

SCHOLASTIC
Moving Up
 with Literacy
 Place
 4-6

**TEXT FEATURES**

- italics
- ellipses
- section divider icons

VISUAL LITERACY

- illustrations

TEXT SUPPORTS

- narrative story structure
- sequential plot
- illustrations

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- sentence complexity
- an elevated application of inferring needed

TO TELL THE TRUTH

Written by Anne Gray

Illustrations by Wes Lowe

TEXT TYPE: Fiction: Narrative—Realistic Story

GUIDED READING LEVEL: U/V

SUMMARY: After being asked to leave his mom’s house because of ongoing conflict with his stepfather, the main character moves in with his father. Watching his father become involved with someone new reignites the main character’s fear of rejection and jeopardizes his goal of reconciliation between his parents. Refusing to believe his parents will never get back together, he sabotages his father’s new relationship by ‘telling the truth,’ which results in disappointment for everyone involved.

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- inferring

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

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

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Value Line strategy
- discussing with a partner
- discussing with a group
- sharing ideas
- dramatization of a script (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: noticing a familiar word embedded within a larger word

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student’s ability to:

- blend background knowledge, text and picture cues to make inferences
- make inferences as to what a character is feeling
- use multiple reading strategies to solve unfamiliar vocabulary
- self-monitor and repair comprehension when it breaks down
- evaluate a character’s bias in retelling events

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Inferring Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

BEFORE READING

Making Connections: Text to Self and Text to Text and Inferring

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Tell students that this story is about a boy whose parents have divorced, and his attempt to get them back together, despite the fact they are both in new relationships. In partners, ask students to infer how the main character might be feeling about his parents and their new partners. Encourage them to make connections to their own experiences, or books/movies they might have read/seen about this situation.
- Using the Value Line strategy (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*), ask students to respond to the question: *Should you always tell the whole truth?* Students should indicate where on the value line they stand, with ‘Strongly agree’ at one end of the line and ‘Strongly disagree’ at the other end. Encourage students to explain their position on the value line and include personal examples and experiences from their own lives.
- Authors often use pictures to help tell their story. Have students look through the story’s pictures and, with their partner, discuss what they think might happen. Point out that even though readers must sometimes ‘read between the lines,’ authors often provide clues for support.

Visual Literacy Features and Inferring

Introduce supports and challenges

Self-monitoring and Word Solving and Building

- Tell students that as they read they might encounter words they are unfamiliar with. Ask them what strategies they can use to figure out unfamiliar words. Encourage them to identify strategies such as rereading difficult text, finding words they know within the larger word, making connections to what they already know, or skipping the word and then going back. As they read, ask students to record any words that they are unsure of and the page number on which they appear.

Evaluating

- Explain to students that the author has chosen to write this story in the first person, almost like a journal entry. As such, the main character is telling the story from his own perspective of what happened. In partners, ask students to discuss how that might influence or bias the retelling of events from the story.

Text Features

- Invite students to turn to page 2 of the story and discuss with their partner what they think the break in the text might mean.

Inferring

Set a purpose for reading

- As students read, have them infer how the main character feels about the choices he made and the resulting emotional consequences for each of the characters involved.

Provide for early finishers

- Encourage students who finish early to write a paragraph or two on how divorce has affected them or someone they know.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- After you have listened to each student read, ask students to tell you how they think the main character's actions have impacted the other characters in the story (Mom, Dad, Frankie, and Donna). Encourage them to pay particular attention to feelings and consequences that are implied, but not necessarily stated outright by the author. Provide prompts and such as, *What clues does the author give you?* or *Why do you think that?* Provide assistance to those students who are having difficulty with this task.

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Inferring Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*.)

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

Inferring

- Give students a few minutes to look back through the text to ensure that they have indentified how 'telling the truth' has impacted each of the main characters. In partners, have students discuss how each character felt about the 'truth' and how the actions of the main character impacted everyone else. Encourage students to go beyond the obvious consequences (Mom, Dad, and Donna all ending up alone), to the emotional results for the characters. Ask students to pay particular attention to how the main character is feeling about his actions, and how the father might be feeling as the story ends.

ESL NOTE: Provide students with a graphic organizer to jot down the feelings of each of the characters (e.g., four-column chart, idea wheel [circle cut in quarters], spider map).

Check on outstanding challenges

- Review and discuss any challenges students experienced in going beyond the obvious consequences to identify the implicit results of the main character's actions. What consequences did they find easy to identify? What parts did they find challenging? Were students able to interpret and synthesize an ending that was not 'spelled out' for the reader?

Note successful strategy use

- As students are sharing with their partner and with the larger group, provide feedback about their ability to identify the unspoken consequences of the son's actions. Note particularly thoughtful or insightful explanations. As a group, discuss what qualities a thoughtful or insightful explanation has (allows the listener to establish a clear understanding, think about something in a new way, form an opinion, make pictures in their mind, make a connection).

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*.

Written

- Have students decide whether or not they think the main character did the right thing by refusing to apologize, or whether they think he should have apologized for how he treated Donna. Once students have taken a position, have them write a persuasive letter to Donna or Dad explaining their position, in the son's voice. As this letter is to be written in the son's voice, students should use language that the son might use and create a tone relevant to the intent of the letter (e.g., defiant, angry, apologetic, remorseful). Ask students to ensure that spelling of familiar words is correct in their letter.

Artistic

- Invite students to use a portion of the interaction between the main character and his father on pages 6–7 to create a short storyboard of three or four scenes. Students should use speech bubbles to record the verbal interactions and thought bubbles to identify (infer) what the characters are thinking as they are talking or as events unfold. Ask students: *How does using a storyboard with thought bubbles make it easier to communicate the ideas that are unspoken in the story?*

Oral/dramatic

- Have students focus on the portion of the text where the main character and his father are talking about telling the truth. Have students adapt this conversation into script format. Remind students that sometimes what is being said in a script's dialogue does not always match what is really happening. Encourage students to write a 'what is not being said' portion of the dialogue between the two characters, as might be seen in a script. Discuss the technique of using italics to indicate thoughts or asides in scripts, and how this helps to 'fill in the blanks' of what is not being said in the main text. Students could then assume a 'what is being said' or 'what is not being said' role and act out their script together to give a unique insight into the story.

Inferring and Synthesizing

Inferring

Inferring and Synthesizing