

Appendix J

Putting It Together: Think Aloud Scripts

As proficient readers approach text, they apply multiple comprehension strategies simultaneously. Though we teach young readers strategies in isolation, it is somewhat inauthentic to think, “With this book, I’m only going to ask questions.” Our end goal is to interweave comprehension strategies as the opportunity naturally arises in text. To showcase the application of multiple strategies at the same time, I’ve written transcripts where these strategies are interwoven. Again, I’ve selected culturally relevant high-quality children’s literature across text genres. The chart below will help you track my text selections

Grade Level	Format	Title	Author
K–2	Nonfiction	<i>Apples</i>	Gail Gibbons
K–2	Poetry	“The Dentist and the Crocodile”	Roald Dahl
K–2	Narrative Picture Book	<i>Last Stop on Market Street</i>	Matt de la Peña
K–2	Historical Fiction	<i>The Watcher: Jane Goodall’s Life With the Chimps</i>	Jeanette Winter
3–5	Narrative Picture Book	<i>Doctor De Soto</i>	William Steig
3–5	Chapter Book	<i>The Year of Billy Miller</i>	Kevin Henkes
3–5	Poetry	“Casey at the Bat”	Ernest Thayer
3–5	Narrative Picture Book	<i>An Angel for Solomon Singer</i>	Cynthia Rylant

Thinking Aloud With Nonfiction in Grades K–2

Apples by Gail Gibbons

Overview

This nonfiction book teaches young learners a plethora of factual information about different kinds of apples, how they grow, and their parts. In addition, it provides a brief history of apple trees in America. This book also beautifully illustrates the change of the seasons and fruit tree agriculture. Gail Gibbons is a renowned writer and illustrator of over one hundred children’s books.

Lexile Framework: 650L

Guided Reading Level: N

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
It grows on an apple tree. (p. 1)	<i>Right away, I can tell that the author here is giving me facts about how apples grow. I think the author is trying to inform me.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose
They have been in existence for about two million years. (p. 1)	<i>I wonder why apple trees grow more than other fruit trees. Does this mean that more people in the world eat apples than any other fruit?</i>	? Asking questions
... they brought apple seeds and seedlings with them from England. (p. 2)	<i>At first, I wasn’t sure what the difference is between seeds and seedlings. When I kept reading, I got the sense that seedlings are seeds that have begun to sprout—sort of like tiny little apple trees.</i>	↔ Monitoring and clarifying
... and had apple trees growing near their villages. (p. 3)	<i>When I began reading, I thought that the first apple trees in America were planted by English colonists. But as I read more, I found out that apples were already in America thanks to the Native Americans.</i>	🌀 Synthesizing
He became known as Johnny Appleseed. (p. 4)	<i>Why did Johnny Appleseed choose to give apples out? How were they useful to the people in the early 1800s?</i>	? Asking questions
... but most are grown commercially. (p. 5)	<i>The author is using this signal word but to show me that there is a difference between growing apples at home and growing them commercially. I wonder what those differences are.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose ? Asking questions
... and about 28 million bushels are grown in Canada. (p. 6)	<i>Why does the United States grow so many more apples than Canada? I’ve already discovered that apples are grown everywhere around the world, so how many are grown elsewhere? And how many apples are in a bushel? How much does a bushel weigh?</i>	? Asking questions

continued...

... from previous

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
The core has five seed chambers. (p. 7)	<i>The author wants me to know key parts of an apple, like the core. She introduces the new word, and then restates it to tell me that a core holds seeds.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
Each blossom has to be pollinated in order for an apple to grow. (p. 9)	<i>I'm not sure what is meant by pollinated, so let me keep reading to find out. Before, the author introduced the words and then defined them later, so maybe she does that here.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
The blossoms are usually pollinated by insects or by the wind. (p. 9)	<i>*Note: The text box on the illustration reads as follows: "POLLINATION happens when a grain of pollen from a stamen lands on the stigma of another blossom." I did find out what pollinated means. It is a word to explain how the plants make seeds to reproduce, or make more plants.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
During the late summer or early fall the apples ripen. (p. 12)	<i>Here the author is explaining the life cycle of apples to me—how they grow and change over the seasons.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
Workers pick the apples by hand. (p. 13)	<i>Are there any machines that can help pick apples? It seems like there are so many to pick, and it would be very slow to do it by hand.</i>	? Asking questions
... it is fun to go apple picking. (p. 16)	<i>Here I have learned that apples are picked mostly in the fall, but I see them in my grocery store in the winter and spring. How is that possible?</i>	? Asking questions
There is apple cider, too. (p. 17)	<i>What is the difference between apple juice and apple cider? How are the recipes different?</i>	? Asking questions
Some people bob for apples. (p. 19)	<i>Before I learned the different purposes for apples—mostly for eating and making things. Here I'm getting new information to tell me that apples also have a fun purpose—like in candy and different games.</i>	 Synthesizing
... when the trees will produce a new crop of apples! (p. 21)	<i>Uh oh. Let me slow down and scan the text features to figure out what dormant means. I see here that dormant means alive but not actively growing [point to text feature in illustration]. So that sounds like the apple trees are sort of sleeping.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
Apples are different shades of yellow, green, and red, or a mix of all those colors. (p. 23)	<i>The author wants me to understand that apples come in a variety of colors and flavors.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
This is called pruning. (p. 24)	<i>Why do we prune trees? Is it to get the dead branches off?</i>	? Asking questions

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
The pruning and fertilizing help produce lots of good apples. (p. 25)	<i>I'm getting the sense that apples take a lot more care than just dropping a seed in the dirt. The author is giving me details about pruning and fertilizing.</i>	 Making inferences
They are nutritious and delicious. (p. 29)	<i>These last two sentences are golden lines for me because they help me remember that even though there are many kinds of apples, they are all healthy and good to eat. I think the author ended the book on them so we'd remember how important apples are in many countries around the world.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose

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Thinking Aloud With Poetry in Grades K–2

“The Dentist and the Crocodile” by Roald Dahl

Overview

This poem’s plot centers on a crocodile’s visit to the dentist due to a toothache. With humor and delight, the text portrays the dentist’s fear of the crocodile while humanizing dentists in the eyes of children. The crocodile sits in the dentist’s chair and tries to trick the dentist into putting his head into his mouth by asking him to check his back teeth. Young learners will enjoy the rhymes and humoristic language used in this poem. Roald Dahl is a world-renowned poet and novelist who has sold over 250 million copies of his books.

