

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Fantasy Page Count: 14 Word Count: 214

Book Summary

A group of farm animals notice that their friends appear smaller and smaller as they go to a barn far away. Cow, who believes that each animal has disappeared, is the last to go to the barn. When she gets to the barn, she discovers something unexpected.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Retell


Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of retelling to understand and remember a fiction story
- Sequence events in a story
- Manipulate medial sounds
- Identify short vowel *i*
- Recognize and understand the use of quotation marks
- Identify and use synonyms

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Smaller and Smaller* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- [Sequence events, quotation marks worksheets](#)
- [Discussion cards](#)

 Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](#).

- **High-frequency words:** saw, see, to, too, very
- **Content words:**

Story critical: **bigger** (adj.), **disappeared** (v.), **farther** (adv.), **goodness** (n.), **reached** (v.), **shrinking** (v.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students if they have ever noticed how things appear to grow smaller the farther away they are, such as an airplane after takeoff, or a balloon released into the air. Invite them to describe something they have observed getting smaller and smaller as it moved farther away.

Book Walk

- Show students the front and back covers of the book and read the title with them. Ask what they might read about in a book called *Smaller and Smaller*. (Accept any answers students can justify.)
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information that on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name). Ask who they think the characters in the book will be.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Retell**

- Explain to students that one way to understand and remember what they are reading is to stop now and then during reading to retell in their mind what is happening in the story.
- Explain to students that when someone retells something, they explain the details of what happened in order. Point out that people retell stories as part of their daily lives, such as explaining what happened at a sports game. Ask students to share other examples of when people might give a retelling.
- Model retelling a familiar story in detail, such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.
Think-aloud: *In Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Goldilocks comes to a house in the forest that belongs to three bears: a mama bear, a papa bear, and a baby bear. The bears leave the house for a walk in the forest while their porridge is cooling. Goldilocks goes inside the house, even though no one is home. First, Goldilocks sees three bowls of porridge on the table. She tries each one. The first bowl is too hot, the second bowl is too cold, and the third bowl is just right, so she eats it all up. Next, she sees three chairs and sits in each one. The first chair is too hard, the second chair is too soft, and the third chair is just right. However, the chair breaks and Goldilocks falls to the ground.*
- Continue retelling in detail to the end of the story. Invite students to suggest information for the retelling of this story.
- Have students place sticky notes on pages 6, 10, and 14. Explain to them that as they read, they should stop on these pages to think about what has happened in the story. Encourage students to retell in their mind what happens in the story as they read.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- As you preview the book, ask students to talk about what they see in the illustrations and use the vocabulary they will encounter in the text. Model how to use what they know about how things appear to shrink the farther away they are as they preview the illustrations.
- Reinforce new vocabulary by incorporating it into the discussion of the pictures. For example, on page 5, you might say: *Goat looks like he's shrinking*. Use phrases from the book such as "Goodness me," and "Oh no" while previewing the book to incorporate book language into the discussion.
- Model for students the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, point to the word *farther* on page 6. Model using the familiar word part *far* and the picture to read the word. Then read the sentence to students and ask if the word *farther* makes sense.

Set the Purpose


- Have students read the book to find out what gets smaller and smaller. Remind them to stop reading at the end of each page with a sticky note to quickly retell in their mind the details of what has happened so far in the story.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Ask them to place a finger on the page number at the bottom corner of the page. Have them read to the end of page 6, using their finger to point to each word as they read. Encourage students who finish before others to reread the text.
- Ask students what has happened so far in the story. Model how you stopped to mentally retell the story.
Think-aloud: *I stopped after a few pages to retell in my mind what I had read so far. First, lots of farm animals were standing on top of a hill looking at the barn on another hill. Goat decided to go to the barn. So it ran down the hill and across the field. As it ran farther away, Cow thought Goat was shrinking and then disappeared completely.*

- Have students read to the end of page 10. Ask them to retell the events of the story to a partner. Observe their retellings for characters, sequence of events, and details.
- Have students read the remainder of the story. Remind them to stop reading at the end of each page with a sticky note to quickly retell in their mind the details of what has happened so far in the story.

 Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in the discussion that follows.

