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Introduction

My Science Library: Comprehension, Writing, and Vocabulary Skills using Informational Text is a resource specially designed to provide scaffolding and practice for developing comprehension, writing, and vocabulary skills. All activities are based on science texts, allowing teachers to simultaneously teach language arts and science standards.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

This kit includes a set of science content nonfiction readers, a Teacher Resource book with guided lessons and student worksheets, an activity CD, and correlations to the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and to state science standards.

Leveled Nonfiction Readers

Three copies are provided for all of the titles in the kit. Each of the readers addresses a science topic at a student-appropriate reading level. In addition, the science focus of the readers varies so that students are introduced to, and learn about, concepts from the areas of physical science, Earth science, and life science.

The readers include colorful photos and illustrations that support the content. In addition, the book covers contain lively and relevant pictures that can serve as useful pre-reading tools and are referenced in prompts within the corresponding units in the Teacher Resource book. Each reader also contains a glossary. Boldface words in each reader are defined in the glossary and are further explored in connected activities presented in the Teacher Resource book. The readers include text features, such as captions, charts, and a table of contents. These text features make it possible to practice important reading strategies, and are used in the teacher sections of the corresponding units included in the Teacher Resource book.

Each reader provides a Guided Reading Level, as well as word count and 100th word information. These features allow teachers to use appropriate texts for students and make this resource an excellent reading intervention tool. The readers also list the sight words used. This means teachers can prepare for reading by teaching or reviewing the sight words students will encounter.

Additional resources, such as related websites and teaching tips, are included in the readers. The features in the readers combined with the connected units in the Teacher Resource book give teachers the tools to teach a very comprehensive or very focused unit that is based on students' needs.

Activity CD

The activity CD contains all of the student pages from the Teacher Resource book, as well as correlations to the Common Core State Standards. The CD is located at the back of this book. All student pages are presented in PDF format and are easy to access and print. They can also be projected onto an interactive whiteboard. This ensures teachers always have quick access to their favorite activities and makes it easy to project directions on the board for reference. Using an interactive whiteboard, teachers can also guide or begin activities in a whole group format for additional scaffolding.

Standards

The lessons and activities are correlated to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and to each state's science standards. Common Core correlations are provided on the CD and online at *www.bluestareducation.com*. Correlations to the science standards for each state can be found on the Blue Star Education site. The PDF format and chart-style presentation for the standards make the correlations easy to print and use.

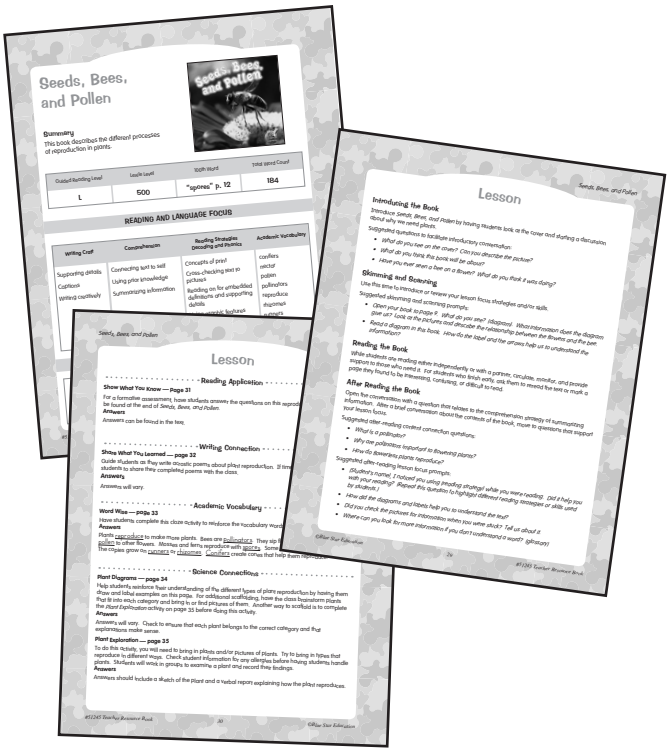
Teacher Resource Book

This book is organized by topic, with a unit covering each of the titles in the kit. Each of these units contains a teacher section with information about the reader, a scripted reading comprehension guide, and a guide to the student pages with an answer key. The student pages comprise the second portion of each unit and include one or more activities from each of the following sections: Reading Application, Writing Connections, Academic Vocabulary, and Science Connections. Each activity relates to the subject matter and to the specific vocabulary and reading challenges of the reader.

