

The Biggest Catch

Evie likes to think she is a fishing expert. She bets Pumpkin that she can beat him at fishing. Pumpkin catches the first fish and things aren't looking good for Evie. Even Carlo isn't having any luck. Then a seagull flies by...



Reading strategy

Asking questions as you read

- What do I know about the characters?
- Why did the character say that?
- Why did the character do that?
- What does that tell me about the character?
- What will the character do?

Comprehension focus

- Analysing characters

Fluency focus

- Using intonation to convey author's message

Genre focus

- Recount (email)

Day 1: Before reading

- Introduce the book and allow students to make predictions about the content by looking at the title, cover illustration and blurb. Choral read it together. Engage them in sharing their knowledge and experience of fishing.
- Review the term "main character". Allow time for students to scan the book, including the contents page, to quickly see who they think the main character will be and to note features of the storyline.
- Students share their predictions with the group.
- Introduce the reading strategy by discussing the importance of asking questions about the characters before, during and after reading. Explain that we do this to aid prediction and comprehension.
- Write questions about the characters on chart paper and read them with students.
 - What do I know about the characters?
 - Why did the character say that?
 - Why did the character do that?
 - What does that tell me about the character?
 - What will the character do?
- Have students suggest further questions to add.
- Ask: What do you already know about Carlo's character? Have students record three facts on sticky notes, then share their opinions with a partner and the group. Identify common elements and differences of opinion.

During reading

- Read the title for Chapter 1 and ask: What do you think this chapter will be about? Discuss responses.

- Discuss the importance of identifying who is telling a story (voice), then have students identify the narrator of *The Biggest Catch*. They check to see if they are correct on page 4.
- What does Carlo think of Evie, for example when he says “*in her telltale voice*”. Use new and interesting words to describe his attitude to her.
- Read the chapter with students, then ask: Do you think Carlo will feel like this throughout the story? Why or why not?
- Discuss the way Evie speaks and highlight features by rereading excerpts together, e.g. “*I’ll tell Mum*”.
- Students scan the Chapter 2 heading and illustrations and predict how Carlo will feel about skateboarding now that Pumpkin is there. Encourage them to justify their opinions.
- Read the text with students. Discuss the change in Carlo’s attitude.
- Allow time for students to refer to their sticky-note facts about Carlo.

After reading

- Read Worksheet A and model how students can use excerpts from the text to record information about Carlo in Chapters 1 and 2.

Fluency focus

Read *Pumpkin’s Email* or *Evie’s Rap* to students. Discuss how a reader uses their voice when reading to an audience. Have students read *Pumpkin’s Email*. They practise using intonation to convey the author’s message.

Vocabulary and spelling activities

You can substitute these suggested activities with ones that specifically address any gaps in student knowledge that you become aware of:

- comparatives and superlatives
- variant graphemes for /e/
- prefixes re- and un-
- encoding challenging words

Activity 1 Comparatives and superlatives

Comparatives are adjectives used to compare two things and mostly end in -er (e.g. bigger). Superlatives are adjectives used to compare three or more things and mostly end in -est (e.g. biggest). On page 34 find the words *bigger* and *biggest*. Ask: What are these adjectives comparing? (their catches) Notice on page 6, “the faster the better”. Ask: What does this mean? What is the superlative of *fast*? Explain that *better* is different as it’s the comparative of *good* (good, better, best). Brainstorm other examples of comparative and superlative adjectives to record and read.

Activity 2 Variant graphemes for /e/

Display the words *head*, *ready*, *instead*. Read the words and discuss what vowel sound students hear. These words are spelt with the variant grapheme *ea* for /e/. Brainstorm a list of words with /e/ sound written as *ea*, e.g. *heavy*, *weather*, *bread*. Students practise reading (decoding) and writing (encoding) these words in pairs.

Activity 3 Prefixes *re-* and *un-*

Write *rebaited* on the board. Model decoding the word by breaking the word into smaller parts, *re + baited = rebaited*. Discuss what *re* means and how it changes the meaning of *baited*. Review the term prefix and brainstorm a list of words beginning with the prefix *re-*. Students copy the list. Write *untangled*. Identify the prefix *un-* and make a list of words beginning with *un-*. Discuss what *un* means and how it changes the meaning of *tangled*. Brainstorm, record and read together a list of words with the prefix *un-*. Students practise encoding and decoding the lists in pairs. One decodes (reads) a word and the other encodes (writes/spells) it. Then they swap over. They check their spelling against the master lists.