After Reading


- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Retell in detail with students the events of the story from pages 11 and 12, using the pictures in the book as a guide.
- Think-aloud: *After Cow thought Pig disappeared, Cow decided to find Pig, Duck, and Goat. Cow ran down the hill toward the barn.*
- Have volunteers retell the events to the end of the book using the pictures in the book as a guide. Then have them retell the story to a partner, starting at the beginning. Listen for whether students include the following: correct events in detail, events in order, main characters.
- Ask students how pausing to retell the story in their mind helped them to remember what was happening in the story.
- Discuss additional strategies students used to gain meaning from the book.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Sequence events**

- **Discussion:** Ask students why they think the animals seemed to shrink as they ran to the barn.
- **Introduce and model:** Tell students that a story is a series of events that happens in a particular order. First one thing happens, then something else, and so on. Explain to students that the order in which events happen is called the *sequence*. Point out the sequence in this story.
- **Think-aloud:** *In this story, the first event that happened was Goat runs to the barn. Cow thinks Goat disappeared. Next, Duck flies to the barn to find Goat. Cow thinks Duck disappeared. I don't include all the details of the story, as I would in a retelling. I only tell the most important events in order to tell the story correctly.*
- **Check for understanding:** Have students share the sequence of events through the end of the story. If necessary, use the pictures in the book as a guide.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [sequence events worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

 Instruct students to use the last page of their book to draw a picture of something they've seen that seemed to grow smaller and smaller (a building or landmark as a vehicle drove away, buildings on the ground as a plane lifted off, and so on). Have students share their pictures with the group.

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: **Manipulate medial sounds**

- Say the words *burn* and *firm* and ask students what is the same about the middle sound in each word (they each have the /er/ sound). Tell students you can change the words by changing the middle sound.
- Say the /ar/ sound as in the word *car*. Have students repeat the sound. Have them replace the middle sound in *firm* to the /ar/ sound (*farm*).

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Smaller and Smaller

- Say the following words to students: *hurt, dirt, curl*. Pause after saying each word and have them replace the middle sound to /ar/ to say the new word (*heart, dart, Carl*).

Phonics: Short vowel i

- Write the word *bigger* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the short /i/ sound aloud. Then run your fingers under the letters in the word as students say the word aloud. Ask students which letter stands for the short /i/ sound in the word *bigger*.
- Write the following words that have a short /i/ sound on the board, leaving out the medial vowel: *sing, trip, pig, lip*. Say each word, one at a time, and have volunteers come to the board and add the *i* in each word. Have students blend the sounds together as you run your finger under the letters.
- Check for understanding: Have students search the story to locate and highlight words that have the short /i/ sound.

Grammar and Mechanics: Quotation marks

- Review or explain to students that quotation marks are punctuation marks used to show the spoken part of the story when a character is talking.
- Have students turn to page 3. Write the following sentence on the board: “*Look at that little barn on the other hill.*” Point to the quotation marks and have students name the marks. Ask them to tell who was speaking in this part of the story (*Goat*). Have students repeat what *Goat* said and identify where *Goat* started and stopped speaking.
- Have students look at page 4. Ask them to find the quotation marks on the page.
- Have students suggest dialogue. Write the sentences on the board, leaving off the quotation marks. Have volunteers come to the board and add the quotation marks in the correct places.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [quotation marks worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Synonyms

- Have students turn to page 6 in the book. Ask them to find the last sentence that tells what *Cow* believes has happened to *Goat*. Tell them to point to the word. Write the word *disappeared* on the board.
- Explain to students that writers often have many choices of words to use and there may be another word that has a similar meaning. Tell them that words with similar meanings are called *synonyms*. Ask students to tell what other word(s) the author might have used in place of *disappeared* (*vanished, gone*).
- Have students turn to page 12. Ask them to find the word in the first sentence that describes the barn (*bigger*). Ask students to tell a synonym the author could have used for *bigger* (*larger*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students identify synonyms for the word *said*. Write these words on a chart that can be displayed for students to use as a resource for their own writing.

Build Fluency
Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends.

Extend the Reading

Writing and Art Connection

Create a class book called *Bigger and Bigger*. Use the book *Smaller and Smaller* as a template. Map the sequence of events as a class. Then have students work with a partner to write and illustrate 2–3 pages of the book. Combine the pages and read the completed story aloud.

Science Connection

Have two students stand side-by-side in a long hallway. Ask one of the students to slowly walk backward down the hall. Ask students to tell what appears to be happening to the height of the student moving backward.

Skill Review

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- accurately retell the events and details of the story
- correctly sequence events in a story during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly manipulate medial sounds of words during discussion
- accurately recognize and read words with the short vowel *i*
- correctly use quotation marks during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately demonstrate the use of synonyms during discussion

Comprehension Checks

- **Book Quiz**
- **Retelling Rubric**