

# Stepping Off the Page Book Club Teacher Support

In *Literacy Place for the Early Years*, the book club unit offers opportunities for small-group reading experiences that deepen comprehension as well as providing more student control of the reading process than Guided Reading. All students read texts that they can comfortably read on their own at their Independent Reading levels, meet with other members of their book club, and use prompts to help get their discussions going.

During book club sessions, oral language receives continuous attention. Students have opportunities to express their ideas in a safe setting and strengthen their abilities in articulating their thoughts to others and in listening to group members' viewpoints. Taking turns, disagreeing politely, introducing topics, and bringing closure are all pragmatic social language strategies that students can learn by being participants in book clubs.

## Framing Question

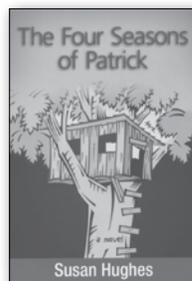
A framing question helps to introduce and maintain the theme throughout the book club unit. The question serves to focus students on a unifying big idea that they can explore together, even though each book club will be reading a different text. The framing question for the *Stepping Off the Page* book club is: **“What can we learn from fictional characters?”**

## Instructional Support Materials

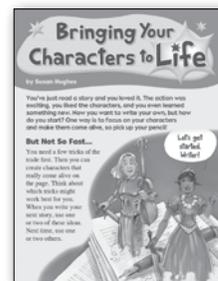
To provide instructional support within the unit, you use a Read Aloud to introduce the big idea and a Shared Reading text to explore the big idea and model appropriate comprehension and group interaction strategies.

Vocabulary enrichment is also introduced with the Read Aloud text, while more extensive Working with Words teaching is linked to the Shared Reading piece. Lessons are provided for each of the support materials.

The following texts are used for instructional support:



Read Aloud: *The Four Seasons of Patrick* (fiction: narrative—realistic story)



Shared Reading: *Bringing Your Characters to Life* (non-fiction: procedural—how-to guide)

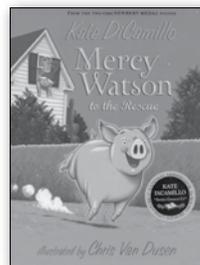
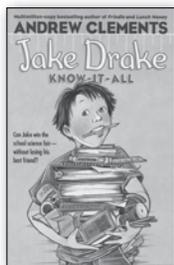
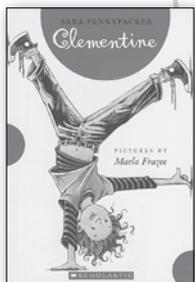
## Matching Books and Readers

Students with similar reading needs are arranged into book clubs and matched with books at appropriate reading levels. Although each book club will be reading a different text, all will be reading a fiction book that connects with the framing question.

Select books for students that are a little easier than their Guided Reading levels. The intent is that students will be able to read the text without teacher support and provide themselves with valuable reading practice. The books selected should offer success in word recognition and comprehension, and provide only minor challenges that need to be overcome. The goal is for students to become increasingly confident readers and full participants in book clubs.

### Texts for the Book Club

The *Stepping Off the Page* book club unit offers four levels of text to meet readers' needs—an Above Grade Level text for advanced readers, an On Grade Level text for readers at the anticipated level for grade three, an Approaching Grade Level text for readers a little below the expected level for grade three, and a Below Grade Level text for struggling readers.



Broad Group Level	Titles
Above Grade Level	<i>Clementine</i> (Level O)
On Grade Level	<i>Jake Drake Know-It-All</i> (Level M)
Approaching Grade Level	<i>Mercy Watson to the Rescue</i> (Level K)
Below Grade Level	<i>The Human Bean</i> (Level I)

**Teaching Tip:** Classroom organization is made smoother if each book club has a tub. Books should be returned to the tub at the end of the book club sessions. It is recommended that book club books not be sent home, as this may make them unavailable for the next session.