Introduction

TEACHER RESOURCE

LESSON STRUCTURE AND CONTENT



Teacher Section

Lessons and activities are provided for every reader in the kit. The first page of each unit contains a short guide to the book, including a summary and leveling information. It also includes the unit's science content focus as well as the reading and language focus. The latter is divided into categories for easy reference. The categories are writing craft; comprehension; reading strategies, decoding, and phonics; and academic vocabulary.

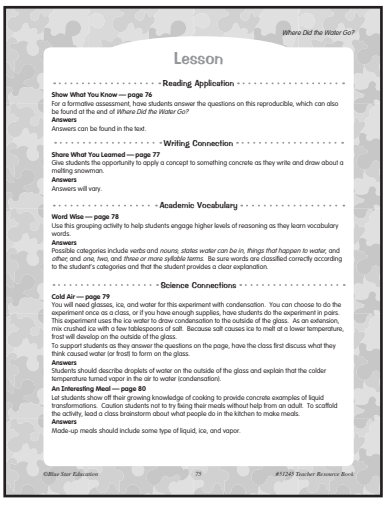
The second page of each unit contains guided reading prompts, which are scripted for easy use. They are divided into four sections: Introducing the Book, Skimming and Scanning, Reading the Book, and After Reading the Book. This organization provides teachers with prompts and guidance to support students through all phases of the reading process. Each unit contains prompts that address a specific comprehension strategy as well as general content-connection prompts.

The third page of each unit provides an overview of the student activities contained in the unit. It is divided into sections for easy navigation. Each activity is introduced with a short description of its purpose and benefits as well as the page number for easy navigation. Teachers can review this page to learn if any additional materials will be needed and to review correct answers.

Student Pages

Each student page represents a stand-alone activity with tie-ins to the concepts and vocabulary introduced in the reader. The activities in each unit can be presented as a unit of study to support comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills. Alternatively, teachers can pick and choose which activities are most needed or set some activities aside for a review later in the year. Each unit contains one or more reading applications, writing connections, academic vocabulary activities, and science connections.

Reading Application: This page, called Show What You Know, can be found both in the reader and as a separate worksheet in the Teacher Resource book. As with all other student pages, it is on the CD. Answers to the questions can be found in the text of the reader, making this a great formative assessment for reading comprehension.



Writing Connections: One or more student pages from this category are represented in each unit. These open-ended activities will help students process what they have learned and make personal connections to the subject matter. Here, students will practice a variety of fiction and nonfiction writing skills.

Academic Vocabulary: Each unit contains one or more pages from this category, which will support students as they learn academic vocabulary. Every reader has a glossary of academic vocabulary. The vocabulary words are in boldface where they are used in context in the reader. These pages provide extra practice with the vocabulary.

Science Connections: The activities suggested in this section provide a variety of approaches to the subject matter from analytical activities, such as comparing and contrasting, to science experiments. They include writing or vocabulary components so that students are practicing core language skills even as they deepen their understanding of science concepts. The hands-on nature of these activities allows students to engage a variety of learning styles.

Introduction

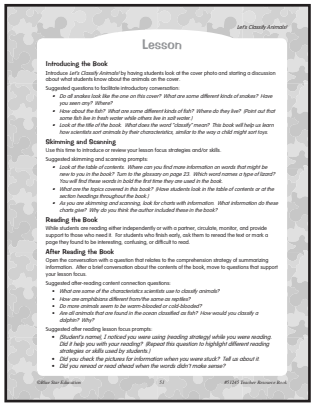
USING THE COMPONENTS

The components can be used in a manner tailored to accommodate the needs and interests of an individual student, a small group, or the entire class. What follows is a general guide to using the components of one unit. This overview focuses on using the readers in conjunction with the information, prompts, and activities in the Teacher Resource. It is also possible to get quick tips and ideas relating to all phases of the reading process from the information provided on the inside covers of the readers.

Selecting a Text

You may choose to use all components of this kit, using the titles in the order in which they are introduced in the Teacher Resource book. To facilitate this, the reading levels of the titles are arranged in increasing order of difficulty, with the books at the beginning of the set representing the easiest reading levels. However, in an intervention setting, you may select texts most suited to the reading proficiency and interests of one student or a small group. Because the lessons for each title can be used independently, and contain writing, reading comprehension, and science activities, it is easy to pick and choose among the titles offered within the kit.

