



**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

- table of contents
- glossary
- index
- italicized and bolded words
- fact boxes

### VISUAL LITERACY

- photographs
- captions
- illustrations
- diagrams
- labels

### TEXT SUPPORTS

- photographs
- captions
- illustrations
- text boxes
- chart

### POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- dense layout
- diagrams
- scientific explanations
- understanding difference between fiction and non-fiction parts of text

# SNOWSTORM

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**TEXT TYPE:** Info-fiction: Description—Explanation/Account  
**GUIDED READING LEVEL:** S

**SUMMARY:** Amina, a young girl in Ontario, copes with a winter blizzard in this info-fiction text. From the first snowflake, to watching a snowplow clear her street, this selection looks at the cause, forecasting, and clean-up of snowstorms.

### FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- sequencing

### FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

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

### ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Place Mat strategy
- discussing with a group
- answering questions
- weather forecast (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

### WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: using knowledge of prefixes and suffixes
- word solving and building: chunking words, associating sounds, and reblending
- word solving and building: using meaning connections to solve unfamiliar words
- language predictability: using context and dictionaries to work out word meanings

### ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- recognize the importance of the order of events
- link one event with another
- recall personal connections when reading
- evaluate aspects of the text
- use text and visual features, such as diagrams, to assist in understanding

### ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Sequencing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

# First Session (pages 3–9)

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

### BEFORE READING

#### **Activate and build prior knowledge**

- Students begin the session with a Place Mat activity (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*). Organize students into groups of 4 and present each group with a piece of chart paper. Ask students to draw a circle or square in the centre of the paper and divide the rest of the paper into equal sections. Each group member gets a section of the paper. Display the cover of the book and read the title to students. Tell students they will be writing about ‘snowstorms’ on the chart paper. Ask students to think about the topic and then write about it in their section of the paper. After providing students with time to write, ask them to discuss their ideas as a group. The group must look for common elements in the written responses and come to an agreement, writing the most important points in the centre of the place mat. Each group shares their results with the class.

#### **TEACHING TIP:**

When helping students make meaningful connections with a text, draw on any sources that are relevant in students’ lives. Students receive information and view ideas from a wide variety of sources: television, magazines, the Internet, travel, and so on.

## Text Features and Sequencing

#### **Introduce supports and challenges**

## Self-monitoring and Sequencing

- As a group, turn to pages 4 and 5. Ask students to preview the two pages and highlight the different text features, e.g., main text, text box, ‘Weather?’ box, photograph, caption, illustrations. Ask, *How can all of the features on these two pages help you understand snowstorms?* What do students notice about the format of the text? Ask, *Why do you think the author presents the information this way?* Allow students an opportunity to discuss their ideas and share as a group. Ask, *How is the information linked in an ordered way? Where would you start reading here?* Remind students the information in the heading, illustration, text box, and ‘Weather?’ box is very important and must be read. In some cases the order in which these features are read is not important, but here it is helpful to read them in the order in which they are presented.
- Direct students to pages 6 and 7. Read ‘The Big Clash’ heading and ask students what they think the section could be about. After students discuss their ideas, explain the section is about the cause of snowstorms. Ask students to highlight the text features that can help them understand the scientific explanation they are about to read (e.g., main text, text box, ‘Weather?’ box, diagram, caption, labels, illustrations). Discuss some reading strategies students can use to help them understand the information presented in the text. Allow students to share any strategies they have for reading and understanding this challenging scientific information. If not mentioned, present the following as suggestions to students:

## Language Predictability and Analyzing

- carefully look at diagrams
  - check the meaning of bolded words in the glossary
  - put the information in order
  - think about what happened previously
  - think about the series of steps that cause an air mass collision
  - reread
  - ask teacher and other students questions
- As a group, locate the word ‘astounding,’ located in the page 5 ‘Weather?’ box. Tell students the context—in this case, the surrounding text—can help them figure out the meaning of the word. Read the text within this box, being sure to use an enthusiastic and excited tone, which will relate to students the fascinating nature of this fact. Ask, *What type of information are we given? Did the way I read this fact give you a clue as to the nature of the information being presented to us?* Discuss how punctuation like the exclamation mark and the inclusion of Guinness World Records suggest the fact being discussed in this box is something impressive and exciting. Say, *If we look at the word ‘astounding’ in this context, what do you think it could mean?*
  - Direct students’ attention to the word ‘dendrites’ on page 5. Ask, *If you did not know this word, what are some strategies you could use to figure it out?* Allow students to share appropriate strategies. Remind students of the different strategies they can use to solve unfamiliar words. If the context of the word’s appearance does not provide clues, a dictionary might be a good tool to figure out the meaning of this word.