You may have students whose Independent Reading levels are well above or below most of the class, and yet, we want them to be participants in the book club. Consider the following alternatives:

- Group readers who are more advanced than the Above Grade Level text with the Above Grade Level readers. They will have the opportunity to read an easier text and reinforce their own reading strategies. You may conference with these students during Independent Reading where they tackle harder materials. This will stimulate their growth further.

- If you have readers who would find the Below Grade Level text too difficult, then you can wait a bit longer before you engage the class in a book club. In grade three, you may decide to run the book club later in the school year. Alternatively, you could find a book with memorable characters at an easier level.

## ELL Note

Integrating English Language Learners (ELLs) into the Below Level book club group will be the most appropriate choice for grade three students at the beginning and intermediate levels of English language learning. You can provide instructional support for these students by pre-teaching vocabulary and engaging students in pre-reading activities to build their background knowledge. You may choose to implement a small-group Guided Reading lesson with ELLs as they read their book. For some ELLs, it may also be appropriate to read the book aloud to them or have students listen to the fluent reading for *Stepping Off the Page* online first.

For those ELLs who are in the beginning stages of English language learning, select some very simple books with memorable characters. Some easier books on the theme of what we can learn from fictional characters include: *No, David!* by David Shannon; *The Dot* by Peter Reynolds; *Fancy Nancy* by Jane O'Connor; *Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel; and *Pinkalicious* by Victoria Kann and Elizabeth Kann.

Newcomers may not be familiar with tree houses. Gather some visuals of tree houses compiled from the Internet and books to show to ELLs before the first Read Aloud lesson. Have students share what they know about tree houses in a small-group discussion with you. Captions or short texts for the tree house visuals can be created together with ELLs and posted along with the pictures.

Collect several books about tree houses at an appropriate level for ELLs to use for Read Alouds, buddy reading, and Independent Reading. Selections could include *In the Tree House* by Andrew Larsen (2013); *House Held Up By Trees* by Ted Kooser (2012); *Froggy Builds a Tree House* by Jonathan London (2011); and *The Tree House* by Marije Tolman (2010).

Start a Characters in Fiction Word Wall where you can post vocabulary such as *trait, fiction, adjective, voice, emotion, appearance, motive, perfect, flaws, unique*, and so on, as these words come up in the lessons and in class discussions.

Prepare character charts to use with the ELLs reading *The Human Bean*. The character charts can include the following columns: Character's Name; Character's Words, Actions, and Thoughts; Page in the Text; and What I Learned About the Character. ELLs can then use these charts as a basis for creating the culminating comic strip activity.

Provide access to the online audio at the Listening Centre for students to listen to while reading.

## Book Club Discussions with Prompts

One of the aims of a book club is to provide time for students to deepen comprehension by exchanging ideas with others. The give-and-take of a discussion allows readers to try out their understanding of a text, share it with other people, listen to other readers' views, and modify or strengthen their opinions.

Grade three readers are beginning their book club experiences, and they will need guidance to focus on discussion and maintain topics. Modelling how to engage in book discussions using the Read Aloud and Shared Reading text will help, but when

discussing independently students may need initial support. The prompts provided with the unit will assist students to initiate and maintain on-topic talk.

## Before Reading Prompts

In this book club unit, students will meet to explore their books (Before Reading) by making connections and predictions based on looking at front and back covers and a walk through their text. They will use the Before Reading prompts to stimulate discussion. These prompts are provided on spinners. Students spin the spinner to initiate discussion.



