

Teacher's Guide for Spider Magazine

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Teacher's Guide prepared by Gail Skroback Hennessey

Gail Hennessey taught social studies at Harpursville Central School in New York State for 33 years. She writes often for children's publications and is the author of six books for teachers and students. In 1988, she was named Outstanding Elementary Social Studies Classroom Teacher of the Year from the New York State Council for the Social Studies and also named Outstanding Elementary Social Studies Teacher of the Year by the National Council for the Social Studies. Check out her helpful Web site for teachers at www.gailhennessey.com

The following teacher's guide is designed to assist the classroom teacher in using the February 2012 issue of *Spider Magazine*. Common Core Standards are addressed in the guide including a focus on reading informational text, vocabulary development, phonics, decoding skills, listening skills and fluency.

Students are introduced to a variety of materials on different topics and genres to build their knowledge, experience and joy of reading. Questions are scaffolded and a variety of writing opportunities are suggested throughout the teaching guide. Oral speaking and listening standards are also addressed in the guide as well as offering cross curricular activities to help you utilize the magazine in your classroom.

Lessons can be used in small group, partners, individuals or whole class instruction formats and the sessions are a suggestion and the sequencing of the material can depend upon your individual preferences and students.

Helpful reminders:

Pre-Reading: Pre-reading prepares students for learning by activating their prior knowledge about the topic featured in the text.

During-Reading: Reading strategies teach comprehension by making connections, generating questions, and determining importance by guiding the reader to use proficient reader strategies.

After-reading: After activities connect the old and new knowledge and help students frame it in some way to their lives.

Students will be able to :

1. analyzed word similarities and differences
- 2.. appropriately participated in chorally reading activities.
3. read with accuracy and increased fluency during partner reading and independent reading activities.
4. increased their listening and speaking vocabulary as well as conversational skills.
5. shown evidence of listening and reading comprehension.
6. demonstrated accurate story imaging or visualization skills.
7. demonstrated an ability to sequence events in a story
8. identified rhyming words in a poem.
9. read with appropriate expression
10. created illustrations that creatively portray the topic or text.
11. demonstrated the ability to evaluate a piece of writing.

Materials:

Copies of the February issue of *Spider*

Map of the world

Websites of interest

Drawing paper

Session 1:

1. To get ready for the February issue, have students close their eyes and visualize what comes to mind when they think of the month of February. Possible ideas may include: Valentine's Day, Groundhog Day, President's Day, Abraham Lincoln, etc. Encourage students to share prior knowledge they might have on these different holidays.

2. Pass out Necco Candy Hearts. Ask the students to think of new comments that could be placed on the candy hearts. Go to this site to learn more about the history of Necco Candy Hearts:

<http://www.necco.com/SweetheartMiniSite/Default.asp?Section=history>

Draw a large Necco candy and place their favorite new comment on their "candy". Ask the students to share thoughts about Valentine's Day. This site has lots of background information on Valentine's Day:

<http://holidays.kaboose.com/valentines-day/history/val-history.html>

3. Explain that in the story, "Doodlebug and Dandelion, XO" by Pamela Dell, on pages 4-8, Dandelion has a secret admirer during the month of February.

4. Assign the students a partner and distribute a copy of *Spider* magazine. Introduce the issue, looking at the cover, title page and table of contents. Ask for comments, reactions and predictions. Take a guided picture walk through the issue, reading captions and noting illustrations. This activity utilizes background knowledge, stimulates interest in the context, builds expectations, and sets a purpose for the reading.

5. Have the students turn to "Doodlebug and Dandelion" by Pamela Dell, on pages 4- 8, have students take turns reading the story, stopping after each page to review and discuss what is happening in the story.

6. On pages 4, encourage students to give descriptive phrases to describe what they see in the pictures.

7. After finishing the story, have partners write up three comprehension questions from the story. This encourages students to review the story for important information from the story. Next, have the students return to a class grouping and have the partners ask other partner groups their questions. Each group that answers a question correctly gets a point.

8. Pamela Dell always uses lots of vivid description. Discuss the purpose of adjectives and adverbs to help make words come alive. Have students in pairs review pages 4-8 for adjectives and adverbs. For each adjective, have the student list the noun for which it describes. For each adverb, have the students list the verb for which the adverb gives more description. Mention that many adverbs end in "ly" and answer the questions: "how," "when," "where," "how much".

