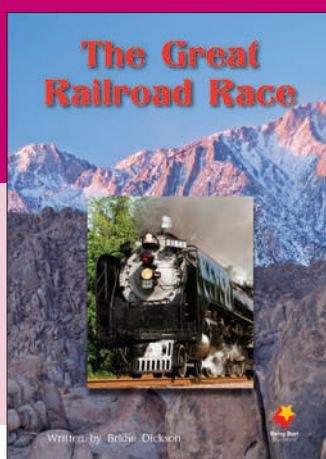


Lesson Plans

**Fluent
reading stage**

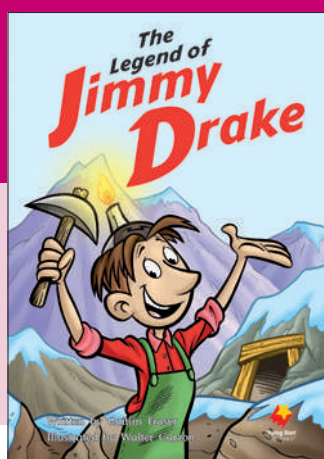
Level 24



The Great Railroad Race is about the building of the transcontinental railroad line across the USA.

Running words: 622

Text type: Historical recount



When five men are trapped in a tunnel after an avalanche, it is only Jimmy Drake's bravery that saves them.

Running words: 708

Text type: Narrative

Content vocabulary

avalanche blizzards brave bridges building built canyon dangerous east coast explosives journey legend pick railroad railroad track railway cart supplies travel tunnels west coast

Phonics

- Identifying the long /o/ sound represented by "oa" as in railroad, coast.
- Identifying the long /e/ sound represented by "y" as in Jimmy, story, hurry

Text features

The Great Railroad Race

- Chapters with headings
- Coloured and historical photographs
- Map and illustrations

The Legend of Jimmy Drake

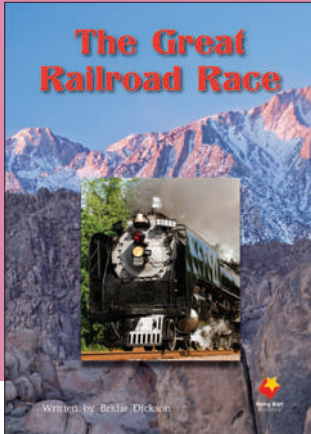
- Preface
- Chapters with headings
- A note from the author

Reading strategies

- Integrating visual and text information
- Summarising the plot

ELL support	Key concepts	Curriculum link
• Introduction and preface set up the contexts of the texts. • Chapter headings signal content. • Visual information supports the text.	• The building of America's transcontinental railroad was a huge achievement. • The people who built the railroad were very brave because it was dangerous and difficult work.	• History: The past in the present

Lesson 1 The Great Railroad Race



Before reading

Getting ready to read

Encourage students to activate their prior knowledge.

Ask: *If you need to get to a place that is a long way away, how could you travel there? (e.g. car, train, aeroplane). Say: Hundreds of years ago, people travelled on horses or wagons pulled by horses. When railroads were invented, travel became easier, but it was a difficult job to build them.*

★ Read the “Introduction” aloud, stopping occasionally to check students’ understanding.

Vocabulary building

★ Ask: *What words might be in a factual recount about building a railroad?* List students’ ideas and discuss the meaning of the suggested words.

Introducing the book

Give each student a copy of the book and have them read the title and the contents page. Ask: *What do the chapter names tell us about how this railroad was built?*

Have students prepare for reading by thinking and talking about the book with your support. Say: *This railroad was very difficult to build. Why do you think this was the case?*

During reading

Ask each student to read the text independently. Monitor students as they read and support them where appropriate. If necessary, ask them to stop reading and remind them to use the reading strategies you are focused on. Say: *Look at the map/illustration/drawing. What extra information does it give you?*

After reading

Talking about the book

Ask students to talk about the book. Encourage discussion by choosing questions that are appropriate for your students. Ask them to support their answers by referring to the photographs and the text.

Why was it so difficult for the team from the west at first? (Literal)

Why is this railroad considered one of America’s biggest achievements? (Inferential)

How would building a railroad like this be different if it were built today? (Synthesising)

Would all of the workers have been brave? (Critical)

Reviewing reading strategies

Encourage students to identify what they did to help themselves as readers. Say: *I like the way you used all of the information on the page. Viewing the map, photos and illustrations helps you to understand more fully what the text is about.*

Returning to the book

Provide multiple opportunities for students to read and interact with the book again – with teacher support, with a partner and independently. Choose activities that are appropriate for your students.

Developing fluency

Have pairs of students read the book together, taking turns to read a chapter each. Say: *When you are reading aloud, make sure your voice is smooth and not jerky.*

Word work

Phonics

Write the word *railroad* on the board. Ask: *What sounds can you hear in this word? What letters represent the long /o/ sound?* Repeat with *coast*. Have pairs make a list of other words that have the long /o/ sound represented by “oa”.

Exploring words

Rewrite the last sentence on page 5 as three simple sentences. (It was a long journey. It took about six months. It was very unsafe.) Ask: *What is the difference between what I have written and what is in the book?* Draw out the difference between simple sentences (one idea) and compound sentences (two or more ideas). Ask students to find an example of a simple sentence and an example of a compound sentence in the book.

Writing

★ Draw up the following data chart.