Activity 4 Encoding challenging words

Demonstrate how to split a word orally into syllables or chunks, e.g. *biggest - big/gest*. Ask students to use their phonics knowledge to decode each chunk. In pairs, students find challenging words in the book. They say the word slowly and write each syllable as they say it. They dictate and encode words in pairs.

Day 2: Before reading

- Explain how asking questions about characters aids prediction and comprehension. Read the chart of questions together.
- Involve students in orally retelling the story so far through Carlo's eyes.
- Allow time for students to check the next two chapter headings, then record a prediction about Carlo on sticky notes.

During reading

- Read the opening of Chapter 3, then have students take over, choral reading it together. Stop them at appropriate places to pose questions about the characters. Ask: What do you think Maddy was going to do? Do you think Evie was going to be helpful?
- Repeat the process for Chapter 4 after orally predicting who will win the competition. Ask: Do you think Pumpkin and Curly were being fair? Do you think Carlo is confident?

After reading

- Explain expectations for Chapters 3 and 4 on Worksheet A and encourage students to find examples of their own.

The rap: rhythm, rhyme and repetition

Goals

- To provide a forum for meaningful reading practice
- To use rhythm, rhyme and repetition and shared reading experiences to build students' confidence
- To further develop students' ability to read important words automatically

Activity 1 Introduce the rap

Read *Evie's Rap* with students. Volunteers read the rap independently.

Activity 2 Perform the rap: body percussion

Encourage students to perform word or sound percussion in time with the rhythm of the rap. Pairs of students create a set of movements to perform as they read the rap.

Activity 3 Identify rhyme

Students identify the rhyming words in each verse. Work together to write another version of the rap using two other rhyming words. Students perform the new raps together.

Activity 4 Create a new rap

Students work together to write a new rap about catching a fish using the same rhyming pattern and rhythm.

Activity 5 Make a readers' theatre script

Pairs of students decide which lines/words each one will read individually and which lines/words they will read together. They perform their rap for the class.

Day 3: Before reading

- Review the reading strategy by inviting students to recall questions they can ask themselves about characters before, during and after reading.
- Involve students in summarising what they know about Carlo in this story after allowing time for them to refer to their sticky-note predictions about him and the information on Worksheet A.
- Discuss how knowing and analysing characters aids prediction and comprehension.

During reading

- Read the opening of Chapter 5, then have students take over, choral reading it together. Discuss the way Carlo responded when he caught the small herring. Ask: Why did Maddy say not to cut the line? Why were the words "*the biggest catch*" so important?
- Encourage diversity of opinion and allow time for students to voice their ideas and opinions and demonstrate respect for differing views.

After reading

- Discuss expectations for Chapter 5 on Worksheet A. Have students complete the task.

All about emails

Goals

- To read and write an email
- To identify and discuss the features of an email

Emails can be written to share good news, bad news, ask a question, or express the writer's feelings or opinions about something. They are sent electronically and are received anywhere in the world almost immediately. Photos and scanned documents can be attached to the email.

- Ask: Has anyone sent an email? What do you know about emails? Tell students about email etiquette which includes a clear subject line; a greeting; good grammar and spelling. It is important to check that the address you have entered is correct. It is polite to reply to an email promptly.
- Involve students in discussing their own emailing habits – who they send them to and what they are about.
- Allow time for students to read Pumpkin's email. Introduce Worksheet B. Reread Pumpkin's email together and model how to add some text to each paragraph. Encourage students to be descriptive and use new and interesting words in their writing when completing Worksheet B.
- Discuss the operation and screen displays of the email service the school uses for writing, sending, receiving, saving, deleting and printing email.
- Reread Pumpkin's email and say: We could use this format to help us compose and send an email.
- Identify the different features at the top of an email and highlight the purpose of the subject section.
- Model how to compose and send the email. Match students with an email partner and review school requirements for sending email.
- Remind students to keep their emails brief; to sound out words when writing; to use spelling and grammar checks.

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Worksheet A Analysing characters

Name: _____ Date: _____

Complete the boxes to analyse Carlo's behaviour.

Chapter	Action	Speech and thoughts	Feelings
Chapter 1 Telling Tales			
Chapter 2 Fishing Challenge			
Chapter 3 The Referee			
Chapter 4 The Flathead			
Chapter 5 The Biggest Catch			

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Worksheet B Reading and writing an email

Name: _____ Date: _____

Add to Pumpkin's email.

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

Paragraph 4

Paragraph 5

Compose and send an email.