

**Expository Text Lesson Cycle**  
**Laura Weakland – RDNG 310 – Spring 2008**



Simon, S. (2003). *The moon*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

**Summary of Expository Text Selected**

This book is well written and eloquently illustrated with beautiful National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) photography with white text set on a black background. There are 32 pages in this revised edition. This book covers many aspects of the moon that children and adults alike may not know: for example, there is no weather on the moon, there is no sound on the moon, the sky is always black and the stars always shine, you would weigh less there and bounce when you walk, and the moon is made of rock and has mountains and flatlands or craters. This book also provides details of the Apollo space program. This book provides a wonderful glimpse at the moon, our nearest neighbor in space. Children and adults alike will enjoy reading this book and taking in the impressive photography and the information text as an educational journey to the moon. *The Moon* by Seymour Simon was a 2004 Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K–12 as awarded the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA).

**About the Author** (author website - <http://www.seymoursimon.com/>)

This text was written by Seymour Simon, a well-known children’s author of science informational books. Prior to becoming a writer, Mr. Simon was a science teacher for over 20 years. He has over 200 published works, with over half of them being named Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K-12 by the NSTA.

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### **Analysis of Content:**

As mentioned previously, this text was written by a very prominent author of children’s science texts. Prior to becoming a writer, Seymour Simon was a science teacher for many years. Accordingly, many of his science books receive awards and are highly regarded as a source of nonfiction information for students on a variety of subjects. *The Moon* was a 2004 Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K–12 as awarded by NSTA (NSTA, 2008). This book was reviewed by a panel to have met the following criteria:

- Substantial science content;
- Information is clear, accurate, and up to date;
- Theories and facts are clearly distinguished;
- Facts are not oversimplified to the point where the information is misleading;
- Generalizations are supported by facts and significant facts are not omitted; and
- Books are free of gender, ethnic, and socioeconomic bias.

This text has a sequential text structure. The book begins with a brief descriptive overview of the moon. After this descriptive overview the book outlines the work of early scientists leading into the subsequent launching of the Apollo space program. The text leads the reader through the landing on the moon by the Apollo 11 flight crew and their subsequent explorations and findings. The text then discusses subsequent Apollo missions, including the last mission, Apollo 17, and their findings. The book concludes with a summary on what scientists have learned and what questions and mysteries are still open to learn. The last page leaves us with a very profound view of Earth from the moon and outlines for the reader how very contrasting the Earth and moon are from each other.

### **Book Reviews**

The *School Library Journal* (SLJ) says the digitally remastered NASA photographs taken of the scientific voyage to the moon are “incredible” (Amazon, 2008). The SLJ also says that

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Simon’s original facts remain relevant and true to the original edition and the “writing reflects the graphics: beautiful.” The SLJ levels this text for grades 2-5.

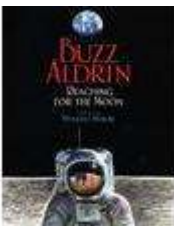
The *Booklist*, a review journal of the American Library Association (Amazon, 2008), levels this book for grades 2-4 and states this text is an attractive replacement for an older edition. This edition has many new photographs and color reproductions with a new layout.

#### **Readability**

According to the Scholastic Book Wizard (Scholastic, 2008) the interest level of this text is grade 3-5, the grade level equivalent is 3.8, the Lexile Framework is 730, the DRA of this text is 38 and the Guided Reading level is P. Accordingly, this text is appropriate for students nearing the end of the third grade or for fourth grade.

#### **Ancillary Texts**

**\*Aldrin, B. (2005). *Buzz Aldrin: reaching for the moon*. New York: Harper Collins.**



Genre: Nonfiction/Autobiography/Picture Book

Guided Reading Level: W (6<sup>th</sup> grade)/Grade Level Equivalent: 4.3 (4<sup>th</sup> grade)

This is the incredible autobiography of Edwin Eugene (“Buzz”) Aldrin, one of the Apollo 11 astronauts to first step foot on the moon. The story begins with young Buzz’s life and how he got the nickname Buzz (or “buzzer,” his sister’s word for “brother”) and how maybe it was meant to be for him to travel to the moon since his mother’s maiden name was “Moon!” As a young boy, Buzz aspired to the qualities of “determination, strength and independence” of his favorite movie hero, the Lone Ranger. This book takes us through his young life and his career up until his

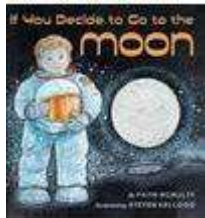
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historical Apollo 11 voyage to the moon. *Buzz Aldrin: Reaching for the Moon* was a 2006 Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K–12 as awarded by the NSTA (NSTA 2008).

