

Ugly Cat and Pablo

by Isabel Quintero

Ugly Cat is craving a paleta, or ice pop. His friend, Pablo the Mouse, is determined to help him get one by scaring a little girl who is enjoying a coconut paleta to drop it. Things go horribly wrong when, instead of being scared, the little girl picks Pablo up and declares that he would make a great snack for her pet snake. Oh, and there's also the small problem that Ugly Cat may have inadvertently swallowed Pablo in all of the commotion!

Create Successful Reading Habits

Ensure that each student reads connected text everyday to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. When students read connected text accurately, they are required to:

- identify words quickly
- integrate ideas in the text with their background knowledge
- self-monitor their understanding
- apply strategies to support comprehension and repair misunderstandings

Current research from the What Works Clearinghouse shows that having students read connected text (multiple related sentences) daily, both with and without constructive feedback, facilitates the development of reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension and should begin as soon as students can identify a few words.* Students should interact with a variety of connected texts, including texts of varied levels, diverse genres, and wide-ranging content. Students should read both informational and narrative text, beginning in the early grades.

* 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

Reading is a Complex Task

Research has shown that fluent reading involves a set of skills and processes so complex that it is awe-inspiring.* Fluent reading comprises numerous subskills and requires the brain to perform multiple tasks simultaneously and automatically. These subskills and tasks must be automatic and applied with a high degree of accuracy for a reader to gain meaning from the text.

Think about the hierarchy of skills that develops when students are learning to read:

- First, it is important for students to develop phonemic awareness, which is the conscious awareness of the individual sounds in language. The students then need to know the letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds.
- After developing phonemic awareness and basic letter knowledge, they can use this knowledge to begin to decode. This is called the alphabetic principle, which is the understanding that letters make sounds, and sounds go together to make words.
- Through explicit and systematic instruction paired with repeated practice, students' decoding becomes more automatic.
- Once students can decode words without much cognitive load, this leads to fluent reading.
- With sufficient practice, reading (decoding) becomes automatic.

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

The ELA foundational standards are built on the following premises:

- English Language Arts is not a discrete set of skills but a rich discipline with meaningful, significant content, the knowledge of which helps all students actively and fully participate in our society.
- The standards are clear and concise, so they are easily understood by every stakeholder.
- The texts students read are meaningful and thought-provoking, preparing them to be informed, civic-minded members of their community.
- Standards should not stand alone as a separate focus for instruction but should be combined purposefully.

Look for standards alignment in each section of this guide.

WORD WORK – WORD ANALYSIS

When your students read longer words, help them look for and identify **base words**, **prefixes**, and **suffixes**. Guide students in identifying word parts to decode longer words, and then, blend the parts to read the whole word fluently.

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

When students try to decode longer words, they can use word analysis to help them break apart the word. Guide students in identifying **base words**, **prefixes**, and **suffixes**.

- **Base words** are single words that cannot be broken into smaller word parts and still have meaning, like the word *friend*.
- A **prefix** is a word part that is added to the beginning of a base word, like *un* in the word *unfriendly*. **Prefixes** have meaning and will change the meaning of the base word when added.
- A **suffix** is a word part that is added to the end of a base word, like *ly* in the word *friendly*. **Suffixes** have meaning and will change the meaning of the base word when added.

Here is an example of how to identify **base words**, **prefixes**, and **suffixes** using the following words from the book.

suddenly (p. 2) disbelief (p. 61) uncomfortable (p. 8)

- Point to the word *suddenly*. Say the word, and ask the student to repeat it.
- Cover the suffix, *ly* with your finger and say, "What is the base word in *suddenly*?" (*sudden*)
- Then, say, "Point to the suffix in *suddenly*." (*ly*)
- Say, "Now run your finger under the whole word, and read the word parts together."
- Repeat the steps for the words *disbelief* and *uncomfortable*.
 - The base word in *disbelief* is *belief*, and the prefix is *dis*.
 - The base word in *uncomfortable* is *comfort*. The prefix is *un*, and the suffix is *able*.

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Explicitly teach the terms **prefix**, **suffix**, and **base** word to students. Then, create many opportunities for students to apply this knowledge to unknown words they encounter. Use pocket charts and word strips or index cards with prefixes, suffixes, and base words written on them to guide students in manipulating and blending the word parts.

