



3RD
GRADE

VOLUME 3.5

Legend
Maniac Magee

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with Bethany Robinson



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Welcome to the C. I. A. Unit of Study for the book *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli

This unit of study was put together for the purpose of teaching students how to read longer, more complex text. Unfortunately, in classrooms where only basal readers are used, many students do not learn how to make the transition from picture books, to series books, to more complex chapter books. As a result, students struggle during independent reading. This unit of study will teach students the fundamental processes of reading text, specifically longer, more complex chapter books. It follows an approach described in its companion text, *Raising the Standards through Chapter Books: The C. I. A. Approach*. I hope you enjoy guiding your students through the authentic work of expert readers!

Maniac Magee has always been one of my favorite books to read aloud to my students because of the conversations my students have in response to the topic of the story. The book brings to the forefront issues of racism and prejudice that continue to exist in today's modern world. *Maniac Magee* is the perfect conclusion to the C. I. A. series' third-grade focus on conflict and the civil rights movement. Students will rely on background knowledge built across the year in the other C. I. A. units. They will easily make connections across texts such as *The War with Grandpa*, *Martin Luther King Jr.*, and *Glory Be*.

To keep the heavy topic of racism light, Jerry Spinelli cleverly writes this fictional story as if it were a true legend. Legends are stories that have been passed down from generation to generation. The details of the story have been elaborated on and exaggerated to the point that it is difficult to know what is true and what is myth. The element of exaggeration is what makes this book humorous. Students will learn to pick up on this humor as they separate what is ordinary from what is extraordinary.

Woven throughout the legend of *Maniac Magee* is a strong reference to the biblical story "The Good Samaritan," and knowledge of that story helps the reader determine the author's message. Therefore, students will study the parable of the good Samaritan as they read *Maniac Magee*. Students will watch the 2003 Big Idea Studio video presentation of "The Story of Flibber-o-Loo" from the DVD *Veggie Tales: Heroes of the Bible—Stand Up, Stand Tall, Stand Strong*. Students will infer the author's message for the book *Maniac Magee* after watching this DVD. Though you may be tempted to skip this lesson, please do not—it is essential to the entire unit. You will want to purchase this DVD prior to teaching the unit of study.

Throughout this unit, it will be important to keep charts easy to read, colorful, and displayed on the classroom wall, as they will be used often for referencing and for monitoring comprehension.

Before starting this unit of study with your students, you will want to read and label a copy of the book *Maniac Magee*, to be used as a teacher guide. You will also want to acquire a class set of books for students to use during read-aloud. Take time to get to know the scope and sequence, and input lessons into your plan book ahead of time.

At the back of this unit you will find a vocabulary handbook. Please print a copy of this handbook for each student. It will be used almost daily and is an essential component of this unit of study.

If this is your first time teaching a C. I. A. unit, you will want to first familiarize yourself with the C. I. A. approach. You will then need to lay the groundwork for optimizing your success with this unit in your classroom by:

- Designating a read-aloud block in your daily schedule
- Setting up a meeting area
- Planning for turn and talk
- Preparing reader's notebooks
- Preparing for assessment

Get Ready for Vocabulary Instruction

“Teacher read-aloud is one of the major opportunities for children to learn new word meanings” (Cunningham & Allington, 2007, p. 98). Therefore, vocabulary work will be an essential component of the read-aloud block.

Words selected for explicit instruction in this unit of study are words that appear over and over again or are inferred repeatedly throughout the text. Students expand their vocabulary knowledge when they are given the opportunity to learn synonyms and antonyms of key words.

Vocabulary will be reinforced through both turn and talk and writing. Students will be expected to practice using new vocabulary when they are talking in partnerships and writing in their notebooks. Teachers will reinforce the use of new vocabulary through dialogues with students. Vocabulary words taught in the read-aloud unit will be revisited during the paired book club unit.

