

Open a World of Possible



What We Heard

Tucson Unified School District's teachers will impact student reading achievement by providing differentiated small-group instruction. Students will improve their comprehension by reading more text at their instructional level during guided reading small-group instruction on a daily basis.

To help Tucson Unified School District's teachers deliver high-quality, small-group guided reading instruction while meeting the needs of striving readers, Scholastic presents this proposal to deepen the partnership with TUSD by providing resources and strategies to support their guided reading initiative.

Through rigorous high-quality reading instruction; interactive read aloud; shared reading; voluminous, engaged independent reading; small-group intensive guided reading instruction with Scholastic EDGE; and appropriate professional learning; the schools in this initiative have the best opportunity to:

- Implement intensive, data-driven guided reading instruction and intervention with striving readers
- Build stronger reading and analytical skills around increasingly complex text
- Scaffold striving readers to high-volume independent reading

For the past 98 years, Scholastic's mission has not changed—to encourage the intellectual and personal growth of all children through literacy, the cornerstone of all learning. Scholastic programs and services are based on expert research, and success is measured by gathering constant feedback and data from the leaders served in the education community and from parents, teachers and students across the country.

Scholastic EDGE: Give Striving Readers a Winning Edge

Scholastic EDGE, for Grades PreK-6, authored by literacy expert Adria Klein, Ph.D., is a unique program specifically created for striving readers and English Language Learners who are reading 6 to 24 months below grade level. This includes intermediate students who need accessible and age-appropriate content, as well as early readers who lack confidence, comprehension, and fluency with text. EDGE is grounded in research-based best-practices; it provides the support and substantive scaffolding necessary to get striving readers and English Language Learners on an accelerated path. EDGE provides accessible, compelling, leveled fiction and informational text of various genres, and text types to build confidence and sustain engagement during small-group, facilitated instruction (see Appendix A for a full program overview).

To this end, EDGE is comprised of carefully leveled texts that provide a perfect balance of both support and challenge, as well as:

- Access to high quality books at appropriate instructional levels helps provide students with the support they need to become proficient readers (Allington, 2013; Fountas & Pinnell, 2006)
- Appropriately difficult texts—books that are truly matched to each reader—to produce substantive reading growth

Teachers want their students to thrive as successful, confident readers—and making sure that happens begins with sensitive, responsive reading instruction, an understanding of how text supports the learning to read process, and access to enough high quality books at appropriate instructional levels to provide students with the support they need to become proficient readers. The role leveled text plays in this process is essential. As Fountas and Pinnell (2006) note, “a level is an approximation, not an absolute designation; not all books on a level are precisely alike.” Each level and book encompass multiple variables, including the background knowledge required of the reader to understand the text, the reader’s ability to process words and comprehend the text, the number of complex sentences embedded in the text, the reader’s engagement with the topic, and so on (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006).

Author of Scholastic EDGE: Adria Klein, Ph.D.



Dr. Klein is a professor emerita of reading education at CSU San Bernardino where she was the Chair of the Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education. A former president of the California Reading Association, she also served on the International Literacy Association's Board of Directors. Currently, Adria is the director of a center focused on early literacy intervention at Saint Mary's College of California. She also serves as a reviewer for the professional journal *The Reading Teacher*.

Dr. Klein is renowned for her work with school districts across the United States to support literacy instruction for striving readers, English language learners, and other student populations. She works with striving students across the grade levels and has taught reading on five continents. Adria has authored or co-authored many professional books and articles about guided reading and other literacy topics.

Research: Intensive Guided Reading Instruction & Intervention

In a review of the research on effective practices for striving readers, Richard Allington (2013) found that the most effective intervention programs provide, minimally, daily 30-minutes of very small group intervention lessons The goal is accelerated reading growth and that all reading growth is linked to the amount of high-success reading that students actually do.”

Guided reading lessons increase the volume of independent reading that students do; provide explicit instruction in accurate, fluent reading; expand academic vocabulary through reading, writing, conversation and explicit instruction; build foundational reading skills; invite students to write about reading; and, in multiple ways, create engagement in and motivation for reading.

The Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) studied teachers and how their students performed on standardized tests and found that time spent in small group instruction for reading distinguished the most effective schools from the other schools in the study. The table below demonstrates how the most accomplished teachers spent almost twice as much time in small group instruction than in whole class instruction (Taylor, et al., 2000).

Time Spent in Reading Instruction by School Effectiveness Level

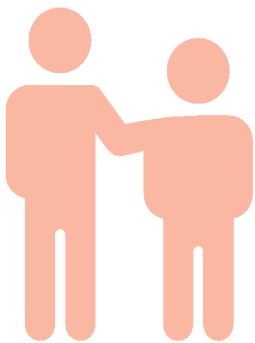
Effectiveness	Minutes Spent in Small Group	Minutes Spent in Whole Group	Minutes Spent in Independent Reading	Total Minutes in Reading
Most Effective Schools	60	25	28	134
Moderately Effective Schools	26	37	27	113
Least Effective Schools	38	30	19	113

The researchers found that what also set the teachers in the most effective schools apart from their counterparts was their use of coaching kids how to apply the word identification skills they were learning in phonics while they were reading everyday texts during differentiated small group time.

Guided reading is our best guarantee that students will hit their reading stride and, as suggested for college and career readiness, read widely and extensively—high quality, grade level literature and informational texts—on their way to becoming proficient readers. Reading well means reading with deep, refined comprehension. We want students to gain maximum insight, knowledge, and enjoyment from every text they read; nothing less will do.

Guided reading groups are not static; they are flexible, temporary, and dynamic, constantly changing as students shift in their understandings and abilities. Indeed, the “key to effective teaching is the ability to make different decisions for different students at different points in time, honoring the complexity of development” (Fountas & Pinnell, 2013). Clearly, the key to successful teaching is systematic assessment and closely monitoring each student’s developmental reading trajectory. Teachers, fully informed by their assessment data, must remain ever vigilant, nimble, and ready to move students into new groups as the incoming data suggests such a move is warranted.

Research: Comprehending Increasingly Complex Text



The research is clear: Providing time for small group instruction, ideally 60 minutes, is linked to student success; but what practices are supported by research? When designing interventions for striving readers, Allington recommends the single-most critical factor that will determine the success of the effort is matching struggling readers with texts they can actually read with a high level of accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. Students need enormous quantities of successful reading to become independent, proficient readers (Allington, 2013; Gallagher, 2009). Allington defines successful reading as “reading experiences in which students perform with a high level

of accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. It is the high accuracy, fluent, and easily comprehended reading that provides the opportunities to integrate complex skills and strategies into an automatic, independent reading process.”

Getting the right books into students' hands is the key that opens the way to strategic intervention strategies that work. Students thrive in classrooms that are filled with books at different levels. Using appropriately difficult texts—books that are truly matched to each reader—produces substantive reading growth. This is especially true for students who find reading challenging (Ehri, et al; 2007). Note that providing lots of opportunities for struggling readers to read texts with high accuracy explains almost all of the success the teachers had in producing accelerated growth.

Fuchs, Fuchs and Vaughn's (2008) research builds on that premise and outlines guidelines for implementing effective Tier-2 interventions support including:

- Form same-ability, small groups
- Provide daily, targeted instruction that is explicit, systematic, and that provides ample practice opportunities with immediate feedback
- Ensure that students are reading texts at the appropriate level of difficulty
- Match reading levels to the purpose of reading
- Provide many opportunities for struggling readers to apply phonics and word study learning to reading words, word lists, and connected texts
- Include writing to support reading and spelling

Fisher, Frey and Hattie (2016) looked at the effect sizes of these small-group practices and found statistically significant effects for small group instruction with flexible grouping (0.49), where the groups must change; teachers provide feedback around a specific goal (0.75) just in time; student-centered teaching = 0.54) where the instruction matches the needs of the group; and teacher clarity (0.75) when s/he is clear with the students in small group about what they are learning and why.

EDGE immerses students in rich, complex authentic text via thoughtfully scaffolded small group guided reading instruction, and marshals the full force of language—listening, speaking, reading and writing—to build a bridge to successful independent reading.