Lexile Framework: 410L

Guided Reading Level: N

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
He said, “Right here and everywhere my teeth require repair.” (line 2)	<i>Hmm, I’m getting some clues, like the word cunning, that make me think this crocodile is up to no good. And if his teeth need so much repair, or fixing, why is he smiling so much?</i>	 Making inferences
He muttered, “I suppose I’m going to have to take a look.” (line 5)	<i>Now I understand how nervous this dentist feels! His face is pale, he’s shaking, and he’s trying to convince himself that he has to look at this crocodile’s teeth! I know I’d be scared!</i>	 Synthesizing
At least three hundred pointed teeth, all sharp and shining white. (line 9)	<i>I like how the author is painting a scary picture here—the words massive, fearsome, and three hundred pointed teeth really show me exactly why the dentist might feel afraid.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose
“You’re much too far away, dear sir, to see what you’re about.” (line 14)	<i>This makes me wonder what the crocodile is planning. Does he want the dentist to start with the molars so he can bite down and eat him?</i>	 Asking questions
He cried, “No no! I see them all extremely well from here!” (line 16)	<i>Why isn’t the dentist running away? The author is really showing me how tense this situation is—the crocodile is trying to convince the dentist to put his head way inside of his mouth, and the dentist is crying because he’s so afraid!</i>	 Asking questions A Understanding the author’s purpose
“Oh Croc, you naughty boy, you’re playing tricks again!” (line 18)	<i>Aha! The dentist might be rescued—the words in burst a lady make me think that she’s there to save the dentist—she even scolds the crocodile for playing tricks!</i>	 Making inferences A Understanding the author’s purpose

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
<p>"He's after me! He's after you! He's going to eat us all!" (line 20)</p>	<p><i>I wonder who this lady is. Where did she come from?</i></p>	<p> Asking questions</p>
<p>"... He's my little pet, my lovely crocodile." (line 24)</p>	<p><i>What? When I first read this, I thought that the lady was going to rescue the dentist. But when I reread it, I thought that the lady was not a part of the solution—but a part of the problem! Did she send the crocodile in to trick the dentist? Who keeps a crocodile for a pet? In a nutshell, maybe this dentist should be afraid of the lady and the crocodile!</i></p>	<p> Monitoring and clarifying</p> <p> Synthesizing</p> <p> Asking questions</p>

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Thinking Aloud With a Narrative Picture Book in Grades K–2

Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Peña

Overview

Every Sunday after church, CJ takes a crosstown bus with his grandmother. At the start of the book, he questions this routine, but the tender moments with his Nana help him to understand the beauty in his community and in everyday life. This book has racked up multiple awards, including a 2016 Newbery Medal, a 2016 Caldecott Honor, a 2016 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor, a 2015 *New York Times* Book Review Notable Children’s Book, and a 2015 *Wall Street Journal* Best Children’s Book.

Lexile Framework: 610L

Guided Reading Level: M

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
... which freckled CJ’s shirt and dripped down his nose. (p. 2)	<i>The author doesn’t tell me CJ’s exact age, but this information makes me think he is a child. He is skipping down the steps—kids are more likely to skip than adults. And being outside smells like freedom, which makes me think he didn’t go to church on his own—maybe an adult forced him to go there.</i>	 Making inferences
“How come we gotta wait for the bus in all this wet?” (p. 3)	<i>I’m getting more evidence that CJ is young. He is with his nana, which is nickname for a grandmother. I also wonder why they are not leaving church in their car. Do they live in a city, where people take buses more often to avoid traffic? Do they not have money for a car?</i>	 Making inferences  Asking questions
“Nana, how come we don’t got a car?” (p. 5)	<i>I’m noticing that the author really tries to make CJ sound like a child—he’s using slang words, like gotta and don’t got. I’m also guessing that CJ is a little embarrassed. He is waiting in the rain for a bus, while his friend gets into a car and waves. This is making me think CJ’s family doesn’t have enough money for their own car.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose  Making inferences
“... old Mr. Dennis, who always has a trick for you.” (p. 7)	<i>I’m not sure what she means by a bus that breathes fire or who Mr. Dennis is. If I keep reading, maybe I will find out more.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
It sighed and sagged and the doors swung open. (p. 7)	<i>Now I’m thinking that this book takes place in a neighborhood without a lot of money. The bus CJ is riding sounds old and used.</i>	 Synthesizing
Nana laughed her deep laugh and pushed CJ along. (p. 9)	<i>I’m thinking that Mr. Dennis is the bus driver, and that he’s very used to seeing CJ. They seem to have a routine of these tricks, which hints to me that CJ is on the bus a lot.</i>	 Making inferences
She made sure CJ did the same. (p. 10)	<i>In a nutshell, Nana and CJ are used to riding this bus and interacting with the people on it. They greet all of the passengers and don’t seem to be embarrassed to be riding the bus.</i>	 Synthesizing

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
Nana hummed as she knit. (p. 11)	<i>I'm getting the sense that Nana is quite comfortable on this bus—even though it's stopping and lurching, she's humming and knitting. She's not ashamed to be riding this bus.</i>	 Synthesizing
"Miguel and Colby never have to go nowhere." (p. 11)	<i>Where are they going after church? It sounds like they have a habit of going to the same place every week after church, and the hint gotta go makes me think CJ isn't that excited about where they are going.</i>	 Asking questions  Making inferences
"... And I hear Trixie got herself a brand-new hat." (p. 12)	<i>Now I can really see that CJ and his nana always go to this place—they have nicknames for the people they see there! And Nana is so excited to go there, so much so she feels sorry for kids who don't meet these people. Why doesn't CJ feel as excited as Nana does?</i>	 Synthesizing  Asking questions
CJ gave up his seat. (p. 13)	<i>Why does CJ give up his seat? I know that it's polite to give up your seat to someone older than you or someone who can't stand as well as you can. If I keep reading, maybe I'll find out why.</i>	 Asking questions  Monitoring and clarifying
"How come that man can't see?" (p. 13)	<i>The author answered my question! I reread to find out that CJ gave up his seat to a blind man. The picture shows me a man holding a cane, which confirms that he's blind.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
"Some people watch the world with their ears." (p. 13)	<i>I like how the author shows Nana as firm and wise. She doesn't tolerate CJ's whining, and she makes him treat strangers politely.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
Nana squeezed the man's hand and laughed her deep laugh. (p. 14)	<i>I'm getting more information that makes me see how likable Nana is to everyone. Right after meeting a stranger, she is laughing with him and squeezing his hand.</i>	 Synthesizing
"... Why don't you ask the man if he'll play us a song?" (p. 15)	<p>*Note: The picture shows one of the boys holding an iPod. Be sure to point this out to students.</p> <p><i>Here's more important evidence of how comfortable Nana feels—she would ask a stranger on the bus to play his guitar for her! She also doesn't allow CJ to feel sorry for himself that he doesn't have an iPod, like the older boys. She's comfortable with where she is and how she is.</i></p>	 Synthesizing
So did CJ and the spotted dog. (p. 16)	<i>Now I think the passengers on this bus are enjoying a happy moment together, listening to music and appreciating each other's company. Even CJ—who was complaining about having to ride the bus before—joins in.</i>	 Synthesizing

continued...