At the back of this unit, you will find materials that can be copied to create vocabulary handbooks for students to use throughout this unit of study. (The vocabulary handbook is also available to download at readsidebyside.com). Words will be introduced on the days indicated in the scope and sequence. On any given day, the vocabulary mini-lesson precedes the read-aloud, so that right after receiving instruction on a word, students have the opportunity to see the word used in the text and to use the word in their turn and talk. The following routine should be used for teaching vocabulary and should take up no more than 10 minutes of the read-aloud block.

Vocabulary Mini-Lesson Routine

<p>1. Introduce the word and highlight morphemes.</p>	<p><i>Today our target word is...</i> If applicable: <i>What is the root? (underline the root)</i> <i>What is the prefix? (circle the prefix)</i> <i>What does the prefix mean?</i> <i>What is the suffix? (box the suffix)</i> <i>What does the suffix mean?</i></p>
<p>2. Read the context(s) of the word. Highlight any clues that will help the reader infer the meaning.</p>	<p><i>Our target word comes right from our text on page _____. Let's read it together. Are there any clues in the sentence that help us infer what this word means?</i></p>
<p>3. Turn and talk: What does the word _____ mean?</p>	<p><i>Based on the clues, what words or phrases describe this word?</i> <i>Turn and talk.</i></p>
<p>4. Share-out and add to chart.</p>	<p><i>What did you come up with?</i> *add accurate examples to the chart</p>
<p>5. Brainstorm other contexts for this word.</p>	<p><i>In what other contexts might we find this word?</i> *add accurate examples to the chart</p>
<p>6. Turn and talk: What are opposites of this word?</p>	<p><i>What words or phrases describe the opposite of this word? Turn and talk.</i></p>
<p>7. Share-out and add to chart.</p>	<p><i>What did you come up with?</i> *add accurate examples to the chart</p>
<p>8. I will remember this word...</p>	<p><i>How will you remember this word? Draw a picture, or write a phrase that will help you remember this word. Use an example from your own life if possible.</i></p>
<p>9. Link...</p>	<p><i>Today and every day I want you to be looking for forms of this word in your reading. I also want you to practice using this word in your talk and in your writing.</i></p>

Maniac Magee Text Complexity

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	QUANTITATIVE MEASURES
<p>Levels of Meaning There are multiple themes throughout the book, which increase the complexity of the text. Themes include: war vs. peace, love vs. hate, and right vs. wrong. The book also explores relationships that cross the boundaries of race and age. Homelessness is a topic that is also explored in this book.</p> <p>Structure This legend is told chronologically; however, there is an eight-year gap in the story line. The reader will have to infer what took place during those years. The genre is challenging for readers because exaggeration is used to convey the message of the story. Readers will have to separate fact and fiction.</p> <p>Language Conventionalty and Clarity Figurative language adds depth to this text. Short phrases add challenge as readers must infer details.</p> <p>Knowledge Demands Background knowledge about racism and prejudice will be needed to understand the conflict in the story. The intertextual connection to the story “The Good Samaritan” will allow the reader to gain a deeper understanding of themes in the book.</p>	<p>The Lexile level for <i>Maniac Magee</i> is 820 based on word frequency and sentence length. This is in the middle range of the complexity band for 4th–5th grade according to the Common Core State Standards.</p> <p>READER TASK CONSIDERATIONS</p> <p>These should be determined locally with reference to motivation, knowledge, and experiences as well as to purpose and the complexity of the tasks assigned and the questions posed.</p>

Maniac Magee Scope and Sequence

NOTE: The lessons for this unit give page references for the Little, Brown and Company paperback edition of *Maniac Magee* published in 1999.

Unit of Study: *Maniac Magee*

Genre: Legend

DAY	CHAPTER(S)/ PAGES	MINI-LESSON	READ-ALoud
1	Blurb	Vocabulary: <i>racially divided</i> Use sticky notes to mark each quadrant of the text.	Search for key story elements in the blurb. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete story elements handout together• Make a prediction
2	Genre Charts	Vocabulary: <i>embellished</i> Use the genre charts to help students understand what to expect from realistic fiction written as a legend.	
3	Before the Story pp. 1–2	Vocabulary: <i>truth vs. myth</i>	Identify details about the genre.