Research: Voluminous Reading

The success equation is clear: access to quality books influences how much students read, and the more students read, the more proficient they become.

Students must log hours of reading every day—both at school and at home—to reach the level of achievement our complex world now demands. Malcolm Gladwell (2009) reminds us that the most successful among us top the chart because of dedication to practice—10,000 hours or more. Volume of reading is critical in the development of reading proficiency (Johnston, 2011); volume is defined as a combination of the time students spend reading plus the numbers of words they actually consume as they read (Allington, 2013; Guthrie, 2004).

In their seminal article, *What Reading Does for the Mind*, Keith Stanovich and Anne Cunningham remind us that the bulk of a child’s vocabulary develops indirectly, through language exposure, rather than directly, as a consequence of being taught meanings of words. What’s more, researchers agree that the primary difference between individual variations in students’ vocabulary has to do with their exposure to text and reading volume. That’s because oral language, compared to written, is lexically impoverished. **Students encounter much richer language, replete with rare words, in the pages of authentic literature than they do in conversation with their parents or through television. Rich, vibrant language is readily available in books—but kids who don’t read don’t access that language. That lack of access, in turn, makes it hard for them to understand texts that are more sophisticated** (2001).

Students who read have a profound advantage over students who don’t, simply in the sheer exposure they gain to sophisticated words. Research shows the average child at the 90th percentile reads almost two million words per year outside of school—more than 200 times more words than the child at the 10th percentile, who reads just 8,000 words outside of school during a year. To put it another way, the entire year’s out-of-school reading for the child at the 10th percentile amounts to just two days of reading for the child at the 90th percentile. These dramatic differences, combined with the lexical richness of print, act to create large vocabulary differences between children.

The advantage readers have over nonreaders does not end with vocabulary; growth in verbal skills and in conceptual knowledge of the world is also most readily available through reading and books. Study after study reveals that those who read extensively and intensively know more about the world. Equally important, enthusiastic readers recognize misinformation. Engaged avid readers develop the essential critical analysis skills required by the new standards. What’s more, Cunningham and Stanovich found

that avid readers who log hours inside books are quick to spot misinformation—an indispensable skill all students must develop as digital information is now doubling every 72 hours (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

To support striving readers in these endeavors, **EDGE scaffolds striving readers as they transfer the skills and strategies practiced in small group to their independent reading practice.** From the engaging, authentic text in EDGE, to the Extend Literacy discussions around the rich text, to the EDGE UP! prompts that challenge readers toward the next level of reading comprehension, EDGE invites readers to apply the strategies they learn to the next text they read.

Reading proficiency—developed with the support of an informed, knowledgeable teacher and hours and hours of reading practice with books that engage the mind and spirit—contributes directly to a lifetime of benefits for every student. For all these reasons, TUSD’s vision of providing students with independent reading coupled with intensive, data-driven guided reading instruction and reader-text-match during the summer literacy camp lays the foundation for academic success and achievement.

Professional Learning: Getting Started with EDGE

To support TUSD teachers' implementation of EDGE, Scholastic provides an initial half-day of program professional learning detailed below.

The EDGE implementation training will provide EDGE teachers the tools necessary to deliver small group, Guided Reading instruction to striving readers. During the 3-hour session, teachers will learn how the program resources support striving readers, how to match students to text and resources based on assessment data, and how to deliver an effective lesson using the appropriate scaffolds provided in the teaching resources. Teachers will develop a schedule for using running records and other reading assessments to monitor student progress and set the instructional focus for each guided reading lesson. Teachers will leave with a plan for how to manage the implementation from launch through the establishment of student independence in centers.

