Unit 2: Word Detectives Use All They Know to Solve Words

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **3 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

This is a unit that aims to tap into the power of play. At this critical time in the year, first graders are moving into reading texts with increased complexity and new words to solve at the turn of each page. This can feel like a monumental task, and the reality is, children will need to tackle these challenges with determination, grit, and hard work. What better way to rally them to take on this challenge then to turn to your students and say, "Let's play Word Detectives! You can all be word detectives and use everything you know to work hard and solve all the tricky words in your books!" Then watch with amazement as your students buy into those magical words and use the power of play to transform themselves into being the kind of readers they imagine they can be, all the while learning so much more about the process of reading.

In the first bend, children will take on the role of word detectives-in-training, learning that, like a detective, readers are always on alert for problems and trouble, and do something to solve them. The focus of this first bend is having students monitor their reading by locating difficult words, using what they know to try solving those words, and then checking their attempts before either trying again or moving on.

In the second bend, students are now ready to become full-fledged word detectives and which requires them to draw on their previous knowledge. The focus of this bend is on high-frequency words. Children will learn how to increase their bank of high-frequency words-and also to use the words they know to help solve unknown words.

Finally, in the third bend, you will focus on ways to use visual information effectively. Students will learn that word detectives look closely on words. This will require students to apply their phonics knowledge to solve words in continuous text, attending to blends and digraphs, common inflectional endings, syllable breaks, vowel combinations, common spelling patterns, contractions, and compound words. Throughout the bend, students will continue to work on fluency skills as well. The unit then culminates with the opportunity to orchestrate all that they have learned to put their word-solving skills to the test and solve a mystery as a class.

Standards

LA.RL.1.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

LA.RL.1.2	Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
LA.RL.1.3	Describe characters, settings, and major event(s) in a story, using key details.
LA.RL.1.4	Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.

Essential Questions

- How can I use all the strategies that I know in ways that let me understand and figure out words in the books that I read?
- How do I get better at using strategies to figure out hard and new words while I am reading? (Bend I)
- How can I use what I know about how letters and sounds work to solve tricky words in my books? (Bend II)
- What are ways I can reread my books to make my reading voice smoother, so that it sounds like talking? (Bend III)

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- Readers have many different ways to solve words using knowledge about letters, sounds, patterns and snap words to read (Bend II)
- Readers work hard to solve tricky words (Bend I)
- Rereading to make our reading sound like talking is an important skill to build fluency (Bend III)

Application of Skills: Students will be able to...

- choose just right books to work on print
- get their minds ready to read books
- make sure their reading makes sense
- read with increasing fluency
- use a variety of print strategies with flexibility

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from *Word Detectives: Strategies for Using High-Frequency Words and for Decoding, Grade 1* (Franco et al., 2016). The manual will serve as a loose framework for teachers who will add and/or emphasize based on their students' needs.

Teaching Points

- Word detectives are always on the lookout. They notice when there's a problem and stop to solve it right away.
- Word detectives look closely to get clues. Word detectives make sure to look closely across the whole word-from start to end.
- Word detectives use everything they know to solve problems.

- When word detectives think they know what a word might say, they do a s-l-o-w check to be sure. They say the word slowly as they slide their finger under the word. They check that all the parts look right.
- When word detectives see a word they know, they read it quickly! To do this, they read the word wall. Then, they can spot these words in their books and read them in a snap.
- Snap words are like pieces of a puzzle. Word detectives can use the clues they have and think about what makes sense and sounds right to fill in the missing word.
- Readers can solve the tricky words in their books by asking, "Does this remind me of another word I know?' They say the snap word they know, and then they use that word to read the word they don't know, the mystery word."
- Word detectives don't work to solve the same word over and over. Once word detectives have figured out a hard word, they work on ways to remember it. Then, when they see the word again, they can read it in a snap!
- Word detectives can clap out the parts of a word that they want to write, they can break up the parts of a word that they want to read. They can break the word apart, trying it in different ways until they find a word that makes sense and sounds right.
- Readers pay close attention to the beginning of a word. They especially look closely to see if there are any letters that go together.
- When word detectives see that a big word has an ending they know, they can break the ending off to figure out the part that is left over. Then, they can put the parts back together to read the whole word in a way that makes sense and sounds right.
- Word detectives don't let vowels trip them up. They remember to look closely at the vowels inside words, noticing when two vowels are side by side. Then, they try the word one way and then another until it makes sense and sounds right.
- Readers can use parts of words you know to help you figure out new words. When you come to a tricky word, stop and think, "Does part of this look like a word I know?" Read or say the word you know, then go back to the tricky word to figure out the part that is the same.
- Word detectives watch out for unusual words in their books. They notice when words they know are a part of words they don't know, like in contractions.
- After readers have read once to fix up the tricky words, they can reread to make their reading sound smooth. You read, fix it, and then read again, putting it all back together.
- Word detectives use everything they know to show off their skills. They notice a problem, solve it, check it, and reread to make it smooth.