I would use this text as a read-aloud to the students after reading our featured expository text, *The Moon* or as a guided reading group selection, and before wrapping up the lesson cycle. This book is a great way to help students make “connections.” All students can relate to young Buzz’s life, from playing sports to collecting rocks to dreaming about the future. After reading this text, I would ask the students to make a “*point of view*” response (Nettles, p. 449) in their reader’s response journals. The students would write a response from the point of view of Buzz Aldrin of what it would feel like to be one of the first astronauts to visit the moon.

In addition, this text would serve to introduce the students to one of our “*characters*” in our podcast performance assessment at the end of this lesson cycle.

**\* McNulty, F. (2005). *If you decide to go to the moon*. New York: Scholastic.**



Genre: Fiction/Nonfiction/Picture Book

Guided Reading Level: N (3<sup>rd</sup> grade)/Grade Level Equivalent: 2.7 (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)

This book is a fictionalized story about a kid going to the moon and is based on nonfiction material. It is written in a whimsical way in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person viewpoint about taking a trip to the moon. It begins by detailing how long it would take to get there and how far it is. It is followed with a “*blast off*.” As the reader journeys toward the moon he is told all about space and what it would be like to travel there. The pictures are delightful and give the reader a fun visual of what it might be like to travel to the moon. Students will delight in the images of “*floating liquid balls*” of orange juice and “*rising through the air and leaping forward like a kangaroo when you*

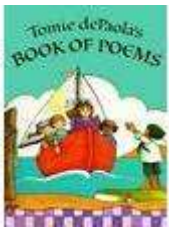
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*step out on the moon.*” The reader proceeds to land on the moon and then return home. It is a delightful way to introduce kids to the facts about the moon and the space program.

I chose this book to supplement the expository text as an “*Interactive Read-Aloud*” pre-reading activity. (See further discussion below under “Pre-Reading Strategy – *Teacher Read-Aloud*”). It is light and fun and the illustrations are beautiful and it will excite the students to read further about the moon.

**\*dePaola, T. (1988). *Tomie dePaola’s book of poems*. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons.**



Genre: Poetry

Guided Reading Level: N (3<sup>rd</sup> grade)/Grade Level Equivalent: 3.5 (3<sup>rd</sup> grade)

This is delightful anthology of poems compiled and illustrated by an award-winning artist and author, Tomie dePaola. The poems I would use in this lesson cycle are: “*The Moon’s the North Wind’s Cooky*” and “*Old Man Moon.*” I would use these poems, along with other legends and folktales about the moon, including some Native American or other cultural lore, to help students understand that before the 19<sup>th</sup> century the moon was shrouded in mystery. The students could then complete the “*Full Moons*” graphic organizer from the October 2007 Moon Exploration issue of *Kids Discover* magazine. This graphic organizer gives all the various Native American names for the months of full months and asks the students to create their own names for full moons. The students could work in pairs and then create a “*jingle*” or skit about one of their new names. Or the students could each take a different month and illustrate their new name to be bound in a class “*Collaborative Book*” (Tompkins, p. 25). *See Appendices for poems and “Full Moons” graphic organizer.*

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\*Kline, S. (2000). *Horrible Harry goes to the moon*. New York: Scholastic.



Genre: Fiction/Chapter Book/Series

Guided Reading Level: L (transitional 2<sup>nd</sup> gr./3<sup>rd</sup> gr.)/Grade Level Equivalent: 3.3 (3<sup>rd</sup> grade)

This book is part of the Horrible Harry series chapter books and is leveled at the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading level. This book is a humorous account of Harry who decides when his class is studying the moon that he would like to do more than just study the moon. I would use this text with the students who have a history of reading struggles. Diane Nettles in *Comprehensive Literacy Instruction in Today's Classrooms: The Whole, the Parts and the Heart* says that with students who struggle in reading that teachers need to give them a “steady diet of books that are easy to read” (p. 510). Nettles also says to make use of series books with these struggling students and I would let these students read this fun light text during our lesson cycle to help hook them into the unit on the moon, as well as reading. Once they read this text, they could continue on with other books in the series.

\* **Moon exploration.** (2007, October). *Kids Discover*, 17 (10).



