

THE CASE OF THE RUNAWAY DOG

The Case of the Runaway Dog

by James Preller

Ages 5-7

Running Time: 53 mins.

Lexile® Level: 400 Guided Reading Level: N

Summary

Jigsaw Jones let his dog, Rags, off the leash in the park, and the next thing he knew, Rags was gone. Overcome by guilt, Jigsaw could hardly get himself to investigate the disappearance. Had Rags just wandered off and gotten lost, or had he been dog-napped? With the help of his friends and family, Jigsaw traces the clues to track down Rags, and makes an unlikely friend in the process.

Learning Objectives

- Students will practice the reading strategy of making inferences.
- Students will develop their vocabulary through listening, reading, writing, drawing, and identifying synonyms.
- Students will practice the comprehension strategy of sequencing events.

Before Listening Activities

1. Preview these important vocabulary words. Provide a word list for students. Have the students read each word aloud, assisting with pronunciation. Then, as students listen to the story, have them highlight the word when they hear it. Students will revisit this word list after listening to the story for further vocabulary development.

heritage
Pilgrim
bellow(ed)
harvest
protest(ed)
moping
scowl(ed)
deny
grateful

2. Introduce or review the reading strategy of making inferences to the students. Explain to students that making an inference is drawing a conclusion about a character's actions or feelings, based on clues that the author gives about the character. Tell students that great readers make inferences about what characters think, feel, and do. Tell them that detectives also make inferences to solve mysteries or crimes, based on clues that they find. Have students practice making inferences by acting out emotions and having students complete the sentence: "I can tell that _____ feels _____ because _____ (describe action)." Tell students that the story that they are about to listen to is a mystery. Tell them to listen for clues that Jigsaw uses to solve the mystery. What inferences does Jigsaw make? After listening to the story, challenge students to make their own inferences about the characters based on their actions.

After Listening Activities

1. Practice the comprehension strategy of sequencing with the children. Write the following sentences on sentence strips. Mix the sentence strips up, read them aloud with students, then have them rearrange the sentences in the correct order.
 1. Jigsaw and Ralphie went to the park to play with Rags.
 2. Rags disappeared.
 3. Jigsaw met Mr. Signorelli.
 4. Jigsaw found Rags' collar and a green thread.
 5. Jigsaw found the girl in the park who was wearing a green jacket.

As an extension, give students a worksheet with these same sentences. After doing the group activity, the students can cut out the sentences, paste them in the correct order, and draw pictures to match.

2. Return to the vocabulary list. Give each student seven 3x5 index cards, one for each word. Have the students write the words in large letters on one side of the card. On the other side of the card, have students draw an X to divide the card into four equal sections. In the top section, students should write the definition of the word (provided by the teacher or from the dictionary). In the right section, students should write 2 or more synonyms for the word (provided by the teacher or from a thesaurus). In the bottom section, students should draw a picture that represents the word's meaning. In the left section, students should write a sentence that contains the word. All of the students' vocabulary cards can be hole punched and kept on a "vocabulary ring" (a metal binder ring) or kept in a plastic bag.

3. Ask students the following comprehension questions: (can be administered as an assessment)
 - What holiday were the students discussing in Mrs. Gleason's class?
 - What clues led Jigsaw to Rags?
 - Why did Jigsaw invite Mr. Signorelli over for dinner?
 - How did Mila know that the girl with the green jacket wasn't telling the truth?
 - Where was Rags?
 - How did Jigsaw feel after losing Rags?
4. Have students create an "I am thankful for..." list, as Jigsaw and his classmates did. In order to extend this activity, students can create a mini-book in which they write a sentence on each page about someone or something they are thankful for. They should illustrate each page and present their books to their classmates. This activity can also be paired with the audio book, *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message*, from Weston Woods.

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