Activities to Support Teaching Points

- Create and refer to anchor charts.
- Study pages from exemplar reader's notebooks.
- Provide and present mentor texts as models.
- Teach the *Work of Readers* Charts.
- Teach children strategies for holding onto text. For example, use Post-its and graphic organizers.
- Model (Talk Aloud) the strategies good readers use.
- Model, provide, and use a reader's notebook.
- Tap, sketch, or jot across a story as a way of retaining information and details.
- Study book introductions and endings.
- Practice creating mental movies as you read.
- Investigate figurative language and descriptive vocabulary and how authors use them.

- Turn and Talk the dialogue in a story to bring the characters' feelings alive.
- Set mini-reading goals for engagement, print work, fluency, comprehension, and/or conversation.
- Provide checklists and reading progressions to assess and develop on-going reading goals.
- Scaffold skills with strategies. For example, use Post-its to identify key elements of a chapter.
- Write long about reading.
- Practice alternating the speed a text is read to reflect tone and mood.
- Plan to celebrate the conclusion of classroom reading projects.
- Use technology in the reading classroom; for example, use digital journals.

Assessments

Assessment in this unit takes three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. There are downloadable, digital versions of the assessment tools available through the online resources at; www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources. Teachers may also develop their own rubrics and assessments in order to include more specific elements of knowledge and skills listed in this unit summary.

Student self-assessment and peer assessment should take place whenever possible--again, in all three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. Removing the traditional emphasis on teacher assessment enables students to take more initiative and become self-directed.

On-going teacher assessment will take place in the context of a conference. Conferences, both small group and one-to-one conferring, are used to reinforce expectations, provide advice and/or assistance, and ultimately, to support growth.

Diagnostic Assessments

Running Records

www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/running-records

Spelling Inventory

www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/spelling-assessments

Individual beginning of the year "How's It Going?" conferences

Formative Assessments

Teacher-student conferences including: individual, small group, strategy group, and guided reading

Daily observation of students' participation during the active engagement segment of each mini-lesson.

Students' conversation with partners during Turn and Talk segment of mini-lessons.

Reading logs, Reader's Notebooks, Writing About Reading evidence (Post-its, journal entries, writing long about reading, for example)

Summative Assessment

Teacher-student conferences

Running Records

Spelling Assessments

Reading logs, Reader's Notebooks, and other evidence of students improving skills

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

The design of reading workshop allows for individualized instruction and independent growth for every child. At the heart of differentiation in Reader's Workshop is data and the analysis of data. Through the usage of monitoring student progress during independent reading, analysis of formal and informal running records, and other assessments such as high-frequency word lists and spelling inventories, teachers should be able to delineate which students are in need of additional supports, in what areas those supports should be targeted at, and which students are ready to be pushed further in their reading work.

Some methods to use to support struggling readers as well as advanced readers:

- Provide leveled books appropriate for all reading levels
- Provide support as needed through conferencing
- Provide support as needed through strategy groups
- Provide support as needed through guided reading groups
- Provide modified and/or alternate grade level checklists and rubrics to scaffold or stretch learning
- Scaffold or stretch learning through the use of various strategies
- Provide appropriate reading partners
- Utilize charts to provide a visual reminder for students throughout the mini-lesson.
    - Add drawings and visuals to charts
    - Provide individualized copies of teaching charts
    - Depending on the concept, the chart may be most effective to visually break the concept into parts and touch each part during a demonstration
- For students needing more support at the end of the mini-lesson, keep them at the rug for an extra minute after dispersing the rest of the class and clarify the main topic of the mini-lesson or work one-on-one with them to start their reading
- Set reading goals for students and follow-up with the reading goals after an appropriate amount of time.
- Create group and one-on-one conferencing calendars to ensure that students are being met with on a regular basis and working toward individualized goals
- As the unit progresses, the teacher, in coordination with the students, will develop a word wall that will highlight vocabulary specific to the topic chosen
- Assign roles to partners (Partner 1/Partner 2) to help scaffold which student should speak first and avoid one partner dominating the conversation and the other partner becoming a passive listener
    - For ELL students, creating a triad instead of partnership may be beneficial
- Provide students access to RAZ Kids which will provide students more reading options for leveled texts, access to technology, and the ability to have books read to them while they follow along or for students to record their reading

Supports for ELL students:

