

TEACHER READING GUIDE

Harlem Grown: How One Big Idea Transformed a Neighborhood

written by Tony Hillery
illustrated by Jesse Hartland

Essential Question: How does the author’s use of descriptive words add meaning to the text?

BOOK SNAPSHOT

Selected from the New Worlds Reading Initiative Booklist

Text Type: Literary

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes/Topics: Community Involvement, Nutrition

Lexile: AD540L

SKILLS ALIGNED WITH FLORIDA’S ELA B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

Word Work **ELA.1.F.1.3 (b)**
Decode words with r-controlled vowels.

Vocabulary **ELA.1.V.1.1**
Use grade-level academic vocabulary. (Tier 2)

Comprehension **ELA.1.R.3.1**
Identify and explain descriptive words and phrases.

STUDENT LEARNING TARGETS

Today I am:
identifying and explaining descriptive words and phrases.

So that I can:
better understand the meaning of the story.

BUILDING BACKGROUND

- *Harlem Grown: How One Big Idea Transformed a Neighborhood* is a true story written by Tony Hillery, a volunteer at a public school in Harlem who recognized students needed access to healthy foods.
- In 2011, Tony Hillery created a farm in the middle of one of the largest cities in the world, New York City, which still exists today.
- Display p. 2 to help students understand how unusual it is to build a farm in the middle of New York City.
 - There are no green spaces.
 - Buildings are close together.
 - There are sidewalks and concrete.

WORD WORK – DECODING R-CONTROLLED VOWELS

ELA.1.F.1.3: Use knowledge of grade-appropriate phonics and word-analysis skills to decode words accurately.

b. Decode simple words with *r*-controlled vowels.

Students will decode words with ***r*-controlled vowels**. An *r*-controlled vowel contains a vowel followed by the letter *r*. The vowel-*r* combination cannot be segmented and makes a single sound.

- The *r*-controlled vowels /**er**/, /**ir**/, and /**ur**/ are pronounced with the same single sound as in **bird**, **fern**, and **turn**, with a few exceptions, like when a word starts with /**ir**/ as in **irritate**.
- The *r*-controlled vowel /**or**/ is pronounced with its own single sound, like in **corn**.
- The *r*-controlled vowel /**ar**/ is pronounced with its own single sound, like in **smart**.

Say:

- “Today, you will decode words with *r*-controlled vowels. An ***r*-controlled vowel** is made up of a vowel followed by the letter *r*.” Review letter combinations and their sounds for *r*-controlled vowels.
- Display the word *car*. “The word is *car*.”
- “The *c* makes the /**k**/ sound, and *a-r* makes the /**ar**/ sound, like in the word *car*.”
- Repeat after me: /**k**/ /**ar**/.” Point to the corresponding grapheme as you say each phoneme.
- “Blend the sounds together to read the word *car*.”

Decode words with *r*-controlled vowels from *Harlem Grown: How One Big Idea Transformed a Neighborhood*:

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| York (p. 3) | Harlem (p. 3) | garden (p. 5) |
| her (p. 17) | for (p. 19) | farm (p. 29) |

TALK ABOUT NEW AND INTERESTING WORDS

Tier 2 vocabulary words, paired with student-friendly definitions, can be used for explicit vocabulary instruction. It is important to provide background information and learning opportunities to help students make connections to the words.

Examples of Tier 2 vocabulary words for this text are:



bustling (p. 3): A place that is **bustling** is full of people who are very busy and active. Harlem is a **bustling** neighborhood in New York City.



wrecked (p. 5): If something is **wrecked**, it is broken or smashed. The couches in the garden were **wrecked**.



cluttered (p. 5): **Cluttered** describes something filled with things or people in a messy way. The garden was **cluttered** with broken bottles and empty cans.



tended (p. 26): If you **tend** to something or someone, you take care of them. The neighborhood kids **tended** their plants, which helped their fruits and vegetables grow.

Vocabulary Extension Activity

Use target vocabulary to teach word relationships and aid students in making connections between words and their synonyms. Refer to p. 205 of Florida’s ELA B.E.S.T. Standards for additional information about word relationships.

- Example Synonyms:
 - Bustling: rushing, dashing, scrambling
 - Wrecked: destroyed, ruined, damaged

ELA.1.V.1.1: Use grade-level academic vocabulary appropriately in speaking and writing.

ELA.1.R.3.1: Identify and explain descriptive words and phrases in text(s).

- **Clarification 1: Continue to expose students to the academic vocabulary word “adjective.” Discussion should focus on how the descriptive words add meaning to the text.**



Before:

Students will identify **descriptive words** in *Harlem Grown: How One Big Idea Transformed a Neighborhood*, and explain how they add meaning to the text. The author uses **adjectives** to make the story more interesting and help students imagine the story in their minds. **Adjectives** are words that describe people, animals, places, and things.



During:

Students will identify adjectives describing the lot at the beginning of the story and how it change through the end. Use the suggested prompts to guide your discussion:

- What do you see?
- How does it feel?
- What do you hear?

Beginning:

Setting: **bustling** neighborhood (p. 2 – 3)

Model: The author describes the setting as a bustling neighborhood. Model a think aloud to explain how the adjective **bustling** describes the neighborhood.

- What do you see? (*bright lights, buildings, people walking, airplanes*)
- How does it feel? (*crowded, comfortable, active*)
- What do you hear? (*airplane engines, car horns, children playing*)

How does what we see, hear, and feel in a **bustling** neighborhood describe being busy or being active?

- When I think of bright lights, people walking, crowded streets, and car horns, it helps me visualize what a **bustling**, busy neighborhood might look like.

Guided Practice: p. 3 – 5: Guide students to use their senses to visualize how the lot is described in the beginning of the story. Use the suggested prompts above to facilitate the discussion.

Suggested adjectives:

- **empty** lot (p. 3); **haunted** garden (p. 5); **cluttered** lot (p. 5); **wrecked** couches (p. 5)
 - Discuss adjectives that describe the condition of the lot.
 - How are the meanings of the words **cluttered** and **wrecked** alike? How are they different?
 - How do these adjectives help you understand the story?

Middle:

Using p. 12 – 22, students will collaborate with a partner to visualize and discuss how the lot is described in the middle of the story. Use the suggested prompts to facilitate the discussion.

- **clean** slate (p. 12); **blank** canvas (p. 13); **wilted** plant (p. 21); **raised** beds (p. 22)
 - Discuss the adjectives the author uses to describe the condition of the lot.
 - How are the meanings of the words **clean** and **blank** alike? How are they different?
 - How do these adjectives help you understand the story?



After:

End: Using p. 28 – 29, engage students in a discussion about how the lot change from the beginning of the story to the end of the story.

- How do the descriptive words contribute to the meaning of the story?

Writing Activity:

- On chart paper, brainstorm a list of adjectives to describe the farm on p. 28 – 29.
- Compare the brainstormed adjectives to the author’s adjectives used in the beginning of the story. (*empty, haunted, and cluttered*)
 - How are the brainstormed adjectives different from the adjectives used in the beginning of the story?
 - How do the adjectives help readers understand how the lot has changes from the beginning to the end of the story?
- Students will select an adjective from the list and complete the sentence stem: “The kids in Harlem grow a _____ farm.” Model forming a complete sentence.
- Students will create an illustration to accompany their sentence.
- Circulate while students are working to discuss how their adjective adds to their understanding of the text.