

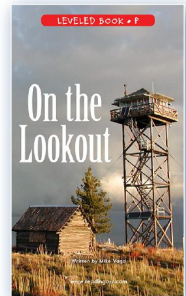
Focus Question:

What is the job of a fire lookout, and why is it important?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Interview

A fire lookout is a very important job that requires a special type of person. In *On the Lookout*, students will read an interview with a fire lookout who explains what life in a lookout tower is like and what he does to help keep firefighters safe and to protect the environment. This book can be used to teach students how to determine an author's purpose and how to identify combined sentences.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to understand text
- ☐ Determine author's purpose
- ☐ Describe information provided by photographs
- ☐ Recognize long vowel *i* words
- ☐ Identify and use combined sentences
- ☐ Understand and use content vocabulary

Materials

- ☐ Book: *On the Lookout* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Author's purpose, combined sentences, content vocabulary worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *alert* (v.), *climate* (n.), *damage* (n.), *environment* (n.), *lookouts* (n.), *remote* (adj.)

Enrichment: *ecosystem* (n.), *humidity* (n.), *jarring* (adj.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *allow* (v.), *amount* (n.), *area* (n.), *become* (v.), *environment* (n.), *protect* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Place a photograph of a lookout structure on the board. Ask students to work with a partner to describe what the structure looks like and what they think the purpose of the structure is.
- Ask students if they have heard of a *lookout*. Have students work with a partner to discuss the meaning of the word *lookout* and what might be the possible responsibilities of a person who has the job of a lookout. Discuss with students what makes the job of a lookout important.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *On the Lookout*. Guide them to the front and back covers, and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy:

Ask and answer questions

Explain to students that engaged readers ask questions before and during reading and search for answers while they read to help them better understand what they are reading. Remind students that they can use prior knowledge and information in the book to come up with questions. Have students work with a partner to create at least two questions about the book based on the cover and title page. Invite students to share their questions with the class. Record students' questions on the board. Have students preview the rest of the book to come up with more questions. Remind students to look for the answers to these questions as they read. Pause throughout the reading to record answers to questions listed on the board.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Author's purpose

- Explain to students that when authors write about a topic, they often have a purpose for writing. Point out that most times, the purpose is either to inform, persuade, or entertain the reader. Write the words *inform*, *entertain*, and *persuade* on the board. Explain to students that to *inform* means to provide information, to *entertain* means to tell a story, and to *persuade* means to convince another to act or feel a certain way. Point out that the reason an author writes a book is called the *author's purpose*.
- Review with students a book the class has previously read. Have students work in groups to determine the author's purpose, and guide students to a class consensus. Have students work with a partner to predict the author's purpose for *On the Lookout*.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about the job of a lookout. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *What do fire lookouts do?* (level 1) page 3
- *How did Steve become a fire lookout?* (level 1) page 5
- *What does Steve's lookout station look like? Why is it important that all of the walls in his lookout are windows?* (level 3) page 6
- *What does a typical day for Steve consist of?* (level 2) pages 8 and 9

- *What is the main cause of forest fires in remote areas?* (level 1) page 11
- *What does a lookout do if he or she spots a fire?* (level 2) pages 10–12
- *Why are there more fires now than in the past?* (level 1) page 13
- *What are the pros and cons of being a lookout?* (level 2) pages 14 and 15
- *What can people do to help protect the environment?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Photographs

Explain that pictures taken with a camera, or *photographs*, help readers know exactly what something looks like. Emphasize that photographs can help readers better understand the text by answering questions they may have. Have students look at the photographs on pages 6 and 7. Ask students: *How do the photographs on these pages help you see why it is important for a lookout structure to be tall or on high ground? How does the photograph on page 7 show you why Steve would need a helicopter to drop him off with his supplies at the beginning of the year?* Invite volunteers to share their ideas with the class. Have students review other photographs and discuss in groups how the details in these photographs can be used to answer questions they may have while reading. Invite volunteers to share their ideas with the class.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you ask and answer questions as you read.
- Model evaluating details to determine the author's purpose.
Think-aloud: *This book is providing me with many details about the job of a lookout. I have read where the lookout station is located, how the lookout spots a fire, and who the lookout calls if he sees a fire. All of these facts give me new information on the topic, so I believe the author's purpose is to inform. However, the author also provides me with ways that people impact the environment and what people can do to help care for the environment. Therefore, the author's purpose could also be to persuade. So, I will read to the end of the book, examining each detail, to see what the author's main purpose is or if there is more than one purpose.*
- **Independent practice:** Model how to complete the [author's purpose worksheet](#). Have students identify details from the book and circle them. Then, have students discuss the details with a partner and determine the author's purpose for the book.

After Reading

Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: **Author's purpose**

Review the author's purpose worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the purpose they decided on and the details they chose. Have students justify their reasoning for choosing the purpose that they did.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided to be used for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Example: *The job of a lookout is to spend his or her summers deep in the woods, keep a sharp eye out for smoke, and alert firefighters at the first sign of danger. Then, the lookout watches the smoke from the fire to look for any changes to help firefighters. The lookout's job is important because if there were no lookouts to alert firefighters of possible fires, the fires might do a lot more damage and possibly hurt people. Lookouts help protect the environment.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonics: **Long vowel i**

- Write the word *hike* on the board, and have students read it aloud.
- Then run your finger under the letters in the word as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letter or letters represent the /i/ sound in the word *hike*.
- Review with students that the e at the end of the word helps the /i/ make the long sound. This is just one way that the long /i/ sound is made. Write the words *fire*, *mile*, and *hire* on the board. Point to each word, and have students read it aloud. Remind students that the /i/ makes the long sound in each word.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work in pairs to create a list of at least three words that contain the long /i/ sound. Invite volunteers to share their list with the class.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Combined sentences**

- Write the following sentences on the board: *I went into the ranger station. I asked if I could be a lookout.* Ask students to identify the subject of each

sentence (or who the sentence is about). Underline the subjects. Explain that in this case, the two short sentences that share the same subject can be combined into one sentence by using the conjunction *and*. Ask students how to rewrite the sentences on the board to combine them into one sentence. Write the combined sentence on the board. (*I went into the ranger station and asked if I could be a lookout.*)

- Write the following sentences on the board: *Careless campers can start a fire. Loggers can start a fire.* Ask students to identify the predicate (or what the subject does) in each sentence. Underline each predicate. Explain that in this case, the two short sentences that share the same predicate can be combined into one sentence by using the conjunction *or*. Have students work in groups to rewrite the sentences. Write the combined sentence on the board. (*Careless campers or loggers can start a fire.*)
- **Check for understanding:** In pairs, have students look through the book to locate combined sentences. Call on volunteers to share their sentences. Have students identify the shared subject or predicate.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **combined sentences worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Content vocabulary**

- Explain to students that understanding the definitions of the words they read will help them better understand the book. Have students turn to page 3 in the book and locate the word *damage*. Remind students that words in boldface print are important and can often be found in a glossary. Point out that authors will include challenging words to expand the reader's vocabulary.
- Have students read the sentence aloud: *Forest fires can spread quickly and do a lot of damage.* Ask students to discuss the meaning of the word with a partner. Invite volunteers to share their discussion.
- Have students turn to the glossary on page 16 and read the definition of the word *damage*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work in pairs to create oral sentences using the word *damage*. Invite volunteers to share their sentence with the class, and ask other students to give the thumbs-up signal if they used the word *damage* correctly. Repeat with other glossary words if there is time.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **content vocabulary worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.