

Lesson 4: Reading Informational Texts: Asking and Answering Questions about Frogs



CCS Standards

- **RI.3.1:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **RI.3.4:** Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.
- **RI.3.5:** Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
- **RI.3.10:** By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **W.3.7:** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
- **W.3.8:** Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
- **SL.3.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.3.1b:** Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- **L.3.4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.



Daily Learning Targets

- I can use text features to find information about the glass frog efficiently in *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*. (RI.3.5)
- I can find the gist of an excerpt from *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*. (RI.3.4, L.3.4)

Ongoing Assessment

- KWEL chart (RI.3.1, RI.3.10, W.3.7, W.3.8)

Agenda

1. Opening

- A. KWEL Chart: Frogs (10 minutes)
- B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

2. Work Time

- A. Mini Lesson: Using Informational Text Features (15 minutes)
- B. Reading for Gist: *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* (15 minutes)

3. Closing and Assessment

- A. Research Reading Share (15 minutes)

4. Homework

- A. Choose a Regular Verb practice from your Homework Resources to complete.
- B. Vocabulary. Follow the directions in your Unit 2 homework packet.
- C. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt to respond to in the front of your independent reading journal.

Teaching Notes

Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- This lesson follows a similar pattern to Lesson 1. Students revisit the “why” questions generated in Unit 1 and reframe the questions as their purpose for research and writing over the next several lessons. Similar to Lesson 1, they use the text features in *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* to continue to build an understanding of how text features can help a reader find information efficiently. They practice this by using the text features to find information related to another “why” question developed in Unit 1 (RI.3.5). Then they read one of the sections they have identified as having information related to the topic for gist (RI.3.1).
- In Work Time B, students find the gist of an excerpt from *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*. Since they are unable to mark the actual text, consider using the Finding the Gist and Unfamiliar Vocabulary note-catcher or having students record the gist and unfamiliar vocabulary on sticky notes.
- In Closing and Assessment A, students share what they have read and learned from their independent reading texts. This sharing is designed to hold students accountable for their research reading completed for homework. This volume of reading promotes their growing ability to read a variety of literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. Refer to the Independent Reading: Sample Plan (standalone document), if you do not already have an independent reading review routine. (R.3.10, RL.3.10, SL.3.1)
- As an extension, students can choose an additional “why” question from Unit 1 to research, using text features in *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* to find information related to the question and reading sections of the text for gist.
- Lessons 1-3 featured built-out instruction for Goal 3 Conversation Cues. Moving forward, this will only appear as reminders after select questions. Continue using Goals 1-3 Conversation

Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation. Refer to the Module 1 Appendix for additional information on Conversation Cues.

- The research reading students complete for homework helps to build both their vocabulary and knowledge pertaining to frogs and specifically frog adaptations. By participating in this volume of reading over a span of time, students will develop a wide base of knowledge about the world and the words that help describe and make sense of it.
- Students practice their fluency in this lesson by following along and reading silently as the teacher reads aloud from *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* in Work Time B.

How it builds on previous work:

- Students begin to research the answer to another “why” question developed in Unit 1.
- Students are held accountable for their independent reading and homework by sharing with their peers.

Areas where students may need additional support:

- Throughout Lessons 4–5, students should work with a reading partner. Strategically partner students so they can support one another well as they read this complex text.
- Students may struggle with using the table of contents and index in Work Time A. Consider spending some time before this lesson reviewing how these are structured and how to look up a word or topic in a text.

Assessment Guidance:

- Answer keys are not provided for the Finding the Gist and Unfamiliar Vocabulary note-catchers because these are optional.
- Consider using the Speaking and Listening Informal Assessment: Collaborative Discussion Checklist when students work in pairs reading for gist in Work Time B or during the Research Reading Share in Closing and Assessment A.
- Consider using the Reading: Foundational Skills Informal Assessment: Phonics and Word Recognition Checklist (Grade 3) or the Reading: Foundational Skills Informal Assessment: Reading Fluency Checklist to informally assess students as they read for gist in Work Time B or during the Research Reading Share in Closing and Assessment A.

Down the road:

- In Lesson 5, students will closely reread the excerpt from *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* used in this lesson. Then, in Lesson 6, students will use the information they have learned and gathered in the close read to write an informational paragraph in response to the “why” question generated in Unit 1: “Why is the glass frog hard to see?”
- Students will read a new section from *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* and take notes to research a topic independently as part of the Mid-Unit 2 Assessment in Lesson 7.

In advance:

- Prepare:
 - Why?, Informational Texts, Close Readers Do These Things anchor charts.