DAY	CHAPTER(S)/ PAGES	MINI-LESSON	READ-ALoud
4	Chapters 1–2 pp. 5–9	Vocabulary: <i>divided</i>	Focus on using comprehension strategies to determine important characters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create a character list
5	Chapters 1–2 pp. 5–9		Identify the important events in the story. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create a timeline of events
6	Chapter 3 pp. 10–13	Vocabulary: <i>ordinary</i> vs. <i>extraordinary</i>	Focus on using comprehension strategies to determine important characters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to co-create a character list
7	Chapters 4–8 pp. 14–28	Vocabulary: <i>feat</i>	Identify the important events in the story. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create a list of Maniac Magee’s extraordinary feats

DAY	CHAPTER(S)/ PAGES	MINI-LESSON	READ-ALoud
8	Chapters 8–11 pp. 28–40		Identify the problems in the story. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create a problems list • Continue to co-create a character list
9	Select pages	Vocabulary: <i>boundary</i>	Identify the setting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create a setting map
10	Chapters 12–13 pp. 41–49	Vocabulary: <i>fit in</i>	Make predictions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to co-create an extraordinary feats list
11		Retell Summary Writing	
12	Outside Text: “Parable of the Good Samaritan” Video	Vocabulary: <i>pity</i>	Gather background knowledge about an important topic—the good Samaritan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create a list of good Samaritan examples
13	Chapters 14–15 pp. 50–56	Vocabulary: <i>fame</i>	Focus on the main character and infer character traits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create a main character chart
14	Chapters 16–18 pp. 57–67	Vocabulary: <i>dislike</i>	Infer character feelings.

DAY	CHAPTER(S)/ PAGES	MINI-LESSON	READ-ALOUD
15	Chapters 18–21 pp. 67–76	Vocabulary: <i>worthy</i>	Make predictions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to co-create an extraordinary feats list Continue to co-create a setting map Analyze the author’s craft. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analogy
16	Chapters 21–23 pp. 74–86	Vocabulary: <i>favor</i>	Infer character feelings.
17	Outside Text: “The Story of Flibber-o-Loo” Video	Vocabulary: <i>prejudice</i>	Analyze how two texts (Veggie Tales video & <i>Maniac Magee</i>) address similar topics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to co-create a list of good Samaritan examples Name a line of thinking. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-create an evidence collection box
18	Chapters 24–25 pp. 87–95	Vocabulary: <i>out of life</i>	Analyze how two characters are alike and different. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-create a comparison chart
19		Comparison Writing	
20	Chapters 26–29 pp. 96–109	Vocabulary: <i>amen</i>	Collect evidence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to co-create an evidence collection box
21	Chapters 30–33 pp. 110–123		Collect evidence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to co-create an evidence collection box

DAY	CHAPTER(S)/ PAGES	MINI-LESSON	READ-ALLOUD
22	Chapters 34–36 pp. 124–136	Vocabulary: <i>disgraced</i>	Collect evidence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to co-create an evidence collection box
23	Chapters 36–37 pp. 136–142	Vocabulary: <i>perilous</i>	Identify the important events in the story. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to co-create a list of extraordinary feats Identify the turning point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to co-create an evidence collection box
24		Turning Point Writing, Part 1	
25	Chapters 38–40 pp. 143–157		Make predictions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with part 2 of the turning point writing
26	Chapters 41–46 pp. 158–184		Read-in
27		Synthesis Summary Writing	
28– 34		Formal Writing: Letter to a Neighbor	

***Maniac Magee* Stems List**

Day 1 – Blurb

When the blurb said _____, I was thinking _____. I am also thinking _____.

Day 2 – Genre

I predict _____ because _____.

Day 3 – Identify Genre Details

When the book said _____, I was thinking this was an important detail because _____. This helps me understand _____.

Day 4 – Character List

When the book said _____, I was thinking _____.

Day 5 – Important Events

When the book said _____, I was thinking this was an important event because _____.

Day 6 – Character List

When the book said _____, I was thinking _____.

Day 7 – Important Events

When the book said _____, I was thinking this was an extraordinary feat because _____.

Day 8 – Problems

When the book said _____, I thought the problem was _____.

