

Message from the Stars

PM Level 27

Ruby

Text Type Narrative

Running Words 3582



Preparing for Guided Reading

Prior Knowledge

- Invite students to share their experiences of what they have seen in the night sky. Encourage them to discuss and describe things that are closer to Earth, such as birds or bats, things that are a little further away, such as planes, and objects a long distance away, such as stars, the moon and planets.

Orientation to the Text

- Sirius is named after the brightest star and has an interest in astronomy fuelled by his astronomer dad. But when Dad travels to the USA to work at one of the world's largest radio telescopes, Sirius is left feeling lonely. Can a surprise in the mail and a special message help Sirius to feel better again?

Building the Balanced Reader

Grammatical Conventions

- Look for examples of simple (e.g. *They did this every day.*), compound (e.g. *Sirius loved thinking about the possibility of alien life, and he loved staring up at the stars through Dad's telescope.*) and complex sentences (e.g. *When Sirius was younger, Dad would call him "my bright little Star-boy".*) and talk about the number and types of verbs in each.

Vocabulary

Key Vocabulary

absence, astronomer, astronomy, connection, conversation, distorting, electromagnetic, frequencies, mechanism, microphone, mysterious, observatory, optical, possibility, swivelled, telescope, universe, university

Spelling

- Look at plurals in the text and what was added to or changed in the base to form them, e.g. *frequencies, conversations, lunches.*

Visual Literacy

- Talk with students about what the pictures accompanying the text tell us about the time and place that the story is set in and why.

Focusing on the Book – Guided Reading

- Look at the front cover and read the title together. Ask, *What sort of text type do you think this will be? What helps you to know this?*

- Draw students' attention to the table of contents and have them explain how to use it. Ask, *Why did the author include this in the text?*
- Read to page 8 together. Ask, *How is Mum feeling at this point in the story? How do you know this?* Guide students to monitor Mum's feelings throughout the text.
- Stop at pages 10 and 11. Ask, *Why are there words in italics at the top of these pages? What do they help the reader to understand?*
- Continue to page 14. Ask, *Why do you think Dad went to work in the USA? How do you think he feels about his new position?*
- Invite students to describe the organisational features on page 25, such as the chapter title and special design of the initial letter. Discuss how each of these supports the reader.
- Read to page 38. Ask, *What might Sirius's classmates have thought of his radio telescope and recording? Why?*
- Ask students to locate the name of the chapter on page 46. Ask, *Do you think this is a good name for the chapter? Why?*

Comprehension

- Why didn't Sirius and Mum know who the mysterious package was from? (*Literal*)
- Why do you think the author described the sentence *Are you serious, Sirius?* as an old joke? What might this mean? (*Inferential*)
- How effective do you think the resolution to this narrative is? How else could it have ended? (*Applied Knowledge*)

Follow-up Activities

- Work with students to build a list of professions and the fields that they relate to, e.g. chemist, chemistry; astronomer, astronomy; optometrist, optometry. Have students work in pairs or small groups to choose one of the items from the list and explain what it is.
- Read or watch a video together about the radio telescope in Parkes, New South Wales and the role it played in the *Apollo 11* moon landing. Ask students to write a summary of what they learned.
- Organise students into 10 small groups and allocate to each group a different chapter from the text. Each group should write a script for their given chapter and then act it out for the class.

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Learning Intentions

- We are learning to make inferences as we read.
- We are learning to understand how texts are organised.

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Success Criteria

- I can make inferences about events and characters' feelings, supported by information from the text and my own experiences.
- I can identify and explain organisational features such as the contents, chapter headings and page headings.

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Guided Reading Notes

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