

Topic: Appreciation

Text Type: Narrative Fiction

Word Count: 475

Lexile® Measure: 740L

Skills: Reading for Meaning
Phrasing
Rate
Timed Reading

Lesson 1

Time: 10–15 minutes

Skills: Reading for Meaning

Student Pages: “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy)

Lesson 2

Time: 15–20 minutes

Skills: Phrasing

Student Pages: “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy)

Lesson 3

Time: 15 minutes

Skills: Phrasing with Dashes

Student Pages: “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy)

Lesson 4

Time: 15 minutes

Skills: Rate

Student Pages: “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy)

Lesson 5

Time: 15–20 minutes

Skills: Timed Reading

Student Pages: “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy)

Teacher Pages: “Home Sweet Home” (Teacher Copy), Fluency Chart

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Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Reading for Meaning

Distribute “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy). **Follow along with me as I read this story. The title is “Home Sweet Home.”** Read the story aloud to students. Read the passage with proper expression, phrasing, and intonation. Model appropriate rate as you read. After reading, ask the following questions to engage students in a discussion about the story:

- **What is this passage about?**
- **What words describe Mortimer? Why?**
- **What does this story remind you of?**

Discuss any words students may not be familiar with.

Assign partners. Avoid pairing students of significantly different proficiencies. This results in less frustration. Also, the more proficient reader may serve as a model. Partners should be changed periodically.

It is important to model the expectations of partner reading. You may do this by role-playing with one student, or you may select two students to role-play the following:

- how to sit with your partner (Have partners sit close together so that the partner who is reading can use a low inside voice and still be heard.)
- how to read with your partner (Partner A reads. Partner B listens carefully and follows along. Partner A underlines lightly with a pencil any words he or she finds interesting or does not know. Partners may also assist with words if needed by using the following correction procedure:
 - If a student reads a word incorrectly, skips a word, or does not know a word, his or her partner points to the word and says, “What is this word?”
 - If the student reads the word correctly, the partner says, “Yes, that word is _____. Please reread the sentence.”
 - If the student does not know the word, the partner says, “That word is _____. Please reread the sentence.”
 - The student repeats the word and rereads the sentence.)
- how to dialogue with each other after the reading (Have students discuss what the passage is about and which words in the passage they found interesting or did not understand.)

After these procedures have been modeled, have students practice. Discuss behaviors that are unacceptable as well.

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Independent Practice

Now, I want you to get with your partner and read “Home Sweet Home” together. Using a pencil, lightly underline any words you find interesting or do not know as you read. Partner A will read the first paragraph and stop. Then partner B will read the same paragraph. Discuss what you read and any words you found interesting or did not understand. Then follow the same procedure with the following paragraphs until you reach the end of the passage.

Walk around and observe students as they read together. If necessary, remind students of the expectations for partner reading.

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Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy). **We will practice reading “Home Sweet Home” fluently.**

Reading fluently means reading the words correctly, at an appropriate rate, and with correct phrasing and intonation. Reading fluently is not about reading fast but about reading at an appropriate rate. Fluent reading should sound like you are talking. The way we read a text affects our comprehension.

Each lesson will focus on one or two aspects of fluency. **Today, we will practice phrasing.**

Phrasing involves grouping certain words together when speaking. As we talk, we automatically chunk words into groups. This is also important when reading. There are some words that sound better chunked together, and when this is done, the ideas are easier to understand.

Commas help us with phrasing, too. A comma signals to the reader to pause briefly while reading. Commas separate listed items, characteristics, or events. Paying attention to commas helps us with chunking words as we read.

Sometimes in long sentences there aren’t commas. Fluent readers chunk words automatically to make the reading sound like talking.

Listen as I read the beginning of the seventh paragraph. There are some commas in these sentences that tell the reader to pause. There are also other natural pauses that fluent readers make. Read the following, pausing accordingly at the slashes:

Mortimer crept forward / and peered inside. / The babies were squawking, / the kitchen was littered / with dirty dishes, / and baby things were everywhere.

I made a long pause at each period, and I also paused briefly at each comma and after the words *forward* and *littered*. These are natural pauses to make in these sentences. Pausing at each comma and period and after those words makes the reading sound like talking. The more reading sounds like talking, the easier it is to comprehend the text.