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
... and the sound gave him the feeling of magic. (p. 18)	<i>At first, I was confused because the bus becomes dark. CJ is lifted out of the city, and he sees crashing waves and butterflies in the moon. Then I reread, and I thought that maybe the music is making him see all these beautiful sights in his mind's eye. So he's not really seeing these things—he's just imagining them as he listens to the guitar.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
CJ dropped it in the man's hat. (p. 19)	<i>I'm getting more confirmation that Nana is firm and CJ respects her. Without a word, she can tell him what she wants him to do—to give money to the guitar player.</i>	 Synthesizing
"Last stop on Market Street," Mr. Dennis called. (p. 20)	<i>I want to know what's so important about Market Street. Why is Market Street so important that they've ridden this crowded bus all the way there?</i>	 Asking questions
"How come it's always so dirty over here?" (p. 21)	<i>The author is suggesting that Market Street is a poor area in the city. There are so many clues—the broken doors and the graffiti and the stores that are not open anymore—to make me think that people here are poor.</i>	 Making inferences
"Sometimes when you're surrounded by dirt, CJ, you're a better witness for what's beautiful." (p. 22)	<i>I wonder what Nana means here. Why doesn't she just tell CJ that this area is dirty because people are poor? I think it's a really important line, so I want to spend some time with it. Let me reread again her line about the dirt. "You're a better witness for what's beautiful." Maybe Nana is telling CJ to look for what is beautiful—even in places that might not look beautiful to the outside. Nana is teaching CJ to look for the positive things in life.</i>	 Asking questions  Synthesizing  Monitoring and clarifying
... the perfect rainbow arcing over their soup kitchen. (p. 23)	<i>Aha! Throughout this book, I've been wondering where CJ and Nana are going. Finally, I get an answer. They are going to a soup kitchen, a place where people who need help can get free food. Are they taking food from the soup kitchen, or are they volunteering to help at the soup kitchen?</i>	 Asking questions
... where he never even thought to look. (p. 23)	<i>This is a golden line for me because it describes exactly what is so likable about Nana—how she easily makes friends with strangers and how she is so positive. It seems like CJ admires this quality in his nana.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
... he said, "I'm glad we came." (p. 25)	<i>This is another golden line for me! The author shows me that there's been a change in CJ—at first, he didn't want to come here, but now he's thankful he did.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
... told him, "Me too, CJ. Now, come on." (p. 27)	<i>*Note: The picture shows CJ and his Nana serving food to people who have come to the soup kitchen. I had wondered if CJ and Nana came to the soup kitchen to get food for themselves, since I got the sense they didn't have much money. But this illustration makes me realize that they are there to help. This information confirms that Nana is helping CJ realize the positive things in life, like helping out people in need.</i>	 Synthesizing

Thinking Aloud With Historical Fiction in Grades K–2

The Watcher: Jane Goodall’s Life With the Chimps

by Jeanette Winter

Overview

This picture book depicts Jane Goodall’s life and scientific accomplishments. The plot begins in Jane’s childhood and illustrates her love of animals. After graduating high school, Jane immigrates to Africa where she meets a professor who sends her to observe chimps in their natural habitat. The plot continues and details the struggles Jane encountered on this unique journey. This book was named Best Book of the Year by the *Boston Globe*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Booklist*, and the Bank Street College of Education.

Lexile Framework: 820

Guided Reading Level: O

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
... looking for little Valerie Jane Goodall. (p. 1)	<i>Who is everyone? Who is searching for Jane? Where have they searched? The author is giving me clues that she’s gone off somewhere alone, so I want to know how that happened. And I get the clue that she’s little, but exactly how old is she?</i>	 Asking questions
“I know how an egg comes out!” (p. 2)	<i>I have a question about the setting. I get a clue about the henhouse, so maybe this takes place on a farm. And Jane tells her mother that she knows how an egg came out, so I’m thinking that her hiding spot was in the henhouse where she watched chickens lay eggs.</i>	 Making inferences
At five years old, Jane was already a watcher. (p. 2)	<i>This is an important sentence that answers my question about how old Jane is. And the author is describing her as a “watcher.” I know she watched what happened in the henhouse, so I wonder what else she likes to watch.</i>	 Synthesizing
When spring came, the robin even built a nest in Jane’s bookcase! (p. 4)	<i>The author is using all of these examples to show me that Jane is curious about nature. The author is showing me that Jane is patient and observant, because she watched this bird for weeks. The author is also hinting that animals trust Jane, because this bird lives in Jane’s room.</i>	 Making inferences  Synthesizing
... talk to the animals and live with the apes. (p. 5)	<i>I think the author’s purpose here is to show how important apes and Africa are to Jane. There are lots of places in the world that have animals, but apes in Africa seem especially important.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose
... She hid her earnings under the parlor rug for safekeeping. (p. 6)	<i>I wonder what her school days were like. The author doesn’t give me any information about Jane as a student, but tells me that she saved her money for a plane trip to Kenya—which is in Africa. This confirms my earlier thought that the author wants me to know the importance of Jane’s dream of Africa.</i>	 Asking questions

continued...