Genre: Nonfiction/Magazine

Flesch-Kincaid Readability: (average of 3 100-word excerpts): 10.5 (10<sup>th</sup> grade)

Because of the high readability level of this text, I would use it as a read-aloud and would also do some word study vocabulary activities with this text. An example of a vocabulary word study activity that could be used with this text is a called a “Tea Party” (Tompkins, p 126). The

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students would work in pairs and take a vocabulary word from the magazine after we read it aloud (e.g. satellite, atmosphere, gravity, lunar, telescope, etc.). They would then create an index card with their vocabulary word, its definition, and an illustration. When the students are done, they move around the class in a “*tea party*” fashion sharing their word cards and explaining their words to their classmates. The magazine is beautifully illustrated with lots of pictures and graphics and I would have it available in the reading center for students to browse independently and for students to read who are reading above grade-level.

**\*Osbourne, M. P. (1996). *Midnight on the moon*. New York: Scholastic.**



Genre: Fiction/Chapter Book/Series

Guided Reading Level: M (transitional 2<sup>nd</sup> gr./3<sup>rd</sup> gr.)/Grade Level Equivalent: 2.1 (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)

This book is another book in a chapter books series and is part of the Magic Tree House series chapter books and is leveled at the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading level. This book is about two young kids who are able to travel via a “*magic tree house*.” This text would also be used with the students who have a history of reading struggles. It has a nice nonfiction companion guide (see further description below) that these students could also use to help support their reading of the main expository text.

**\* Osbourne, M. P. & W. (2003). *Space: A nonfiction companion to midnight on the moon*. New York: Random House.**



Genre: Nonfiction/Chapter Book

Guided Reading Level: M (transitional 2<sup>nd</sup> gr./3<sup>rd</sup> gr.)/Grade Level Equivalent: 3.5 (3<sup>rd</sup> grade)

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This book is the companion nonfiction guide to the fiction book, *Midnight on the Moon*, by the same author. It has a chapter entitled “*From Earth to the Moon*” that I would use in guided reading groups during this lesson cycle with the students who are reading below grade level. As they read, I would have them copy down words that give them trouble in their reading response journals.

**\*Brown, D. (2001). *One giant leap: the story of Neil Armstrong*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin**



Genre: Nonfiction/Picture Book

Guided Reading Level: P (transitional 3<sup>rd</sup> gr./4<sup>th</sup> gr.)/Grade Level Equivalent: 3.1 (3<sup>rd</sup> grade)

This is the biography of Neil Armstrong, one of the Apollo 11 astronauts to first step foot on the moon. The story begins with young Neal’s life and his fascination with flying and planes. This book takes us through his young life and his career up until his historical Apollo 11 voyage to the moon.

I would use this text as a read-aloud to the students after reading our featured expository text, *The Moon*, or as a guided reading group selection, and before wrapping up the lesson cycle. Subsequent to our read aloud, I would have the students create a Venn diagram making “*text to text*” connections on the similarities (and differences) of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin’s lives.

In addition, this text would serve to introduce the students to one of our “*characters*” in our podcast performance assessment at the end of this lesson cycle.

#### **Additional Ancillary Resources**

The following additional resources would be used during this lesson cycle. Students would be keeping a log of their observations of the moon phases. They will write their observations on



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the “*Moon Watch Flip Book*” and they will use the U.S. Naval Observatory websites to aid in when to look for the moon and what the moon ‘should’ look like if it is cloudy! Prior to beginning their observations, the students will work in pairs to access the Enchanted Learning website and read about the various phases of the moon and complete the “*Label the Moon Phases Diagram*.” This will help the students build schema for how and why the moon moves through phases during the month before they begin making their observations. As a fun culminating activity for the students, especially for the kinesthetic learners, the students will be creating a model of the phases of the moon with Oreos! *See Appendices for handouts. See Bibliography for website URLs.*

- American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) – oLogy Moon Watch Flip Book (n.d)
- Enchanted Learning – Phases of the Moon (2008)
- Enchanted Learning – Label the Moon Phases Diagram (2008)
- Lunar and Planetary Institute Explore! News (Dec. 2006) - Oreo Moon Phases (2008)
- U.S. Naval Observatory - Complete Moon and Sun Data for One Day (2007)
- U.S. Naval Observatory - What the Moon Looks like Today (2008)

### **Audience Description**

This expository text lesson cycle is designed for a class of 16 fourth graders in an urban school. However, this lesson cycle could be used with third graders in the latter part of the year, as well. The students range in age from 9-11 years old. There are 9 female students and 7 male students. Four of the students are receiving special education services: three for reading support and the other for speech/language and hearing impairment. All of these students are reading below grade level. The class is 100% African-American with all speaking English as their first language. Sixty-nine percent of the students receive free or reduced lunches.

