Before-Reading Activities to Build Background Knowledge

**WHY DO FROGS COME IN ALL COLORS?**

Purpose: Post and read these statements with students to set a purpose for reading.

- I can sound out words I don’t know.
- I can use the pictures after I read the words to confirm what I read.
- I can talk about what I read.

Materials:

- Letter cards (vowels: e, i, o, u, consonants: g, t, s, h, p, b, l) or wipe-off board and marker (Print the vowel letters in a different color from the consonants.)
- Color copy of the book on the computer screen.
- Individual black and white copies of the book for the students.

**Lesson Guide**

**Activity 1 Making Predictions about the Book Cover**

Before doing this activity, become familiar with the demonstration and explanation for Exploring the Book Cover activity. Read the Title (*Kim Looks for Frogs*) with students. Then look at the illustration on the cover to have students predict what the topic of the story is about. Help students to think about how the title and the picture help us predict what we will read. Predict type of text: Is this a story or is it an informational book? (I think it will give us information about frogs because I see a real photo of a frog and the title says, *Kim Looks for Frogs*. I have read other books where the student conservationist characters go into different habitats to learn about real animals).
Predict topic: What do you think is the topic of the book? (where to find frogs and frog habitats)  
How do you know? (title says, *Kim Looks for Frogs*).  
Think Aloud: “I see a character Kim, and it says that she took the photos in the book. I see a photo of a blue frog on a tree and Kim looks surprised to see it. The title says, *Kim Looks for Frogs*, so I think Kim wants to study frogs in their natural habitat.

**Activity 2 Word Work - Sounding Out Words and Recognizing Words**

Before students read the book on their own, practice these activities to prepare them to read the words accurately. Use pictures from the book or that you draw to give meaning to the words that will be practiced before reading.

**Phonemic Awareness**

Point a finger for each sound you hear in a word. Use pictures whenever possible so students will recognize the vocabulary.

Words with 3 sounds: hid, mud, rock  
Words with 4 sounds: pond, frog, plan, grass, stuff, them, this  
Words with 5 sounds: frogs, jumps, plant, next  
*Note: The letter x represents 2 phonemes (sounds/ks/) so the word next has 5 phonemes.*

**Sound-By-Sound Blending**

(*hid, mud, frog, pond, plan, rock, plant*). Write one letter on the board and have students say the sound, then after they pronounce the vowel, blend the consonant and vowel together. Next, say the last consonant sound and blend all the letters together.  
*Note: For the word rock, write the ck together to spell the sound /k/. Make a loop under the ck to show that it spells one sound.*  
Example: bend  
• Write the letter h  
• Say: *sound* (Students respond /h/)  
• Write the letter i  
• Say: *sound* (students respond /i/)  
• Blend (Students respond /hi/)  
• Write the letter d  
• Say: *sound* (Students respond /d/)  
• Say: hid (Students respond /hid/)  

**Word Chain**

Use letter cards: vowels: e, i, o, u. consonants: g, t, w, s, h, p, b, l  
Before doing this activity become familiar with the demonstration and explanation for Word Chain activities.  
Students have to listen for the sound that changes in each word and change their own letter or erase the letter on their board to change it to a letter that goes with the new sound they heard. When possible, show a picture or act out the word to connect it to meaning after students spell it. Review the short vowel sounds using the vowel staircase video.  
Follow the steps for the word chain.  
Say: Spell mud.  
Say: Change *mud* to *bud*.  
Say: Change *bud* to *bid*.  
Say: Change *bid* to *hid*.  
Say: Change *hid* to *had*.  
Say: : Change *had* to *hand*.  
Say: Change *hand* to *sand*.  
Say: Change *sand* to *sad*.  
Say: Change *sad* to *pad*.  
Say: Change *pad* to *pod*.  


Say: Change pod to pond.

Notes  bud: means a flower bud which is the beginning of a flower.
Bid- the amount of money offered to pay at an auction. To bid farewell is to say goodbye.
Pad- as in pad of paper or mattress pad
Pod- as in pea pod, or a storage unit

High-Frequency Words
: like, this, looks, come, are, wants, to, out, about, why, come, many, colors, she, goes, into, there, are, where, all, behind, become
*See a demonstration of this activity online

Look at this.
________________________ (name of student) goes into _______________. (a place)
There are many colors: red, blue, green, yellow, orange, black, white. (use color words printed in the color that they represent)
She wants you to look at the ____________. (name a thing)
Where are all the __________? (frogs, birds, children) They are behind the ________. (tree, rock, grass)
The frog goes into the _____________. (pond, tree, hole, water, log)

Phoneme-Grapheme Map for Blends and Digraphs
*See a demonstration of this activity online.

Tap out the sounds in the word.
Guide students to think of how to spell each sound in the word.
After spelling the word in the sound blocks, then have students write the whole word again in the space at the end.

