Grade 2 - Unit 2 Reading - Getting to Know Characters

Unit Focus

In *Getting to Know Characters*, students develop early narrative comprehension as they explore how characters think, feel, and relate to one another within engaging fictional texts. They strengthen decoding and fluency through systematic instruction while using literature as a way to better understand human behavior and relationships. Students learn to notice how characters change over time, how their choices affect events, and how stories reflect real-life social interactions and emotions. Through discussion and response, students begin to articulate their thinking about characters' actions and motivations, building the foundation for deeper narrative understanding and interpretation.

Instruction is grounded in the Science of Reading, integrating systematic instruction in phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension to support the development of skilled, independent readers and writers. Students engage in structured literacy instruction through Fundations, which provides explicit instruction in word recognition and encoding; Bookworms, which builds background knowledge, vocabulary, and comprehension through read-alouds and shared reading; and Geodes, which allows students to apply phonics skills in connected, decodable texts to build fluency and accuracy. Teachers provide differentiated targeted practice across the five pillars of literacy.

Students engage with high-quality texts that build knowledge, vocabulary, and comprehension while supporting close reading of grade-level standards, including *Pinky and Rex* by James Howe, *Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel, *Winners Never Quit* by Mia Hamm, *Jamaica's Blue Marker* by Juanita Havill, and *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)

Common Core
English Language Arts: 2

- Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1)
- Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RL.2.5)
- Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RL.2.7)
- By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 23 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.10)
- Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.2.3.A)
- Know spelling-sound correspondences for additional common vowel teams. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.2.3.B) Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RF.2.3.C)
- Decode words with common prefixes and suffixes. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.2.3.D)
- Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.2.3.E)
- Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RF.2.3.F)

Transfer

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...
T1 Use strategies to comprehend and engage with a variety of increasingly complex texts to become independent, critical, and reflective thinkers.

Meaning

Understanding(s)	Essential Question(s)
Students will understand that... **U1** Understanding story structure helps readers comprehend and retell texts. **U2** Effective readers and writers engage in conversations to share ideas, listen to others, and build understanding collaboratively. **U3** Sounds, letters, and patterns work together to support decoding and spelling of words. **U4** Reading accurately, smoothly, and with expression helps readers focus on meaning and better understand the text. **U5** Vocabulary knowledge supports making meaning from text and deepening understanding.	*Students will keep considering...* **Q1** How does story structure help us understand and retell texts? **Q2** How does respectful discussion help us learn from texts and each other? **Q3** How do sounds, letters, and patterns work together to help me read and spell words? **Q4** How does reading smoothly and accurately help me understand what I read? **Q5** How can the words I know help me understand what I read?

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

- Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF. 2.4.A)
- Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RF.2.4.B)
- Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RF.2.4.C)
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.A)
- Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.B)
- Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.SL.2.1.C)
- Use collective nouns (e.g., group). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.1.A)
- Form and use frequently occurring irregular plural nouns (e.g., feet, children, teeth, mice, fish). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.1.B)
- Use adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.1.E)
- Produce, expand, and rearrange complete simple and compound sentences (e.g., The boy watched the movie; The little boy watched the movie; The action movie was watched by the little boy). (CCSS.ELALITERACY.L.2.1.F)
- Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.4.A)
- Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., happy/unhappy, tell/ retell). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.4.B)
- Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., addition, additional). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.4.C)
- Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.4.D)
- Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny). (CCSS.ELALITERACY.L.2.5.B)

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- Analyzing: Examining information/data/ evidence from multiple sources to identify possible underlying assumptions, patterns, and relationships in order to make inferences. (POG.1.2)
- Alternate Perspectives: Interpret or critique complementary and competing approaches, experiences, and worldviews in order to develop an empathetic perspective. (POG.5.2)

Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill

Knowledge

Students will know...

K1 Stories have key elements—characters, setting, plot, and problem/solution— and that the beginning introduces the story while the ending concludes the action. They will also know that temporal words like first, next, then, and finally help show the order of events.

K2 Question words: who, what, where, when, why, how.

K3 Feelings are emotions that change and traits are characteristics of a personality.

K4 Words can have slightly different shades of meaning, and choosing the right word matters.

K5 Participating in discussions, listening carefully, and responding to peers helps them learn and build understanding.

K6 Reading with accuracy, fluency, and expression supports understanding of text.

K7 Vocabulary supports understanding of text and builds deeper meaning.

K8 Fundations:

- Closed syllable exception;
- Glued sounds;
- Vowel Teams: oi, oy, oa, oe, ow, ou, oo, ue, ew;
- Suffixes: s, es, ed, ing, er, est, ed, ful, ment, ness, less, able, en, ish;
- Prefixes: mis, un, non, dis, and trans, au and aw;
- Forming plurals;
- Forming past and present;
- Reading and writing two syllable words;
- Compound words;
- Spelling of ic

Skill(s)

Students will be skilled at...

S1 Describing the structure of a story, including how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action, and at using temporal words to signal the order of events.

S2 Asking and answering questions using key details.

S3 Making inferences based on character thoughts, actions, dialogue and feelings.

S4 Making character timelines and plot mountains.

S5 Participating in discussions about texts, responding to peers' ideas, building on others' comments, and asking for clarification.

S6 Reading aloud with accuracy, smoothness, and expression to focus on comprehension.

S7 Using known words, context clues, and new vocabulary to understand and make meaning from texts.