... from previous

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
... and fish that glowed through the dark water. (p. 7)	<i>The author's purpose here is to confirm what I already thought about Jane—that she's observant and patient. She watches nature even in the cold wind.</i>	<p>A</p> <p>Understanding the author's purpose</p>
Yes, she would! (p. 9)	<i>The part about chimpanzees being most like humans makes me ask questions. How are humans and chimpanzees alike? How are they different? Why is it important that we are so alike? Why is it important to study them? I think the author here wants me to ask questions, so I can understand the job Jane is going to take.</i>	<p>?</p> <p>Asking questions</p>
"I wanted to learn things that no one else knew, uncover secrets . . .," she wrote. (p. 10)	<i>Here the author seems to be quoting directly from what Jane wrote—maybe in a journal or in a letter. I like how the author used Jane's words to show how curious and observant Jane was.</i>	<p>A</p> <p>Understanding the author's purpose</p>
She knew she was Home. (p. 11)	<i>The author doesn't come right out and say it, but I'm making an inference that the message here is about how brave Jane is. She's all alone in the woods in the dark, with strange sounds, yet she feels safe there. I also think the author was deliberate in capitalizing Home. The capital H makes me think how important this place was to Jane.</i>	<p>A</p> <p>Understanding the author's purpose</p> <p>III</p> <p>Making inferences</p>
... she didn't see them. (p. 14)	<i>The author is hinting that the chimps are hiding from Jane. I know from a previous description about the robin that Jane is a patient watcher, so I'm thinking that the author is telling me that Jane's patience will be important.</i>	<p>A</p> <p>Understanding the author's purpose</p> <p>III</p> <p>Making inferences</p>
When will I see a chimp? She wondered. (p. 16)	<i>I like how the author writes "when will I" rather than "will I." This makes me think that Jane is confident that with enough patience, eventually she will see a chimp.</i>	<p>A</p> <p>Understanding the author's purpose</p>
... she almost lost hope. (p. 17)	<i>The word almost stands out for me here. It seems like the author is showing me all of Jane's challenges—being alone, being sick, not seeing the chimps. The word almost confirms that Jane will continue to be brave and patient until she sees the chimps.</i>	<p>A</p> <p>Understanding the author's purpose</p> <p>🌀</p> <p>Synthesizing</p>
She stayed in the background, never hid, acted uninterested, and quietly watched. (p. 18)	<i>I think the author is deliberately making this part sound just like what happened with the robin. Eventually, it was comfortable enough with Jane to build a nest in her room. I wonder then if the chimps will be just as comfortable.</i>	<p>?</p> <p>Asking questions</p> <p>A</p> <p>Understanding the author's purpose</p>
"You have to be patient if you want to learn about animals," she wrote. (p. 20)	<i>Again the author incorporated Jane's writing to show her patience. I'm getting more evidence of her perseverance, bravery, and desire to learn about the chimps.</i>	<p>A</p> <p>Understanding the author's purpose</p>

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
To her, each one was different—just like us. (p. 23)	<i>It seems to me that Jane is growing very close to the chimps, sleeping with them and naming them. Maybe they are more than just animals to her.</i>	 Synthesizing
“... So gently. No snatching,” she wrote. (p. 23)	<i>I like how the author chose this passage of Jane writing in capital letters. Those capital letters show how important this was to Jane. Maybe she was surprised or excited that this chimp has gotten so close to her.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose
Before this, everybody thought chimps ate only plants. (p. 24)	<i>Here the author is informing me of things that we know about chimps all because of Jane. This makes me understand how important Jane’s work was.</i>	 Synthesizing
“... What a day—chimps near, chimps far, old men, young men, ladies, children, babies, teenagers—the lot,” she wrote. (p. 26)	<i>Here Jane thinks of chimps just like human beings—she calls them ladies and children, not female chimps and baby chimps. This makes me understand how much love she feels for them.</i>	 Synthesizing  Making inferences
She saw them swagger and throw tantrums, and kept out of the way. (p. 28)	<i>At the beginning of the book, I asked about the ways that chimps are similar to humans. The purpose of this part is to answer that question—I see here that chimps have emotions—love, anger, sadness. The author is telling me how alike chimps and humans are.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose  Synthesizing
And so assistants came to watch and write. (p. 31)	<i>The author is giving me just enough information here to make me ask more questions. I wonder how long Jane was alone—I know there are “years of notes,” but how many years did she spend with the chimps? How did she survive on her own for so long? Who were these assistants? How many came? What did Jane do with her notes?</i>	 Asking questions
One day Jane sadly left Gombe. (p. 32)	<i>The author has included a powerful word in this short sentence—the word sadly. I can tell that over the years Jane has come to love the chimps. So it makes sense that she’d feel sad to leave. But why did she leave? What was her reason for leaving?</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose  Asking questions
They needed Jane to speak for them. (p. 34)	<i>That word extinct is so important—extinct means there would be no more left. I think by saying “They needed Jane to speak for them,” the author is telling me that Jane has to tell people to protect chimps. Maybe the reason Jane left was to educate people about chimps so we could protect them and their habitats.</i>	 Synthesizing

continued...

... from previous

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy Model
<p>... year after year, asking for help to save the chimps and the forests. (p. 35)</p>	<p><i>I notice here that this is the first time the author has referred to the chimps as Jane's friends. I was right that she loved them. I'm also confirming my idea that Jane left Africa to educate people to save the chimps.</i></p>	<p>A Understanding the author's purpose  Synthesizing</p>
<p>... David Greybeard at her side. (p. 36)</p>	<p><i>As I read this, I wondered if the chimps would remember her like she remembered them. But the author gave me a clue—David Greybeard at her side—that makes me think they remember her as well.</i></p>	<p>III Making inferences</p>
<p>... and opened a window for us to the world of the chimpanzees. (p. 39)</p>	<p><i>I like how the author reminds me of the things Jane did as a little girl—Dr. Dolittle and Tarzan. It makes me think that the author's purpose is to inform us about Jane, a woman who worked hard to achieve her childhood dreams. The last sentence also makes me think that the author's message is how important Jane is to chimpanzees.</i></p>	<p>A Understanding the author's purpose</p>

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Thinking Aloud With a Narrative Picture Book in Grades 3–5

Doctor De Soto by William Steig

Overview and Rationale

Doctor De Soto is a talented and sought-after dentist who is assisted by his wife. Animals—large and small—seek him out for his ability to stop their pain. Since he is a mouse, he refuses to treat animals who have a taste for mice. One day, he takes mercy on a fox suffering from a toothache. In a race to see who outfoxes whom, this picture book has readers rooting for the De Sotos.