### **Accommodations**

For the students who need extra reading support, accommodations will be made to ensure they have access to materials that support the reading of this expository text at their reading

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level. They will be partnered with a buddy to help ensure they are able to decode the text, as well as they will receive additional small group instruction to scaffold the reading of this text.

For the student who is hearing impaired, the following accommodations will be made:

- During the read-alouds and question and answer time, I will direct my face toward this student and place her as close to me as possible.
- Use of the overhead instead of the white board to prevent the necessity to turn my back to this student.
- Assign a peer buddy that will work with this student one-on-one to ensure understanding of the instructions.
- Be aware of pacing. It is imperative for students with hearing impairment that the pace is slow enough that they can keep up.
- Limit distractions around this student’s work area. Students with hearing impairment benefit from reducing excessive background noise.

### **Goals**

During this expository text lesson cycle, students will:

- Read for meaning the expository text, *The Moon*.
- Monitor their comprehension by formulating questions, clarifying points within the text, making and confirming predictions, and summarizing ideas based on information in the text.
- Discuss with their peers responses to reading this expository text.
- Teach the comprehension strategy “*Reciprocal Teaching*” to their peers.
- Identify the main ideas of the expository text.
- Write responses and summaries after reading this expository text.
- Compose a podcast on the moon with their peers presenting what they have learned from reading this expository text.

All of the reading strategies taught in this lesson cycle are research-based, classroom-tested, and developmentally appropriate and were obtained from Diane Nettle’s *Comprehensive Literacy Instruction in Today’s Classroom: The Whole, the Parts, and the Heart* (2006) and Gail Tompkins’ *50 Literacy Strategies: Step by Step, Third Edition* (2008).

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### Objectives (State of Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations):

#### *Language Arts:*

##### *Students will:*

- R.WS.04.05 Acquire and apply strategies to identify unknown words or work parts: self-monitor and construct meaning by engaging actively in reading a variety of genre, self-correcting, and using a thesaurus.
- R.WS.04.07 In context, determine the meaning of words and phrases including similes, metaphors, content vocabulary, and literary terms using strategies and resources including context clues, semantic feature analysis, and a thesaurus.
- R.WS.04.06 Read fluently beginning grade-level text and increasingly demanding text as the year proceeds.
- R.IT.04.01 Identify and describe the structure, elements, features, and purpose of a variety of informational genre including autobiography/biography, personal essay, almanac, and newspaper.
- R.CM.04.02 Retell through concise summarization grade-level narrative and informational text.
- R.CM.04.03 Explain relations among themes, ideas, and characters within and across the texts to create a deeper understanding by categorizing and classifying, comparing and contrasting, or drawing parallels across time and culture.
- R.CM.04.04 Apply significant knowledge from grade-level science, social studies, and mathematics texts.
- R.MT.04.01 Self-monitor comprehension when reading or listening to text by automatically applying and discussing the strategies used by mature readers to increase comprehension including: predicting, constructing mental images, visually representing ideas in text, questioning, rereading or listening again if uncertain about meaning, inferring, summarizing, and engaging in interpretative discussions.
- R.MT.04.02 Plan, monitor, regulate, and evaluate skills, strategies, and processes to construct and convey meaning (e.g. decoding unknown words) and use graphic organizers to deepen their understanding of compare/contrast, and sequential organizational patterns.
- W.PR.04.02 Apply a variety of pre-writing strategies for both narrative and informational writing (e.g. graphic organizers such as maps, webs, Venn diagrams) in order to generate, sequence, and structure ideas (e.g. plot, settings, conflict/resolutions, definition/description, or chronological sequence).
- W.PS.04.01 Exhibit personal style and voice to enhance the written message in both narrative (e.g., strong verbs, figurative language, sensory images) and informational writing (e.g., precision, established importance, transitions).
- W.SP.04.01 In the context of writing, correctly spell frequently encountered words (e.g. roots, inflections, prefixes, suffixes, multi-syllabic); for less frequently encountered words, use structural cues (e.g. letter/sound, rimes, morphemic) and environmental sources (e.g. word walls, word lists, dictionaries, spell checkers).
- W.HW.04.01 Write neat and legible compositions.
- S.CN.04.03 Speak effectively using facial expressions, hand gestures, and body language in narrative and information presentations.

