

Books for Young Learners Teacher Resource

Book Notes

**A Family of Beavers**

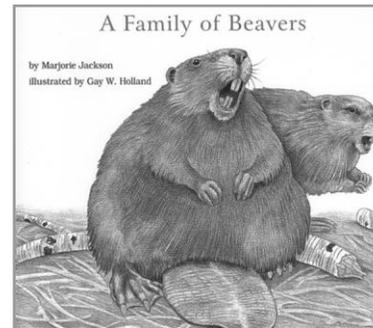
Author Marjorie Jackson

Illustrator Gay W. Holland

12 pages ■ 141 words

Fountas and Pinnell Level J

Reading Recovery Level 15



A Family of Beavers

SYNOPSIS

A family of beavers builds and enjoys a new home.

WHAT THE BOOK OFFERS

- Nonfiction expository
- Third person
- Past tense
- Detailed descriptive writing
- Range of structures, some longer sentences
- Extensive notes on inside front cover
- Clear but detailed illustrations

POSSIBLE SKILLS EMPHASIS

- Gathering information from text and illustrations
- Making inferences
- Prioritizing to summarize
- Understanding how illustrations reflect and extend the text
- Understanding the functions of captions

INTRODUCING THE BOOK

- Establish what the group knows about beavers. Determine the probable focus of the book from the cover illustration; predict the writing form and what that will mean for reading pace and style. Remind students that illustrations can sometimes carry more or different information than the text, so they will need to attend carefully to both.
- Discuss the first page as the purpose-setting question or focus for the reading. Compare its brevity with what they will read on subsequent pages and discuss how it serves as an introduction.

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A Family of Beavers (continued)

FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION

- Pause frequently to encourage students to discuss or note the new information and to identify which has been from the text and which through the illustrations.

Which new information is most important? Which is the hook that other information can hang on? So, which facts do you think you will need to remember?

Does this illustration match the text, or how does it extend the text?

- The extra information could be noted on self-stick notes attached to the page. In some situations, this activity might be more suitable after the initial reading.
- If students are reading word by word or breaking the text into chunks that reflect a lack of comprehension, encourage them to read the text in their heads first.

Read the page to yourself. Look for the natural break. Which words go together? Which word cannot stand alone? Which words tell about the same thing? Look for the words that tell where and read those together. .

FOLLOWING THE READING

- Discuss the kind of information gathered from the text and compare it with that gleaned from the illustrations. Ask the students to identify the most important facts and to include these in a two-sentence or three-sentence summary of the book followed by a concluding statement about their impression of the book.
- The clear illustrations provide opportunities to discuss the function of captions. The information gained from the pictures could be summarized and written as captions on self-stick notes or as an appendix to the book. Or, the discussion could focus on the role of the illustrator in supporting the author and helping the reader access the author's information.

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A Family of Beavers (continued)

Additional Comprehension Prompts For Oral or Written Use Before, During, and After Reading	
FINISH THIS THOUGHT	<i>If I were a beaver, I would . . . Beaver tails are . . . and beaver teeth are . . .</i>
USE YOUR MEMORY	<i>What are baby beavers called? Where does it tell you in the book? Why do grownup beavers slap the water with their flat tails?</i>
WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?	<i>On page 10, a fox is walking into the water. What do you think the fox is thinking? What other animals might be a danger to beavers? Why do you think beavers put doorways to their lodge under the water?</i>
BE CREATIVE	<i>Pretend that beavers didn't have any teeth. Design a beaver lodge that is in the water, but made out of the following things: *pine needles *rocks *shells *car tires *old coins *marbles *soda cans Use your imagination! Don't forget doorways so they can get in and out. Help the beavers . . .</i>
VOCABULARY AGENT	<i>Read the information in the Nonfiction Note box on the inside front cover to learn cool facts about beavers. Look up these words in the dictionary or on Wikipedia and write down the definition of each: *rodent *environment *provide *havens *colony *lodge *gnaw</i>

Book Note by Margaret E. Mooney

Additional Comprehension Prompts by Dr. Connie Hebert

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