

Everything Awesome About Sharks and Other Underwater Creatures!

by Robert Kraus

Readers will discover a wealth of weird and wonderful facts about the oceans, sharks, and other sea creatures presented in Mike Lowery’s signature comic style with bright and energetic artwork. This will be a cherished book for curious readers and make them eager to know absolutely everything there is to know about sharks.

Create Successful Reading Habits

Recent research from the What Works Clearinghouse shows that readers need opportunities to explore a variety of information text structures.* These structures include **description, sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect, and compare and contrast**. Teacher- or student-created graphic organizers are effective in helping scaffold reader comprehension of text structure.

* U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, What Works Clearinghouse. (n.d.). Practice Guides. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuides>

SCIENCE OF READING – CONNECTING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

What is the Science of Reading?

The **science of reading** refers to the body of evidence that underlies what we know about how children learn to read. It stems from decades of research in educational and developmental psychology, linguistics, cognitive science, and neuroscience. It outlines:

- how reading develops
- what happens in the brains of students with reading difficulties
- the instructional strategies and content that should be taught to support this development

The **science of reading** is the knowledge that comprises all of these things.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT FLORIDA’S B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

The Florida B.E.S.T. ELA standards emphasize the point that comprehension is the most important goal of reading and reading instruction. Being able to identify and understand a variety of text structures, or organizational patterns, can greatly aid students in comprehending nonfiction texts (p. 174). One of these text structures is *description*. This is a structure where authors present information about a topic in sections, usually beginning with a central idea or text heading. Authors then elaborate on the topic with features, characteristics, or examples related to the topic.

Look for standards alignment in each section of this guide.

WORD WORK – PHONICS AND WORD ANALYSIS

Help your students read words that have both open and closed syllables. Remember that:

ELA.4.F.1.3: Use knowledge of grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills to decode words.

Decode Words with Open and Closed Syllables

Say to students, "Syllables are a word or part of a word pronounced as a unit and contain one vowel sound."

A **closed syllable**:

- ends with one or more consonants
- has a **short-vowel** sound that is spelled with one vowel letter

An **open syllable**:

- ends with a vowel
- has a **long-vowel** sound spelled with one vowel letter

Here is an example of how to identify words with open and closed syllables in this book:

con - **go** (p. 14)

o - **cean** (p. 14)

- Write the words *congo* and *ocean*.
- Say the word *congo* and have your students clap the syllables.
- Say, "How many syllables are there in *congo*?" (two)
- Ask your students to point to the vowel *o* in the syllable *con*.
- Say, "The consonant, *n*, after the *o* makes this a **closed syllable**, so the vowel does *not* sound like its name. It has a short-vowel sound."
- Ask students to point to the vowel *o* in the syllable *go*.
- Say, "This syllable ends with *o* and is not followed by a consonant. It is an **open syllable**, so the vowel sounds like its name, *o*. It has a long-vowel sound."
- Help your students read the whole word *ocean*.
- Repeat the steps for *ocean*:
 - The first syllable in *ocean* is the vowel *o*. Since it is not followed by a consonant, it is an **open syllable**, and the vowel sounds like its name. It has a long-vowel sound.
 - The vowels of the second syllable are followed by a consonant. It is a **closed syllable**, and the vowel does not sound like its name. It has a short-vowel sound.

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Students who need additional practice identifying syllable boundaries can benefit from clapping syllables, saying a written word aloud while clapping for each syllable. Repeating this process can help students gain more confidence in identifying syllable boundaries.

Remind students that every syllable contains one vowel sound. For consonant *-le*, the vowel is silent.

You can help your students identify more open syllables and closed syllables by selecting a few words throughout the book to practice with them. You may repeat words or point out new words.

TALK ABOUT NEW AND INTERESTING WORDS

When thinking about which words to select for explicit instruction, choose Tier Two words to help your students increase their vocabulary knowledge. These are high-frequency words that can be used across multiple texts and content areas and are spoken by more mature language users.

