

COMPREHENSION STRATEGY LESSON PLANS AND PRACTICE PAGES

The following preview shows all of the comprehension strategy resources for *Those Darn Squirrels!* by Adam Rubin

Author's Purpose Lesson Plan

Identifying the Author's Purpose

Those Darn Squirrels!
By: Adam Rubin
Grade Level: 3 / Guided Reading Level: N

1
Get Ready To Read

- Learn about the book
- Get your brain ready to read
- Understand the meaning of important words found in the book

2
Learn About Comprehension Strategies

- Think about the text you read
- Know what to do when you get confused

Summary

Those Darn Squirrels! is about a grumpy old man named Old Man Fookwire who loves to paint birds and watch them eat from his birdfeeders. But when a bunch of clever squirrels start stealing all the birdseed, he gets very angry and builds tricky contraptions to stop them. The squirrels don't give up—they come up with smart plans to get the food anyway! Just when it seems like they'll always be enemies, something surprising happens that changes everything.

Link to What You Know

- Tell about a time when you felt lonely. How did it make you feel?
- Have you ever invented a game or built something out of it?

Important Words to Know and Understand

Clamps – Tools that hold things tightly together
Determined – Not giving up, even when something is hard

Why Readers Identify the Author's Purpose While Reading

Readers identify the author's purpose to understand why an author wrote the book. Authors write books because they want to persuade, inform, or entertain their reader.

When you read fiction (stories that are not real), the author usually includes a message or lesson that they want their readers to think about. When the author does this, they are trying to **persuade** you.

On the other hand, when you read nonfiction (books about real people, places, things, or events), the author answers questions about a specific topic. When the author does this, they are trying to **inform** you.

Author may try to entertain you by being funny, mysterious, or serious. Authors of both fiction and nonfiction can write to **entertain** you.

Activate Prior Knowledge

Page by Page Guide and Strategy Questions

Turn, Talk, and Reflect

Author's Purpose Lesson Plan

Identifying the Author's Purpose

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3
Identify the Author's Purpose While Reading

- Think about what the author is trying to tell you or make you think about
- Did the author write this book to persuade, inform, or entertain you?

4
Notice the Work You Did While Reading

- Think
- Talk
- Reflect
- Write

Time to Read

Stop on the following pages. Think about the questions for each page. Then talk with a reading partner or write your thoughts down in your notebook.

Page 7 – The author uses made-up names for the birds. Why do you think the author chose to use pretend bird names? What does this tell you about the type of story you are reading?

Pages 11 to 13 – The squirrels are "lucky little geniuses." What important information does the author share about the squirrels on these pages? How does answering this question help you to better understand why the old man and the birds dislike the squirrels?

Pages 18 and 19 – Old Man Fookwire built a "veritable fortress" around his birdfeeders. Based on the text and illustrations, what do you think the author means by the word "veritable"? What words and details does the author and illustrator include to help you with your answer?

Pages 24 and 25 – Based on the text and illustrations, what was the author's purpose for including these pages in the story? How does answering this question help you to better understand the old man? How does it help you to better understand the squirrels?

Page 26 – The story ends with the old man smiling and saying, "Those darn squirrels." Why do you think the author chose to end the book this way? Is the author trying to share a message with the reader? Explain your thinking.

Time to Reflect

Think – Adam Rubin is the author of *Those Darn Squirrels!* What was his purpose for writing this book? Did she write the book to persuade, inform, or entertain you? How do you know?

Talk – Tell your reading partner what this book made you think about. What message did the author share with you?

Reflect – Think about what you learned while reading *Those Darn Squirrels!*. Think about the things you and your reading partner discussed. How does identifying the author's purpose help you to be a better reader?

Write – Glue your Strategy Slip into your reader's notebook. Write about the work you did while reading *Those Darn Squirrels!*. (Remember to include examples from the book!)