Day 10 – Make Predictions

When the book said _____, I made a prediction. I think _____ because _____.

Day 12 – Outside Text

When the video said _____, I was thinking _____. This helps me understand _____.

Day 13 – Infer Character Traits

When the book said _____, I was thinking _____. This helps me understand _____.

Day 14 – Infer Character Feelings

When the book said _____, I thought that Maniac felt _____ because _____.

Day 15 – Make Predictions

When the book said _____, I made a prediction. I think _____ because _____.

Day 16 – Infer Character Feelings

When the book said _____, I thought that Maniac felt _____ because _____.

Day 17 – Outside Text

When the video said _____, I was thinking _____. This helps me understand _____.

Day 18 – Compare Characters

When the book said _____, I was thinking Maniac and Grayson are alike/different because _____ .
This helps me understand _____.

Day 20 – Collect Evidence

When the book said _____, I was thinking this proves that Jerry Spinelli is telling us that it is good to be a good Samaritan because _____.

Day 21 – Collect Evidence

When the book said _____, I was thinking this proves that Jerry Spinelli is telling us that it is good to be a good Samaritan because _____.

Day 22 – Collect Evidence

When the book said _____, I was thinking this proves that Jerry Spinelli is telling us that it is good to be a good Samaritan because _____.

Day 23 – Important Events & Turning Point

When the book said _____, I was thinking this was an extraordinary feat because _____ .
This makes me think _____.

Day 25 – Make Predictions

When the book said _____, I made a prediction. I think _____ .

Day 26 – Read-In

When the book said _____, I was thinking _____ because _____ .

C. I. A. Lesson Plans

Maniac Magee

NOTE: The lessons for this unit give page references for the Little, Brown and Company paperback edition of *Maniac Magee* published in 1999.

C

Collect Critical Information

Identify the main story elements:

- Character
- Setting
- Problem
- Main Events



In this quadrant, readers read slowly and often reread in order to monitor their comprehension.



After finishing this quadrant of the text, readers stop to check their understanding. They write a retell summary of the first quadrant of the book, including all the main story elements: character, setting, problem, and main events.

Days 1–11, Chapters 1–13

Mini-Lesson

Vocabulary Routine: *racially divided* (L 4, 5)

racially—The base word ‘race’ means *a group of people classified together by certain distinctive physical traits*. The suffix ‘ail’ means *pertaining to*, and the suffix ‘ly’ makes this word an adverb.

divided—The base word ‘divide’ means *to separate*. The suffix ‘ed’ makes this word an adjective.

Instructional Read-Aloud

In this lesson...you will be modeling for students how you use clues in the blurb to help you get the main elements of the story—character, setting, problem, and main events—in your head. After identifying these story elements, students will use them to make predictions.

To prepare for this lesson, make a copy of the blurb handout for each student to glue or tape into his or her reader’s notebook.

Learning Targets:

Read closely to monitor comprehension (RL 1)

- Make predictions

Show understanding of story elements (RL 3)

- Main characters
- Setting
- Problem

Gather and categorize information through note taking (W 8)

Convey ideas precisely using appropriate vocabulary (L 3, 6)

Engage in collaborative discussion (SL 1, 2, 4, 6)

Connect:

We have been learning...

...that good readers preview a book before they read to help them form ideas about the text and to set a purpose for reading.

Teach:

Today I am going to teach you...

...that good readers look carefully at the cover of a book and read the blurb prior to starting the first chapter so that they can begin to think about the story elements. The main elements of the story are character, setting, problem, and main events.

We are going to create the first entry in your notebooks today. I have copied a handout for you. We will be completing the handout together before gluing or taping your copies into your reader's notebooks. This entry will be a tool that we will use while reading this book; it will help us remember the most important story elements so that we can keep the story in our heads.

Today we will be using this stem for turn and talk:

When the blurb said _____, I was thinking _____. I am also thinking _____.

Listen and follow along while I read the blurb.



Read the entire blurb aloud.

Model:

As I read the blurb, I noticed the names of important characters. To help me remember these important characters as I read, I am going to write their names and any important information I have learned about each of them on the handout.

