



CHARLIE ON TOUR

Written by Janet M. Whyte
Cover illustration by Bob Doucet

TEXT TYPE: Info-fiction: Narrative—Biography
GUIDED READING LEVEL: U/V

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

- chapters
- handwritten notes and letters (including letterhead)
- performance poster
- capitalized text in telegrams
- example of text in script form
- italics
- biographical outline
- filmography
- labelled photograph of Charlie Chaplin
- suggested reading page

TEXT SUPPORTS

- sequential plot
- biographical outline
- filmography

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- contexts and vocabulary specific to Victorian England and early/mid-20th century show business
- reconstructing previous events in Charlie's and Syd's lives via inferential references in biography

SUMMARY: This story (a sequel to 'Charlie') begins as Charlie Chaplin's 'Sherlock Holmes' Music Hall tour ends. After a brief but exciting stint as a photographer, Charlie moves back into acting and begins to create his signature 'tramp,' or 'little fellow,' persona. Given a leading role on stage, and then in silent movies, he hones the skills that ultimately bring him fame as a silent movies writer, actor, and director. Note that the British spelling of 'Mum' is used throughout the text.

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- sequencing

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

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

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Think-Pair-Share strategy
- discussing with a partner
- discussing with a group
- dramatizing a conversation (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- language predictability: using context to work out word meanings
- language predictability: idiomatic expressions

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- understand and follow main events of plot in sequence
- link one event with another
- make connections to what they already know about Chaplin and his era
- self-monitor their understanding of a text
- understand the difference between a biography and autobiography

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Sequencing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

First Session (pages 5–23)

Making Connections: Text to Text and Text to World

Self-monitoring and Language Predictability

Inferring and Language Predictability

Sequencing

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Show students the front cover and read the back cover blurb aloud. Ask them to share everything they might know about Charlie Chaplin or the era in which he lived. Some students might offer information previously gleaned from reading Whyte’s ‘Charlie’ (*Moving Up with Literacy Place*, Grade 5 Guided Reading text). Briefly discuss Victorian Music Halls and American Vaudeville. Tell students that ‘Charlie on Tour’ is a biography based in part on Charlie Chaplin’s autobiography. Ask for thoughts on the differences between autobiographies and biographies.

Introduce supports and challenges

- Clarify meanings of words like ‘carmine lips’ and ‘kohl-black eyes’ (page 5). Tell students that as they read, they should flag unfamiliar words and phrases with a specific colour of sticky note (e.g., yellow) if contextual checks don’t provide ready answers.
- Say to students: *Sometimes authors use exaggerated, interesting expressions—or idioms—called ‘idiomatic expressions,’ as examples of dialogue the character might say in their situation. Let’s take a look at one example. Turn to page 10 where Syd says to Charlie, ‘If you’re not a sight for sore eyes!’* Point out that this expression simply means that Charlie’s arrival is welcome and Syd is very happy to see him. Using an expression like this helps make dialogue more believable or realistic, as this is an expression someone in Syd’s position might very well say. Ask students to be aware of other idiomatic expressions as they read on.

Set a purpose for reading

- Say to students: *You’ll be reading to the end of page 23. Your job is to decide which are the main events in Charlie’s life. Use another colour (e.g., green) sticky note to flag those main events.*

Provide for early finishers

- Direct early finishers to pair up and discuss any idiomatic expressions they think they’ve found.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Listen to one or two students read. Give positive feedback for effective strategy use, and offer support via prompts when needed, e.g., *What is*

the first thing that happened after Charlie developed his photograph of Clara? What happened next?

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*.)

AFTER READING

Sequencing

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Using the Charlie on Tour: Sequence of Events BLM, ask students to discuss settings, main characters, and the story's opening event. Invite them to refer to their green-tagged main events, and ask them to recount each one. As a group, add agreed-on main events to the BLM in their proper sequence. Hold a Think-Pair-Share activity for students (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*), asking them to decide whether the events so far link in a cause and effect manner, or whether they are in a random order.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Ask for opinions about some of the words and phrases that students flagged with a yellow sticky. Encourage contextual rereading, and clarify meaning as needed.

Note successful strategy use

- Give positive feedback about a reading strategy demonstrated effectively by a student, e.g., *When Asher read the last three sentences on page 7, he was puzzled about Charlie warning Mrs. Starkey not to ruin his plates and Mrs. Starkey telling him that his plate was getting cold. Then Asher made a connection between the glass plates used for taking photographs in Victorian times and food plates, and he figured out that Charlie's breakfast was getting cold on its plate.*

Optional Approach

Sequencing

You may wish to have students read the rest of the text independently. Set a purpose for reading and choose a date to come back together to discuss and work with the text using the Optional After Reading session (see page 7). It is recommended that you do some diagnostic work with students or hold a book discussion halfway through to check their comprehension of the text.

Setting a Purpose

Direct students to continue flagging the main events in Charlie's life and to jot those events and applicable settings and characters on their Charlie on Tour: Sequence of Events BLM in the sequence in which they appear in the story.

Second Session (pages 24–41)

**Synthesizing and
Evaluating**

**Making Connections: Text
to Text and Predicting**

Sequencing

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- As a group, discuss what makes each of the events listed so far a ‘main event.’ Ask for a few examples of a ‘secondary’ event, or a story event that might not be considered main.

Introduce supports and challenges

- Introduce students to the concept of foreshadowing. Turn to page 25, locate ‘Hey, Syd...’ seven lines from the bottom of the page, and read silently to the end of ‘They had invented the Chaplin walk’ on page 26. Say, *In this next section of the story, the author gives us clues about Charlie’s future. This is called ‘foreshadowing.’ She’s giving us clues and allowing us to possibly predict an outcome based on them. What might this foreshadowing include for Charlie?*

Set a purpose for reading

- Direct students to continue to flag the unfolding main events in Charlie’s life with green stickies. Remind students to flag unfamiliar words with yellow stickies if rereading and checking context clues haven’t proved useful.

