



Reading Instruction for Middle School Students

**Lessons for Improving Comprehension
Through “Any Small Goodness”**

by Tony Johnston

Adapted from intervention materials developed by
the Texas Center for Learning Disabilities

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Chapter 2 Teacher Guide and Student Log

Teacher Guide

Chapter 2: Corn Fungus

pp. 22–36

Suggested Time Frame: 2 Days

Day 1: 50 Minutes

Materials Needed

- Novel for each student
- Chapter 2 Student Log for each student
- Display of Chapter 2 Student Log (transparency, projected image, etc.)
- Get the Gist poster
- Timer

Preparation

- Develop questions for accessing background knowledge and select active participation strategies.
- Note Spanish word meanings used throughout the chapter.
- Choose a reading format.

Introduce Vocabulary

(10 minutes)

1.	bristle	<i>v.</i>	to respond with anger
2.	tactic	<i>n.</i>	a plan for achieving a goal
3.	dominating	<i>v.</i>	to be above others in authority; be in command
4.	flair	<i>n.</i>	an innate ability; knack
5.	desolate	<i>adj.</i>	feeling hopeless

Display student log so students can follow along as you read. Explicitly state the purpose of the lesson by telling students that they will learn the meanings of important vocabulary words before reading the chapter and that learning the vocabulary words will help the students to understand what they read. After introducing each word, provide some examples and nonexamples, and, through discussion, connect the word to students’ prior knowledge as well as to the context of the passage.

1. *Before we read today’s chapter, let’s read the difficult words. The first word is BRISTLE. What word? BRISTLE. Now, read the definition with me: “to respond with anger.”*
2. *The next word is TACTIC. What word? TACTIC. Read the definition with me: “a plan for achieving a goal.”*
3. *The next word is DOMINATING. What word? DOMINATING. Read the definition with me: “to be above others in authority; be in command.”*
4. *The next word is FLAIR. What word? FLAIR. Read the definition with me: “an innate ability; knack.”*
5. *The next word is DESOLATE. What word? DESOLATE. Read the definition with me: “feeling hopeless.”*

Prediction

(2–3 minutes)

1. *Before reading the chapter, we will make some predictions about what the chapter is about. We'll look back at what we predicted after reading, so keep your prediction in mind while you read.*
2. *Turn to page 22.*
3. *Let's read the title together: "Corn Fungus."*
4. You also see a picture there.
5. *I will give you 1 minute to write one sentence that tells what you think the chapter might be about.*

Point to the line on the transparency.

6. Set the timer for 1 minute. When the timer goes off, say:
Partner 1, tell Partner 2 what you think the chapter will be about.
7. Monitor discussion and share ideas with the entire class as appropriate.

Access Background Knowledge

(3–5 minutes)

Preread this chapter before class and write at least two questions to activate background knowledge.

Use an active participation strategy (see details below) to engage all students in answering questions. Avoid calling on individual students as your only means of soliciting response. List your questions and active participation strategies below.

Question	Active Participation Strategy
1.	
2.	
3.	

If students cannot answer the questions you pose, provide the missing background knowledge necessary for understanding the chapter.

Example From Chapter 1: “American Names”

- 1. This chapter is about a family who moves to a new place. Arturo finds himself in a new house and in a new school. Have you ever had to move to a new place? Take 30 seconds to think about a time when you had to move to a new place.*
- 2. Partner 2, tell Partner 1 about a time when you moved to a new place.*
Walk around the room as partners talk, and take notes on what students say.
- 3. Tell students a couple of things that you heard as you walked around the room.*

Active Participation Ideas for Different Types of Questions

Type of Question	Active Participation Response
Yes/no	Thumbs-up or thumbs-down
Tell about a time...	Give 30 seconds to think, and then ask students to turn to their partner and tell about a time when... Have 2 groups share or you share what you heard as you walked around.
Why do you think this chapter is...	Discuss with a partner.
What character do you think will be...	Choral response

Reading the Chapter: Modeling/Practice

Get the Gist

(25–30 minutes)

As you preread the chapter, make a note of Spanish words in italics. Some words are defined in the text. Words that are not defined in the text are defined in the back of the book. If needed, look up the definition for any unknown word so you can quickly define the word for your students.

Choose a format for reading, based on the amount of text. Remember to choose a variety of reading formats. Please refer to the Reading Format Options section of the introductory materials for an explanation of each format. If you vary the formats within the chapter, make a plan before class. Circle the reading format you plan to use.