When the blurb said that the book is about the life of Jeffrey Lionel “Maniac” Magee, **I was thinking** Jeffrey must be the main character of this story. **I am also thinking** that “Maniac” is probably his nickname.

When the blurb said that Jeffrey decides to run away from his aunt and uncle’s house after living with them for eight years, **I was thinking** the aunt and uncle are important characters in this story. **I am also thinking** that Jeffrey must have been very unhappy living with them.

(Model adding these characters and information about them to the chart.)

Guided Practice:

The setting of a story is where the story takes place. Based on clues in the blurb, where does this story take place?

Turn and talk to your partners using this stem:

When the blurb said _____, I was thinking _____. I am also thinking _____.

(Model adding information about the setting of the story to the chart.)

The setting of the story is also *when* the story takes place. This story could take place in the present time.

(Model adding information about the setting of the story to the chart.)

Guided Practice:

This story also is going to have several problems. When the blurb said that the small town was racially divided, what were you thinking a problem in the story will be?

Turn and talk to your partners using this stem:

When the blurb said _____, I was thinking _____. I am also thinking _____.

(Model adding information about this problem to the chart.)

Stretch It:

Good readers not only gather key information about the characters, setting, and problems before starting a book, they also make predictions to help set a purpose for reading. Good readers use story elements to help them make predictions.

Discuss: What are you predicting will happen in this story?

(Allow time for students to add their predictions to the chart.)

Link:

Today and every day when you read...

...I want you to think about the story elements before you start reading the first chapter, by paying close attention to the cover of the book and the information in the blurb. You can also use that information to help you make predictions.

The following is a sample of what your blurb chart *might* look like:

Notebook Entry #1: Finding Story Elements in the Blurb

Blurb (from the Little, Brown and Company paperback edition of *Maniac Magee* published in 1999):

Jeffrey Lionel “Maniac” Magee might have lived a normal life if a trolley accident hadn’t made him an orphan. After living with his unhappy and uptight aunt and uncle for eight years, he decides to run—and not just run away, but run. And this is where the myth of Maniac Magee begins, as he changes the lives of a racially divided small town with his amazing and legendary feats.

Characters: Jeffrey Lionel “Maniac” Magee - orphan
Aunt and Uncle

Setting (place & time): racially divided small town

Problem: Jeffrey is an orphan.
A small town is racially divided.

Prediction:

I predict Maniac Magee will desegregate the town because the blurb says he changes lives.

Notebook Entry #1: Finding Story Elements in the Blurb

Blurb (from the Little, Brown and Company paperback edition of *Maniac Magee* published in 1999):

Jeffrey Lionel “Maniac” Magee might have lived a normal life if a trolley accident hadn’t made him an orphan. After living with his unhappy and uptight aunt and uncle for eight years, he decides to run—and not just run away, but run. And this is where the myth of Maniac Magee begins, as he changes the lives of a racially divided small town with his amazing and legendary feats.

Characters:

Setting (place & time):

Problem:

Prediction:

DAY 1, MARK EACH QUADRANT OF THE TEXT

Mini-Lesson

In this lesson... you will model how readers break a long text into manageable pieces by dividing the text into quadrants. Marking each quadrant will help students set goals as they read. Each student will need three small sticky notes, preferably in different colors.

Learning Target:

Analyze the structure of texts (RL 5)

- how larger portions of the text relate to each other and the whole

Connect:

We have been learning...

...that good readers get ready to read a book by looking at the blurb in order to pull out the most important story elements: character, setting, and plot.

Teach:

Today I am also going to teach you...

...that good readers, before reading, divide a book into four relatively equal quadrants. Good readers use various specific strategies to help them understand the text, depending on which quadrant they are reading in. They also use these divisions to help set their reading goals.

You should each have three small sticky notes.

Model:

First, open up your book to the last page. There are 184 pages in our book, *Maniac Magee*. If we take that number and divide it by 4, we get 46. We are going to divide our book into four quadrants that are each roughly 46 pages long. When marking quadrants, always make sure you end a quadrant at the end of a chapter.