Participants will be able to:

- Select appropriate EDGE resources for students
- Plan and teach an EDGE lesson
- Evaluate the effectiveness of an EDGE lesson
- Use a variety of reading assessment data to track student progress and make instructional decisions

Professional Learning: Sample Session Agenda

EDGE Session Components	Timing	Artifacts of Learning
Welcome and Introduction <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction/Community Builder 2. Session objectives and agenda 	10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking lot questions
EDGE Overview <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting striving readers with EDGE? 2. EDGE levels and resource overview 	20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant Guide: Student Profile
Lesson Planning <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model <i>All Kinds of Ears</i> lesson 2. Within and beyond the Teaching Cards 3. Build your lesson 	45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson Plan
Break	10 minutes	
Resource Exploration <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Other print and digital resources 2. Implementation planning and pacing 	15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Plan
Lesson in Action <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review EDGE lesson Picture of Excellence (POE) 2. Deliberate practice of EDGE lesson 	55 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POE rubric for lesson plan delivery
Tracking Progress <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Running Records and Monitoring Comprehension 	10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student progress tracking plan
Action Planning and Closing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Action Plan for Summer Implementation (25 days and center activities) 2. Closing and Final Questions 	15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session reflection • Action Plan

In Summary

Scholastic EDGE draws together breakthrough research on multiple fronts: wide, independent reading, volume of reading, data-driven guided reading instruction, reader-text-match, and authentic leveled books. Research has demonstrated again and again that providing students with time to read at school enhances their reading ability and is significantly related to gains in reading achievement (Swan, Coddington, Guthrie, 2010). EDGE is founded on the pivotal understanding that striving readers need accelerated progress with a bank of known skills and strategies to help them problem solve when reading new texts. The volume of reading in which students engage profoundly influences their achievement—and this is especially so when students are guided and monitored during that small-group reading and read books at an appropriate level of difficulty.

And this—access to “just right” books matched to every reader—coupled with precise, data-driven small-group guided reading instruction with authentic, engaging text is the hallmark of Scholastic EDGE.

The recommendations described here present comprehensive and sustainable solutions to meet these needs. Scholastic looks forward to finalizing the details of this collaboration with TUSD’s leadership, and creating an ongoing partnership to increase the literacy skills of striving readers throughout the district.

Please contact the following Scholastic Education representatives for more information:

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Appendix A

Program Overview

Scholastic EDGE: Program Overview

Scholastic EDGE is a Tier-2 Intervention program created for striving readers who are reading six months to two years behind grade level. EDGE offers engaging, age-appropriate books and strategic instructional support in a small group setting.

Since students using EDGE materials are typically reading up to two years below grade level, the content reflects both the students' true reading level and their actual age level and interests. This respectful instruction provides the support needed for striving readers to become confident readers.

EDGE is for Grades K-6, however there are key features by grade level for targeted use. EDGE for Grades K-2 (Guided Reading levels Pre-A, A-I) builds literacy by teaching phonemic awareness and phonics letter recognition, print concepts and more, while EDGE for grades 3-6 (Guided Reading levels H-V) is designed to meet the needs of students who have mastered basic decoding and comprehension skills, but have not reached grade-level expectations.

Components of each Scholastic EDGE K-3 Grade Level Kit Include:


- 56-80 Engaging age-appropriate titles, 6 copies each for small-group instruction
- 350-480 Books (GR Levels PreA-1-N)
- Robust four-page Teaching Card for every title offering scaffolds to motivate, focus students' attention, and support literacy development and acceleration
- Comprehensive Teacher's Guide
- Digital Supports for including comprehension graphic organizers and videos for whole and small group connections
- Title-specific graphic organizers (Levels A-V)
- Title-specific bookmarks (Levels J-V)
- 12 Lap Books (K)
- 2 Alphabet Books (K)
- Alphabet Cards (K)
- Avatar Puppet (K)



Teaching Cards for Convenient Lesson Planning

Each Scholastic EDGE titles comes with a laminated, four-page Teaching Card that is designed to build the literacy habits students need to become skilled readers. EDGE provides the scaffolds striving readers need to develop the characteristics that proficient readers already possess to help them become aware of their thinking and reading behavior. The teaching cards provide robust options for specific, purposeful instruction and extensive lesson planning that allows teachers to personalize and adjust each lesson to meet the needs of all students. Prompts on the lesson cards encourage students to extrapolate what they know from reading, writing, and discussing one text and transferring this knowledge to their reading and writing about other texts. The EDGE UP! icon, on the card, signifies a challenge to spur readers on toward the next level of reading comprehension, while the English Learner Support provides suggestions on how to best meet their needs.