Lexile Framework: 560L

Guided Reading Level: M

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
Larger animals sat on the floor, while Doctor De Soto stood on a ladder. (p. 1)	<i>The author is telling me that small animals are close to Doctor De Soto's size and that he needs a ladder to reach bigger animals, so I can guess that Doctor De Soto is small too—maybe a squirrel, or a mouse, or a hamster.</i>	 Making inferences
There Doctor De Soto was hoisted up to the patient's mouth by his assistant, who happened to be his wife. (p. 2)	<i>I'm getting the sense that Doctor De Soto has lots of patients—animals of all sizes. He seems to be a talented and popular dentist.</i>	 Synthesizing
Doctor De Soto was especially popular with the big animals. (p. 4)	<i>When I hear big animals, I think of things like elephants and horses. I wonder why they like him so much.</i>	 Asking questions
... they could hardly feel any pain. (p. 4)	<i>Before I asked why the big animals liked him, and I get information here that tells me he is a delicate dentist who barely hurts his patients.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
Being a mouse ... (p. 5)	<i>Aha! I was right that Doctor De Soto is small.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
They wouldn't even admit the most timid looking cat. (p. 5)	<i>The big idea here is that there are no cats allowed. Are there any other animals that are dangerous to mice?</i>	 Synthesizing  Asking questions
... they saw a well-dressed fox with a flannel bandage around his jaw. (p. 6)	<i>I wonder how Doctor De Soto and his wife will handle this. I'm guessing foxes are dangerous to mice, so he will be forbidden.</i>	 Making inferences
And he wept so bitterly it was pitiful to see. (pp. 7–8)	<i>At first I thought that Doctor De Soto wouldn't help the fox, but now I'm thinking that because the fox is so miserable, he will allow him in.</i>	 Synthesizing

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What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
She pressed the buzzer and let the fox in. (p. 9)	<i>Why do they change their mind? I'm seeing these characters now as very sympathetic toward the fox.</i>	 Asking questions  Monitoring and clarifying
"... and remove the bandage, please." (pp. 10–11)	<i>I like how the author shows the fox begging and in terrible pain to show me why the De Sotos changed their minds.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
... and his jaw began to quiver. (pp. 12–13)	<i>When I first met the fox, I thought he was in such pain that he'd never hurt the mice. But now I'm thinking that the fox will not be able to resist temptation and will try to eat the De Sotos!</i>	 Synthesizing
"Wide open!" yelled his wife. (p. 13)	<i>At first, I wasn't sure about the word quiver. I know quiver means to shake, and at first I thought his mouth was quivering because he was in so much pain. But when I reread it and noticed the phrase despite his misery, I thought his mouth was shaking because he wanted to close it with Doctor De Soto and his wife inside!</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
"You won't feel a feel when I yank that tooth." (p. 14)	<i>I was confused at first with gas. I was thinking the doctor was giving him gas like we give our cars gas! But when I kept reading, I realized he was using gas to numb the fox and make him not feel pain.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
"How I love them raw ... with just a pinch of salt, and a ... dry ... white wine." (p. 14)	<i>Hmm, I know here he's talking in his sleep because the author gives the clue of dreamland. But I wonder what he is talking about. What does he love raw, with salt and white wine?</i>	 Asking questions
Mrs. De Soto handed her husband a pole to keep the fox's mouth open. (p. 15)	<i>I'm getting the sense here that Doctor De Soto and his wife think the fox is talking about how he loves mice and calls them yummy! Maybe they are using the pole so he can't snap his jaws shut and eat them.</i>	 Making inferences
... if it would be shabby of him to eat the De Sotos when the job was done. (pp. 16–17)	<i>I like how the author makes it so the fox has to wait and come back for his new tooth. It makes the story go on longer and builds suspense for me.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
"They're wicked, wicked creatures." (p. 18)	<i>I'm really getting the sense here that Doctor De Soto and his wife are plotting something. They call themselves foolish to trust a fox, but they are still planning to give him a new tooth. I like how the author introduced conflict between Doctor De Soto and his wife—she thinks the fox is trustworthy, but he is suspicious of the fox. This conflict makes me want to keep reading to see if either of them is right!</i>	 Making inferences A Understanding the author's purpose
A minute later he was snoring. (p. 19)	<i>Now I'm really curious to see what this plan is! I wonder what they are plotting.</i>	 Asking questions

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
... and laughed. "Just a joke!" he chortled. (pp. 20–21)	<i>I like how the author has the fox snap his mouth shut here as a joke. The mood was so tense up until this point, and the author used a bit of humor to break through some of the tension.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
... and hooked it up to the teeth on both sides. (pp. 21–22)	<i>I'm getting these clues that the fox is really appreciative—he loves the gold tooth, he's cheerful because he's not in pain, and he's making jokes. That makes me think that the fox will not try to eat the De Sotos.</i>	III Making inferences
"On the other hand, how can I resist?" (p. 22)	<i>This word shouldn't be important to me—and so is the phrase on the other hand. The author is telling me that the fox is really in a dilemma. He doesn't want to eat the De Sotos, but he's not sure he can say no to the temptation!</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
"... How would you like to be the first one to receive this unique treatment?" (p. 23)	<i>Now I think that something is going on with this preparation. I know the De Sotos were up late at night making a plan, and all of a sudden, they are introducing this brand-new application. I think it's a trick, and I want to read on to see if the fox will fall for it.</i>	6 Synthesizing
... with the help of his brand-new tooth. (p. 24)	<i>I was a bit confused when I saw that the words no one were in italics. I know the author uses that to show something important. When I wasn't sure why he said no one would see them again, I read more to find out that the fox is going to eat them. So when he says no one will see them again, the fox means that they will be gone forever in his belly!</i>	↔ Monitoring and clarifying A Understanding the author's purpose
The fox looked very happy. (p. 25)	<i>I like how the author shows here that everyone is relaxed—Doctor De Soto is humming, his wife is helping out her husband, and the fox is happy. It makes me think that the De Sotos have no idea what the fox is planning to do—and the fox has no idea that the De Sotos are plotting something!</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
... but his teeth were stuck together! (p. 26)	<i>Stuck together! I wonder if there was something—like super glue—in that gold tooth to make it so that he couldn't open his mouth again!</i>	? Asking questions
"... No pain ever again!" (p. 26)	<i>"Permeate the dentine"? What does that mean? I see a part of dentist in dentine, so I think it has to do with teeth. And maybe permeate has something to do with sitting there. Doctor De Soto is saying the formula won't work unless it permeates the teeth.</i>	↔ Monitoring and clarifying
... He tried to do so with dignity. (p. 27)	<i>The gist here is that the fox knows he got tricked! He can't talk well with his mouth glued shut, and he's trying to leave without being totally embarrassed. I now see that the fox is embarrassed that he was outsmarted.</i>	6 Synthesizing
They kissed each other and took the rest of the day off. (p. 28)	<i>I'm ending the book with questions. Will the fox never be able to open his mouth again? Will the De Sotos ever treat any animals who are dangerous to mice again? What does the fox think about mice now? What do the De Sotos think about foxes now? I know these questions aren't answered in the book, but I sure am curious!</i>	? Asking questions

Thinking Aloud With a Chapter Book in Grades 3–5

The Year of Billy Miller by Kevin Henkes

Overview and Rationale

Most children and teachers know and love Kevin Henkes for his popular picture books, but his works for the middle-grade reader are equally as appealing. A Newbery Honor book, *The Year of Billy Miller* is a story about friendship, sibling rivalry, and elementary school.

