cratern society changed from the beginning to the end of the story. Make a fifth entry that predicts how life might be on Cratern now that Zarg rule has ended.

Making Connections: Text to Self and Inferring

- Have students select a section of the text so that they can imagine that they are communicating on an instant messenger service as one

character to another, e.g., L42 to D18, or P149 to D18. Have them write, in an instant messenger format, a conversation that they would have depending on which section of the text they have selected to write about.

Sequencing

Artistic

- Using the BLM ‘The Zarg Rule Storyboard,’ students will create a sequenced retelling of the story in a storyboard format (an explanation of what a storyboard entails is on the BLM). On one side of the page, students draw a scene, with accompanying commentary on the opposite side. As an alternative, students could work on drawing the sequence of scenes and then explain the scenes orally to a partner. Students might require several copies of the BLM to complete this activity.
- Students can create a timeline based on the story and events. On a chalkboard, model for students a basic linear timeline, with points of interest marked in sequential order relevant to whatever subject you choose to model. On coloured paper, or larger sheet paper, students can create their own timeline with notable events of the text written in sequence along the timeline. Illustrations or creative artwork can accompany each point on the timeline. Students can produce several drafts if they miss something they would like to represent on their timeline.

Sequencing

Oral/dramatic

- In small groups, students work on developing a series of tableaux, which will help to retell the story. Each student in the group will take turns narrating and then explaining a tableau. When a student is engaged in narrating/explaining the tableau to the class, they will not be a part of the tableau being discussed; they will be involved only in the oral recounting of the scene.
- In partners, students select a section of the text to act out using a variety of interesting voices to accommodate the characters portrayed in their chosen section. A good example to demonstrate this with would be pages 14–17, where P149 talks with the Zarg.

The Zarg Rule Storyboard

Name: _____

Pretend that you are going to create a movie of The Zarg Rule. First, you will need to make a storyboard. A storyboard is a set of pictures explaining what will happen in each scene. In the empty box, draw the scene that the audience would see. In the lines below it, write what a narrator would say about the scene. Be sure to include as much detail as you think is needed for others to understand the sequence of events in The Zarg Rule. Don't forget to include a title for each scene!



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