



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU FLUSH?

Illustrations by Steve MacEachern



TEXT TYPE: Non-fiction: Description—Poster
GUIDED READING LEVEL: Q

SUMMARY: This poster examines what occurs to waste once a toilet is flushed. Depending on where you live—in the country or in the city—two very different things can happen to sewage after it leaves a home.

TEXT FEATURES

- headings
- subheadings

VISUAL LITERACY

- illustrations
- diagrams
- labels

TEXT SUPPORTS

- strong illustration support
- fact boxes
- divided layout, focusing separately on country and city

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- technical vocabulary
- large amount of information presented in a condensed format

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- sequencing

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- analyzing
- self-monitoring

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Ranking Ladder strategy
- discussing with a partner
- discussing with a group
- trivia game show (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: uses meaning connections to solve a range of unfamiliar words and construct meanings, e.g., 'drainage pipes,' 'Drainfield'

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- recognize the importance of the order of events
- link information in an ordered way
- recognize text signals indicating order
- identify how the author shows order
- self-monitor to better understand content

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Sequencing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

Sequencing

- Show students the poster and read the title. Ask if they think a specific order or sequence will be important in looking at the text. Present students with an example of a simple and familiar activity that requires an ordered sequence, e.g., following a recipe, building a doghouse, brushing their teeth. Depending on the example you select, you may say, *I am going to give you an example of an activity that has steps that must be done in a certain order. If you are going to make a sandwich, (follow any recipe, build a doghouse, or any other appropriate example) you follow specific steps. I want you to think of the steps involved in making a sandwich.* Give students a few minutes to discuss with a partner steps to making a sandwich.

Self-monitoring

- Ask students, *Why is it important for you to think about and keep track of your understanding of a text?* Allow students to share their thoughts. If it is not mentioned, explain to students they must be able to check their own understanding so they can use appropriate strategies to help themselves if they experience difficulties. Suggest some simple questions students can ask themselves as they read: *Do I understand this text? Does this diagram make sense to me? Should I reread this section?*

TEACHING TIP: Expecting students to be able to think and talk about their thinking (metacognition) is an important part of reading comprehension. As much as possible, model ways to think about your thinking. Encourage students, as they self-monitor their reading, to try to use strategies to help them solve any problems they may be having as they read.

Sequencing

Introduce supports and challenges

- Ask students, *Can a short text contain a lot of information?* Discuss with students that text formats, such as a poster, can be short and still contain a lot of information. Ask, *What are some ways you can deal with a lot of information in a text that has a certain order or sequence?* As a Ranking Ladder activity, (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*) instruct students to share any strategies they have for reading and understanding a lot of information presented in a short text. Allow a few minutes for students to share and rank their ideas in small groups, and afterwards select a member from each group to share their top ideas with the rest of the class. Supplement their suggestions with the following, if needed:
 - look at illustrations and diagrams
 - think of the order
 - put the steps in order
 - look for signals (numbers, e.g., 1, 2, 3, or bullets) or signal words (first, second, third)
 - think about what happens before/after
 - reread

Word Solving and Building

- Ask students the meaning of the word ‘drain.’ Direct them to the ‘Country’ side of the poster and ask them to look for words containing the word drain in them (‘drainage pipe,’ ‘Drainfield’). Ask students how knowing the word ‘drain’ and its meaning may help them in solving and understanding new words containing drain in them. Ask students to practise the modelled ‘drain’ example for other words where they might use meaning connections, e.g., ‘Secondary.’

Visual Literacy Features

- Explain to students the text contains many words related to sewage that may be new to them. Refer students to the labels and diagrams. Specifically, point to the word ‘sludge’ in the septic tank diagram. Ask, *How can the diagram help us figure out the meaning of this word (shows a picture of the location, colour, and general appearance of the substance)?* Encourage students to use the labels and illustrated diagrams to help them figure out the meaning of technical vocabulary.

Sequencing

Set a purpose for reading

- Tell students they will be reading to identify the sequence in which sewage travels in the country and in the city.

ESL NOTE: Allow students the choice of writing notes in a sequencing graphic organizer while reading.

Provide for early finishers

- Any students who finish early can take turns rereading the text to a partner, identifying the order sewage disposal follows in the country and in the city.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Ensure students understand the sequence of events of what happens to sewage from the time it leaves the home, both in the country and in the city. Be sure to provide supportive prompts to students requiring them. You may say, *You just finished one of the steps, now pay attention to the next one you are about to read.* Remind students to think about clues presented in the text. Ask, *Are there any signal words that tell us about the order?* The diagrams are strong in the text, so remind students to use these to help in sequencing.

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*.)

AFTER READING

Sequencing

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Provide students with the opportunity to share their understanding of what happens to waste in both the country and city. Discuss the events in each area and attempt to come to a consensus on four major steps in either or both of the sewage systems. Following an agreement, chart the four major steps in order, on chart paper or on a whiteboard. Use numbers to represent each step in the process.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Review the observations made during the reading to determine any areas students had difficulties with.

Note successful strategy use

- Highlight a student who successfully reads the text, e.g., *I thought Leigh did a terrific job self-monitoring. Leigh was having trouble with ‘The Secondary Stage’ under the ‘City’ heading. She did not understand what happened to the waste during this stage. She told me she asked herself, ‘What is happening in the diagram?’ After carefully looking at the diagram again, she said, ‘It makes sense to me now, the waste goes to the digester and then goes to the trucks.’*

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*.

Sequencing

Written

- Using a format different from the charts created in the After Reading discussion, (either bullets or signal words, not numbers) ask students to write the sequence of what happens in the sewage system.

Sequencing

Artistic

- Ask students to select one of the methods of getting rid of waste and to design their own interpretation of it. The basic steps and system should be accurate as per the poster, but encourage students to add their own voice or creative ideas to their diagram or model, making it unique.

Synthesizing

Oral/dramatic

- From each text box, as well as the main text, think of trivia questions and place each question and answer on a cue card or piece of paper. One student gathers all the cards and acts as the host, while two or more students can become the contestants on ‘Toilet Bowl Trivia.’ To add humour to this activity, encourage students to come up with interesting, but appropriate, names for the host, contestants, and for the show should they choose to do another.