

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

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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>	<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Understanding the author's purpose</p>
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>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monitoring and clarifying</p>
The blossoms are usually pollinated by insects or by the wind. (p. 9)	<p><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></p> <p><i>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></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monitoring and clarifying</p>
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>	<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Understanding the author's purpose</p>
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>	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Asking questions</p>
... 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>	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Asking questions</p>
There is apple cider, too. (p. 17)	<i>What is the difference between apple juice and apple cider? How are the recipes different?</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Asking questions</p>
Some people bob for apples. (p. 19)	<p><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></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Synthesizing</p>
... when the trees will produce a new crop of apples! (p. 21)	<p><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></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monitoring and clarifying</p>
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>	<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Understanding the author's purpose</p>
This is called pruning. (p. 24)	<i>Why do we prune trees? Is it to get the dead branches off?</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Asking questions</p>

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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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