Please place your first sticky note on page 49, at the end of chapter 13. In the first quadrant of the book we will be collecting story elements. We will stop at the end of this quadrant to write a retell summary as a way of monitoring our comprehension while reading.

Place your second sticky note on page 95, at the end of chapter 25. When we reach this page, we should have a big idea of what this book is going to be about. Therefore, in this second quadrant we will focus on understanding the genre and looking for patterns in our thinking.

Place your third sticky note on page 142, at the end of chapter 37. When we reach this page, we will have found the turning point of the book. The turning point is where the author's message is revealed. Therefore, in the third quadrant we will be collecting evidence to support our thinking about the story's theme.

In the last quadrant of the book, we will be rejecting or confirming predictions and evaluating how the author ties everything up at the end. In addition, we will be considering whether the author's message is one we agree with and can apply to our own lives.

Link:

Today and every day when you read...

...I want you to think about dividing the text into four quadrants in order to help focus your thinking and set goals for reading.

Mini-Lesson

Vocabulary Routine: *embellished* (L 4, 5)

The prefix ‘em’ means *into*. The root ‘bellis/bellus’ means *beauty*. The suffix ‘ed’ makes this word an adjective.

In this lesson...you will be activating students’ background knowledge about the genres realistic fiction and legend. For this lesson, I suggest either transferring the sample genre charts for realistic fiction and legend onto chart paper or using the realistic fiction poster and legend poster found at shop.readsidebyside.com. Post these charts or posters side by side in the meeting area prior to the lesson. These are the only charts in the unit that will not be co-created. You will use these genre charts to guide your instruction during this mini-lesson. You will model for students how to use information on the charts to help make predictions about how the book will go. You might also provide hand-outs of these charts for students to glue or tape into their notebooks.

Learning Targets:

Show understanding of story elements (RL 3)

- Character
- Setting
- Plot

Use what you know about genre to help you understand the story better and compare texts (RL 5)

- Realistic fiction
- Legend

Convey ideas precisely using appropriate vocabulary (L 3, 6)

Engage in collaborative discussion (SL 1, 2, 4, 6)

Connect:

We have been learning...

...that good readers think about story elements before they start reading a book by looking carefully at the cover and reading the blurb.

Teach:

Today I am going to teach you...

...that good readers also use what they know about the genre to think about character, setting, and plot. Knowledge of genre will be useful as you make predictions about the story. Today we are going to review the genre realistic fiction, which is the genre of *Maniac Magee*. We will be using the chart I have posted in our meeting area to help us think about this genre.

Notice how I use the information on this chart to help me make predictions about the book *Maniac Magee*.

Today we will be using this stem for turn and talk:

I predict _____ because _____.

Model:

When reading realistic fiction, you can expect the setting to be a realistic, believable place. Realistic fiction takes place in the present time.

When reading realistic fiction, you can expect the characters to be believable.

When the chart said that the characters of realistic fiction are believable, I made a prediction. **I predict** Maniac Magee will be a normal kid who has special qualities **because** in the blurb it said that Maniac Magee was special.

Guided Practice:

When reading realistic fiction, you can expect the main character to deal with a real-life problem and that the problem will change him or her. When you read the blurb, you learned that Maniac Magee's life changed after his parents died.

Based on this information, what are you predicting?

Turn and talk to your partners using this stem:

I predict _____ because _____.

Teach:

Because this book is realistic fiction, it is a made-up story. However, the author chose to write the story as a legend.

Now let's look at the legend genre chart.

Notice how I use the information on this chart to help me make predictions about the book *Maniac Magee*.

We will continue to use this stem for turn and talk:

I predict _____ because _____.

Model:

When reading a legend, you can expect the story to begin in the past. The story will be told chronologically.

When reading a legend, the story will be about a person's life.

When the chart said a legend tells about a person's life and is told in chronological order, I made a prediction. **I predict** this book will be about Maniac Magee's life and will be told from when he was young to when he is an older kid **because** Maniac Magee is the main character in this book.

Guided Practice:

When reading a legend, you can expect the story to be embellished beyond the truth. This means details have been added to the story to make it more entertaining, but these details may not be true. The story will tell about the main character's life accomplishments.

