

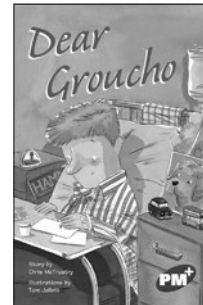
Dear Groucho

PM Level 27

Ruby

Text Type Narrative

Running Words 2272



Preparing for Guided Reading

Orientation to the Text

- Ben is very ill, and goes to London with his father for an operation. He sends postcards to his dog, Groucho, telling all about his trip – the aeroplane journey, the interesting places he visits, and his time in hospital.

Prior Knowledge

- Tell the students that the boy on the cover, Ben, is travelling overseas. Ask them to work out the destination using the clues on the cover, e.g. double-decker bus and London cab.

Building the Balanced Reader

Grammatical Conventions

- Discuss the author's use of parentheses (brackets) and why writers use this feature. Have students investigate the content of the parentheses and make generalisations about their use in this story.
- Note the one-word sentences on p. 10. Explain that these have the effect of keeping the story moving quickly.

Vocabulary

Key vocabulary

announced, cavalry, circulation, incredible, medicine, miracle, offense, passports, stroll, terminal

Spelling

- Discuss words in the text that have the same spelling but different meanings, e.g. *patient, sick*.
- Use syllabification to assist with spelling of unfamiliar words, e.g. *par/li/a/ment; cel/e/brate; op/er/a/tion*.

Visual Literacy

- Discuss and name the elements in the illustrations that typify London.
- Notice that when Ben changes location, this is reflected in the address written at the beginning of his letter. Explain how this assists the reader to follow the story more closely.

Focusing on the Story – Guided Reading

Preparing for Reading

- Ask students to read to the end of p. 15 after setting the focus questions: *Why does Ben change his mind about flying? Who was Ben waving to from the bus window?*
- Encourage students to calculate over what period of time the first three chapters occur (use the dates on the postcards). For a more challenging task, use a map showing the time zones to calculate the period of time.
- Ask students to read to the end of p. 24 after setting the focus questions:

Why did Aunt Isabel hold Ben's hand throughout dinner?

Why does Ben write "big breath" on the postcard?

How does Ben measure his braveness?

- Ask students to calculate how much time Ben has now spent away from home, and then make a list of things that Ben could do to pass time while he is confined to bed.
- Share students' responses to the focus questions, then discuss the following: *What clues are there that Ben is unwell? What sort of surprise may Dad have planned?*
- Share students' responses to the focus questions, then discuss the following: *Ben thinks that his dad is nervous about meeting Dr Khan because Dr Khan is famous. What do you think? What do you think Ben's favourite experience in London was? How can you tell?*
- Explore the use of bold text in the story. Have students read sentences aloud, emphasising different words and commenting on how this can alter the meaning of the sentence.

Comprehension

- Who is Ben writing to on the postcards? (*Literal*)
- Why hasn't Dad mentioned Ben's illness? (*Inferential*)
- What are the effects of Ben's illness? How does he feel about these? (*Applied Knowledge*)

Follow-up Activities

- Ask students to recount occasions when they or a family member has had to have an operation. Explain how they felt before and after the operation.

Learning Intentions

- We are learning to understand a range of situations that we encounter in everyday life, and understand the impact these have on us.
- We are learning to make predictions about the text based on our knowledge of the structure of the text type, and the typical vocabulary.
- _____

Success Criteria

- I can identify situations in the text that we encounter in our lives, and can talk about the effect they have on us.
- I can use prior knowledge about the text type and vocabulary to make predictions about the text.
- _____

Guided Reading Notes

Student's name	Reading focus	Observations/notes	For follow-up