Lexile Framework: 620L

Guided Reading Level: P

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
Part One: Teacher	<i>Hmm, I can tell this book is going to be written in several parts. I wonder why there are so many parts. Will each part be written from a different person, like this one is from the teacher?</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
It was the first day of second grade, and Billy Miller was worried.	<i>Who is Billy Miller? Is he a second-grade student? A second-grade teacher? What is he worried about?</i>	? Asking questions
He was worried that he wouldn't be smart enough for school this year.	<i>Before I wasn't sure who Billy was and why he was worried. Now I'm getting the hint that he's worried about not being smart enough, so that makes me think Billy is a kid.</i>	🌀 Synthesizing
There was a reason he was worried. Two weeks earlier on their drive home from visiting Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills of South Dakota, Billy Miller and his family stopped in Blue Earth, Minnesota to see the statue of the Jolly Green Giant. Billy instantly recognized the Giant from the labels of canned and frozen vegetables. The statue was spectacular—so tall, and the greenest green Billy had ever seen.	<i>I got lost here because I thought I was going to hear about the reason Billy was worried about not being smart enough, and instead the author is telling me about his trip to see a statue. Maybe if I keep reading I will find out why the author is telling me the part about the statue.</i>	↔ Monitoring and clarifying
Billy was wearing his new baseball cap that said BLACK HILLS in glossy silver embroidery. It was a blustery day. The flag on the nearby pole snapped in the wind. Billy raced ahead of his family—up the steps to the lookout platform. As he stood between the Giant's enormous feet, a sudden gust lifted his cap from his head. His cap sailed away. Without thinking, Billy stepped onto the middle rung of the guardrail, leaned over, and reached as far as he could. He fell to the pavement below. The next thing Billy remembered was waking up in a hospital.	<i>The author doesn't come right out and say it, but I'm getting the sense that he fell a long way down to the pavement below. I'm inferring that when he fell, he got hurt badly. It could be that he hurt his head when he fell. Maybe that is why he's worried about not being smart enough for second grade.</i>	 Making inferences

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
<p>His parents, whom he called Mama and Papa, were with him, as was his three-year-old sister, Sally, whom everyone called Sal. After tests were done, the doctor proclaimed Billy miraculously unharmed, except for a lump on his head. "You fell exactly the right way to protect yourself," the doctor told him. "You're a lucky young man." "And Papa got your hat back!" said Sal.</p>	<p><i>I've got lots of questions here. Why does Billy call his parents Mama and Papa? That sounds sort of old-fashioned, when kids today mostly call their parents Mom and Dad. That makes me wonder when this story takes place. What kind of tests did they run?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Asking questions</p>
<p>When they returned home, Billy proudly showed his lump—and his cap—to his best friend, Ned. He called his grandmother on the phone and told her about the incident, too. Everything seemed all right until a few nights later when Billy overheard his parents taking in the kitchen. "I'm worried about him," said Mama. "He's fine," said Papa. "Everyone said he's fine. And he seems fine. He is fine." "You're probably right," said Mama. "But I worry that down the line something will show up. He'll start forgetting things." "He already forgets things," said Papa. "He's a seven-year old boy." "You know what I mean," said Mama. She paused. "Or he'll be confused at school. Or . . ." That's all Billy heard. He snuck up to his room and closed the door. And that's when he started to worry.</p>	<p><i>Now I understand why Billy is so worried about not being smart enough for second grade. He had a bad fall, went to the hospital, and has a lump on his head. He overhears his parents worrying that he is forgetful.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Synthesizing</p>
<p>Billy didn't tell anyone that he was worried. Sometimes, he didn't know how to say what he was thinking. He had words in his head, but they didn't always make it to his mouth. This happened often, even before the fall.</p>	<p><i>I'm getting the sense that Billy has a lot on his mind. He worries a lot, and sometimes he has a hard time telling people things. I think this will be an important part of Billy's character, since the author is telling it to me right at the start of the book.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Synthesizing</p>
<p>"Happy first day of school," said Mama. "Happy first day of school," said Papa. Billy had noticed long ago that one of his parents often repeated what the other said. Without taking the time to sit at the table, Mama rushed about the kitchen, stealing a few bites of Papa's toast and a gulp of his coffee. She hoisted her big canvas bag onto the counter and reorganized its contents. It was Mama's first day of school, too. She taught English at the high school down the street.</p>	<p><i>I wonder how Billy feels about his mom being a teacher. Will she eventually be his teacher? And do we know yet what kind of job Billy's father has?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Asking questions</p>
<p>While Billy was eating his pancakes, Papa reread aloud the letter that Ms. Silver, the second grade teacher, had sent during the summer. In the letter Ms. Silver greeted the students and said she was looking forward to the new school year. She said that she and her husband had a baby boy at home. And two dogs. She said that second grade would be a "safe, happy year of growth" and "a wonderful, joyful, exciting challenge." Billy stopped chewing when he heard the word <i>challenge</i>. He put down his fork and touched the lump on his head. He didn't want a challenge.</p>	<p><i>The author is giving me more clues that Billy is really nervous about second grade. He stops eating, and touches the lump on his head. I get the sense that Billy is anxious.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Synthesizing</p>