NOUN/Adjective

VERB/ Adverb/ what question does it describe

(example: N: guy A: smartest, cutest) (example: V: glancing A: toward Q: Where)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Regroup and discuss the activity on Adjectives and Adverbs.

9. Encourage the students to make text-to-self connections. Have they ever teased a sibling or had a sibling pull a trick on them? Etc.
10. Give students 5 strips of paper and have them write an event in the story. Exchange with another group and have the students place the events in proper sequence.

Session 2:

1. Explain that in "Zouk, The Crush", by Serge Bloch, on pages 9-13, someone will do almost anything asked to show how much he cares. This might be a good story to discuss peer pressure and how, in order to be liked, students sometimes do things against their better judgment.
2. Have the students open the issue of *Spider* magazine and turn to "Zouk, The Crush", on pages 9-13. Have students volunteer to read a part of the story, stopping after each page to review for comprehension, share comments and predictions.
3. After reading the story, have partners of students do the following activity:

Steps to problem solving: Zouk, The Crush

- A. What is Zouk's problem?
- B Who was involved?
- C. Where did the problem occur?
- D. When did the problem occur?
- E. What steps were taken to solve the problem?
- F. Who helped solve the problem?

After students have had an opportunity to finish the activity, rejoin as a class and review their charts with the entire class.

4. Post comprehension questions to do in small groups or individually:

A. What did Zouk ask Nano to tell the couple? What happened after the comments were said? (man is ugly and girlfriend looks like a flea/hit)

B. Because Nano has a crush on Zouk, what does he promise? (Your wish is my command)

C. Why did Nano jump into the river? (to retrieve Zouk's scarf) How did it wind up in the river?(Zouk threw it there)

D. What happened that Zouk realized she'd gone too far? (Nano fell from top of bridge)

E. What magic word did she use?(abracadabra) What spell did she place on Nano (could fly like a bird) Regroup and discuss.

5. If you could fly, what would you want to see from above? Write a paragraph describing you feel, see and hear as you fly over the destination. Encourage students to share their paragraphs with the class.

Session 3:

1. Ask the students to share any prior knowledge they might have about medieval times and, specifically knights. This link has lots of information on knights in medieval times.

<http://medievaleurope.mrdonn.org/knights.html>

Explain that in the story, that takes place in medieval times, they will be reading "The Knight Who Was Afraid of the Dark", by Barbara Shook Hazen, on pages 16-20, about a knight who has to overcome his fears.

2. Pass out copies of *Spider Magazine* and have the students turn to "The Knight Who Was Afraid of the Dark", on pages 16-20. Introduce possible vocabulary words such as: moat, hideous, exceedingly, hemmed and hawed, embroidered, tweaked, and snorted. Ask the students to share creative sentences using the new vocabulary words.

3. Have the students take turns reading the story, stopping after each page to review comprehension and vocabulary.

4. After reading the story, have partners of students do the following activity:

Sir Fred's Problem:

- A. What is the problem?
- B. Who was involved?
- C. Where did the problem occur?
- D. When did the problem occur?
- E. What steps were taken to solve the problem?
- F. Who helped solve the problem?

After students have had an opportunity to finish the activity, rejoin as a class and review their charts with the entire class.

5. Discuss the importance of sequencing and how it is helpful in reading comprehension. Explain that sequencing is done all day long such as getting ready for school. Have students share the order of how they get ready for school with 5 events. Review some of the key words for sequencing such as *first*, *next*, *then*, and *finally*. Have groups of students make 7 events in the story and place them each on a different index card. When done, exchange the index cards with events from the story and have another group sequence the cards.

6. Have students do comprehension questions:

A. What are three things that Sir Fred did to become a much-loved knight? (drove monsters from moat, chased dishonest merchants out of town, saved Lady Wendylyn from dragon)

B. Of what 3 types of "darkness" was Sir Fred afraid? (bottom of bed, dark at top of stone stairs, dark of the moon, dark between head and arm holes of his armor)

C. What three things did he keep in his room? (candles, electric eel, fireflies)

D. Even more afraid of the dark, what did Sir Fred fear? (being found out and bullied by Melvin)

E. What famous table didn't Sir Fred ever cower under? (Round Table)

F. When didn't his girlfriend, Lady Wendylyn see Sir Fred? (at night when moon was not full)

G. What problem did Lady Wendylyn create for Sir Fred (embroidered a banner requesting him to see her at night without a full moon)

H. What was Lady Wendylyn's fear? (bugs and slithery things)

Regroup and review the comprehension questions.