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- S.DS.04.01 Engage in interactive, extended discourse to socially construct meaning in book clubs, literature circles, partnerships, or other conversation protocols.
- S.DS.04.04 Plan and deliver presentations focusing on a key question using an informational organizational pattern (e.g. descriptive, problem/solution, cause/effect); supportive facts and details reflecting and emphasizing facial expressions, hand gestures, and body language.
- L.CN.04.01 Ask substantive questions of the speaker that will provide additional elaboration and details.
- L.CN.04.02 Listen to or view critically while demonstrating appropriate social skills of audience behaviors (e.g. eye contact, attentive, supportive) in small and large group settings.
- L.RP.04.05 Respond to and summarize the major ideas and evidence presented in spoken messages and formal presentations.

#### ***Science:***

##### *Students will:*

- E.ST.04.11 Identify common objects in the sky, such as the sun and moon.
- E.ST.04.12 Compare and contrast the characteristics of the sun, moon and Earth, including relative distances and abilities to support life.
- E.ST.04.23 Describe the motion of the moon around the Earth.
- E.ST.04.24 Explain how the visible shape of the moon follows a predictable cycle which takes approximately a month.

#### **Assessment**

Students will be assessed during this expository text lesson cycle using a variety of formative and summative assessment means. The summative assessments include the “*Reciprocal Teaching Presentations*” on the comprehension reading strategy “*Reciprocal Teaching*,” the “*Identifying the Main Ideas - Essay*” on the expository text, and the “*Moon Podcast*” performance assessment. All of these assessments are done using a rubric. *See Appendices for rubrics.* The remaining assessments are formative in nature and are embedded throughout the lesson cycle and will be used to guide instruction.

#### **Anticipatory Set**

Students will participate in a “*Who Am I*” riddle activity about the moon to pique their interest on this topic and text. Students will be split up into groups of 4. Students will find one

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person they want to work with and the teacher will then place the pairs together into groups of 4. This allows for some choice by the student, as well as some control of grouping by the teacher. Each team will begin with 80 points. There are 8 clues to the “*Who Am I*” riddle. Each clue gets slightly easier than the ones before. The clues will be folded over and the students will be instructed as to when to turn over the next clue. Students can discuss quietly in their groups possible answers. By working in groups, students are given the opportunity to socially interact, discuss and evaluate their own and others’ points of views as they respond. If students elect to make a “*guess*” they must write it down and give to the teacher in silence for checking. If they are incorrect, they lose 10 points. If they are correct they gain 25 points and the game is over. The group with the most points wins. Accordingly, a group who guesses every time incorrectly, but ultimately guesses correctly could possibly lose! The winning team gets to serve themselves first to a snack of “*MoonPies*” and juice! *See Appendices for “Who Am I” riddle handout.*

#### **Pre-Assessment of Content – Two Minute Fast Facts**

To pre-assess the content knowledge of the students with regards to the topic of the moon, I would use a brainstorming reading strategy called “*Two Minute Fast Facts*” (Nettles, p. 389). This strategy is a form of brainstorming and quickly allows the teacher to find out how much students know about a subject. The students write the numbers 1-25 down the side of their paper. After the teacher introduces the topic of the moon, the students list everything they know about the moon in two minutes. The students draw a line under the last item they wrote. At the end of the lesson cycle, the students take another two minutes to see how many more facts they can add to the list that they learned through the lesson cycle. This activity could be done before the “*Who Am I?*” anticipatory riddle activity, if the teacher didn’t want the riddle activity to alter getting a clear assessment of what the students know about this topic. Students will turn in their *Two Minute Fast Facts* as a means of formative assessment.

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#### **Pre-Assessment of Vocabulary – Exclusion Brainstorming**

To pre-assess the vocabulary relating to this expository text, I would use a reading strategy called “*Exclusion Brainstorming*” (Tompkins, p. 35). This strategy is a pre-reading assessment strategy that helps the teacher gauge the extent of students’ background knowledge with regards to the vocabulary relating to the topic, as well as to help students familiarize themselves with key terms before reading. The teacher prepares a list of vocabulary words and the students are asked to work in pairs or small groups to discuss the words and decide which ones do not belong to the topic of the moon. As the students read, they identify which words belong and which don’t and make corrections to their pre-reading decisions. The words included in the exclusion brainstorm are: satellite, mountains, oceans, crescent, Apollo, flatlands, sunsets, gravity, noise, moonquake, hot, lava, soil, crater, and air. (Note: the words that don’t belong in this list with regards to the topic of the moon are: oceans, sunsets, noise, and air). *See Appendices for the “Exclusion Brainstorming” handout.* Students will turn in their work as a means of formative assessment.