LEVEL
EDGE



The Bad Guys in Mission Unpluckable

Written and illustrated by Aaron Blabey
© 2018 Scholastic Teaching Resources • TEXT TYPE: Graphic Novel
 THEMES: Problem Solving, Teamwork, Overcoming Obstacles

Book Talk

Display the cover. Share the title and author. Say, "Imagine this: You are walking down the street. You notice a car. A wolf is in the driver's seat. A huge shark is sitting next to him. A big, hairy spider called a tarantula is perched near the wolf's shoulder. In the back seat sits a snake and a porcupine—a small fish with a lot of sharp teeth. What would you think?"

Invite students to share their thinking, building on what they already know and think about these animals.

Of course this isn't something you'd see in real life. But it does happen in this funny, fantasy book! Mr. Wolf, Mr. Snake, Mr. Shark, Mr. Porcupine, and Legs the tarantula team up to save the world. But they work the world to know that they are NOT bad. To prove it, they plan to rescue 30,000 trapped chickens from a high-tech farm. What will this odd team of heroes do to get past the guards and the laser beam alarms to rescue the chickens? Get ready to find out!

Preview the Text

Have students page through the book to notice its genre, text type, and the author's style and think about how these factors will affect how they read the book.

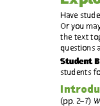
- Identify Genre** What details tell you that this story is a humorous fantasy—a funny book in which some of the things that happen could never happen in real life?
- Explore Text Type** Model for students how to navigate the panels in the first pages of book. What do you notice about how the illustrations and the text work together in this graphic novel? How does the author make it easy to know which character is speaking?
- Key Words** Read about the book cover of the book to preview aspects of the author's style and to discuss the meanings of words that appear often in the text: mission, rescue, lasers, and tarantula.

ELL SUPPORT You may wish to clarify some of the expressions used in the story that may challenge students, such as this use of the multiple-meaning word *rescue* (p. 90). As used in the book, it means stop moving and stand still, not turn to ice.

EDGE UP!

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Explore the Text

Have students read and discuss the book section by section using the questions below. Or you may follow a gradual release model, reading and discussing the first section of the text together with students, then bringing the group back to discuss the remaining questions after they have completed reading the book on their own or with a partner.

Students Bookmark Copy and distribute the bookmark found online to help keep students focused as they read.

Introduction and Chapter 1

(pp. 2–7) What words from the TV interview make the Bad Guys seem really bad?

THINK ALOUD The interviewer uses the words *monsters*, *villains*, and *dangerous*. Mr. Porcupine adds that the wolf looks mean and had pointy teeth, and that the snake was cranky, the shark was gigantic, and the Bat was really nasty. Their words would make anyone watching the news story think that these four characters were terrible and scary.

(pp. 8–11) Why is Mr. Wolf so upset by the news story? What clues from Mr. Snake's dialogue and the illustrations make you think he might cause problems at the farm?

(pp. 12–21) This graphic novel includes charts. Use them to explain what happens if someone walks into a laser beam. What other things make the mission difficult?

Chapters 2–3

(pp. 22–29) Mr. Wolf tells the team they should be ashamed of how they treat Legs. Do you agree? Why or why not?

(pp. 30–43) Let's look at the diagrams Legs draws. How do they help you understand his plan to your own words, read the steps the team has to follow to rescue the chickens.

Chapters 4–6

ELL UP! (pp. 61–67) How does Mr. Porcupine show that he is both clever and brave? Do his actions surprise you? Explain your answer.

THINK ALOUD Hears is smart to realize that being mistaken for a sadnie could help him get close to the computer. Hears knows to jump down because he's afraid of getting caught and eaten and was surprised that Hears is so much about his friends being able to get to the chickens.

(pp. 68–85) Why is it so important that Mr. Shark gets over his fear of Legs?

Chapters 7–9

(pp. 114–126) Why do the chickens trust Mr. Shark? Why wouldn't they have followed anyone else?

ELL UP! (pp. 127–138) How does Mr. Snake's conversation with the guard help the team? Think about how Mr. Snake acted earlier. How has he changed?