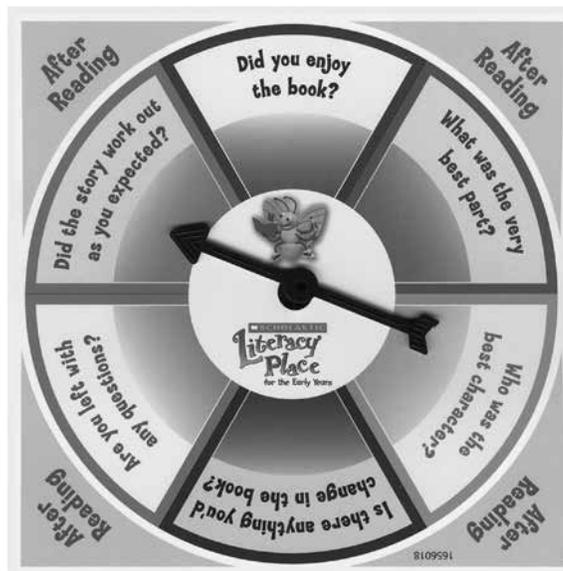
## During Reading Prompts

Book club discussions will take place throughout the reading of each book. Students will meet in their book club groups and use the During Reading prompts to help to initiate their exchange of ideas. These prompts are provided in a spinner format.



## After Reading Prompts

After the book has been finished, a final discussion occurs within each book club group, and the After Reading prompts are used to promote discussion. These prompts are also provided in a spinner format.



The following charts illustrate the comprehension strategies receiving focus in each prompt:

Before Reading Prompts	
Fiction Prompts	Comprehension Strategies
What will this book will be about?	Analyzing/Predicting/Inferring/Making Connections
What questions do you have before reading the book?	Inferring/Self-Monitoring
Who do you think the main characters will be?	Inferring/Predicting
Does this book remind you of another book, a movie, or something in your life?	Making Connections
What looks interesting about this book?	Evaluating
Where do you think this story will take place?	Inferring/Predicting

During Reading Prompts	
Fiction Prompts	Comprehension Strategies
What's happened so far?	Analyzing/Sequencing/Synthesizing
What does the author tell you about the setting?	Analyzing/Synthesizing
What will happen next?	Predicting
Does the story remind you of something?	Making Connections
What interests you so far?	Evaluating
Are your predictions working out or do you want to change them?	Self-Monitoring/Predicting
What does the author tell you about the characters?	Analyzing/Synthesizing
Are your questions being answered? Do you have new questions?	Self-Monitoring/Inferring

After Reading Prompts	
Fiction Prompts	Comprehension Strategies
Did you enjoy the book?	Evaluating
What was the very best part?	Evaluating/Synthesizing
Who was the best character?	Evaluating/Synthesizing
Is there anything you'd change in the book?	Evaluating
Are you left with any questions?	Self-Monitoring
Did the story work out as you expected?	Evaluating/Self-Monitoring

## Sharing Day to Discuss Ideas Across the Groups

Reading themed books encourages communication amongst the groups. Students from different book clubs can meet and share their ideas about the theme and framing question, using their own book as a reference.

## Culminating Task

A culminating task helps students to synthesize their learning and draw out ideas about the materials they have read and discussed and see how they fit with the theme and the framing question.

The culminating task in the *Stepping Off the Page* book club is creating a cartoon/comic strip featuring one of the characters from the book club books and celebrating what readers can learn from fictional characters. The cartoon/comic strips will form a wall display.

# Book Club Unit

## Supported Contexts

### Read Aloud

### Shared Reading

The teacher uses the Read Aloud and Shared Reading text for introducing and developing the theme and framing question, and for teaching comprehension strategies and appropriate group dynamics.

## The Teacher

- Selects books to match the needs of each group.
- Rotates between each group and joins in, providing prompts to encourage the development of comprehension strategies, group interactions, and literature responses.
- Observes and assesses to refine future teaching of strategies.

## Students

### Book Clubs

- Read the assigned portion of the text and apply comprehension strategies.
- Talk with book club members and apply comprehension and group dynamic strategies.
- Self-assess to celebrate successes and set future goals.

## Responding

### Sharing Day and Culminating Task

- Students discuss their book in context of the theme with students from different book clubs.
- Students work alone or with their group to develop a final response to their books. Responses can be written, artistic, or dramatic.