#### **Pre-Reading Strategy – Teacher Read-Aloud**

The pre-reading strategy I chose for this lesson cycle to help prepare students to read the expository text, to motivate them, and to help develop their background knowledge and vocabulary is a whole-class “*Interactive Read-Aloud*” (Tompkins, p. 50). The text I chose for this pre-reading strategy is *If You Decide to Go to the Moon* written by Faith McNulty and illustrated by Stephen Kellogg. This book is a fictionalized story with expository information woven throughout. It is light and fun and the illustrations are beautiful and it will excite the students to read further about the moon. I would preview the book before I read it aloud, selecting stop points for asking questions or asking vocabulary words. As I read aloud, I would model fluent and expressive reading, stopping periodically to ask questions and to focus students on specific points in the text. After reading, to assess the students’ understanding of the text, I

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would employ a strategy called “*Reading Logs*” (Tompkins, p. 100) whereby the students would write an entry in their reader’s response journals based upon their reflection of the story we read aloud. As a teacher, I would pose these questions in relation to the text for them to reflect on and respond to: ***If you got a chance to go to the moon, what three things you would like to see on the moon or do you think would be pretty cool about visiting the moon?*** (e.g. being able to jump higher than on Earth, collecting and analyzing all the interesting rocks, seeing the flag and other things the astronauts left behind like a falcon feather and a four-leaf clover, etc.). ***And what three things would you miss about Earth?*** (e.g. family, plants, air, water, animals, etc). The students will turn in their reader’s response journals with their *Reading Log* entries as a means of formative assessment.

#### **During-Reading Strategy (Whole Group) – Reciprocal Teaching**

The during-reading strategy I chose for the whole group for this text to help students monitor their own comprehension of the text is a strategy called “*Reciprocal Teaching*” (Nettles, p. 412). This strategy will be taught to the entire group, but they will practice using this strategy in groups of four. The students get the opportunity to not only read and monitor their comprehension, but to also socially interact with their peers giving them an opportunity to discuss, listen, and evaluate their own and others’ points of view with regards to this text. This strategy has two components: (1) students focus on four comprehension strategies as they read the text: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing and (2) students gradually take over the role of teaching and helping their peers with the strategy. The struggling readers would be assigned the role of “*questioner*” and would receive further small group instruction in this strategy as outlined below under “*During Reading Strategy (Small Group) – Reciprocal Questioning.*”

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The instructional method I would use for teaching this strategy is “*explanation*” and would be scripted as follows:

*“Today, fourth graders, we are going to read a book entitled The Moon by Seymour Simon. As we read this text, we will be monitoring our understanding of the text or comprehension using a strategy called “Reciprocal Teaching.” This strategy has four parts: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing and good readers use all of these strategies when they read. We will divide up into groups of four. Each person will have a role as either “predictor,” “questioner,” “clarifier,” or “summarizer.” In addition, one person will be assigned the role of teacher for the group and this person will also have the job to make sure the group is progressing on task and in a timely manner. The predictor is in charge of making 3 predictions about what they anticipate next in the text. The questioner will come up with 3 questions about their reading: either questions about confusing parts or questions about things they are wondering about. The clarifier will note 3 areas in his reading where he needed clarification in order to help understand the text. The summarizer will list what they think is the 3 most important details or events in their reading. We will all read the same text independently and we will have stop points where we will discuss our findings. You should be prepared to discuss your findings with your group. You will make notes on the handout for your group. The handout has 4 columns: one for each role. During reading you will only be taking notes for your assigned role; but during your group’s discussion, you should make some notes about the findings of each of your group member’s roles.”*

At this time, I would select an excerpt from the text and model how to use each of these strategies. The text, *The Moon*, will be chunked into four sections and after each stop point, students will meet with their groups and discuss their findings. As students break up into their groups, I would circulate the room to each group monitoring their discussion. I would ask follow-up questions as necessary to assess their understanding. Students will turn in their written findings as a group as a means of formative assessment. *See Appendices for handout.*