- Small label: “Glass Frogs” to attach to a pin and place on the world map. This must be large enough to see but not too large to cover up too much of the map.
- Research reading share using with the Independent Reading: Sample Plan standalone document, or using your own independent reading routine.
- Post: Learning targets.

Technology & Multimedia

- Opening A: Students’ Freaky Frog research notebooks could be completed online, for example on Google Docs in a folder for each student.
- Opening A: Students complete their KWEL charts in a word processing document, for example a Google Doc using Speech to Text facilities activated on devices, or using an app or software like Dictation.io (<https://dictation.io/speech>)
- Work Time B: For students who will benefit from hearing the text read aloud multiple times to find the gist, consider using a text-to-speech tool like Natural Reader (<http://www.naturalreaders.com>), SpeakIt! for Google Chrome or the Safari reader. Note that to use a web-based text-to-speech tool like SpeakIt! or Safari reader, you will need to create an online doc, such as a Google Doc, containing the text.

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 3.I.B.6, 3.II.A.1, 3.II.A.2, 3.I.C.10.

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs by focusing on text features, which may be similar to texts in their home language system and at times might be different.
- ELLs may find text features challenging, too. If students home culture does not focus on literacy, text features may be completely new. *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* has so many different text features that it can be overwhelming for some students. To focus students, emphasize that captions help tell about a picture, words in larger print are important, and headings name the topic of each section.

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- To reinforce students’ learning on verb tenses, ask them to note when the author uses the present simple tense while reading *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*. Example: “The glass frog blends in perfectly with its environment. Invite them to identify the verb and ask how they know it is present tense. Tell them that many informational text authors write in the present simple, just like they will.

For heavier support:

- To emphasize the usefulness of text features, type up a page of *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* without any text features at all. Compare it to the book. Point out that when all of the text looks the same and is organized in the same way, our eyes do not know where to look.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation (MMR):** Some students may need additional support understanding informational texts and text features. Consider working in a small group in advance to look closely at the Informational Texts handout. Pull together some examples of informational texts and guide students to highlight words or phrases that show what topic these texts are about. Emphasize the idea that all informational texts give information about a certain topic and authors are careful to stay on topic and provide details about that topic. Also, look closely at some of the text features common to informational texts and discuss what a reader can find in each one.
- **Multiple Means of Action and Expression (MMAE):** Because this lesson requires students to shift the focus of their thinking multiple times, consider quickly revisiting and pointing out learning targets throughout the lesson as an indicator for students that they will now be working on. Some students who may need support attending to the task may also benefit from having a personal “map” of the lesson that they can physically point to or use to check off what they have accomplished and “see” what they need to focus on next.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement (MME):** While holding high expectations is important, be aware that sometimes these expectations can raise student anxiety. Emphasize the importance of process and effort by discussing how even when you try your best, you may make a mistake and that is okay because it is an opportunity to learn and use that knowledge the next time.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

- informational, topic (L)
- table of contents, index (T)

Materials

- ✓ Freaky Frog research notebooks (from Lesson 1; one per student and one to display)
 - KWEL Chart: Frogs (page 1 of Freaky Frog research notebook)
- ✓ *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* (from Lesson 1; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ KWEL Chart: Frogs (answers, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Why? anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 2)
- ✓ Informational Texts handout (from Lesson 1; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ Close Readers Do These Things anchor chart (begun in Module 1)
- ✓ Finding the Gist and Unfamiliar Vocabulary note-catcher (optional; one per student; see Teaching Notes)
- ✓ Sticky notes (optional; one per student; see Teaching Notes)

- ✓ Vocabulary logs (from Module 1; one per student)
- ✓ Academic Word Wall (started in Module 1)
- ✓ Domain-Specific Word Wall (started in Unit 1, Lesson 1)
- ✓ Pin and label (see Teaching Notes; two for display)
- ✓ World map (from Module 1; one for display)
- ✓ Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (from Module 1)
- ✓ Independent Reading: Sample Plan (standalone document)

Opening

A. KWEL Chart: Frogs (10 minutes)

- Ask students to turn to the **KWEL Chart: Frogs** on page 1 of their **Freaky Frog research notebooks** and to pages 6–7 in *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*.
- Remind students what each letter represents.
- Focus students on the Source column on their KWEL charts. Tell them that when they cite evidence, it is important to explain where that evidence came from so they can return to it later or others can find it. This lets other people read the original source themselves and consider whether the information provided is indeed reliable.
- Model how to record the source on the KWEL Chart: Frogs. See **KWEL Chart: Frogs (answers, for teacher reference)**.
- Emphasize that evidence should be copied carefully, word for word, and should be written inside quotation marks. The source should be recorded in the column next to the evidence.
- Invite students to discuss with an elbow partner what they have learned from the close reading of “Amphibians.” Then ask students to add their source, learning, and evidence to their own KWEL charts.
- Circulate to support students in their discussions and recordings. Look specifically at their use of quotation marks and the way they are citing evidence from the text.
- Invite volunteers to share any new questions they have about frogs and record them on their charts. Add any new “why” questions to the **Why? anchor chart**. If students do not bring up this question or something similar on their own, tell them you are curious about this and add it to the anchor chart: “Why does where a frog lives affect how it looks and/or acts?”