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Guided Practice

Now, let's practice. We'll read the second paragraph of the story. Allow students time to locate the paragraph. **I will read a sentence. Then, you will echo me.** Read the following paragraph one sentence at a time, modeling proper phrasing and expression. Pause accordingly at the slashes, and allow students time to repeat each sentence after you. Make sure the pauses sound like natural breaks and not like choppy phrasing.

As you might have guessed, / Mortimer Mouse was unhappy / with his life. / Now that the triplets had been born, / the hollow tree / where the Mouse family lived / seemed impossibly crowded. / Mortimer had done his best / to adjust, / but recently / he had begun to feel invisible. / He was doing extra chores / around the house, / tending to the garden, / and earning good grades / at school. / But Mother and Father Mouse hardly seemed to notice. / On the other hand, / if one of the triplets slept / through the night / or giggled / at a funny face, / the celebration went on / for days.

It is important to use proper phrasing when reading fluently. Commas and periods help with this, but fluent readers use other natural pauses, too. This makes the ideas on the page easier to understand.

Independent Practice

Review the expectations for partner reading with the students. **Now, with your partner, practice using proper phrasing as you read the passage. Pause briefly at each comma. Commas will help you chunk words together.** Have each student read the passage as before, one paragraph at a time. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on proper phrasing. If necessary, model how to use proper phrasing again.

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Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy). **We will continue to practice reading fluently. In the previous lesson, we practiced reading with appropriate phrasing. We will continue to practice fluency by looking at signals authors include in the text, such as dashes.**

A dash inserted in the text usually signals additional information or an example. When you come to a dash in the text, you pause longer than you would for a comma.

Listen as I read the first sentence of the third paragraph. Allow students time to find the sentence. Read the sentence aloud with proper expression, pausing at each dash.

Disgusted with anything small—baby rattles, baby spoons, little baby booties—Mortimer headed into the wide, expansive world of the woods.

Pausing a little longer at each dash adds drama to the sentence.

Guided Practice

Let’s practice reading this sentence together. Try to make your voice stay with mine. Read the sentence with the students, pausing at each dash.

Disgusted with anything small—baby rattles, baby spoons, little baby booties—Mortimer headed into the wide, expansive world of the woods.

Now, scan the passage for additional places where the author uses dashes. As students locate the sentences with dashes, have them practice reading them aloud.

Independent Practice

Now, it is time to practice with your partner. Have each student read the passage as before, one paragraph at a time. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on proper phrasing. If necessary, model how to use proper phrasing again.

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Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy). **Let’s continue to practice reading fluently. This time we will focus on rate.**

Rate is the speed at which you read the passage. Most of the time, reading is done at a normal pace. But sometimes, to add interest, you might read a sentence more quickly or slowly than the rest of the passage. The message that the author is conveying lets you know how to read the words.

This story is read at a normal rate. Reading the passage at a rate that sounds like talking will help you better understand the message that the author is conveying.

Guided Practice

Let’s practice with the first two paragraphs. First, listen to me read. Read the first two paragraphs aloud, fluently.

Now, read with me. Try to make your voice stay with mine. Read along with students.

Independent Practice

Now it is your time to practice with your partner. Have students read the passage with their partner. Partners should take turns reading one paragraph at a time. After both have read the passage, have students discuss what the passage is all about. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on rate and phrasing. If necessary, model appropriate rate and phrasing again for students.

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Timed Reading

Redistribute or have students take out “Home Sweet Home” (Student Copy). **While you are reading with your partner today, I will listen to each of you read. I will call you over one at a time and have you read for 60 seconds. Then we will set fluency goals together. Remember what is expected during partner reading. I want each partner to read the passage twice. You may begin.**

While students are reading, call one student over at a time and listen to him or her read the passage for 60 seconds. Encourage students to do their best reading.

For each student, use a copy of “Home Sweet Home” (Teacher Copy) to mark words that the student has trouble reading. If the student does not know a word, point to the word and say “This word is ____.” Have him or her read the word and continue reading the passage.

As students read, listen for proper phrasing and intonation. Provide positive feedback on their efforts when they are done.

When the student begins reading, start a timer or use a clock with a second hand. At the end of 60 seconds, tell the student to stop reading. Subtract the number of words that gave the student trouble from the total number of words the student read. This results in the student’s Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM).

