

TEACHER READING GUIDE

**Animals to the
Rescue!: Balto**

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illustrated by Francesca Rosa

This is book #1
in the **Animals to
the Rescue!** series



Essential Question: How does identifying and explaining personification help the reader understand the text?

BOOK SNAPSHOT

Selected from the New Worlds
Reading Initiative Booklist

Text Type: Literary

Genre: Historical Fiction

Themes/Topics: Animals,
Perseverance, Bravery

Lexile: 820L

**SKILLS ALIGNED WITH FLORIDA'S ELA
B.E.S.T. STANDARDS**

Word Work

ELA.4.F.1.3 (a)

Decode multisyllabic words with open, closed, and consonant *le* syllables. (-ble)

Vocabulary

ELA.4.V.1.1

Use grade-level academic vocabulary. (Tier 2)

Comprehension

ELA.4.R.3.1

Explain how figurative language contributes to meaning in text.

BUILDING BACKGROUND

- The Nome Serum Run in *Balto* took place in the 1920s. Present students with images of the inventions that existed then:
 - A 1920s airplane
 - A 1920s automobile
 - A telegraph
- Ask for students' predictions to explain why the people of Nome needed to use sled dogs for the journey despite the availability of the inventions during that time.
- As you read *Balto*, guide students in understanding why the trip needed to be done by sled dog.

STUDENT LEARNING TARGETS

Today I am:
identifying
personification.

So that I can:
explain how
personification
contributes to the
meaning of the text.

WORD WORK – DECODE MULTISYLLABIC WORDS USING SYLLABLE PATTERNS

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

- a. Apply knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology to read and write unfamiliar single-syllable and multisyllabic words in and out of context.

Students will decode multisyllabic words using **syllabication**. **Syllabication** is the division of words into **syllables**. A **syllable** is a part of a word with just one vowel sound. There are six common syllable patterns. This lesson will focus on:

Closed syllables	Open syllables	Final stable syllables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ends with one or more consonants has a short-vowel sound spelled with one vowel letter Ex: <i>at, fun, stop, dump</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ends with a vowel usually has a long-vowel sound spelled with one vowel letter Ex: <i>go, she, hi</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ending syllable that has a consonant plus a reliable unit like <i>-le, -sion, -ture, -tion</i> Ex: <i>apple, picture, addition</i>

Below is an example of how to decode words with these syllable types:

bub - ble

Write *bubble* on the board and say:

- “This word is *bubble*. How many syllables are in *bubble*?”
- “There are two syllables. *Bub - ble*.” Write *bub - ble* on the board with a hyphen separating each syllable.
- Point to *bub*. “This syllable ends with a consonant, *b*, which makes it a closed syllable. In a closed syllable, the vowel *u* makes the short vowel sound /*ŭ*/. The syllable is pronounced /*bŭb*/.”
- Point to *-ble*. “This syllable is always pronounced /*bəl*/. Repeat after me. /*bəl*/.”
- “Now, blend the syllables together. /*bŭb* / *bəl*/. *Bubble*.” Run your finger under the word as you blend.

Continue decoding words with open, closed, and final stable syllable patterns using words from the book:

able (p. 21)

stumbled (p. 44)

tumbled (p. 64)

mumbled (p. 75)

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:

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

ELA.4.C.1.1: Demonstrate legible cursive writing skills.



scrambled (p. 14): If something or someone **scrambles** over an area, they quickly climb or crawl using their hands or paws to help them. Togo **scrambled** back onto the slippery ice to pull the floe closer to the shore.



sturdy (p. 34): **Sturdy** describes something or someone that looks strong and unlikely to be injured or damaged. Gunnar looked at the steady, big, and powerful dog, Balto, and knew he would be a **sturdy** lead dog.



plunge (p. 33): When something or someone **plunges** somewhere, they fall or rush suddenly. One misstep by Balto and the entire team could **plunge** off the cliffs to the ocean below.



precious (p. 40): When something or someone is **precious**, they are valuable and should be protected. To help the people of Nome, Dr. Beeson carefully packed the **precious** crate of diphtheria serums.

Vocabulary Extension Activity

- Make connections with the target words to reinforce students' understanding of the vocabulary. Model how to make a connection using the target vocabulary word.
 - For example, “Gold is a **precious** resource. What are some other **precious** resources?”

READ FOR MEANING – FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

ELA.4.R.3.1: Explain how figurative language contributes to meaning in text(s).

- **Clarification 1:** Figurative language for the purposes of this benchmark refers to metaphor, simile, alliteration, personification, hyperbole, and idiom. Other examples can be used in instruction.



Before:

The purpose of this read aloud is to explain how

personification contributes to the meaning of the text.

Personification is a type of figurative language where an author gives a non-human object human traits.

- Example: I feel chilled by the wind's icy fingers.
- Provide an example and a non-example to review **personification**.
 - Personification example: The wind whispered through the trees.
 - Non-example: Amy whispered to her puppy.
- Guide students in determining which sentence is an example of personification.
- Ask students to explain why the other sentence is not an example of personification.

Try This!

Discuss other types of figurative language in *Balto* and their contribution to meaning in the text. Refer to p. 175 in Florida's ELA B.E.S.T. Standards for a list of elementary figurative language.



During:

As you read *Balto*, recreate the graphic organizer below to explain how personification contributes to the meaning of the text.

Personification: "But danger waited below its surface." (p. 43)			
<u>Non-Human Objects</u>	<u>Human Qualities</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Purpose in the Story</u>
danger	wait	If the frozen river's surface breaks, the team would end up freezing to death.	It emphasizes how dangerous the trip was.

- **I Do:** Think aloud to explain the contribution of personification to the text.
 - On p. 43, read, "But danger waited below its surface." Say to students:
 - "I know danger cannot literally wait. Danger is not human, and saying it can wait gives it a human quality."
 - "The personification means if the frozen river's surface breaks, the team would be in danger of freezing to death."
 - "This emphasizes how dangerous the trip was and what the team had to persevere through to save the children of Nome."
- **We Do:** Guide students in identifying and explaining the meaning and purpose of **personification** on p. 49 - 58.
 - Examples:
 - "It heaved and split and groaned and cracked." (p. 49 - 50)
 - "Outside in the howling blizzard, the cold bit through Gunnar's fur parka." (p. 53)
 - "The other dogs howled behind them, competing with the shriek of the wind." (p. 54)
 - "Above them, the mountain thrust its craggy face into the storm." (p. 57 - 58)

READ FOR MEANING – FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE



- Guiding Questions:
 - “What non-human object is given human qualities?”
 - “What human quality is it given?”
 - “What does the personification mean?”
 - “What purpose does the personification have in the text?”



After:

- **You Do:** Students will reread p. 59 and p. 63. Instruct students to recreate the graphic organizer to identify and explain the meaning and purpose of the personification.
 - “He couldn’t trust his own judgment, and the dogs couldn’t hear him over the howling wind anyway.” (p. 59)
 - “There was only the darkness and screaming winds and numbing fingers and creeping, punishing cold.” (p. 63)
- Review the graphic organizers with students. Discuss the overall purpose of the personifications in *Balto*. (Identified purposes may vary but include: The personifications helped to describe extreme weather conditions.)