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What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
Papa continued. "Ms. Silver says you'll be studying colors and habitats and the world of names." "That sounds like fun," said Mama. "My students will be studying <i>Beowulf</i> and <i>Paradise Lost</i> ." "I'd rather be in second grade," said Papa, smiling.	<i>The author doesn't come right out and say it, but I get the sense Papa thinks those books are boring. He smiles and says that second grade sounds more fun than the work Mama's students will be doing.</i>	 Making inferences
Unlike the other fathers Billy knew, Papa stayed home and took care of Sal and the house. Papa was an artist.	<i>Aha! Earlier, I had asked if Papa had a job—and here I got my answer.</i>	 Asking questions
He was waiting for a breakthrough.	<i>What does that mean—"waiting for a breakthrough"? Maybe if I keep rereading the author will explain it to me.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
That's what he always said. He was currently working on big sculptures made of found objects. Pieces of old machines, tree limbs, and broken furniture filled the garage and spilled out onto the driveway. They were scattered across the yard too. Billy loved watching Papa work. There was always something lying around that was fun to play with.	<i>The author doesn't really explain to me what a breakthrough is, but I know that artists sometimes have a hard time selling their work and making money. I wonder if that is the case for Papa.</i>	 Asking questions
"Gotta go," said Mama. She kissed Papa on his bushy orange beard. She kissed Billy on his lump. "Have a fantastic day," she said. "And kiss Sal for me when she wakes up." Just like that, Mama was gone, the smell of her lemony shampoo hanging in the air for a moment.	<i>I get the sense here that Billy is a bit sad about his mother leaving. She kisses him on his lump—a spot that she knows he is worried about. When she leaves, he still smells her scent. Perhaps he wants his mother to make him feel better on the first day of school.</i>	 Making inferences
Papa cleared his throat and shook Ms. Silver's letter with a flourish.	<i>What does it mean that he shook the letter "with a flourish"? Why is he shaking it like that? Let me keep reading for more clues.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
Billy could tell he was trying to be funny. In a deep, rumbly voice he said, "This utterly fascinating letter concludes by stating that currently this is, in fact, according to the Chinese, the Year of the Rabbit." Papa used his regular voice again. "That's pretty great, don't you think? The Year of the Rabbit." Billy shrugged. Normally this would have interested him, but he was preoccupied.	<i>I'm getting the sense that Papa knows Billy is nervous and maybe a bit sad about Mama leaving. Maybe Papa is trying to distract him, or to be funny to make Billy feel better on the first day of school.</i>	 Making inferences
"Maybe you'll have carrots for a snack every day," said Papa. Silence. "Papa?" said Billy. "Hmm?" "But, Papa, will I be smart enough for second grade?"	<i>The key point here is that Billy is nervous about how smart he is. The author started out by saying that at the very beginning of the story, but I had sort of forgotten why he was so worried.</i>	 Synthesizing
"Of course you will," said Papa. He was looking right down at Billy, directly into his eyes. Billy glanced down at what was left of his pancakes. With his thick, work-gnarled finger, Papa lifted Billy's chin. Their eyes met and held.	<i>I like how the author uses a gesture from Papa to show how kind he is and how much he loves Billy. He looks him right in the eyes and lifts his chin, which makes me think Papa really wants Billy to understand that he's smart enough.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
"Ms. Silver and the great nation of China might think that this is the Year of the Rabbit," said Papa. "But I know—and I know everything—that this is the Year of Billy Miller." Billy smiled. He couldn't not. He repeated Papa's words in his head. This is the Year of Billy Miller.	<i>I want to keep reading so that I know exactly why this is the Year of Billy Miller—just like the title and this last line say. What happens to make second grade the Year of Billy Miller? Is that a good thing or a bad thing?</i>	 Asking questions

Thinking Aloud With Poetry in Grades 3–5

“Casey at the Bat” by Ernest Thayer

Overview and Rationale

This legendary poem depicts the last half-inning of a baseball game. The plot follows Casey and his team who are at a disadvantage with a score of four to two. The poem illustrates the thrill, fun, and disappointments experienced at such ballgames.

Lexile Framework: 810L

Guided Reading Level: Z

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day: (stanza 1)	<i>Who are the Mudville nine? Where is Mudville?</i>	 Asking questions
The score stood four to two; with but one inning more to play, (stanza 1)	<i>I'm getting the sense that this is a poem about baseball—I've got the hint that there are nine players, and that there is an inning left—which lets me know this is a baseball game.</i>	 Making inferences
A pall-like silence fell upon the patrons of the game. (stanza 1)	<i>At first I thought that these two players really died, but when I reread, I realized they were out at first base and the two outs made the crowd grow quiet.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
The rest Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast. (stanza 2)	<i>I'm getting the sense that some of the fans think their team—the Mudville one—is about to lose. Some fans are leaving early, but a couple of die-hard fans are still watching.</i>	 Synthesizing
“... We'd put up even money now, with Casey at the bat.” (stanza 2)	<i>I like how the author uses if only. That shows me that the crowd sees Casey as their last hope to get a hit and win this game.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
For there seemed but little chance of Casey getting to the bat. (stanza 3)	<i>I don't really understand what the author means by these two players being a hoodoo and a cake. When I reread this whole stanza, I can guess that these are negative terms to describe a player. The author is hinting that the crowd is melancholy because of these two players—if they get out, there will be no chance for Casey to come up to bat.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying  Making inferences
There was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third. (stanza 4)	<i>At first, I thought that Flynn and Jimmy were going to strike out or get out so that Casey wouldn't get the chance to hit. But both Flynn and Jimmy got on base! Jimmy is on second base, and Flynn is on third, with Casey about to bat.</i>	 Synthesizing
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat. (stanza 5)	<i>I like how the author uses the yells from the throats of the fans to show that they are cheering on Casey. The golden phrase is mighty Casey. This makes me think the crowd is expecting him to get a hit and to win the game for Mudville!</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose

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What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat. (stanza 6)	<i>What does doffed his hat mean? When I reread it and when I read on, I don't get much of a sense of the word, but I do get this image that Casey is cool and collected—the words ease, pride, and smile show he's confident! This mood makes me think a hit is a sure thing for Casey!</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
Defiance flashed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip. (stanza 7)	<i>I wonder why Casey's face changes from a smile to a sneer. Maybe he's trying to intimidate the pitcher?</i>	 Asking questions
"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one!" the umpire said. (stanza 8)	<i>I don't understand why the author uses leather-covered sphere. Is that just an overly descriptive way to say ball? I know that sometimes poets like to use vivid imagery as they write, so maybe that's why he didn't simply say ball. Also, at first I thought Casey was going to hit the ball, but I know that it might be more interesting to have some strikes against Casey—to increase the suspense and to make me read more!</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying A Understanding the author's purpose
And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand. (stanza 9)	<i>Okay, now I'm not sure why the fans are yelling to kill the umpire. Do they think he made a bad call? Maybe I should go back and reread the previous stanza carefully. This line "close by the sturdy batsman" makes me think that maybe the pitch was really close and almost hit Casey. That might make the fans angry! I missed that the first time I read.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
But Casey still ignored it and the umpire said, "Strike two!" (stanza 10)	<i>Why did Casey ignore this pitch? What was wrong with it that he didn't want to swing?</i>	 Asking questions
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again. (stanza 11)	<i>The author wants me to see how outraged the fans are, and how determined Casey is. It's really clear how much these fans need Casey to get a hit.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate; (stanza 12)	<i>Okay, the smiling, confident Casey is gone! The words hate, clenched, and cruel violence show me how tense this scene is.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow. (stanza 12)	<i>I need to know more about what is meant by Casey's blow. Did he blow through the air, like he missed the ball? Or did he blow it out of the park, like a home run? I need to keep reading to understand the action here.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck out. (stanza 13)	<i>What? I'm so surprised here—I've got these clues like bright sunshine, a band, light hearts, laughing men, and shouting children that make me think this was a good outcome—that Casey got a hit and Mudville won the game. And then I see the signal word but, and I have to revise what I was thinking—mighty Casey has struck out!</i>	 Synthesizing