Sum It Up

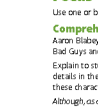
At the end of the book, the team feels very proud of what they have done. Do you think they deserve to be called good guys? Why or why not?

What new problem does the author introduce at the end of the book? What do the last few pages tell you about what might happen in the next book in the series?

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Focus on Strategies and Skills

Use one or both of these lessons after reading the text.

Comprehension: Understand Characters

Aaron Blabey uses both words and illustrations to help readers understand his amazing Bad Guys and why they behave as they do.

Explain to students that in order to fully understand characters, readers have to use details in the text and art to clues, and build on these clues to make inferences about these characters and what is important to them.

Although, as a team, the Bad Guy are working toward the same general goal, they each have their own ideas and problems to overcome. For example, Mr. Snake wants to save some chickens, but later on he comes up with a plan that helps all of the chickens escape.

Mr. Shark is terrified of Legs, but he overcomes his fear to work with the spider to come up with a solution that eventually helps get the chickens out.

Ask students to consider:

- How does each Bad Guy find a way to use his skills to help the rescue mission succeed?
- What problems does each Bad Guy face or create for others?

Graphic Organizer Distribute copies of the graphic organizer found online. Have students work alone or with a partner and use it to demonstrate their understanding of each character and his role in the story. Invite students to share their answers with the group.

Word Study: Synonyms

Remind students that synonyms are words that have similar meaning. Authors do not always repeat the same word when they are describing characters or events. Instead they use different words that have similar meaning to help make their writing more interesting.

For example, on page 5, the author describes Mr. Shark as *gigantic*, and on page 40, the author says he is *massive*. *Gigantic* and *massive* are synonyms. Both of these words mean "huge" or "very big."

- Have students search page 82 to find the word *temble* and its synonym, (*lucky*).
- On page 11, Mr. Wolf says that the rescue will be *awesome*. Have students search page 44 for a synonym for *awesome*. (*great*).
- Circle word webs together with more synonyms for *gigantic*, *temble*, and *awesome*.

ELL SUPPORT Use the high utility word *very* and hand gestures to clarify the meaning of *gigantic* (*very big*) and use to explain *awesome* as meaning "very good" and *temble* as "very bad." As you discuss the meaning of *temble*, encourage Spanish speakers to make the connection between the Spanish word *temble* and its English cognate.

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Extend Literacy

Discussion

Invite students to share their thinking with the whole group or with a partner.

Teamwork Mr. Wolf keeps emphasizing teamwork and cooperation in what ways were the Bad Guys a good team? What are some examples of teamwork from their mission? What are some examples of how teamwork and cooperation help real people accomplish things that they could not do on their own?

Reading More Graphic Novels What made reading this graphic novel fun for you? What did you find challenging? What did you learn from reading this book that might help you the next time you read a graphic novel?

Fluency

Read With Expression Have students work with a partner to read about Chapter 5 (pp. 68–77). The goal is for readers to reflect the characters' voices and personalities. One student will read Mr. Wolf's lines and the other will read Mr. Snake's. Remind students to use the words emphasized in large print and punctuation as clues to help them read with expression. Invite volunteers to perform the scene, reading it aloud to the larger group.

ELL SUPPORT Have students revisit pages 68–69 and help them find examples in the sentences of words in large print, ellipses, exclamation marks, and question marks. Model how the emphasized words and punctuation marks help readers read with expression. Invite volunteers to perform the scene, reading it aloud to the larger group.

Write in Response to Reading

A New Book Ask students to work with a partner on an idea for a new graphic novel about the Bad Guys. Have them write a short summary of their new story and draw an illustration that shows the setting for this new adventure. (Narrative)

In the News . . . Again! Invite students to imagine that one of the Bad Guys is going to be interviewed on TV by TFerry Fluffie about what happened on the farm. Ask students to pick one of the Bad Guys and write an explanation of the rescue from that character's point of view. (Narrative)

ELL SUPPORT Have students work with partners, taking turns to role play their characters and tell their version of the rescue before writing it down.