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For students who may need help organizing their ideas for written expression: Write sentence frames in advance on the KWEL Chart: Frogs so students know which information goes in which box. (MMAE)
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with vocabulary: Clarify the meaning of *source*. Example: “A *source* is the place where an idea comes from. When we borrow an idea from another writer, we need to tell our readers its *source*, or the name of the writer and the book. In the United States, always remember to give readers your sources.” Ask students to explain why this is so important. (MMR)

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with activating prior knowledge: Provide dialogue to help students converse about their prior learning. Example: "One thing I learned about amphibians is _____. What did you learn about amphibians?" Consider writing the dialogue in a speech bubble and holding it up with a Popsicle stick. (MMR)

Opening

B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

- Direct students' attention to the posted learning targets and invite a volunteer to read them aloud.

"I can use text features to find information about the glass frog efficiently in Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures."

"I can find the gist of an excerpt from Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures."

- Explain that today they will use text features to find information about a new research question, then read a section from *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* for gist. In the next lesson, they will closely reread that section, and in the lesson after that, they will plan and write a paragraph that answers the research question. Remind students that this is the process they followed to answer the question "Why do polliwogs wiggle?"
- Direct students' attention to the Why? anchor chart and invite a volunteer to read the questions aloud. Read this question aloud:
"Why is the glass frog so hard to see?"
- Tell students this is the question they will research and write about over the next few lessons.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may benefit from visual supports: Provide the opportunity to draw or sketch definitions, act them out, or list synonyms for key terms in learning targets, such as *record*, *text features*, *efficiently*, *gist*, and *excerpt*. (MMR)
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with comprehension: Ask how adding *why* at the beginning of a sentence changes the meaning. Example: "Look at the question *Do polliwogs wiggle?* What are the two possible answers to that question?" (yes and no) "If I ask that question, I'm not sure if polliwogs wiggle or not. If I add *Why* at the beginning, how does that change the meaning of the question?" (Adding *why* asks for the reason that polliwogs wiggle.) (MMR)

Work Time

A. Mini Lesson: Using Informational Text Features (15 minutes)

- Display and invite students to retrieve their **Informational Texts handout**. Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:
“What kind of text is Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures?” (informational)
“What makes it an informational text?” (It informs or teaches about a topic.)
- Display pages 6–7 and ask:
“What is the topic of these pages?” (amphibians and what makes them unique)
- Point out that each section on this page supports and explains the topic. Point to bullets four and five on the handout and tell students that informational texts are focused on the same topic throughout. This makes the writing easier for the reader to understand.
- If further explanation is needed, connect this point back to the “Why Do Polliwogs Wiggle?” class draft by pointing out that it was focused on the same topic—explaining why polliwogs wiggle—throughout the paragraph.
- Ask:
“Look at the pictures on pages 6–7. Why might the writers have included these pictures?” (to help the reader visualize what the text is saying; to help the reader better understand the text)
- Point to bullet six on the handout and tell students that the illustrations included in informational texts give the reader more information about the topic.
- Direct students’ attention back to the Why? anchor chart and remind them that they will research the answers to some of these questions throughout this unit. Invite a volunteer to read the question on the chart:
“Why is the glass frog so hard to see?”
- Invite students to work with an elbow partner and use the table of contents and index to find information about glass frogs in *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*.
- Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:
“Which pages have information about glass frogs? What text features did you use to help you find this information?” (table of contents: page 32—The Glass Frog; index: pages 32–33)
- Validate student responses and invite students to turn to pages 32–33 and to skim the text features for information about glass frogs on these pages. Cold call students to share out:
“What did you learn about the glass frog on these pages? What in or about the text helped you find that information?” (Responses will vary; for example, the picture on page 32 shows me that glass frogs are green; the diagram at the bottom of page 32 shows me the size of a glass frog, etc.)
“Why is it called a glass frog? What qualities of the frog remind you of glass?” (It is see-through or transparent, just like glass.)
- As students share, formally name the text features that they are noticing, pointing them out under bullet two on the Informational Texts handout.