Thinking Aloud With a Narrative Picture Book in Grades 3–5

An Angel for Solomon Singer by Cynthia Rylant

Overview and Rationale

This poignant picture book tells the story of Solomon Singer, a lonely middle-aged New Yorker. As he walks the city streets, he dreams of his boyhood in Indiana. His dreams are realized at the magical Westway Café, where he befriends a waiter named Angel. Because of this blossoming friendship, Solomon begins to see the beauty of the world around him and leaves behind his loneliness.

Lexile Framework: 1120

Guided Reading Level: P

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy Model
The hotel had none of the things he loved. (p. 1)	<i>At first I wasn't sure what the "it" was. Did Solomon not like the hotel, or did he not like New York City? As I kept reading, I realized he did not like the hotel, as the author tells me it had none of the things he loved.</i> <i>Also, why would someone live in a hotel, especially one he didn't like? What are the things he loved?</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying  Asking questions
... and no picture window for watching the birds. (p. 3)	<i>The author tells me exactly what Solomon likes—watching birds, windows, porch swings. This evidence suggests that Solomon likes the outdoors and nature.</i>	 Making inferences
... oh, what a difference a yellow wall or a purple wall would have made! (p. 4)	<i>No animals and no color in his hotel room. From all of what Solomon doesn't have in his room, it sounds to me like this hotel is drab and lonely.</i>	 Making inferences
It was dreams of balconies and purple walls that took him to the street. (p. 6)	<i>Now I understand that Solomon leaves the place that he does not love so he can wander to places that he might like better.</i>	 Synthesizing
... and listened to the voices of all who passed, wishing for the conversations of crickets. (p. 8)	<i>Why did he leave Indiana? What brought him to New York City?</i>	 Asking questions
He didn't feel happy as he wandered. (p. 10)	<i>I'm really getting the sense that Solomon is lonely and unhappy—no family to love. He doesn't like where he lives, and even wandering does not bring him happiness. I got the clue that he's at least fifty years old, but does he have a job?</i>	 Synthesizing  Asking questions
... and so the name meant something to him. (p. 12)	<i>If he loves the Midwest so much, why does he not move back? Does he not have enough money to move halfway across the country?</i>	 Asking questions

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What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy I Model
But it didn't put a price on dreams. (p. 12)	<i>I'm not sure what that final line means—"It didn't put a price on dreams." When I reread it, I can tell the "it" is the menu, so literally this sentence tells me that there is no price for dreams on the menu. Maybe the author is telling me that dreams are priceless?</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying A Understanding the author's purpose
... a pair of brown eyes that were lined at the corners from a life of smiling. (p. 14)	<i>I like how the author uses a sweet, familiar voice and smiling eyes to show the kindness of whomever is talking to Solomon. I'm guessing he feels comfortable right away.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose  Making inferences
... (but he didn't say the balcony out loud). (p. 14)	<i>I'm wondering what the author meant when he wrote that Solomon ordered a balcony, but didn't say it out loud. Why did he write that? First of all, you can't order a balcony at a café! I already know that a balcony is one of the things that Solomon wants at home. So maybe this shows that he feels so comfortable at the café that it feels like home.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose
Solomon Singer did, the very next night. (p. 14)	<i>Does he come back because the soup is so good? Or because it's a comfortable place for a lonely man? Or because the waiter is so friendly? Or maybe because of all of those reasons?</i>	 Asking questions
... and a fireplace (but he didn't say the fireplace out loud). (p. 16)	<i>There it is again! A thing that he wanted to order but didn't really. The author saying it twice shows me that it's a really important symbol, so I think it represents the idea that this café gives Solomon a feeling of home and a feeling of belonging.</i>	A Understanding the author's purpose  Synthesizing
... and Solomon Singer did, the very next night. (p. 16)	<i>So far Solomon and the waiter haven't really talked. Will they ever have a conversation?</i>	 Asking questions
... and ordered up a balcony (but he didn't say the balcony out loud). (p. 17)	<i>I was confused by this part—I am not sure if "he made his way west" means that he went to Indiana or if it means he went to the café. I've also just noticed that the café's name is Westway—like the Midwest where Solomon is from. I wonder if the author did that on purpose! When I reread this whole part, I'm getting the sense that Solomon keeps going back to this café because it reminds him of home and the things he loves.</i>	 Monitoring and clarifying A Understanding the author's purpose  Asking questions

What the Text Says	What I Say	The Comprehension Strategy Model
... and he thought them beautiful. (p. 19)	<i>What a beautiful sentence—the streets moved before him like fields of wheat. I’m getting the sense that because of this new place, New York City is starting to feel more beautiful and more like home.</i>	 Making inferences
... and he felt friendly toward them. (p. 20)	<i>Here the author repeated some of those images from Solomon’s Indiana home—the shining stars, the wheat fields, and the crickets. I saw those exact same things at the beginning of the book—now I’m really sure that New York City is feeling like home.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose
... when he would come in from wandering the roads he loved. (p. 24)	<i>The important idea here is that Solomon is reliving the happiness he felt in his Indiana childhood. The Westway Café makes him feel like he’s home and no longer lonely.</i>	 Synthesizing
The waiter’s name, it turned out, was Angel. (p. 25)	<i>Angel! I know angels are symbols of love and good things. I don’t think that it’s a coincidence that the author named the waiter Angel.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose
... and one of his dreams has even come true (he has sneaked a cat into his hotel room). (p. 26)	<i>I’m noticing that the book changes verb tense here. It was all written in the past tense—but then the author writes, “he dines there still.” That makes me feel like this story is still going on—that Solomon is still eating at the Westway Café.</i>	A Understanding the author’s purpose
... and Solomon Singer will smile and make you feel you are home. (p. 28)	<i>I wonder if this is a true story. Is there really a Westway Café and a man named Solomon Singer? I think the message here is that everyone—even people who are lonely—can find a place that feels like home to them.</i>	 Asking questions