Based on this information, what are you predicting?

Turn and talk to your partners using this stem:

I predict _____ because _____.

Link:

Today and every day when you read...

...I want you to think about the genre of the book and use what you know about the genre to make predictions.

Realistic Fiction

Setting	A realistic or believable place. The story is typically set in the present time.
Characters	Fictional characters who are believable. A main character who changes over time.
Plot	The main character must deal with a real-life problem. The main character changes over time.
Most important story element	Character
What readers will think about	How does the main character change over time? How does the main character overcome challenges? What are the main character's beliefs about right and wrong? How do the main character's circumstances impact his or her choices?

Sub-genres: Adventure – man vs. nature, man vs. self, survival

Legend

Setting	A real place that exists or existed in the past. The story begins in the past.
Characters	A real person from history whose story has been embellished beyond truth.
Plot	The story relates the person's life accomplishments, some of which have been embellished beyond truth. The story is told chronologically, typically from birth to present or death.
Most important story elements	Character Setting
What readers will think about	Which details are truthful, and which details have been exaggerated? What is the significance of this person's life? How do a person's circumstances shape his or her life?

Mini-Lesson

Vocabulary Routine: *truth* vs. *myth* (L 4, 5)

The base word ‘truth’ means *a statement proven to be true*. The base word ‘myth’ means *a fiction or half-truth*.

Instructional Read-Aloud

In this section...the reader learns that “the history of a kid is one part fact, two parts legend, and three parts snowball.” The reader is left questioning what is true and what is a myth.

In this lesson...you will model paying attention to details in the text that point to the genre—legend. You will direct students to information on the legend chart, which should be prominently hanging in the meeting area throughout the lesson.

Learning Targets:

Read closely to monitor comprehension (RL 1)

- Infer

Show understanding of story elements (RL 3)

- Character
- Setting
- Plot

Use what you know about genre to help you understand the story better and compare texts (RL 5)

- Realistic fiction
- Legend

Convey ideas precisely using appropriate vocabulary (L 3, 6)

Engage in collaborative discussion (SL 1, 2, 4, 6)

Connect:

We have been learning...

...that good readers use what they know about the genre to think about character, setting, and plot.

Teach:

Today I am going to teach you...

...that good readers look for details that are typical of the genre of the story, as they read.

Today we are going to read the first section of the book, titled “Before the Story.” As we read, we are going to identify details in the story that are important because they help us understand the genre of the story.

We know that this story is realistic fiction, so therefore it is made up. We also know that the author, Jerry Spinelli, chose to write it as a legend. We will be using our legend genre chart to help us think about important details in this section of the text.

Today we will be using this stem for turn and talk:

When the book said _____, I was thinking this was an important detail because _____. This helps me understand _____.



Begin reading the “Before the Story” section of *Maniac Magee*, starting on page 1.

Model:



Stop after: “What’s true, what’s myth? It’s hard to know.” (p. 1)

Do you really think Maniac Magee was born in a dump? Could it be true that his stomach was a cereal box and his heart a sofa spring?

When the book said “What’s true, what’s myth? It’s hard to know,” **I was thinking this was an important detail because** it suggests that some of the story is going to be believable and some of the story is going to be unbelievable. **This helps me understand** that the story is a legend. The details will be embellished beyond truth.

Now it is your turn to think about details in the story that are important because they help us understand the genre of the story.

Guided Practice:



Stop after: “...even if it wasn’t really a bull.” (p. 2)

What details in this section of the story are important because they help us understand the genre?

Turn and talk to your partners using this stem:

When the book said _____, I was thinking this was an important detail because _____. This helps me understand _____.

As I read this next part, continue to think about important details in the story.

Guided Practice:



Stop after: "...be very, very careful not to let the facts get mixed up with the truth." (p. 2)

What details in this section of the story are important because they help us understand the genre?

Turn and talk to your partners using this stem:

When the book said _____, I was thinking this was an important detail because _____. This helps me understand _____.