Reading Format Options	
Cloze read	Choral read (repeated)
Partner read	Choral read (alternating)

1. *Please turn to page 22.*
2. *Today, we will _____.*
3. Begin reading the chapter with your students. You will need to complete the chapter (pp. 22–36) by the end of class tomorrow.
4. As you read, stop at the following paragraphs to Get the Gist:
 - p. 23, paragraphs 1 and 2 p. 25, paragraph 2
 - p. 25, paragraph 3 p. 26, paragraph 1
 - p. 33, paragraph 5
 - p. 36 (entire chapter)

(**Note:** This activity will continue on Day 2.)

Sample Script for Stopping to Get the Gist

After the second paragraph on page 23, think aloud (and refer to the Get the Gist visual in your room).

I ask myself who or what that paragraph was about. That paragraph was about Abuelita, Arturo’s grandmother. Now I ask myself: “What was the most important thing about Abuelita?” I think the most important thing about Abuelita in this paragraph is that she grew corn every year and prayed over it. So, in 10 or fewer words, the main idea of this paragraph is: “Abuelita grew corn and prayed for height and flavor.”

We will continue reading, but in a few minutes, I will stop to ask you to Get the Gist on your own.

If students provided appropriate answers for the paragraph on page 23, Get the Gist for the remaining paragraphs as follows:

1. After reading the paragraph, stop and say:
Is, tell 2s who or what this paragraph is about.
Monitor. Guide as necessary.
2. Now, 2s, tell 1s the most important thing about the who or the what.
Monitor. Guide as necessary.
3. *With your partner, come up with a main idea statement that is 10 or fewer words.*
Monitor. Guide as necessary.
4. Ask one or two groups (whom you have monitored and know have an appropriate answer) to share their main idea statements.
5. Continue reading the chapter.

Closure

(30 seconds–1 minute)

Today, we started reading “Corn Fungus” and we practiced the Get the Gist strategy. Tomorrow, we will review our new vocabulary words, finish reading Chapter 2, and practice Get the Gist some more. Let’s quickly review the vocabulary words we learned in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Corn Fungus

pp. 22–36

Day 2: 45 Minutes

Materials Needed

- Novel for each student
- Chapter 2 Student Log for each student
- Get the Gist paragraph transparencies
- Vocabulary review materials

Preparation

- Prepare for vocabulary review.
- Choose a reading format.

Review Vocabulary

(3–5 minutes)

1.	bristle	<i>v.</i>	to respond with anger
2.	tactic	<i>n.</i>	a plan for achieving a goal
3.	dominating	<i>v.</i>	to be above others in authority; be in command
4.	flair	<i>n.</i>	an innate ability; knack
5.	desolate	<i>adj.</i>	feeling hopeless

Choose a vocabulary review procedure. (See the introductory materials for a full description of vocabulary review procedures.) Circle the option you plan on using today.

Vocabulary Review Options
Partner review
Sentence review
Examples and nonexamples

Reading the Chapter: Modeling/Practice

Get the Gist

(25–30 minutes)

(Klingner et al., 2001)

Choose a strategy for reading, based on the amount of text. Remember to choose a variety of reading strategies throughout the novel. Circle the reading format you plan to use.

Reading Format Options	
Cloze read	Choral read (repeated)
Partner read	Choral read (alternating)

1. Quickly review the reading from yesterday. For example:
What is the name of our main character?
2. Finish reading the chapter with your students. (Pick up where you left off from the previous day.)
3. As you read, stop to Get the Gist. See the directions for Day 1 for guidance on where to stop and a sample script.

After Reading: Get the Gist of the Entire Chapter

(3–5 minutes)

(Klingner et al., 2001)

1. *You have had a lot of practice with Get the Gist. Now, turn to your partner and come up with a sentence that tells what the entire chapter is about. Remember to use 10 or fewer words.*
2. Ask groups to share their sentences.

Verifying Predictions

(2–3 minutes)

1. *Let's go back to our predictions to see whether we were correct. Partner 1, read your prediction to Partner 2. Were you correct? If not, how was the chapter different from your prediction?*
2. Repeat with Partner 2.

Closure

(30 seconds–1 minute)

Today, we finished reading “Corn Fungus” and we practiced Get the Gist. Next week, we will begin reading the next chapter, called “The Coach.”

Student Log

Chapter 2: Corn Fungus

pp. 22–36

Vocabulary

1.	bristle	<i>v.</i>	to respond with anger
2.	tactic	<i>n.</i>	a plan for achieving a goal
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Prediction

Get the Gist

Page 23

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Page 25

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Page 25

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Page 26

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Page 33

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Page 36 (Entire Chapter)