Synthesizing

Those Darn Squirrels!
By: Adam Rubin
Grade Level: 3 / Guided Reading Level: N

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Summary

Those Darn Squirrels! is about a grumpy old man named Old Man Fookwire who loves to paint birds and watch them eat from his birdfeeders. But when a bunch of clever squirrels start stealing all the birdseed, he gets very angry and builds tricky contraptions to stop them. The squirrels don't give up—they come up with smart plans to get the food anyway! Just when it seems like they'll always be enemies, something surprising happens that changes everything.

Time to Read

Stop on the following pages. Think about the questions for each page. Then talk with a reading partner or write your thoughts down in your notebook.

Pages 6 to 7 – What do you know about Old Man Fookwire so far? Would you like to be friends with him? Why or why not?

Pages 14 and 15 – So far, the squirrels have been called "lucky little geniuses," "determined," and the "cleverest of all woodland creatures." How do these pages help show that those things are true? What details in the text and illustrations help you with your answer?

Pages 24 and 25 – The squirrels hold a meeting in the tree. How does your opinion of the squirrels begin to change on this page? How does answering this question help you to better understand more about the squirrels?

Pages 30 and 31 – The squirrels are dressed as birds. Why does this help change Old Man Fookwire's mood? What lesson can you learn from these pages of the story?

Time to Reflect

Think – How did your thinking change while you read *Those Darn Squirrels!*? What information helped you to gain a better understanding of the characters or the problem in the book?

Talk – Tell your reading partner about a place where your thinking changed. Explain why your thinking changed.

Reflect – Think about the synthesizing work you did while reading *Those Darn Squirrels!*. How does paying attention to the way your thinking changes across a text help you to be a better reader? Which reading comprehension strategies were most helpful to you as you read today?

Write – Glue your Strategy Slip into your Reader's Notebook. Write about the work you did while reading *Those Darn Squirrels!*. (Remember to include examples from the book!)

Understanding Text Structure

Those Darn Squirrels!
By: Adam Rubin
Grade Level: 3 / Guided Reading Level: N

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Time to Read

Stop on the following pages. Think about the questions for each page. Then talk with a reading partner or write your thoughts down in your notebook.

Pages 6 and 7 – The author and illustrator are using description to tell about Old Man Fookwire. Based on the text and the illustrations, describe what he is like. What details in the text and illustrations help you with your answer?

Pages 12 to 14 – The author uses a cause and effect text structure to show what happened to the bird feeders. What caused Old Man Fookwire to become angry with the squirrels? How do the squirrels try to solve his problem? How does answering this question help you to better understand the squirrels?

Pages 20 to 22 – The old man builds a fortress around the bird feeders, but the squirrels are not giving up. Tell what the squirrels do first, next, then and last to get to the feeders.

Pages 24 to 28 – Old Man Fookwire is feeling sad without his birds. How do the squirrels try to solve his problem? How does answering this question help you to better understand the squirrels?

Page 32 – The author is using a compare and contrast text structure to tell about the old man. Does Fookwire feel the same or different about the squirrels by the end of the story? How do you know? What lesson can you learn from this ending to the story?

Time to Reflect

Think – How do the different text structures help you to better understand *Those Darn Squirrels!*? Why do you think the author used more than one text structure when they tell stories?

Talk – Tell your reading partner about a place where you noticed a description. Explain how you know the author was using a descriptive text structure.

Reflect – Think about the text structures in *Those Darn Squirrels!*. How does paying attention to the way the author organizes text help you to be a better reader?

Write – Glue your Strategy Slip into your Reader's Notebook. Write about the work you did while reading *Those Darn Squirrels!*. (Remember to include examples from the book!)

Answer Key for Understanding Text Structure with Those Darn Squirrels!

Pages 6 to 7:

Old Man Fookwire has a grumpy expression. He has a long, thin nose and a small, pointed ear.

What lesson: This helps me understand the author's purpose.

Pages 12 to 14:

The author uses a cause and effect text structure to show what happened to the bird feeders. What caused Old Man Fookwire to become angry with the squirrels?