Stretch It:

I love the line on page 2 that reads, "The history of a kid is one part fact, two parts legend, and three parts snowball."

Discuss: What do you think the author means when he writes, "three parts snowball"?

Optional: Post this quote in big letters above the area where your charts for this unit of study are going to hang.

Link:

Today and every day when you read...

...I want you to look for details in the story that are important because they help you understand the genre better.

Mini-Lesson

Vocabulary Routine: *divided* (L 4, 5)

The base word ‘divide’ means *to separate*. The suffix ‘ed’ makes this word an adjective.

Instructional Read-Aloud

In these chapters... Jeffrey’s parents die when he is three and he has to move in with his Uncle Dan and Aunt Dot, who hate each other. They don’t share anything and don’t even speak to each other for the eight years that Jeffrey lives with them! When Jeffrey’s aunt and uncle come to see him perform in a musicale, he starts screaming at them to talk to each other and then runs out of the auditorium. Jeffrey runs away from Hollidaysburg and ends up in Two Mills.

In this lesson... you will be modeling how readers use details in the story to help them understand important characters. You will demonstrate how readers keep track of characters while reading by working with your students to co-create a character list that can be used as a tool for comprehension monitoring. Because the list will be used in this way, it is very important that all students keep a copy of this list in their reader’s notebooks.

Learning Targets:

Read closely to monitor comprehension (RL 1)

Show understanding of story elements (RL 3)

- Character traits

Gather and categorize information through note taking (W 8)

Convey ideas precisely using appropriate vocabulary (L 3, 6)

Engage in collaborative discussion (SL 1, 2, 4, 6)

Connect:

We have been learning...

...that good readers identify the genre before reading.

Teach:

Today I am going to teach you...

...that good readers use details in the story to help them understand important characters.

Watch me as I model how I stop to identify the important characters in our story.

Also notice how I use clues in the story to help me think about each character.

You are each going to make a character list in your reader's notebook as we read today. The character list will be a tool that we will use while reading this book; it will help us improve our comprehension when we are confused.

Today we will be using this stem for turn and talk:

When the book said _____, I was thinking _____.

Open your reader's notebooks and title a clean page **Character List**. As we create the list together on the easel, you will each copy down the information on a list in your own reader's notebook.



Begin reading chapter 1 of *Maniac Magee*, starting on page 5.

Model:



Stop after: "Of course, to be accurate, he wasn't really Maniac then. He was Jeffrey. Jeffrey Lionel Magee." (p. 5)

This first chapter introduces us to the main character in the book, Jeffrey Lionel Magee.

When the book said that Jeffrey was an orphan after his parents died in the trolley accident, **I was thinking** that Jeffrey's life was tragic.

(Model adding Jeffrey, and information about him, to the character list.)

Now it will be your turn to identify important characters. As I read, pay attention to details in the story and use those details to help you think about each character.

Guided Practice:



Stop after: “Eight years of that.” (p. 6)

In this first chapter we also learn a little bit about Jeffrey’s Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan. What did you learn about Jeffrey’s aunt and uncle?

Turn and talk to your partners using this stem:

When the book said _____, I was thinking _____.

(Model adding Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan, and information about them, to the character list.)

In this next section of the text, we are going to learn more details about Jeffrey.

Guided Practice:



Stop after: “Never again to return to school.” (p. 7)

We learned some information about Jeffrey. What did you learn about Jeffrey?

Turn and talk to your partners using this stem:

When the book said _____, I was thinking _____.

(Model adding information about Jeffrey to the character list.)

Stretch It:



Stop after: “Because people just didn’t say that to strangers, out of the blue.” (p. 9)

Discuss: What details in the story help you understand that Jeffrey Lionel Magee is not your ordinary eleven-year-old?

Link:

Today and every day when you read...

...I want you to use details in the story to help you identify the important characters and understand them better.

The following list is a sample showing what your co-created list *might* look like:

Character List:

Jeffrey Lionel Magee
(Maniac Magee):

- orphan
- his parents died in a trolley accident
- a legend
- runs away when he is 11 years old

Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan:

- hate each other
- strict catholics
- have two of everything so they won't have to share