



WOOD DETECTIVE

TEXT TYPE: Non-fiction: Explanation—Question and Answer
GUIDED READING LEVEL: Q

SUMMARY: Dendrochronology is the study of tree growth rings to find the age and origin of wood. In this text, Peter Ratcliff shares his experience with dendrochronology as he works to date instruments.

TEXT FEATURES

- headings
- subheadings
- text boxes

VISUAL LITERACY

- photographs
- captions
- text boxes
- varying fonts and colours of print

TEXT SUPPORTS

- headings
- subheadings
- pronunciation key

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- some difficult vocabulary, e.g., ‘dendrochronology,’ ‘dendrochronologist,’ ‘cellos,’ ‘extraordinarily,’ ‘archaeologist’

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- self-monitoring

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- analyzing
- synthesizing

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- sharing ideas
- Think-Pair-Share strategy
- Mock interview

WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: using meaning to solve unfamiliar words (e.g., knowing ‘chronology’ can help with the word ‘chronologist’)

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student’s ability to:

- self-question and use fix-up strategies
- skim and use the subheadings and questions to locate information
- use context clues and word chunks to figure out unknown words
- understand text and visual literacy features in non-fiction

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Self-Monitoring Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

BEFORE READING

Making Connections

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Introduce students to the text by activating their prior knowledge. Ask, *Where does wood come from? Think of something that is made from wood in your home. How does wood look different than other materials?*

ESL NOTE:

Review any unfamiliar vocabulary prior to reading. If possible, have items made from wood for students to look at.

Text Features

Introduce supports and challenges

- Invite students to look at the text and read the title. Ask, *Do you think this is a fiction or non-fiction text? Why do you think so?* Encourage students to use evidence from the text and their own ideas to support their answers.
- Ask students to think about the title. *What do you think a wood detective does?* Have students skim over the subheadings and questions. Ask, *What do you think we will learn as we read this text?*

Visual Literacy Features

- Have students look at the pictures and the captions. Ask, *How do the pictures and captions help you understand the text?*

Word Solving and Building

- Ask students to focus on the word ‘dendrochronology’ on the first page. Use the pronunciation key to read the word together. Then explain how breaking a word into chunks can help you figure out the word and think about the meaning. Provide the definition of ‘dendro’ (relating to trees) and then ‘chronology’ (arranging dates in the order of their occurrence). Ask, *What do you think ‘dendrochronology’ means?*

Self-Monitoring

Set a purpose for reading

- Explain to students that as they read, you want them to think about how the subheadings and the questions on pages 3–4 help them to organize information and self-monitor as they read. Ask, *What do you notice about the subheadings and the questions? How can we use these to monitor our understanding of the text? While you read, use the subheadings and questions to help you summarize the information in the text.*

Provide for early finishers

- Any students who finish early can share, with a partner, the new words and facts they have learned from the text.

Self-Monitoring

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have a student read a portion of the text aloud to you. Note the word solving strategies used as the student negotiates the text. Do they use the subheadings and the questions to support self-monitoring? You can also model self-monitoring. For example, *When I read a section, I can ask myself: what is the key idea? If I cannot answer the question, I can go back and reread the section.*
- Give feedback to students on successes and any areas they need support with.

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Self-Monitoring Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Note any successful reading strategies you observe, e.g., self-monitoring, analyzing, synthesizing, and utilizing word solving strategies, such as chunking words.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Review how this text provided information on being a wood detective. Using the Think-Pair-Share strategy, ask students to think on their own for a moment about the questions below. Then ask them to share with an elbow partner. Select students to share their answers with the class.
 - *How does Peter Ratcliff use dendrochronology?*
 - *How do tree rings help Peter determine an instrument's age and where it came from?*
 - *What tools does Peter use to determine the age of the instruments?*
 - *Why do some people want to know the age of an instrument?*

Encourage students to use evidence from the text to support their answers.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Review any challenges that you observed while students were reading. This may include chunking words, or self-monitoring or analyzing while reading.

Note successful strategy use

- Discuss a successful strategy you observed a student using. For example, *I noticed when Kaia read the first part of the text, she shared a key idea before continuing to read.*

- Have students share how they used the subheadings and questions to support self-monitoring.

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 5 Literacy Support Guide*.

Written

Self-Monitoring

- Have students write a story about a dendrochronologist and an instrument that he or she has found in the basement of an old house.

Artistic

Synthesizing

- Have students draw tree growth rings, identify the age of the tree and any other information the tree rings provide.

Oral/dramatic

Synthesizing

- In groups of two or three, have students interview each other about an instrument they have been asked to date and share how they identified the age of the instrument.