

Reading as Meaning-Making

Strategy: Seeking Meaning During Reading

Classroom Lesson 1: Focusing on Reading

- Write the title of the book on the whiteboard or overhead, but leave out one of the key words. Ask students to finish the sentence. Ask what kind of information is being given in this sentence.
- Show the cover and read the title. Ask students to notice the illustration and to predict what will happen in the story.

Home Connection

See page 125 for *What Started It?/Then What Happened?*, the Home Connection for Classroom Lesson: Focusing on Reading.

What Started It?/Then What Happened?: see Letter to Mom and Dad on page 125; see chart template on page 126.

Classroom Lesson 2: Story Maps

- Create a story map of the book. Explain to students that it will help them keep track of the most important information they need to remember so they can summarize (or retell) the story.
- Write the name of each story map section—Characters; Setting; Problem; Main Event 1; Main Event 2; Main Event 3; Solution—on a separate piece of chart paper. With students' help, sketch something beside each section to remind students which section it is ; e.g., draw a stick figure for the character section.
- Divide the class into seven groups (one for each section of the story map) and give each group one section of the story map. As you read the book aloud, ask students to write or draw the information for their section.
- Stop reading at certain points and have the groups talk about the story and add any important information to their section of the story map. Ask questions such as, "Who is in the story so far?" and "What do you know about the setting?" to prompt groups if they need some help.
- As a class, check over the story map sections to see if the most important information is in each section. Add anything that is missing.
- Have students practice summarizing the story in pairs using the information from the story map.

Home Connection

See page 127 for *Using a Story Map to Summarize*, the Home Connection for Classroom Lesson: Story Maps.

Using a Story Map to Summarize: see Letter to Mom and Dad on page 127; see Story Map Template on page 128.

Classroom Lesson 3: Justifying Opinions

- Read the story and follow up with a discussion of the students' opinion of the story.
- Ask questions that help students become part of the story: e.g., Would you like to be a character in the story? If so, which character? If you were to write in a new character, what would that character be?

- Ask students to imagine they are experiencing what the main character is experiencing. Have them discuss if they would like to have a similar experience. Ask if they would do anything different if they were the main character.

Home Connection

See page 129 for Step Right In, the Home Connection for Classroom Lesson: Justifying Opinions.

Step Right In: see Letter to Mom and Dad on page 129.

Classroom Lesson 4: Choice of Words

- Look for words the author uses that fit with the theme of the story; i.e. words that describe the scenery, the weather, what the characters look like, what they are doing, etc. Record these words on chart paper or the whiteboard.
- After reading the story, refer back to the book and add words to the list.
- Talk about how authors choose their words carefully to help make the story come alive in the reader's mind. Remind students to try to use this technique in their own writing.

Home Connection

See page 130 for Comparing Pictures and Text, the Home Connection for Classroom Lesson: Choice of Words.

Comparing Pictures and Text: see Letter to Mom and Dad on page 130.

**Touchstone Book: *Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs*
by Judi and Ron Barrett**

In this story, Grandpa recounts a tall tale of growing up in the town of Chewandswallow, and how unusual weather events finally lead to the townspeople to abandon the town. The text and illustrations in this book provide many opportunities for making connections, inferring, predicting, summarizing, and clarifying meaning; it is a perfect way to teach parents to help their children identify and focus on the main ideas in the story.

Classroom Lesson 1

- Start by writing the title of the book on the whiteboard or overhead, but leave out the word "Meatballs"; i.e., *Cloudy With a Chance of _____*. Ask students to finish the sentence. Ask what kind of information is being given in this sentence: weather information.
- Show the cover and read the full title. Ask students to notice the illustration and to predict what will happen in the story.
- As you read the story, have students listen for words and phrases that are usually associated with weather. Record these on chart paper or whiteboard: "a brief shower," "low clouds...moved in," "violent storms," etc.
- Talk about how the author has used things the reader is familiar with (weather and food) and put them together in a surprising way.
- Have students write their own ending to the title sentence—*Cloudy With a Chance of _____*—and draw a picture to go with it. These can be stapled together into a class book of titles, or can become a display

for the bulletin board.

Classroom Lesson 2

- Have students create a story map of the book.
- Read the book. Stop at the following points to allow for discussion: after reading the page about the Sanitation Department; after reading that the people had to leave Chewandswallow; after the reading.
- As a class, check over the story map sections to see if the most important information is in each section. Add anything that is missing.
- Have students practice summarizing the story in pairs using the information from the story map: *The main characters are...*, *The story takes place in...*, etc.

Classroom Lesson 3

- Read the story and follow up with a discussion of the following: What are some advantages and disadvantages of living in the town of Chewandswallow? Would you like to live there? Why or why not?
- Show the picture of the children sledding with their grandpa at the end of the book. Ask: Why do you think the children thought they saw a giant pat of butter and could smell mashed potatoes? What did they really see?
- Remind students about this passage in the book: *One day, Gorgonzola cheese, overcooked broccoli and brussel sprouts fell from the sky. The people did not enjoy these foods.* Ask: What food wouldn't you want to eat if it fell from the sky? If you could choose any kind of food to fall from the sky, what would you choose? How could you store it if too much fell?

Classroom Lesson 4

- Read the story and stop at the page where "the weather took a turn for the worse." Ask students to listen for the "weather events" in the story that result in problems for the townspeople. Record their responses on chart paper or the whiteboard.
- After reading the story, refer back to the list and ask the children what they notice: as the weather gets wilder, the food gets bigger. Talk about the words the authors use to describe the weather events. Relate these to actual weather events and as a class create a dictionary of weather event words.