ELL UP! **Who Was the Biggest Hero?** Remind students that all five of the Bad Guys contributed in some way to the success of the mission. Ask, "Who was the biggest hero? Why?" Have students share their opinions by writing a paragraph. Remind them to revisit the book to find details in the text that support their reasoning. (Opinion)

Connect to the Internet

About the Author Find out about how Aaron Blabey became a writer and identify other books by this author that students may want to read at www.aaronblabeybooks.com.

Wolves in the Wild The fictional Mr. Wolf has some things in common with real wolves. Share information about how wolves in the wild use teamwork and cooperation to survive. Visit www.livingwithwolves.org/how-wolves-survive.

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(pp. 8–11) Why is Mr. Wolf so upset by the news story? What clues from Mr. Snake's dialogue and the illustrations make you think he might cause problems at the farm?

(pp. 20–21) This graphic novel includes charts. Use them to explain what happens if someone walks into a laser beam. What other things make the mission difficult?

Chapters 2–3

(pp. 25–29) Mr. Wolf tells the team they should be ashamed of how they treat Legs. Do you agree? Why or why not?

(pp. 38–43) Let's look at the diagrams Legs draws. How do they help you understand his plan? In your own words, retell the steps the team has to follow to rescue the chickens.

Chapters 4–6

EDGE UP (pp. 61–67) How does Mr. Piranha show that he is both clever and brave? Do his actions surprise you? Explain your answer.

THINK ALOUD He was smart to realize that being mistaken for a sardine could help him get close to the computer. He was brave to jump down because he risked getting caught and eaten. I was surprised that he cared so much about his friends being able to get to the chickens.

(pp. 80–85) Why is it so important that Mr. Shark gets over his fear of Legs?

Chapters 7–9

(pp. 114–126) Why do the chickens trust Mr. Shark? Why wouldn't they have followed anyone else?

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Sum It Up

At the end of the book, the team feels very proud of what they have done. Do you think they deserve to be called good guys? Why or why not?

What new problem does the author introduce at the end of the book? What do the last few pages tell you about what might happen in the next book in the series?

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Use one or both of these lessons after reading the text.

Comprehension: Understand Characters

Aaron Blabey uses both words and illustrations to help readers understand his amazing Bad Guys and why they behave as they do.

Explain to students that in order to fully understand characters, readers have to use details in the text and art as clues, and build on these clues to make inferences about these characters and what is important to them.

Although, as a team, the Bad Guys are working toward the same general goal, they each have their own ideas and problems to overcome. For example, Mr. Snake wants to eat some chickens, but later on he comes up with a plan that helps all of the chickens escape.

Mr. Shark is terrified of Legs, but he overcomes his fear to work with the spider to come up with a disguise that eventually helps get the chickens out.

Ask students to consider:

- How would you describe the personalities of each of the main characters?
- What problems does each Bad Guy face or create for others?
- How does each Bad Guy find a way to use his skills to help the rescue mission succeed?

Graphic Organizer Distribute copies of the graphic organizer found online.

Have students work alone or with a partner and use it to demonstrate their understanding of each character and his role in the story. Invite students to share their answers with the group.

Word Study: Synonyms

Remind students that synonyms are words that have similar meaning. Authors do not always repeat the same word when they are describing characters or events. Instead they use different words that have similar meaning to help make their writing more interesting.

- For example, on page 5, the author describes Mr. Shark as **gigantic**, and on page 83, the author says he is **massive**. **Gigantic** and **massive** are synonyms. Both of these words mean "huge" or "very big".
- Have students search page 82 to find the word **terrible** and its synonym, **awful**.
- On page 11, Mr. Wolf says that the rescue will be **awesome**. Have students search page 44 for a synonym for **awesome**. (**great**)
- Create word webs together with more synonyms for **gigantic**, **terrible**, and **awesome**.

EL SUPPORT Use the high utility word **very** and hand gestures to clarify the meaning of **gigantic** ("very big"). Go on to explain **awesome** as meaning "very good" and **terrible** as "very bad." As you discuss the meaning of **terrible**, encourage Spanish speakers to make the connection between the Spanish word **terrible** and its English cognate.