## Sequencing

### Set a purpose for reading

- As a group, turn to the table of contents. View the first three headings presented. Say, *We are going to be reading the text looking for the sequence or order of events that cause a snowstorm. To help us find the order of events, we are going to look at the first three headings. As you read I want you to think about each heading and link the information in an ordered way to explain the main factors that cause a snowstorm.* Provide students with sticky notes to place near parts of the text containing information on the main events that cause a snowstorm.

**ESL NOTE:** Give students the option of creating a web. Have them write ‘What Causes Snowstorms’ in the middle of a blank piece of paper and draw a cloud bubble around it. Main events that cause a snowstorm can extend out from the title.

### Provide for early finishers

- Any students who finish early can write a paragraph on a strong memory they have that relates to a snowstorm. Does their memory involve missing school? Creating forts? Or are their memories different, reflecting the seriousness of these storms?

## DURING READING

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### **Monitor reading**

- Ask students to read to the end of page 9 on their own. Select students to individually read sections of the text to determine their ability to read and understand the text based on the purpose provided for reading.
- Ensure students are using ‘Language Predictability’ strategies demonstrated earlier in the lesson. Students should be trying to use the context to figure out challenging words highlighted. Provide appropriate prompts to remind students who may require help, e.g., *What information is being presented in the sentence? Can you reread the last sentence you read to help you? How might reading on and coming back to this part of the text help you figure out the word?* Where context is not sufficient or is not working, remind students to consult a dictionary for further assistance.

### **Observe**

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Sequencing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Determine if the challenges highlighted are the ones students are having. Do students understand the explanations given regarding the cause of snowstorms? Are students using the diagrams provided to help them understand the explanation regarding snowstorms?

## AFTER READING

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### **Revisit the purpose for reading**

- Create an anchor chart with the title, ‘What causes a snowstorm?’ Using the information students identified with the sticky notes during their reading, ask students to discuss with a partner the information they highlighted. As a group, write the main steps in order to explain what occurs to cause a snowstorm. Can students identify and retell the steps in a linked, sequential way? Can students provide examples of cause and effect?

### **Check on outstanding challenges**

- Are students using the diagrams provided to help them understand the explanation regarding snowstorms? Do they find these diagrams helpful, or do they pose a challenge? Ask students, *Do diagrams like these provide assistance in understanding the text, or are they difficult to ‘read’?* If students find these diagrams more of a challenge than a support, revisit them to check students’ understanding.

### **Sequencing**

- Look at pages 8–9 with students. Ask them if the amount of information within this spread was a challenge for them. There is a lot of data and text contained in this layout, so it is important that students process it in a way that they feel comfortable with. Work with individual students who face this obstacle to scaffold their intake of this densely presented information.

### **Note successful strategy use**

- Highlight a student who successfully read the text, e.g., *When Linn was learning about warm and cold air masses she used both the diagram and the main text to help her understanding. As she read about the two types of air masses, in the main text, she looked at the diagram on the next page as well. Both the text and the diagram gave her a good understanding of the two types of air masses, and how a snowstorm may occur when they meet. Linn thought about the main events in this process and used the diagram to picture it happen. This is a nice example of sequencing and using the visual features to understand something new and unfamiliar.*

## **Second Session (pages 10–20)**

### **Making Connections: Text to Text and Text to Self**

### **Evaluating**

### **Text Features**

## **BEFORE READING**

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### **Activate and build prior knowledge**

- Ask, *Have you ever heard a weather forecast before a big storm? How did that forecast compare to the one presented in the text? Have you had to prepare for a snowstorm? What did you do to prepare for the storm?* Allow students to share their experiences. If students have not personally experienced a snowstorm, have they read other accounts of snowstorms, or viewed news reports on television?