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### During Reading Strategy (Small Group) – Reciprocal Questioning

The during-reading strategy I chose for a small group for this text to help students monitor their own comprehension of the text is a strategy called “*Reciprocal Questioning*” (Tompkins, p. 103). This strategy is a variation of the “*Reciprocal Teaching*” strategy taught above. However, this strategy focuses only on the questioning aspect of the comprehension strategy. I would teach this strategy in a small group with my struggling readers to help scaffold them further in the strategies outlined in *Reciprocal Teaching*. They would be rereading the selection they read earlier in their *Reciprocal Teaching* groups. This strategy has two components: (1) students read the text deeply in order to ask the teacher questions and (2) the teacher reinforces their learning by answering their questions and by helping them refine or focus their questions, if necessary.

The instructional methods I would use for teaching this strategy are “*explanation*” and “*mental modeling*” and would be scripted as follows:

*“Today we are going to further our understanding of the strategy “questioning” as a means to help us understand the text we read. We will be re-reading the section of the book, The Moon, that you read earlier in your Reciprocal Teaching groups. This time you will be the “teacher” and you will be preparing 2-3 questions to ask me about my understanding of this portion of the book. Upon completion of your reading and preparing of the questions, I will close my book and you may ask me your questions. We will then read the next section and this time I will be “the teacher” and I will get to prepare the questions to ask you. Let me give you an example of how I would do this. After reading the following text:*

**This footprint on the moon marks the first time that human beings have walked on ground that was not Earth. The footprint may last for a million years or longer. That is because there is no air on the moon and without air, there can be no winds to blow dust around. The astronauts could jump much higher on the moon than on Earth. People weigh much less on the moon than they do on Earth. The moon’s gravity is one sixth that of the Earth’s. Gravity causes objects to have weight. In places where there is less gravity, you weigh less and you can jump higher. That’s why the astronauts could leap on the moon’s surface. To find out what you would weigh on the moon, divide your weight by six.**

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*I would think to myself that I would want to ask my teacher the following questions: (1) Why would the astronauts footprints last on the moon for a million years or longer? I think this is a good question because I think it is an important fact from this part of text to know that there is no air on the moon to move the dust around. This is a “right there” question and the information can be found right in the text. (2) Why can the astronauts jump much higher on the moon than on Earth? This is another good question because it focuses on the fact that the moon has less gravity than Earth and because of that I would weigh less if I visited the moon and because of that I could jump higher as the text tells us. This also is a “right there” question. (3) What would you weigh on the moon? This question is important because it helps me to further understand the reason why I would be able to jump higher on the moon is because I would weigh less. It also is a good question because it makes me think further for the answer than what is right there in the text. (4) Why do you think the moon has less gravity than Earth? This question is a type of “I wonder” question and even though I may not be able to answer this question yet, it will get me thinking about the moon and making predictions about information that I might read later in the text, or that I might have to search out the answer in another text.”*

To assess their understanding of this strategy, I will “kidwatch” for clues that the students are demonstrating understanding by the questions they generate. Students will write their questions in their reader’s response journals to be collected and assessed as a means of formative assessment.

#### **After-Reading Strategy (Discussion) – Presentations**

The after-reading discussion strategy I chose for this text is follow-up “Presentations” to our during-reading strategy, *Reciprocal Teaching*. During reading, the students were grouped into 4 groups and the text was chunked into 4 sections. Each group will be assigned one section of the text to present to their classmates. Each person in the group will present their “role” explaining its purpose and how it is done during reading and will give an example from their assigned section of the text. Students will be given the choice of how they want to present their “role” (i.e.

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“*predictor,*” “*questioner,*” “*clarifier,*” or “*summarizer*”). They can act it out, do a demonstration, prepare a jingle, give a speech, play charades, etc. Students should prepare written note cards for making their presentations. Students will be assessed using a rubric with the following categories: organization, content knowledge, eye contact, and delivery. *See Appendices for rubric.*

After all of the students/groups have made their presentations, the teacher will lead a concluding whole-group discussion on the strategy, how it is used, and what the benefits are. The students will write a brief summary in the reader response journals after hearing everyone’s presentations of each component of the strategy: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing.