To select a text, refer to the first page of the title's unit in the Teacher Resource book. There, a summary, reading level information, and learning foci can be found. (Note: For convenience, Guided Reading and Lexile levels for each book are shown on page 6 of this book.) On the third page of each unit, a teacher can also find short descriptions of activities and materials needed, if any are needed. In addition, the inside covers of the readers offer tips and ideas for how individual titles may tie in to other English Language Arts curricula.


Let's Classify Animals!

Lesson

Introducing the Book

Introduce *Let's Classify Animals!* by having students look at the cover photo and starting a discussion about what students know about the animals on the cover.

Suggested questions to facilitate introductory conversation:

- *Do all snakes look like the one on this cover? What are some different kinds of snakes? Have you seen any? Where?*
- *How about the fish? What are some different kinds of fish? Where do they live? Point out that some fish live in fresh water while others live in salt water.)*
- *Look at the title of the book. What does the word "classify" mean? This book will help us learn how scientists sort animals by their characteristics, similar to the way a child might sort toys.*

Skimming and Scanning

Use this time to introduce or review your lesson focus strategies and/or skills.

Suggested skimming and scanning prompts:

- *Look at the table of contents. Where can you find more information on words that might be new to you in the book? Turn to the glossary on page 23. Which word names a type of lizard? You will find these words in bold the first time they are used in the book.*
- *What are the topics covered in the book? How students look in the table of contents or at the section headings throughout the book.)*
- *As you are skimming and scanning, look for charts with information. What information do these charts give? Why do you think the author included these in the book?*

Reading the Book

While students are reading either independently or with a partner, circulate, monitor, and provide support to those who need it. For students who finish early, ask them to reread the text or mark a page they found to be interesting, confusing, or difficult to read.

After Reading the Book

Open the conversation with a question that relates to the comprehension strategy of summarizing information. After a brief conversation about the contents of the book, move to questions that support your lesson focus.

Suggested after-reading content connection questions:

- *What are some of the characteristics scientists use to classify animals?*
- *How are amphibians different from the same as reptiles?*
- *Do more animals seem to be warm-blooded or cold-blooded?*
- *Are all animals that are found in the ocean classified as fish? How would you classify a dolphin? Why?*

Suggested after reading lesson focus prompts:

- *(Student's name), I noticed you were using (reading strategy) while you were reading. Did it help you with your reading? (Repeat this question to highlight different reading strategies or skills used by students.)*
- *Did you check the pictures for information when you were stuck? Tell us about it.*
- *Did you reread or read ahead when the words didn't make sense?*

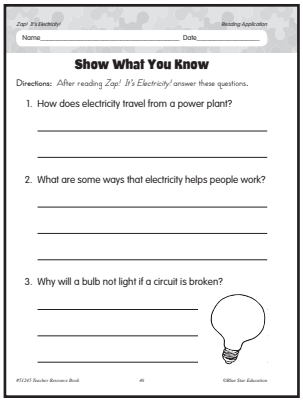
Preparing to Read

Once a title has been selected, it is time to activate students' prior knowledge in the following areas: experience with or understanding of the science concepts, ability to use pre-reading and reading-comprehension strategies, identification of already-known words, and understanding of text features. Page two of each unit in the Teacher Resource book features prompts and questions targeted to these areas. The Introducing the Book and Skimming and Scanning sections help teachers lead students to use pre-reading strategies and discuss their prior knowledge. Scripted prompts are provided to minimize preparation time for the teacher.

Reading the Book

Teachers can choose to have students read the text individually, in pairs or small groups, or as a class. When students read with partners or in a group setting, there is more support built into the process. However, it is important to incorporate some sort of system to ensure equity of voice. For example, students can take turns reading one or two pages at a time or can alternate sentences. If a strong reader is paired with an emerging reader, the strong reader can read the body text with the emerging reader reading the captions and discussing the pictures the first time through the text. They can then repeat the process, trading roles.

There are many ways to ensure that all students receive reading practice and feel supported in their efforts. Teachers needn't choose only one. In fact, students may appreciate the opportunity to alternate group and independent reading throughout the year. Regardless of the configuration chosen, when using the lessons, teachers are encouraged to circulate and monitor students, providing necessary support. Early finishers can be asked to note words or pages they found challenging.