Each space is a sound block. Only one sound can be printed in each space.
• Note that digraphs (-ck, -ss, th) occupy one sound because they spell one sound.
• Guide students to hear both sounds in the beginning or ending blends (pl-, st-, fr-, -nd, -mp)
• The letter x spells 2 sounds (/ks/) so the letter has to be placed over 2 boxes.

Each space is a sound block. Only one sound can be printed in each space.
Syllable Division

: wetland, behind, happens, become

Clap the number syllables in the word. Write the following words on the board. Draw slash marks between the syllables. Have students read each syllable and then blend them all together into the word. (wet/lands, be/hind, hap/pens. be/come.) Have students read each syllable with you and then blend the two syllables together.

Words with a long vowel pronunciation. The word find has a long vowel pronunciation. The vowel says its name. The syllable -hind in the word behind also has this pronunciation. Once students can recognize this word, they can use it to read other words: kind, mind

Activity 3 Individual Reading with Feedback from Teacher

The students read the text and sound out words they don’t know. While other students are reading, the teacher listens to one student read at a time and gives the student feedback on their pronunciation. Help them sound out the word and then put the sounds back together (blend). The challenging words in this book are words that have more than one syllable (e.g., happens, behind) or have a consonant blend (e.g., plant).

Activity 4 Choral Reading for Fluency Practice

A) My Turn, Your Turn

Students may still be reading word by word. So the teacher should model reading the text in phrases. Reread the book page by page and model how to read fluently in phrases. The teacher reads a line from the text and the students follow in their books with their fingers. Then the students read the same line. Look to see if students are pointing to each word.

Example:

Teacher: “My turn. The frog hid behind a rock. Your turn.”

Students: “The frog hid behind a rock.”

B) Choral Reading: The teacher and students read the text at the same time.

Activity 5 Comprehension Practice

- Close read of the text with teacher. Reread each page of the text with students. Teacher helps students to understand the story and make inferences with help from the illustrations (pictures). Teacher asks questions or does a think aloud to help students understand what the words tell us and the illustrations show us about the topic.

- Students answer questions and reread parts of the book to show the evidence for their answers to the questions the teacher asks. (Example: “Read a the part that tells evidence that it is sometimes hard to see frogs.”)

- Teacher helps students make inferences about the topic. Fill in missing information using the words and pictures as evidence to support an inference. Why do you think it is hard to see frogs? (Because they change colors to match their surroundings.)

Activity 6 Oral Language Practice

Talk about the photos and what you found out.
Text-Dependent Questions:
On each page there are questions for students who are at different levels of English language development.

- After one student gives an answer to a question, the teacher repeats the correct answer in a complete sentence. Then have all the students repeat the answer.
- Ask the students who gave the answer to show the other students where the answer came from in the book or picture.

Page 2 Text: Kim wants to find out why frogs come in many colors. She has a plan.

Oral Language level 1:
Count the frogs. (1,2,3,4.) Name the colors of the frogs: orange, brown, green, blue. (orange frog, brown frog, green frog, blue frog)

Oral language level 2 +:
What does Kim want to do? (Find out why frogs are different colors.) How do you know? What is your evidence? The text says she has a plan to find out about the colors of frogs.
Kim goes into a wetland to find frogs.

Kim goes into a wetland to find frogs.

But there are no frogs!
“Where are all of the frogs?”

But there are no frogs!
“Where are all of the frogs?”
frogs. First, she walks along a wetlands bridge, but she does not see any frogs. She is disappointed because she can’t find any.

Page 5 Text: Kim finds a frog. The frog hid on a tree. It looks like the tree.

Oral Language level 1:
Point to the frog. Point to the tree. Point to Kim’s camera.

Oral Language level 2+
What is Kim doing? (She is taking a photo of a frog she found.)
Where is the frog? What does Kim say or think about the frog? (That it is hard to see the frog because it looks like the tree.)
INFER: Why is the frog hard to see? (Because it is the same color as the tree.)

Page 6 Text: The frog hid in the mud. It looks like the mud.

Oral Language level 1:
Point to the frog. Point to the mud. Point to Kim’s boot?

Oral Language level 2 +:
What happens next? (Kim almost steps on a frog in the mud.)
Where is the frog? (in the mud) What does Kim say or think about the frog? (The frog looks like the mud.)
Infer: Why is the frog hard to see? (Because it blends in with the mud.)

Page 7 Text says: This frog hid in the pond. It looks like the green stuff in the pond.

Oral Language level 1:
Point to the frog. Point to the green plants.
Oral Language level 2+:
Where is the frog? (it is in a pond) What does the author mean by green stuff? (plants or algae in the pond)
Infer: Why is it hard to see the frog? (It is green like the plants in the pond.)
What does the frog match with its color green? (the plants or algae in the pond)

Page 8 Text says: This frog hid in the grass. It looks like the grass.