Provide for early finishers

- Early finishers can pair up to discuss additional foreshadowing and main events, and they can share their thoughts on unfamiliar words.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Listen to students read, giving positive feedback about effective strategy use, and provide prompts to support readers who may be struggling to understand a particular concept or word, like ‘extremities’ (page 26).

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*.)

AFTER READING

Sequencing

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Ask students to share with the group what they flagged as a main event. Have the group then discuss which events are main and which might be secondary. As a group, jot these events on the Charlie on Tour: Sequence of Events BLM in their proper sequence, adding settings and characters as needed.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Ask students to offer new examples of foreshadowing from the chapters they've just read, e.g., 'Charlie found moving pictures fascinating' (page 38), and Charlie's early ideas for 'The Gold Rush' (page 38).

Note successful strategy use

- Give positive feedback about an effective reading strategy use demonstrated by a student, e.g., *Marni picked up another possible example of foreshadowing when she read about Syd feeling ill and collapsing, on page 33. She remembered reading that Charlie thought Syd seemed to be in pain earlier (page 30) and figured that Charlie might soon be working on his own, without Syd by his side. Tell us how you thought things through, Marni...*

Third Session (pages 42–64)

BEFORE READING

Synthesizing and Sequencing

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Ask for volunteers to orally synthesize the events so far, in their correct sequence.

Self-monitoring

Introduce supports and challenges

- Remind students to reread for context clues and use any background knowledge whenever they encounter unfamiliar words, phrases, or expressions (e.g., 'Watch your back' on page 49), and mark those which they can't figure out with a yellow sticky. Before students start reading, you might decide to talk about specific words and phrases that students will likely be unable to track down via context clues or dictionary definitions ('Blimey' on page 48, or 'mug' on page 55).

Sequencing

Set a purpose for reading

- Ask students to tag the main events with green stickies in the final pages of the story and to jot down new characters and settings that emerge.

Sequencing

Provide for early finishers

- Direct early finishers to share their yellow-flagged words and phrases with a partner to see if someone else might have insight to offer into challenging words.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Offer prompts, and sometimes answers when needed, in order to activate the use of reading strategies.

Observe

- Provide constructive feedback on students' reading, referencing something specific that you've noticed. For example, *I noticed that you rushed through this section a bit. That word is pretty tricky, are you sure you understood its meaning? Tell me about what you think it might mean.*

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Ask students to cite final main events in the story, promoting discussion to select the most appropriate from those offered. Make sure students jot these agreed-on events in their proper sequence on their BLMs. Add characters and settings where appropriate.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Check for words or phrases that remain unsolved, sharing correct responses from students who have already figured them out. Provide meanings for the remainder, e.g., *When Mack tells Charlie, 'You look like a murderer' (page 54), he means that, with Charlie's unkempt appearance he looks desperate enough to have just committed murder. Of course, Mack knows it's not true. He's just teasing. He knows Charlie has simply neglected his appearance because he has been hard at work in the cutting room.*

Note successful strategy use

- Highlight a student who successfully uses a reading strategy, e.g., *When Cybil was reading about how Charlie became engrossed in learning everything about silent movies, she wondered at first what the author meant by 'The cutting room became Charlie's home' (page 53). Puzzled, Cybil read on and said, 'I see... he was working, sleeping, and probably eating there—and he's got Mutt with him too.' Great job reading on to figure out what the author meant, Cybil.*

Optional After Reading

Sequencing and Synthesizing

If students have completed the text independently, use the following After Reading Discussion and activity suggestions to support comprehension, word solving, and good reader strategies.

Ask students to pair up and discuss the information they have recorded on their Charlie on Tour: Sequence of Events BLMs. Then have them share their thoughts as a whole group. Invite students to cite main characters and settings they identified on their BLMs. Have students read the charted sequential information from first row to last, then ask each student to draft a synthesis of the story in a few paragraphs. Ask them to read their syntheses to the rest of the group to help facilitate discussion.

Self-monitoring

Check on words and phrases marked with yellow stickies, encouraging students who have figured out some of the meanings to explain how they worked them out and what they think the word or phrase means.

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*.

Evaluating

Written

- Ask students to write about the segments of Charlie's life which, in their opinion, demonstrate his empathy and compassion for people who are less fortunate. Allow time for discussion before drafting begins to ensure that students understand the concepts of empathy and compassion.

ESL NOTE: ESL students will benefit from the discussion on the concepts of empathy and compassion.

Inferring

Artistic

- Tell students to examine the Vaudeville poster (page 31), the picture of Charlie in his 'little fellow' persona (page 63), and his early-stages draft excerpts for 'The Gold Rush' (page 38) and 'A Dog's Life' (page 51). Ask them to get the 'flavour' of Charlie's preliminary ideas for two of his movies and to think of advertising possibilities for them. Explain that you want them to create a poster that advertises one of his movies (listed on pages 61 and 62).

Inferring

Oraldramatic

- Direct students to reread page 29. Ask students to imagine that Charlie and one of the steerage passengers are chatting about the similarities and differences in their lives, and about the opportunities they hope to grasp once the ship docks in America. In groups of two or three, students can create a short dramatization of the conversation.

	Settings
	Main Characters
pages 5-23	Opening Event page ____
	Main Event page ____
	Main Event page ____
pages 24-41	Main Event page ____
	Main Event page ____
	Main Event page ____
pages 42-64	Main Event page ____
	Main Event page ____
	Main Event page ____