What lesson: I can learn from the author's purpose.

Pages 20 to 22:

The old man builds a fortress around the bird feeders, but the squirrels are not giving up. Tell what the squirrels do first, next, then and last to get to the feeders.

What lesson: I can learn from the author's purpose.

Answer Key for Synthesizing with Those Darn Squirrels!

Pages 6 to 7:

What do you know about Old Man Fookwire so far? Would you like to be friends with him? Why or why not?

Pages 14 and 15:

So far, the squirrels have been called "lucky little geniuses," "determined," and the "cleverest of all woodland creatures." How do these pages help show that those things are true? What details in the text and illustrations help you with your answer?

Pages 24 and 25:

Based on the text and illustrations, what was the author's purpose for including these pages in the story? How does answering this question help you to better understand the old man? How does it help you to better understand the squirrels?

Synthesizing

Understanding Text Structure

Practice Pages and Answer Keys

WRITING ABOUT READING WITH OPTIONAL CCSS ALIGNMENT

“I Can” Statement

Those Darn Squirrels!: Understanding Text Structure

The story began with an old lonely man who only likes birds and ended with an old man who is friends with squirrels. Use sequencing to tell what happened in the story. Use words like first, next, then, and last to sequence your summary.

☐ I can write and talk about fiction using the words for the different parts (e.g., chapter, scene, stanza). CCSS: RL.3.5

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Strategy and Text Based Reader's Response Prompt

Common Core State Standard

Common Core Free Option

Those Darn Squirrels!: Identifying the Author's Purpose

The author uses birds "talked" to below and the squirrels tell that "Harrumph!" (p. "Nah, nah, nah, "thisabitt" (p. "I can explain meaning")

Those Darn Squirrels: Identifying the Author's Purpose

Old Man Fookwite and the squirrels began as enemies and ended as friends. What made Fookwite change his mind about the squirrels?

☐ I can use and explain that I can

Those Darn Squirrels: Identifying the Author's Purpose

The author used some silly, made-up words to show how the birds felt that "Harrumph!" (p. "Nah, nah, nah, "thisabitt" (p. "I can explain meaning")

Those Darn Squirrels: Identifying the Author's Purpose

Old Man Fookwite and the squirrels began as enemies and ended as friends. What made Fookwite change his mind about the squirrels?

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Reading Response Prompts for Each Comprehension Strategy Lesson Plan

Those Darn Squirrels!: Understanding Text Structure

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3 COMPREHENSION STRATEGY GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Identifying the Author's Purpose

Title: _____

Who is the author of your book?

What was the author's purpose for writing this book? How do you know?

☐ To Persuade ☐ To Inform ☐ To Entertain

I know because...

What do you think the author wanted you to think about while reading this book?

Draw a picture of the most important thing the author made you think about while reading.

Directions:
1. Answer each of the questions.
2. Carefully cut out on the dotted line.
3. Glue, tape, or staple into your reader's notebook.

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Author's Purpose

Synthesizing

Title: _____

At first I was thinking...	My new thinking is...	I used to think...
Because...	Because...	But now I think...
		Because...
My new thinking is...	Now I understand...	After thinking about...
Because...	Because...	I conclude...
		Because...

Directions:
1. Answer each of the questions.
2. Carefully cut out on the dotted line.
3. Glue, tape, or staple into your Reader's Notebook.

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Making Inferences

Understanding Text Structure

Title: _____

Text Structure	Where the Text Structure Was Used	How the Text Structure Helped Me
	Page:	
	Page:	
	Page:	
	Page:	
	Page:	

Text Structures You Might See While Reading

Descriptor: Compare and Contrast	Sequence	Problem and Solution	Cause and Effect

Directions:
1. Answer each of the questions.
2. Carefully cut out on the dotted line.
3. Glue, tape, or staple into your Reader's Notebook.

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Synthesizing