(Total Number of Words Read) – (Number of Problematic Words) = (Number of Words Correct Per Minute)

Example: (101 Words Read) – (3 Problematic Words) = 98 WCPM

Give the student a Fluency Chart. Assist the student in charting his or her WCPM with a bar graph. The student should keep the graph to record readings of various other passages over time. Readings of the same passage may be recorded as well. Each time a passage is read, have the student write its title in the Title section of the chart and shade in the correct amount for WCPM on the graph. It will be motivating for the student to see his or her growth over time.

The student will need to set his or her own fluency goal. Take the student’s initial WCPM and help him or her set a reasonable goal. A reasonable goal would be adding one or two words to his or her WCPM each week. The goal can be a monthly goal or a six- to nine-week goal.

Have students take the passage home and continue to practice. They can read the passage to a family member while practicing appropriate rate, phrasing, and intonation. They can also have a family member time them as they practice reading for 60 seconds.

Lexile Level: 740L

Home Sweet Home

“And I’m not coming back!” Mortimer squeaked, slamming the door behind him. The leaves trembled and whispered, and Mortimer trembled, too. The whole world seemed unstable.

As you might have guessed, Mortimer Mouse was unhappy with his life. Now that the triplets had been born, the hollow tree where the Mouse family lived seemed impossibly crowded. Mortimer had done his best to adjust, but recently he had begun to feel invisible. He was doing extra chores around the house, tending to the garden, and earning good grades at school. But Mother and Father Mouse hardly seemed to notice. On the other hand, if one of the triplets slept through the night or giggled at a funny face, the celebration went on for days.

Disgusted with anything small—baby rattles, baby spoons, little baby booties—Mortimer headed into the wide, expansive world of the woods. The thick trunks and leafy canopy comforted him. The chirping and rustling of the forest creatures soothed him. Mortimer walked and walked, relaxing a little more with every step.

When he reached the river, Mortimer sat down to rest. He watched the water slide lazily by. He imagined himself on a raft, heading to a distant land. He imagined he had been born into another life.

Suddenly, Mortimer found himself walking back home. He didn’t remember leaving the riverbank, but there he was, on the path. And soon enough, he spotted the tree house in the distance.

As Mortimer approached, he noticed that the picket fence was sagging and that the garden was overgrown with weeds. The latch on the front door was broken, and the door was partially open.

Mortimer crept forward and peered inside. The babies were squawking, the kitchen was littered with dirty dishes, and baby things were everywhere. In the middle of it all stood an exhausted-looking Mother Mouse. She was holding one of the babies and gazing wearily out the window.

“Mother!” cried Mortimer, entering the house with alarm. “What’s going on?”

Mother Mouse scowled at Mortimer. “Who are you?” she asked.

Frantically, Mortimer looked around. Hanging crookedly on the wall were all the usual family photos—except the photo of Mortimer! It was as if he had never been born!

Mortimer awakened himself with a loud cry. He saw the river floating by, and he heard the birds chirping in the branches above. He was still in the woods, which meant that the tree house episode had been only a dream—or, rather, a nightmare!

Mortimer sprang to his feet and sprinted through the woods. Reaching the tree house, he was overjoyed to see a straight white picket fence and a well-tended garden. The door was wide open, and he heard the sounds of laughter within. A delicious smell wafted through the window.

Mortimer hurried inside, glad to be alive and glad to be home.

Home Sweet Home

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When he reached the river, Mortimer sat down to rest. He watched the water slide lazily by. He imagined himself on a raft, heading to a distant land. He imagined he had been born into another life.	56
Suddenly, Mortimer found himself walking back home. He didn’t remember leaving the riverbank, but there he was, on the path. And soon enough, he spotted the tree house in the distance.	74
As Mortimer approached, he noticed that the picket fence was sagging and that the garden was overgrown with weeds. The latch on the front door was broken, and the door was partially open.	90
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“Mother!” cried Mortimer, entering the house with alarm. “What’s going on?”	123
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	208
	210
	222
	240
	241
	256
	273
	274
	287
	304
	319
	320
	331
	341
	354
	370
	387
	405
	415
	430
	447
	463
	475