7. Encourage students to make connections to the story by sharing things they fear or "dislike".

8. This story might also be a good time to discuss the issue of bullying. This link has lots of information on bullying. <http://www.gailhennessey.com/index.shtml?bullyingresources.html>

Session 4:

1. Ask the students if they know anything about the Quakers. Learn about the religion at this link:

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/northamerica/after1500/religion/quakers.htm>

Explain that the story takes place during the time when slavery was allowed in much of the country and how Quakers' homes were known as a safe place for run-away slaves to seek help, because Quakers were opposed to slavery.

2. Have students open to "Friend Spider" by Jessica Van Dessel, on pages 21-26. Have small groups of students read the story together and answer the following comprehension questions.

A. Where has Jacob's Pa gone? (to sell four year old colts)

B. What is the help that John Freeman asks of Jacob in his Pa's absence?(hid his family from slave hunters)

C. What is the new law that Congress past that could cause harm to the Freeman family? (slave owners can bring runaway slaves back to bondage)

D. Where can the Freeman family be safe? (In the country of Canada).

E. Where were the family temporarily hidden? (in the colts' stall)

F. What are Quakers not supposed to do? (fight) Do you agree with Jacob that you might have difficulty obeying this rule in this specific case?

G. How did the spider help the Freemans?(slave hunters thought that no one could be hidden there as the web was undisturbed) How did this spider play a role in the beginning of the story?(mother had asked Jacob to get rid of it but he did not kill it)

After reading, regroup as a class and discuss the story and go over the comprehension questions.

3. Have students write a diary entry pretending to be either Jacob or Mr. Freeman. Explain how you felt the day the slave hunters came to our farm. How did you feel at the end of the day? Encourage students to share their diary entries.

Session 5:

1. Imagine a time when the color of your skin or your sex would not allow you to publish a book. Explain that in "Phillis's Big Test" by Catherine Clinton, on pages 28-32, students will be reading about Phillis Wheatly, who in 1773, became the first African American to publish a book of poetry.

2. Pass out copies of *Spider* magazine and have the students turn to "Phillis's Big Test" on pages 28-32. Have students take turns reading a selection of the reading, stopping after each page to discuss for content, comprehension and to make connections.

3. Have the students answer the following comprehension questions:

A. Why did Phillis go before a committee of 18 men? (prove that she wrote the poetry) Why didn't they believe her claim? (didn't believe a slave girl could do such a thing) How do you think you would have felt if you were Phillis?

B. How did Phillis come to live in Massachusetts Bay Colony? (on a ship from Africa). How did she get her name? (name of the slave ship she arrived on)

C. How did the young slave girl learn to read and write? (the Wheatleys' children sharing their lessons with her.)

D. How did she introduce herself as she entered the hearing? (Good day, gentlemen. I am the poet, Phillis Wheatley)

E. Which event in American history did Phillis live? (during the time of the American Revolution). Encourage students to share any information they might have on the American Revolution. This link has lots of resources: <http://americanhistory.mrdonn.org/revolution.html>

F. What did her slave owners grant her after she went to England to meet with literary patrons? (freedom)

G. Why didn't Phillis publish another book of poems? (she died before finishing the book and the poems were lost)

4. Ask the students to share one of their favorite books. Has the book influenced them in some way? Have the students write a paragraph about their favorite book, why they liked it so much and any way the book has influenced them.

5. Have students use the story "Phillis's Big Test" and in small groups, have the students create a list of words according to how many syllables they have. The group with the most syllables will win the game. **A good way to determine syllables is to have the students place their hand under their chin. Tell them for each time their chin drops as they say a word, that is a syllable. For example: Massachusetts has a four chin drops, or 4 syllables.**

Words with three syllables:

Words with four syllables:

Words with five syllables:

Words with more than five syllables:

Regroup and review the lists. If more than one group has the same word in a category, they must cross it out. For each word, that no one else has listed, the team earns a point. If no other group has a word for the category, (ie: five syllable words) the team earns 3 points. The team with the most points wins the game.

Overall Assessment:

The teacher will assess the students'

1. Ability to work together with a partner or in groups. Record the data in your notes
2. Oral responses to discussion and retelling for listening and comprehension competency.
3. Contributions to charts and other activities done with this month's *Spider* magazine.
4. Ability to clearly express their ideas orally and in writing
5. Ability to read and understand vocabulary
6. Ability to write their own sentences, poems, etc.
7. Ability to make connections
8. Increased fluency as demonstrated in their independent oral reading, buddy reading, etc.