### **Introduce supports and challenges**

- Say, *The book we are reading is called ‘info-fiction.’ What does that mean? How can you tell the difference between the parts of the book that are fiction and those which are informational?* Allow students to share their ideas. Encourage students to think about reasons why the author presented the information in this format. Do they think it was a good idea to present the information in this way? Why or why not?
- Ask students to turn to page 12. Read the first paragraph as a group. What is different about the font used in the last two questions in the paragraph, compared to the rest of the paragraph? Ask, *What is the term for font presented in this manner (italics)? Where have you seen ‘italicized’ font before? Why do authors italicize words and sentences?* Provide students with some reasons why italics are used:

## Word Solving and Building

- for titles (books, newspapers, music albums, movies, television shows) in a sentence
  - emphasis
  - new words
  - speech, or thoughts of a character
- Ask, *Why did the author italicize the words here?* If students see other examples of italics as they read the remainder of the book, ask them to identify the purpose of the italicized words based on the information presented, using the listed reasons for italics above as a guide.
- Direct students to the word ‘non-perishables’ on page 10. Model appropriate word solving strategies to help students figure out this word if they do not know its meaning. Say, *First, I have seen the prefix –non before and I know it means ‘not.’ The next three letters are ‘per’ and I also know what sound the letters ‘ish’ make. The last part of the word is the suffix –ables. I now know how to pronounce the word, but I’m not sure of its meaning. Let me look at the context. I’ll read the sentence again. The sentence is about getting ready for the storm by getting canned goods and other non-perishables at a grocery. I am thinking non-perishables are the food we find in cans; they can last a long time. Just to be sure I am going to look the word up in a dictionary. Another way I can figure out the meaning of this new word is through meaning connections. For example, I know the word ‘perish’ means to die. So if something is perishable that must mean that eventually the food will be ruined. And if something is non-perishable it must then mean that this kind of food won’t spoil before being opened. So in connecting the word ‘perish’ to ‘non-perishable’ I was able to arrive at the word’s meaning.*

## Sequencing

### **Set a purpose for reading**

- Explain to students as they read the remainder of the book they are going to place the events that happen during a storm in order: beginning, middle, and end. Students will identify the important components of each of these parts of a snowstorm.

### **Provide for early finishers**

- Students who finish early can pair up and share their sequence of events with a partner.

## DURING READING

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### **Monitor reading**

- Allow students to read to you. During their reading, provide them with appropriate comprehension prompts, e.g., *Does the information you read in the first session help you with understanding what you are reading now? Think about what is happening first, and what happens after as a result. What do you think will happen next? Can you provide examples from the text to help support your ideas?*

### **Observe**

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Sequencing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Observe students' abilities to retell the main events of a snowstorm in sequence. Can students link one event with another?

## AFTER READING

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### **Revisit the purpose for reading**

- With a partner, ask students to share what happens during different parts of a storm. After providing students with the opportunity to discuss with a partner, allow students to share their ideas as a whole group. Ask students to provide examples and give support for their answers from the text. Were there any differences among students in their ordering of events?

### **Check on outstanding challenges**

- Do students understand the parts of this text that are fiction and those that are non-fiction? Have they understood that this kind of text is called 'info-fiction'—that it is a blend of fiction and real information? Can they point out what parts are fiction and what parts are non-fiction?

### **Note successful strategy use**

- Explain a successful strategy you observed, e.g., *Lucia identified with how Amina and her family dealt with the storm. She made a connection between the text and her own life, because last year during a snowstorm her family had to deal with a power outage on her street that lasted all day. She could relate to what Amina and her family were going through during the power outage, and it was similar to her experience. This is a good text to self connection, and really got Lucia involved in the story.*

## Sequencing

## FOCUSED REREADING

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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*.

### **Making Connections: Text to Self and Synthesizing**

#### **Written**

- Ask students to write a piece of info-fiction about snowstorms in which they are the main character. Depending on how much experience students have had writing info-fiction, help them to include factual information in their writing, e.g., weather forecasting, a teacher explaining snowstorms, a parent talking about a snowstorm that happened in the past.

### **Sequencing**

#### **Artistic**

- Ask students to divide a piece of paper into three parts. Ask students to draw the same house (or building, school, store, town hall, and so on) and same details (trees, cars, fence) in each of the sections. In the first, or 'Before' section, ask students to draw the beginning of a snowstorm, with commentary on what is happening as the storm develops. Do the same for the other two sections of the paper: the 'During' and 'After' sections. Each section must contain a text box with commentary on what is transpiring in the illustration to provide information about each part of a snowstorm.

### **Synthesizing**

#### **Oral/dramatic**

- Working in small groups, students will write and present a weather forecast, providing information on a snowstorm. Some possible roles for students in each group could include a news anchor, weather forecaster, and a reporter providing information about the snowstorm.