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. 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.

glorious (p. 1, p. 10): If you describe something as **glorious**, you are saying that it is wonderful, and it makes you very happy. Pablo is happy because he has a **glorious** idea.

clutching (p. 3): When you **clutch** something, you hold it very tightly. Pablo **clutches** his stomach when he is scared.

bounded (p. 4): If something or someone **bounds**, they move quickly with large leaps. Pablo **bounds** up the steps to meet Ugly Cat.

tactic (p. 11): **Tactic** describes a method that you use to get what you want. Pablo and Ugly Cat think of a **tactic** to get ice cream at the park.

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Talk with students about Tier One synonyms for the Tier Two words you've chosen to teach explicitly. Also, encourage ELL students to think of a word or word phrase in their native language that corresponds to the meaning of the word in English.

Example: bounded – Tier One synonyms (jumped, leaped, bounced).

READ FOR MEANING – UNDERSTANDING AND USING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Help your students understand figurative language. Reading literary text provides an opportunity for students to encounter figurative language and to practice using this language in their own writing. Through the knowledge and application of **figurative language**, students can engage in complex texts where the writer uses these literary devices to communicate vivid and clear messages for the reader.

- **ELA.4.R.1.1:** Explain how setting, events, conflict, and character development contribute to the plot in a literary text.
- **ELA.4.R.3.1:** Explain how figurative language contributes to meaning in text(s).
- **ELA.4.C.1.2:** Write personal or fictional narratives using a logical sequence of events and demonstrating an effective use of techniques such as descriptions and transitional words and phrases.

Before: Introduction

- Introduce the story, *Ugly Cat and Pablo*, as a **fictional narrative** telling the students that a **fictional narrative** is a story that is written from the author’s imagination.
- Tell students that while reading this story, they will look for **figurative language** to discuss and write in their notebooks. **Figurative language** refers to words or phrases that are meaningful, but not literally true. These words and phrases are called **figures of speech**.
- Share with the students two types of figurative language: hyperbole and idiom.
 - **Hyperbole** – Exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally
 - **Idiom** – An expression that cannot be understood from the meanings of its separate words but must be learned as a whole

During: Using Figurative Language in a Fictional Narrative

- Read each chapter of the book with students while creating an anchor chart on the elements of **fictional narrative**:
 - Character
 - Setting
 - Events
 - Conflict
 - Resolution

Setting: When: Where:			
↓			
Major Characters: Minor Characters:			
↓			
Conflict:			
↓			
<table border="1"><tr><td>Event 1:</td><td>Event 2:</td><td>Event 3:</td></tr></table>	Event 1:	Event 2:	Event 3:
Event 1:	Event 2:	Event 3:	
↓			
Resolution:			

READ FOR MEANING – UNDERSTANDING AND USING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

- While reading, also point out and explain the author’s use of figurative language to tell the story of *Ugly Cat and Pablo*.
- Have the student write words and phrases in their notebooks, and label them with the type of figurative language that is used.
- Below are examples of words and phrases from Chapter 1:
 - “Oh, mi barriguita!” he said, clutching his stomach. “ **I almost lost my lasagna!**” (p. 3) **Hyperbole**
 - He jumped up and began **striking poses**. (p. 9) **Idiom**
 - “There’ll be all sorts of **people stuffing their faces!**” (p. 10) **Hyperbole**
 - With that, the two friends **took off** straight to el parque **faster than their friend Eric the weasel after a chicken**. (p. 13) **Idiom** and **Hyperbole**
- Continue to read each chapter, and identify elements of fictional narrative on the anchor chart. Have students make note of the figurative language used by the author.

After: Using Figurative Language

- Review the two types of **figurative language** covered in this activity, and have students share and explain to a partner some of the words and phrases they wrote down in their notebook for each example (hyperbole and idiom).
- Discuss with students how the author, Isabel Quintero, uses figurative language to tell the story of *Ugly Cat and Pablo*, a **fictional narrative** about two friends who go on an adventure to find tasty treats.
- Have the students write a **fictional narrative** about two friends who go on an adventure together, including the two types of **figurative language** they learned about in the story to communicate vivid and clear messages for the reader.

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Give students a partially filled anchor chart as a model of each element in a **fictional narrative** as it relates to the story of *Ugly Cat and Pablo*. Provide to students the **Elementary Figurative Language** chart on page 175 of the ELA B.E.S.T. Standards with the two types of figurative language highlighted and pictures for each example given in the chart. Also, provide pictures for the examples noted from each chapter.