#### **After-Reading Strategy (Comprehension) – Identifying the Main Idea/Clusters**

The after-reading comprehension strategy I chose for this text is “*Identifying the Main Idea*” (Nettles, p. 364) or “*Clusters*” (Tompkins, p. 21). As a whole group, we will brainstorm what the main ideas are that we have learned about the moon after reading this text. This will take place *after* students have a chance to revisit their pre-reading activities: *Exclusion Brainstorming* and *Two Minute Fast Facts*. On a large piece of chart paper or mural paper, I will draw a circle representing the moon. As a class, we will identify 4 big categories of ideas about the moon and create branching subtopics on our chart paper. This is known as an organized cluster and is hierarchical by nature. Students will then independently write facts on Post-its or 3x5 index cards they learned about each category and place them on the chart or mural paper in the appropriate category. After students are done, as a class we will discuss the facts and organize them into subcategories. We will also eliminate duplicates. Students will then complete their own main idea graphic organizer from the class chart. Students should write in complete sentences and use proper punctuation and capitalization on this graphic organizer. Clusters provide students with a

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visual representation and are helpful after reading and before writing. This graphic organizer will be used for the extended writing exercise discussed below. *See Appendices for handout.*

#### **After-Reading Strategy (Writing) – Summarizing the Main Idea/Author’s Chair**

The after-reading comprehension strategy I chose for this text is “*Summarizing the Main Idea*” (Nettles, p. 364) and the “*Author’s Chair*” (Tompkins, p. 10). Using the *Identifying the Main Ideas* graphic organizer composed as instructed above, students will work in pairs to draft, revise, edit, and publish a summary of the main ideas of *The Moon*. Students will then rejoin their original group of four to share their writing in the “*Author’s Chair*” with their group members. Classmates will be invited to ask questions and make comments. The student will call on two or three of his classmates for comments. The student then chooses someone to sit in the author’s chair next. Students will be assessed using a rubric with the following categories: organization, content knowledge, grammar and spelling, and neatness. *See Appendices for rubric.*

#### **Performance Assessment – Moon Podcast**

The performance assessment I chose to go along with this lesson cycle is a “*Moon Podcast*.” Students will work in groups of 4. Two students will represent Buzz Aldrin and Neal Armstrong and the other two will be radio journalists. Groups will be selected at random to allow for diversity in the groupings. As a group, students will write 10 interview questions and 10 responses: 5 for/from Mr. Aldrin and 5 for/from Mr. Armstrong. These questions/responses should center on the theme of “*What is it like to visit the moon?*” Students should refer to the texts they read and to their main idea summary. Students will then draw names for who will be which character for the podcast. Once the students have created the script, they will podcast their interview. Each journalist will ask 5 questions and both Mr. Aldrin and Mr. Armstrong will answer 5 questions each. Students need to make sure they are asking questions that address the

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main ideas we summarized from our reading of the texts. Students will record their interviews in podcast form. The podcasts will be posted on the class “*wiki*” and parents and other classes will be invited to “*listen and learn!*” *See Appendices for rubric.*

#### **Extended Activities**

To extend learning, students could choose to do one of the following activities:

- Create a timeline outlining the Apollo space missions.
- Select another Apollo astronaut and write a feature article about him.
- Explore some of the “Astronaut” online links at KidsKonnnect (2008) and write a short summary of something you learned.
- Choose a “Woman in Space” from online Encyclopedia Astronautica (2007) and create a short presentation or a podcast about her accomplishments.
- Create an “Earth, Moon, Mars Balloons” model (NASA, n.d.) with approximate scaling and distancing from the online NASA guide.
- Write your own legend about how the moon came to be.
- Play a round of “*Moon Olympics*” from Scholastic’s Online Student Activities (Scholastic, 2008).

*See Bibliography for website URLs for online activities.*

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### Appendices

- ❖ Moon Poems (Tomie dePaola)
- ❖ Full Moons Graphic Organizer (Kids Discover)
- ❖ Ology Moon Watch Flip Book (AMNH)
- ❖ Label the Moon Phases Diagram (Enchanted Learning)
- ❖ *Who Am I?* Riddle
- ❖ Exclusion Brainstorming Handout
- ❖ Reciprocal Teaching Handout (Greece Central School District, modified)
- ❖ Reciprocal Teaching Presentation Rubric (Teach-nology, modified)
- ❖ Cluster Word Web: Identifying the Main Idea Graphic Organizer (EduPlace)
- ❖ Summarizing the Main Idea Rubric (Teach-nology, modified)
- ❖ Moon Podcast Rubric (Teach-nology, modified)