Zap! It's Electricity! Reading Application

Name:_____ Date:_____

Show What You Know

Directions: *After reading Zap! It's Electricity! answer these questions.*

1. How does electricity travel from a power plant?

2. What are some ways that electricity helps people work?

3. Why will a bulb not light if a circuit is broken?

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Processing the Reading

Once students have completed a reader, it is important to assess and develop student comprehension. A formative assessment for reading comprehension, called Show What You Know, is provided as a handout on the fourth page of each unit in the Teacher Resource book. The same questions are also presented at the end of each reader before the glossary and on the activities CD. Have students complete and turn in the handout as a formative assessment, or use the questions as a jumping-off point when discussing the text. Additional prompts and questions are available on the second page of each lesson. Here, the scripted prompts are divided to address two foci, making content connections and addressing the lesson focus. For each title, there is a lesson focus provided, though teachers can create a different or additional focus based on student needs.

Introduction

USING THE COMPONENTS

Extending the Learning

All student pages can be found in the Teacher Resource book and on the learning CD, providing a variety of presentation options for the teacher. While the student pages in each unit can be taught in any order, it is recommended to follow up the reading comprehension discussion with a writing connection activity. With the Share What You Learned activity sheet, students can recount information in their own words or make a personal connection to the topic while developing important writing skills. To create buy-in for students, it is recommended that teachers publish student writing in some way. Ways to do this include having students share all or part of what they wrote with others, putting work up in a display, or putting completed writing assignments together in a binder or booklet for students and visitors to read.

Next, the Teacher Resource book provides academic vocabulary activities. The words used in these activities are the same ones made boldface in the corresponding readers and addressed in the glossaries. These activities are a great reinforcement of newly learned vocabulary words. It is recommended to also dedicate part of a classroom wall to academic vocabulary. Put up cards with the new terms and their definitions or representative pictures. An accessible, visual presentation of academic vocabulary in the classroom supports student use of the vocabulary in reading comprehension and in writing and discussion. This can be done at the beginning of the unit or when the vocabulary lesson is introduced. It is also an option to include student work in the display, or to involve students in the work of creating the display.

Each unit is rounded off with one or more science connection activities. In the descriptions of the activities (on the third page of each unit in the teacher's guide), teachers can learn if any materials are needed and what adaptations or extensions to the activities are offered. Overall, science connection activities require a minimum of additional materials and outside preparation, with some requiring none at all.

To ensure success in the science connection activities, prepare and discuss behavior guidelines with students. The activities include a writing element or require students to record or classify information. In addition to providing writing and critical thinking practice, this provides a balance of active and reflective tasks in the activities that have a strong hands-on component. Consider projecting the directions using the PDF of the handout included on the CD. Review the directions and provide a time limit to keep students focused. For group activities, make sure student tasks are structured so that all students will participate constructively.

It is recommended that teachers encourage student reflection upon completion of activities or of the unit. Many opportunities are built into prompts and activities in the Teacher Resource book. To extend a unit further, teachers can provide variations and extensions to many of the included lessons, or they can explore the website addresses provided at the back of each reader. With the guidance and flexibility built into this program, teachers are able to save time even as they tailor units to meet their students' needs. This resource encourages differentiation, honors diverse learning styles, and promotes reflective learning, all while providing scaffolded reading support.

NONFICTION READERS—READING LEVELS

READER TITLE	GUIDED READING	LEXILE
Natural or Man-Made?	K	450
What's on the Food Chain Menu?	K	450
Plants Make Their Own Food	L	500
Seeds, Bees, and Pollen	L	500
What Do Critters Do in the Winter?	L	500
Zap! It's Electricity!	L	500
Let's Classify Animals!	M	550
Earth is Tilting!	M	550
Studying Weather and Climates	M	550
Where Did the Water Go?	M	550
Gravity! Do You Feel It?	N	600
Melting Matter	N	600

Name_____ Date_____

Show What You Know

Directions: After reading *Where Did the Water Go?* answer these questions.

1. Can you think of something that melts other than ice?

_____

2. Where do the gas molecules get their energy to zip around?

_____

_____

_____

3. What makes the molecules slow down?

_____

_____

_____

Name_____ Date_____

Share What You Learned

Directions: Have you ever made a snowman? Have you ever seen one or read about one? They are made of frozen water in the form of snow. Write about what happens if a snowman sits in the hot sunshine all day. Draw a picture in the space provided.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name_____ Date_____

Word Wise

Directions: Sort the words in the box into two or three categories. Label each category. Below, explain how you sorted the words.

condenses	**freezes**	**gas**	**liquid**	**melts**
molecules	**solid**	**temperature**	**water vapor**	

My Explanation

_____

_____