EDGE

Level P Sample Teaching Card

Writing to Extend Literacy

EDGE provides students with the opportunity to develop strong writing skills to take full advantage of the power of writing as a tool to strengthen reading comprehension. EDGE Teaching Cards provide robust, title-related writing prompts for each book. The Write in Response to Reading activities are designed to enhance comprehension and make students' thinking about the texts visible. The teaching card provides three 'Write in Response to Reading' options, and the EDGE UP! Icon identifies the most challenging writing option, which allows teachers to differentiate and accelerate support based on students' needs. In addition to the writing activities, the digital bookmarks and graphic organizers offer more options for integrating writing into student interaction with the text.

Fostering Social-Emotional Skills

The routines and rhythm of every Scholastic EDGE book help support social and emotional (SEL) development before, during, and after reading; students are given the tools to help them engage with the text, focus their attention, and take responsibility as they read. Because Scholastic EDGE emphasizes using a book's specific genre, text structure, and features to help students navigate the text and set goals for reading, and in turn they become more flexible, resilient, and confident readers. By participating in small-group and partner work, students, with teacher support, develop stronger skills related to friendship, kindness, and cooperation and collaborative problem-solving.

Technology to Support Teachers and Students

While the main texts students read in EDGE are print texts, technology is integrated into the program. EDGE online offers resources for both the teacher and students. Digital resources include:

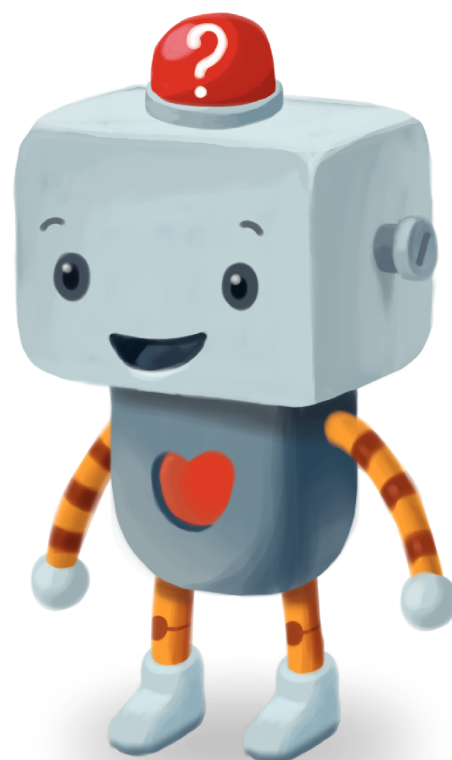
- Streaming videos offering concise exploration of key comprehension strategies that teachers may elect to use during whole group, small group, or individual instruction (Grades 3-6)
- Book-specific downloadable phonics practice pages (Levels A-I)
- Downloadable comprehension graphic organizers to help students visualize their thinking, record their understandings, and analyze more complex text (Levels A-V)
- Downloadable book-specific bookmarks that support striving readers (Levels J-V) that:
 - Break reading into manageable chunks
 - Explore given questions as students read
 - Enhance understanding by incorporating fun facts related to the story
 - Support the skills students need to develop and succeed as independent readers
 - Provide comprehension questions for teachers to check in with students as they read
- Connect to the Internet feature on each Teaching Card

Assessment & Progress Monitoring

Scholastic EDGE can be used with running records observational tools at periodic intervals. The Teacher's Guide offers tips on how to use running records for formative assessments and progress monitoring assessments. In connection with running records that are done one-on-one, other data can be gathered periodically at the small- or whole-group level using informal assessments. The assessments are an important tool for understanding the student's development and adjusting instruction to best meet the needs of the striving reader. Other assessment options include:

- Assessing comprehension with reflective writing pieces, such as answering open-ended questions in a response book, quick writes to develop fluency, and justifying an opinion with textual evidence
- Reviewing the reading and writing connection to observe how the student physically writes the message, such as spacing, word use, spelling, letter formation, sentence structure, and staying on topic
- Using comprehension rubrics to observe progress in reading and writing that include word choice, phonics skills, or a rating scale for classifying writing behaviors
- Implementing observational charts to observe student progress, plan for flexible grouping, and move students toward grade-level performance

**I love to
help striving
readers!**



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