Oral Language level 1:
Point to the frog. Is the frog big or little? (little)
Oral Language level 2+:
Where is the frog? (on a blade/piece of grass)
Infer? How do you know the frog is very little? (Because it can sit on a piece of grass.)
Why is it hard to see the frog? (Because it is the same color as the grass so it blends in with the grass.)

Page 9 Text says: This frog hid behind a rock. It looks like the rock.

Oral Language level 1:
Point to the frog. Point to the rock.
Oral Language level 2+:
Where is the frog? (on a big rock)
Infer: Why is it hard to see the frog? (It blends in with the rock.)
Describe the frog. (It is brown and on the bottom it looks bumpy like the rock.)

Page 10 Text says: This frog jumps up on the green plant. What happens to the frog? It will look like the plant.

Oral Language level 1:
Point to the frog.
Oral Language level 2+:
Where is this frog hiding? (on a leaf)
Infer: Why is it hard to see the frog? (It is almost all green like the leaf.)
What do you notice about the colors of the frog? (The frog is changing from brown to green.)
Which frog in the book do you think is the hardest to see? (Answers may vary.)
Tell why you think it is hard to see.
Why do frogs change colors? (To blend in with their surroundings. To protect themselves from predators who may want to eat them.)

Page 11 Text says: *Kim tells about frogs. Frogs can become the colors next to them.*

Kim tells about frogs.

Frogs can become the colors of things

next to them.

Oral Language level 1:
Point to the frogs.
Oral Language level 2+:
What does Kim tell her class? (answers may vary)
Infer: What else do you think Kim is saying?
What is she telling them about the photo?
Why do you think frogs hide or change color? (to protect themselves from danger)

Students reread the book chorally or with a partner.
- Give each student one page of the book to read.
- Have partners take turns reading alternating pages.

**Activity 7 Cut-Up Sentences**

Directions: Prepare the sentences and then cut apart the words, but leave the period or comma after the word as a clue.
Guide students to use strategies to put the words back in order to make sense. Talk about the comma (,). Remind students that the comma lets the reader know to pause. The period lets the reader know to stop.
The frog hid in the mud.
Kim finds a frog.
The frog hid on a tree.
It looks like the tree.
This frog jumps up on the green plant.
What happens to the frog?
It will look like the plant.
Activity 8 Connecting the Spelling of the Word to its Grammatical Meaning

- Make this chart and write and read the word sums with students.
- Example of how to read the word sum: “j-u-m-p plus s is rewritten as j-u-m-p-s.”
- Listen to how the inflectional ending -s is pronounced at the end of the base verb. The pronunciation changes depending on the final consonant of the base word. If it is voiced the -s inflections is pronounced as a /z/. If it is unvoiced, the -s inflection is pronounced as a /s/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Example from the book</th>
<th>Base word</th>
<th>Word sum</th>
<th>Pronunciation of ending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kim finds a frog.</td>
<td>find</td>
<td>f-i-n-d + s → finds</td>
<td>/z/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It looks like the tree.</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>l-o-o-k + s → looks</td>
<td>/s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The frog jumps up on the green plant. What happens to the frog?</td>
<td>jump</td>
<td>j-u-m-p + s → jumps</td>
<td>/s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>happen</td>
<td>h-a-p-p-e-n + s → happens</td>
<td>/s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kim tells about frogs.</td>
<td>tell</td>
<td>t-e-l-l + s → tells</td>
<td>/z/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 9 Draw and Write

Have students to write what they learned about frogs in this book. Have them draw a picture of a frog that matches its surroundings. Provide an academic language sentence frame for students to write about their picture.

Academic language sentence frame:
I learned that frogs__________________________. This frog is ____________________________.

Example: I learned that frogs can look like things around them. This frog is sitting on a rock, so he is gray like the rock.

Activity 10 Assessment

Use the assessment to monitor students’ progress and find out any students need more practice with some of the vowel or consonant sounds.

Student Name ____________   Date____________

Ask students to reread the book. Note any errors on vowels or consonant pronunciations. Ask students to read the following words printed on cards or from the chart below.
Record answers:
If the student sounded out the word before saying it write the letters with dashes (For example: r-o-ck or r-ock) in the box. Mark a (+) in the box to show they could sound out the word and blend it back together. If the student recognized the word without sounding it out then just make a (+)mark in the box. If the student did not read the word correctly then write a (0) in the box. Count the number of words read correctly and record it as ______correct/10.

Comment on vowel errors: _____________________________
Comment on consonant errors: _____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pond</th>
<th>jumps</th>
<th>mud</th>
<th>plant</th>
<th>frogs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rock</td>
<td>next</td>
<td>plan</td>
<td>goes</td>
<td>this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total correct/10