	Difficulties	Achievements
Team from the west		
Team from the east		

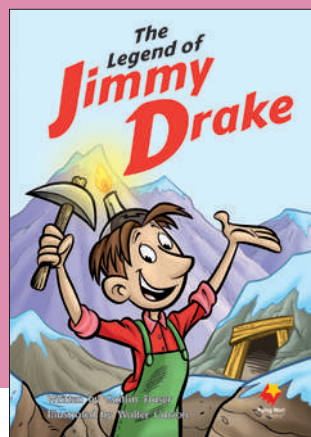
Model writing points in each box of the chart, with input from the students.

Ask: *Which team would you rather be a part of – the east coast team or the west coast team?* Have students give a written response to this question. Have them include three reasons to backup their opinion. Encourage them to refer to the book to find information that supports their opinion.

Sharing and presenting

Have students take turns reading their opinion piece. At the end, tally up how many students preferred the east coast team compared to the west coast team.

Lesson 2 The Legend of Jimmy Drake



Before reading

Getting ready to read

Encourage students to activate their prior knowledge. Say: *Imagine you were a worker who built railroads. What sort of work would you be doing? Would this be easy or difficult work? What would be good about it? What wouldn't be good?* Discuss students' ideas.

★ Say: *When railroads were built hundreds of years ago, it was very dangerous work. We are going to read a story about what it might have been like.*

Vocabulary building

★ Ask: *What is a legend?* Discuss and draw out that it is a story that was so amazing for whatever reason that it has been remembered and retold time and time again.

Introducing the book

Give each student a copy of the book and have them read the title and the contents page. Read the preface aloud and discuss. Answer any questions students might have.

Have students prepare for reading by thinking and talking about the book with your support. Ask: *What might happen in this story?*

During reading

Ask each student to read the text independently. Monitor students as they read and support them where appropriate. If necessary, ask them to stop reading and remind them to use the reading strategies you are focused on. As students read aloud, ask them to stop and retell what has happened in the story so far. If students are unsure about the plot, have them reread. Say: *Reread that paragraph/page/chapter to make sure that you understand what is happening in the story.*

After reading

Talking about the book

Ask students to talk about the book. Encourage discussion by choosing questions that are appropriate for your students. Ask them to support their answers by referring to the illustrations and the text.

Why did most of the workers stop looking for the trapped men? (Literal)

What sort of person is Jimmy Drake? What personal qualities did he show? (Inferential)

This story was set about 150 years ago. How would this story be different if it was set today? (Synthesising)

Do you think this sort of story could have actually happened? Why do you think this? (Critical)

Reviewing reading strategies

Encourage students to identify what they did to help themselves as readers. Say: *When you're reading a story, you must know what it is about. I like how you reread the chapter to make sure you knew what was happening.*

Returning to the book

Provide multiple opportunities for students to read and interact with the book again – with teacher support, with a partner and independently. Choose activities that are appropriate for your students.

Developing fluency

Have students read the book in groups of three, with each student taking on a part or parts – the narrator, Jimmy, Lucas and the other men. Say: *When you are reading direct speech, say the words how the characters would say them.*

Word work

Phonics

Ask: *What letter or letters can make the long /e/ sound?* Draw out that “y” can sometimes make this sound. Have pairs of students search through the book to make a list (e.g. *Jimmy, story, only, hurry, bitterly, finally, slowly, carefully, early*).

Exploring words

Ask students to talk with a partner about Jimmy Drake.

Ask: *What sort of person is Jimmy? How would you describe him?*

Have pairs report back and create a list of words (e.g. *brave, courageous, determined, energetic, strong, happy, positive*). Say: *These words are describing words. They are called adjectives.*

Writing

★ Say: *Let's summarise what happened in the story.* Model writing a recount of the main points of the story, with input from the students. Model the use of clear sentences.

Show students a newspaper article. Ask: *What features does a newspaper article have?* Make a list and discuss (e.g. *headline, quotes, photos with captions*). Ask: *When Jimmy Drake found the five trapped men alive, do you think it would have made the news?* Have students write a newspaper article about the rescue by Jimmy Drake, using the Blackline master provided.

Sharing and presenting

Display the newspaper articles in the room. Provide time for students to view the articles. Discuss what makes a good newspaper article, as a whole group.

Talk about the pair

Ask: *What did we learn about the building of the railroad line across the USA? What makes this achievement so amazing?*

Have students work further with the books by completing the Activity card provided.

Blackline master

Read all about it!

- 1. Write a newspaper article about Jimmy Drake's rescue of five trapped workers.
- 2. Include a headline, a caption for the picture and quotations from Jimmy, Lucas and/or the rescued workers.

Write a headline

The Local Times



Assessment

Write a caption

Does the student show an accurate understanding of what happened in the story?
Can the student write a newspaper article that includes features of this text type?

Activity card

Race to Promontory Point



You will need a die.

1. Cut out the token and join with another player. Place your tokens on Start.
2. Take turns rolling the die and moving forward. Follow the instructions on the spaces.
3. The first player to reach space 15 is the winner.



1 West Coast START	10	11			6	5
2	9 A bridge is finished. Move forward 2 spaces.	12	15 W i n n e r Welcome to Promontory Point!	14	7	4 New workers arrive. Move forward 3 spaces.
3 Blizzard! Move back 1 space.	8	13 Avalanche! Move back 3 spaces.		13 You have no supplies. Move back 3 spaces.	8	3 Rain! Move back 1 space.
4 New workers arrive. Move forward 3 spaces.	7	14		12	9 250 miles of track is built. Move forward 2 spaces.	2
5	6			11	10	1 East Coast START

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