ELA.4.V.1.1: Use grade-level academic vocabulary appropriately in speaking and writing.

diffuse (p. 20): To **diffuse** is to make a substance or thing spread out thinly. Ocean water **diffuses** sunlight, making the ocean darker the deeper one goes.

degrade (p. 22): To **degrade** is to break something down into its parts. There are bacteria in the ocean that can **degrade** oil and maybe one day clean up oil spills.

translucent (p. 34): Something that is **translucent** allows light through it. Sharks have a **translucent** extra eyelid that allows them to see underwater and protects their eyes.

examine (p. 50): To **examine** something means to inspect or try to learn more about it. Sharks **examine** new objects with their mouths. Hopefully, that new object isn't someone's foot!

fragment (p. 100): A **fragment** is a tiny piece of something, especially something that has become broken or degraded. Unfortunately, fish eat the billions of plastic **fragments** in the oceans.

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Provide students with a Frayer Model graphic organizer. This organizer can be used to help students clarify the meaning of words they encountered in texts. The model is used to define target vocabulary and generate examples and nonexamples using synonyms, antonyms, and other characteristics of the word (through drawings and pictures) to demonstrate a deep understanding of the target words. The information is placed on a table divided into four sections to provide a visual representation through words and pictures of the target vocabulary.

Frayer Model

Definition

- If something is translucent, some light can pass through it.

Characteristics

- cloudy
- semi-clear
- partially visible

Translucent

Examples

- frosted glass on a shower door
- tinted Car Windows
- sunglasses
- wax paper
- stained glass window

Non-examples

- opaque objects, like a book, piece of fabric, metal, or wood
- transparent objects, like a window, glass cup, water, and clean air

READ FOR MEANING – SUMMARIZING DESCRIPTION

Comprehension of texts is a supremely important reading skill. With nonfiction texts, students can benefit from analyzing descriptions in order to summarize important ideas or topics. By scaffolding this description analysis and summarization, teachers can help students master this vital skill.

- **ELA.4.R.2.1: Explain how text features contribute to the meaning, and identify the text structures of problem/solution, sequence, and description in texts.**
- **ELA.4.R.3.2: Summarize a text to enhance comprehension.**
 - **b. Include the central idea and relevant details for an informational text.**
- **ELA.4.R.3.3: Compare and contrast accounts of the same event using primary and/or secondary sources.**

Before: Explanation

- Explain that nonfiction texts contain a lot of information, and the information is arranged in such a way as to help readers learn as much as possible about a particular topic. In this book, some examples include the descriptions of the eight “shark squads” on pages 41 – 61.

During: Summarizing

- Divide the students into groups. Assign each group to summarize, and describe one of the eight “squads.”
- Ask each student to individually record three to five key details that describe each squad. Be sure to remind them that each squad, or each shark group, will talk about particular shark species, but the students’ goal is to find the key details that describe the squad as a whole. Remind them that they are not working as partners yet.
- Monitor each student to check for understanding. If a student has trouble identifying three to five key details that describe the squad, refer them to the page that has the information about the shark squad.
- Have the students share their key details with their assigned group, and discuss the details they identified about their assigned shark squad.
- Ask them to summarize the key points their group shared about their shark squad.
- Once they have shared and summarized with their group, ask them to write a paragraph summarizing their squad. Tell them that the paragraphs should include the information they recorded from the text about their assigned squad.

After: Comparative Reading

- Give students some examples of other sea animals from the book that travel in groups (e.g., whale pods, fish schools, jellyfish swarms, etc.). Ask the students to select one group they want to study more about.
- Ask students to search the internet for articles, videos, etc. to learn more and refer to the section(s) of the text about the sea animal they chose.
- Ask them to cite two to four key details from the book and their search about the sea animal group that are similar to and different from the shark squads.

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Help students identify that the description at the beginning of each squad section (also labeled as a checklist) provides an overview of all sharks in that grouping. Students can use the sentence stem “All sharks in this squad ...” to begin recording facts for the whole grouping. They can also use the sentence stem “For example, the _____ shark ...” to provide details for a particular shark that supports the squad description.