



JOURNEY TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

Written by Jennifer Barone

TEXT TYPE: Non-fiction: Retell—Personal Account
GUIDED READING LEVEL: P

SUMMARY: Scholastic editor Jennifer Barone shares her experience of a 2.4-kilometre journey to the depths of the Pacific Ocean in the submersible *Alvin*.

TEXT FEATURES

- headings and subheadings

VISUAL LITERACY

- map
- photographs
- captions

TEXT SUPPORTS

- headings
- subheadings
- definitions within the text

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- some difficult vocabulary, e.g., 'submersible,' 'expedition,' 'hydrothermal'

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- sequencing

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- making connections: text to self and text to world
- synthesizing

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Think-Pair-Share strategy
- Say Something strategy
- sharing ideas
- short play (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: using word chunks and context clues to figure out unknown words

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- sequence the key ideas of the account
- make connections in order to help them understand the text
- 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:

- Sequencing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

BEFORE READING

Making Connections: Text to Self

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Introduce students to the text by activating their prior knowledge about the ocean. Ask, *What do you already know about the ocean? What do you think is at the bottom of the ocean? How far down do you think the bottom of the ocean is?*
- Use the Think-Pair-Share strategy. Ask students to think on their own for a moment about what they already know about the ocean. Then ask them to share with an elbow partner. Select students to share their prior knowledge with the class.

ESL NOTE: Review any unfamiliar vocabulary prior to reading. Ensure students understand what a submersible is.

Text Features

Introduce supports and challenges

- Invite students to look at the article 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.

Visual Literacy Features

- Have students look at the map, 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 ‘hydrothermal’ on the first page. Then explain how breaking a word into chunks can help you figure out the word and think about the meaning.
- Discuss the meaning of the words ‘hydro’ and ‘thermal.’ *What do you think ‘hydrothermal vent’ means?* If possible, look at images on the Internet.

Sequencing

Set a purpose for reading

- Explain to students that as they read, you want them to think about the sequence or order that the information is provided in. *You will want to think about what happened first, then second, and then third. While you read, use the subheadings to help you organize and sequence the information.*

Provide for early finishers

- Students can go back and think of one key idea from each section of the text: intro section, *Into the Water*, *Down to the Bottom*, and *At the Seafloor*.

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. Offer prompts such as, *What happened first?*

You can also model sequencing. For example, *At the beginning, Jennifer Barone was invited to see Alvin in action, then she took a three-day trip on a ship to the place in the ocean they were studying. I wonder what happens next.*

- Give feedback to students on successes and any areas they need support with.

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Sequencing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Note any successful reading strategies you observe, e.g., sequencing, making connections, and utilizing word solving strategies such as chunking words.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Review how this article provided information on exploring the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. Using the Say Something strategy (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*), offer starting points such as: *At the beginning of the article...; When they went to the study site in the ocean, they...; When they explored the bottom of the ocean...; When they returned to the surface of the ocean...*

Check on outstanding challenges

- Review any challenges that you observed while students were reading. This may include chunking words, or sequencing or making connections while reading.

Note successful strategy use

- Discuss a successful strategy you observed a student using. For example, *When Zahid saw the photo of the giant tube worms and read about them, he remembered a trip he took with his family to Australia. It reminded him of snorkelling along the Great Barrier Reef. There were so many things to see, and Zahid said he knows what the writer meant by 'you might as well be on another planet.' This is a good example of making a connection to something you know to help understand the text you are reading.*

Sequencing

- Have students share their connections to the article. *Your connection may be to something you have learned before at school, in books you have read, or movies you have watched.* Ask students, *What does this text remind you of?*

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 6 Literacy Support Guide*.

Sequencing

Written

- After discussing the connections students made to the article, have them write a journal entry to sequence Jennifer’s journey to the bottom of the ocean.

Sequencing

Artistic

- Have students create a visual timeline of Jennifer’s opportunity to experience the bottom of the ocean using text and visuals.

Inferring

Oral/dramatic

- In groups of three or four, have students create a short play of a journey to the bottom of the ocean in a submersible. Have them share with the class what they see and hear as they make their way down to the bottom and then return to the surface of the ocean.