- If productive, cue students with a challenge:
“Can you figure out why the authors used these specific text features? I’ll give you time to think and discuss with a partner.” (Responses will vary.)
- If productive, cue students to listen carefully and seek to understand:
“Who can tell us what your classmate said in your own words?” (Responses will vary.)
- Tell students they will continue to learn about other text features throughout this unit as they read *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For students who may need support using evidence from the text to answer questions: Provide key sections that are pre-highlighted in their texts. This will help them focus on small sections rather than scanning the whole text for answers. (MMR, MMAE)
- For ELLs: Mini Language Dive. Ask students about the meaning of the chunks of a key sentence from the anchor chart: *Informational texts are focused on the same topic throughout the piece*. Write and display student responses next to the chunks. Examples:
“What does this sentence mean?”
“What does it mean for a text to be focused?” (clear, specific, paying attention to something)
“Who is focusing the text?” (me, the writer)
“What does the sentence mean by the same topic?” (It doesn’t change topics to a different one. It talks about only one topic.)
“What does the sentence mean by throughout?” (the whole time; from beginning to end)
“What is the piece?” (the writing; the paragraph)
“Now, can you put the sentence in your own words?” (Informational texts talk about only one topic the whole time.)

Work Time

B. Reading for Gist: *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* (15 minutes)

- Pair students and direct their attention back to pages 32–33 in *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*.
- Ask students to look over these pages and put their finger by the part of the text that they think the author meant for the reader to read first. (the text at the top of page 32)
- Read pages 32 and 33 aloud for students without stopping, as they read along silently in their heads.
- Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:
“What is this text about?” (Student responses may vary, but could include it’s about glass frogs.)

- Refer students to the **Close Readers Do These Things anchor chart**. Remind them that these steps are things they do every time they read a new complex text.
- Focus them on the first six criteria, down to and including: “Talk with their partner or group about the text.” Tell students that this is what you want them to do first with their excerpt of text.
- Review the vocabulary strategies on the anchor chart that students can use when determining the meaning of words they are unsure about the meaning of.
- Distribute the **Finding the Gist and Unfamiliar Vocabulary note-catcher** or **sticky notes**. If using the note-catcher, display a copy to talk students through what they should record in each column. Remind them that these are just notes to help them remember what their excerpt is mostly about.
- Remind students that the glossary in the back of the text provides the meaning of the words that are bold in the text.
- Invite students to follow the criteria on the Close Readers Do These Things anchor chart to find the gist and the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary on pages 32–33. Circulate to support students.
- Invite students to share any new words, adding any unfamiliar words to their **vocabulary logs**. Add any new words to the **academic word wall** and **domain-specific word wall** and invite students to add translations in native languages.
- Ask students to turn and talk to their partner, and cold call students to share with the whole group:
“Where do glass frogs live?” (Central and South America.)
- Add a **pin and label** to both Central and South America on the **world map**.
- Focus students on the learning targets. Read each one aloud, pausing after each to use a checking for understanding protocol for students to reflect on their comfort level with or show how close they are to meeting each target. Make note of students who may need additional support with each of the learning targets moving forward.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who are overwhelmed by too much print on a page: Consider copying the text so that there is only one paragraph on each page, with an organized space for recording the gist and meanings of the unfamiliar words on that page. (MMR)
- For ELLs and students who need additional support with writing: Model doing quick sketches on sticky notes to illustrate gist as placeholders for their ideas. Say: “You can sketch so that you don’t forget what the excerpt is mostly about.” (MMAE)

Closing and Assessment

A. Research Reading Share (15 minutes)

- Focus students on the **Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart**. Remind students of: I behave with integrity. This means I am honest and do the right thing, even when it’s difficult, because it is the right thing to do.

- Remind them that this includes doing homework even when there may be other things they want to do after school. Remind them that the purpose of research reading is to build background knowledge and vocabulary on a topic so that they can gradually read more and more complex texts on that topic.
- Refer to the **Independent Reading: Sample Plan** to guide students through a research reading review, or use your own routine.
- Use a checking for understanding protocol (for example Red Light, Green Light or Thumb-O-Meter) for students to self-assess against how well they showed integrity in this lesson.

Meeting Students' Needs

- Because some students may have completed some of the prompts in their independent reading journal orally with a family member or friend, it will be important for these students to have some notes to use for this sharing time. Consider meeting with them in advance to prep them for the research reading share. (MMAE, MME)

Homework

- A. Choose a Regular Verb practice from your Homework Resources to complete.**
- B. Vocabulary. Follow the directions in your Unit 2 homework packet.**
- C. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt to respond to in the front of your independent reading journal.**

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs: To practice answering selected response questions, write your own selected response question based on your independent reading.
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with reading and writing: Refer to the suggested homework support in Lesson 1. (MMAE)