- Provide consistent teaching structures
- Use consistent teaching language
- Offer plentiful opportunities for reading practice
- Provide access to a broad variety of texts
- Use assessment to provide extra support
- Support students in the preproduction and early production stages of learning English
- Use visual examples in your teaching
- Modify our mini-lessons to be as concise as possible
- Provide extra ?active engagement? time in mini-lessons for extra practice

- Provide readers with topic-based text sets
- Provide opportunities for listening and learning the social language of the reading workshop
- Provide opportunities to read in both their home language and in English
- Plan instruction with the ELL teacher
- Extend the language ELLs are producing through questioning
- Provide explicit instruction in tenses, pronoun references, and connectives
- Support students in building vocabulary using their own reading as the context
- As the unit progresses, the teacher, in coordination with the students, will develop a word wall that will highlight vocabulary specific to the topic chosen

In order to support this differentiation work, teachers may want to consult the following materials:

- Units of Study books at lower or higher levels for teaching strategies that are appropriate to the support needed.
- The Reading Strategies Book by Jennifer Serravallo
- If. . . Then. .. Curriculum book for alternate units or teaching points to support the individual reading levels.
- A Guide to the Reading Workshop (Primary Grades) chapter 14 for more in-depth information on differentiation

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Writing Workshop

- apply language and ideas from read alouds and independent reading
- utilize read alouds and independent reading as mentor texts
- apply spelling strategies
- identify areas of spelling needs
- apply grammar skills
- identify areas in need of addressing (spelling, grammar, mechanics)
- expand written vocabulary from read alouds and independent reading
- model sentence and paragraph structure after mentor texts

Content Areas: Science, Social Studies, Health

- read just right books in the content areas
- use mentor texts to deliver Social Studies content
- compare content area ideas and issues to what our characters deal with in our read alouds and mentor texts
- apply reading skills and strategies to the reading we do in the content areas

Study Skills

- use graphic organizers to support reading
- use checklists and rubrics to monitor progress
- use Venn diagrams and t-charts to gather, compare, and contrast events
- use highlighters, note cards, post-its, and other tools to keep track of story events, details, and ideas
- keep a log and notebook

The Arts

- analyze illustrations in books for details
- compare illustrations to other forms of art
- illustrate a passage that was just read to show details, ideas, and lessons
- act out a scene from a book to better visualize how a character feels

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Read aloud mentor texts may include –

Ruthie and the Not so Teeny Tiny Lie by Laura Rankin

My Mouth is a Volcano! By Carrie Hartman

Willow's Whispers by Lana Button

Ribbit by Rodrigo Falgueira

Ruby the Copycat by Peggy Rathmann

The Recess Queen by Alexis O'Neil

How Rocket Learned to Read

Shared reading suggestion –

Walking in Spring by Beverly Randall

The Gingerbread Man by Brenda Parkes

Resources

Units of Study for Teaching Reading:

- *Building Good Reading Habits;* Lucy Calkins and Elizabeth Dunford Franco
- *Learning About the World, Reading Nonfiction*; Lucy Calkins and Amanda Hartman
- *Readers Have Big Jobs to Do, Fluency, Phonics, and Comprehension;* Lucy Calkins, Elizabeth Dunford Franco, Havilah Jespersen, Lindsay Barton
- *Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons, A Study of Story Elements;* Lucy Calkins and Elizabeth Dunford Franco
- *A Guide to the Reading Workshop,Primary Grades*; Lucy Calkins
- *Reading Pathways, Grades K-2, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*; Lucy Calkins
- *If...Then... Curriculum: Assessment-Based Instruction, Grades K-2*; Lucy Calkins; Julia Mooney; and Colleagues From the TCRWP
- *Online Resources for Teaching Writing*; Lucy Calkins
- website: www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources

The Art of Teaching Reading; Lucy Calkins

The Reading Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Readers; Jennifer Serravallo

Leveled Books, K-8: Matching Texts to Readers for Effective Teaching; Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Reading Miscue Inventory: From Evaluation to Instruction; Yetta M. Goodman

Miscue Analysis Made Easy: Building on Student Strengths; Sandra Wilde

Around the Reading Workshop in 180 Days; Frank Serafini

The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child; Donalyn Miller

Mindsets and Moves: Strategies That Help Readers Take Charge; Gravity Goldberg

Smarter Charts; Marjorie Martinelli

Genre Study: Teaching with Fiction and Nonfiction Books; I.C. Fountas and G.S. Pinnell

Guided Reading, Good First Teaching for All Children; I.C. Fountas and G.S. Pinnell

21st Century Skills

CAEP.9.2.4.A.4	Explain why knowledge and skills acquired in the elementary grades lay the foundation for future academic and career success.