

A Letter to Grandma

GOALS

Comprehension

Discuss strategies for writing a letter. What is needed and in what order?

Vocabulary

High-frequency Words: about, get, her, his, know, live, put, what

Content Words: envelope, friend, Grandma, letter, means, museum, school, stamps, swimming, write

Phonemic Awareness

Recognise and produce words that begin with the same sound: /kn/

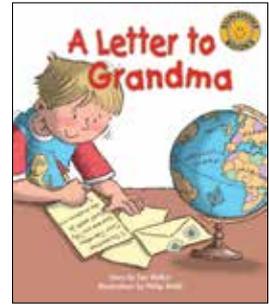
Phonics

Letters and Sounds: kn (n)

Words to Blend and Segment: knee, knew, knit, knot, know

Fluency

Choral reading with students pointing to the words as they are read – sharing information.



Alex writes a letter to his grandma and waits for a reply.

Before Reading

- Listen to the title and the name of the author and illustrator. Together look at the cover picture. Discuss what students see. (stamps, envelope) Ask: What is the boy doing in the picture? Why is there a globe? Is this a fiction or nonfiction book? How do you know?
- Help students to use the title and cover illustration to make predictions about the story.
- Look at the title page illustration. Ask: What is the same or different here compared to the cover? Which country is Grandma living in? What do you think might happen in the story?
- Talk/walk through the pictures. Discuss what is happening to the boy on each page or what he is doing. Bring words like *envelope*, *friend*, *Grandma*, *letter*, *means*, *museum*, *school*, *stamps*, *swimming*, *write* into the conversation.
- On page 15, have students predict the ending.

Reading the Text

- Read the title together and the names of the author and illustrator. Read the title page. Read the address on the envelope.
- On pages 2–3, ask: What is the setting for the text? What is in the picture that is also on the front cover? (the globe). Can you see England on the globe? Read the text together.
- On page 4, have students tell why the print looks different to page 5. (page 4 is the text of the story; page 5 is the letter Alex is writing) Discuss the pictures, locate words like *skeleton*, *museum*, *whale*. Help students to decode these words, e.g. *skel/e/ton*. Read both pages.
- Follow this pattern for each page up to page 15, discussing the illustration, looking for key words, decoding unknown words and reading the words together.
- On page 15, review the predictions for the ending made earlier, turn the page to reveal the ending. Have students discuss what they see in the illustration. Read the text together. Ask: Did you like the ending? Why? What did you notice about Grandma's writing?

After Reading

Invite students to discuss the story. Prompt if needed.

- Retell the text using the pictures on each page as a guide. What happened on each page? How did Alex feel at the end? How do you know?
- Have students make a time line to illustrate the process of sending a letter. For example, write the letter, put it in the envelope, write address on envelope etc. They label and illustrate the time line and share with the class.
- Reread the text, focusing on the punctuation in letters and on envelopes. Teach students the purpose of the capital letters, full stops and commas. Reinforce other punctuation in the text such as apostrophes, ellipses and exclamation marks.
- Students find examples of an apostrophe in the text. (Alex's letter, Grandma's address, spider's web, it's) Discuss the difference between the possessive and contractions. Expand the contraction and write examples of possessives using the students' names with the apostrophe.

Phonemic Awareness

- Recognise and produce words that begin with the same sound: /kn/ n Students listen for /kn/ sound as you read the words, *knee, knew, knit, knot, know*. They repeat the words, emphasising the /kn/ sound.
- Play a game of guessing. Say: "I am thinking of a word that starts with /kn/ and ends with /ee/, (*knee*). I am thinking of something you can make from string." (*knot*).

Phonics

- Discuss the sound of the digraph: /kn/ n Write the words *knee, knew, knit, knot, know* on the board to practise blending and segmenting the sounds together. Note this is a digraph with one sound /n/. Illustrate using alphabet letters, touching them as the sounds are made for the word.
- Students brainstorm other words starting with /kn/ to write up on the board. Read them together. (*knight, knob, knack, knock*)

Word Study

- Talk about the words *about, get, her, his, know, live, put, what*. Read them together. Ask students to locate the words in the text. Photocopy the flash cards from the inside front cover and use them to play a spelling game in pairs. Discuss the meaning or use of each word in the context of the book, e.g. *what* is a question word.

Fluency

- Choral read with students pointing to the words as they are read and sharing information.

Writing

- Discuss the steps for writing a letter. What is needed and in what order? Look at the back cover to talk about the different parts of a letter.
- Students write a letter to someone they know telling them what they have been doing. Use Alex's letter as a model. They start with the date and read it to a friend.

Home/School Link

Take the book home and any related activity done in class to share with family.