We’re Off to Thunder Mountain

Written by Margaret Yatsevitch Phinney and illustrated by Kevin Burgemeestre

**KEY IDEA** A lonely witch goes out on an eerie night. Through rhyming text, follow the growing group of ghoulies as they head to a party on Thunder Mountain.

**LITERACY STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS PLAN**

**RL.2.1** MAIN FOCUS Key Ideas & Details
Sessions 1, 2, 3
Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

**RL.2.4** MAIN FOCUS Craft & Structure
Sessions 1, 3
Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

**RL.2.7** MAIN FOCUS Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
Sessions 1, 3
Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

**RL.2.10** Range of Reading & Level of Complexity
By the end of year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

**SL.2.1a** Comprehension & Collaboration
Sessions 1, 2, 3
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).

**L.2.4** Vocabulary Acquisition & Use
Session 2, Additional Instruction
Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

**L.2.4c** Vocabulary Acquisition & Use
Additional Instruction
Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., addition, additional).

**L.2.4d** Vocabulary Acquisition & Use
Session 1
Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly, bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).

**RF.2.3c** Phonics & Word Recognition
Session 2, Additional Instruction
Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels.

**RF.2.4b** Fluency
Session 2
Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.

**W.2.2** Text Types & Purposes
Writing Task
Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

**W.2.8** Research to Build & Present Knowledge
Sessions 1, 2, 3
Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
Session 1

PREVIEWING THE TEXT  5 minutes
Read the title, author, and illustrator credits with students. Invite them to look at the cover illustration and to read the back cover.

Let’s look at the front cover. Think about what might be happening in the illustration. What are some of your thoughts about this story?

It looks like the story might be a fantasy because the characters are strange.

Who can add to that?

It looks like a witch is giving party hats to two monsters. Maybe they’re going to a party.

Let’s read the text on the back cover. What did you learn?

A witch is going to meet lots of creatures. I think they might be a little scary! And they’re headed to Thunder Mountain.

Who would like to share a question you have?

Where is Thunder Mountain? What’s happening there? What will the creatures be like?

Those are good questions. Let’s read and find out.

READING THE TEXT CLOSELY  10 minutes
Explain the learning focuses for students. Have them read pages 3–4. Check their application of the focuses and provide support if needed. Then have them read the rest of the book.

As we read, we are going to pay close attention to key details to help us understand this poem. We’ll use illustrations to help us understand what we’re reading. Turn to pages 3 and 4. What did you learn so far that helped answer your questions about this story?

The witch meets two hairy monsters.

Who can share details about these characters you saw in the illustrations?

The witch is green with a long, pointy nose. The monsters have pointy teeth and big noses, but they look friendly.

What did you learn about the setting from the illustrations?

I think the characters are near a big town because I see lots of buildings.

Good readers ask and answer questions to make sure they understand the information the author and illustrator are giving them. What question can you ask about what you read so far?

I wonder where these creatures live.

If you are satisfied that students can apply the focuses, set the reading assignment for the session. If you are not, prompt students to reread pages 3–4 again and answer the questions: Where are the characters going? Why are they going there?

When we ask and answer questions about what we read, we pay attention to key details. Let’s read the rest of the book. As we read, we’ll ask questions that begin with the words who, what, where, when, why, and how. We’ll look for answers in the text and the illustrations.
DISCUSSING THE TEXT  10 minutes

Invite students to share what they learned about the poem and questions they asked. Encourage them to use the text and illustrations to answer their questions.

👉 Who can share a question they had before they read the full poem?

   *I wondered what was going to happen at Thunder Mountain.*

👉 Let’s find the answer to that question.

   *Page 4 says they’re going to a party. As I read, I found out that all the creatures were going to make lots of noise at the party.*

👉 You noted key details in the text and understood what was going to happen. Who used illustrations to help them answer this question?

   *On pages 12 and 13, I saw that there were tons of creatures going to the party. It was going to be a big, loud party! On page 16, I saw the creatures at the party. I could see what the party was like.*

Draw attention to the compound word **full-moon**.

👉 We’ve read this word many times in the poem. How can we tell this is a compound word?

   *A hyphen separates the two words, full and moon.*

👉 How can we figure out what this word means? Who would like to share?

   *I know a full moon is when the moon looks big and round.*

👉 This word is a compound adjective. It describes the moon very well because it is specific.

Confirm students’ good use of the focuses and encourage them to keep the focuses in mind whenever they read stories and poems.

👉 Good readers ask questions to help them understand what they read. They look for answers in the text and the illustrations. Use this strategy as you read other stories and poems.

**RESOURCE** ✓ Formative Assessment: Comprehension Using the Quick Start Planner, note this lesson’s learning focuses. Observe each student’s articulation and use of text evidence to evaluate individuals’ effective use of the learning focuses.

COMPREHENSION: ASK AND ANSWER QUESTIONS

**RESOURCE** ✓ Formative Assessment Have students use the blackline master on page 10 to answer who, what, where, when, and how questions about the text. Review students’ responses as you evaluate their mastery of the learning focuses.

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE: COLLECT TEXT EVIDENCE

**RESOURCE** ✓ Formative/Summative Assessment Have students use the blackline master on page 11 as they read. Students will collect details from the text to answer the question: *The author told the story as a poem. Did the rhyme, repeated words, and rhythm help give meaning to the story? Tell why. Use evidence from the story to support your answer.* Review students’ collected evidence as you evaluate their mastery of the learning focuses.

COMPREHENSION SHARE

Use what you know about different types of text to help you understand the poem. Think about why the author uses capital letters for particular words. Look for lines of the poem that appear in the same border. Finding these patterns will help you bring meaning to the text.

**RESOURCE** ✓ RL.2.4d VOCABULARY Compound Words

- **L.2.4d** Formative Assessment Have students use the blackline master on page 11 as they read. Students will collect details from the text to answer the question: *The author told the story as a poem. Did the rhyme, repeated words, and rhythm help give meaning to the story? Tell why. Use evidence from the story to support your answer.* Review students’ collected evidence as you evaluate their mastery of the learning focuses.

TEACHER’S CHOICE

**RESOURCE** ✓ RL.2.1 COMPREHENSION Ask & Answer Questions

**RESOURCE** ✓ W.2.8, RL.2.4 WRITING Gather Information
Session 2

RETURNING TO THE TEXT 5 minutes
Ask students to reflect on their reading in Session 1. Guide them to recall how they applied the learning focuses to their reading.

Let’s quickly review our discussion from the last session. Who would like to share?

We read a poem about creatures going to a party. We asked and answered questions to understand the story. We used illustrations to help.

When you read a poem or story, remember to ask and answer questions about what you are reading.

READING THE TEXT CLOSELY 10 minutes
Explain the new learning focus. Invite students to read pages 3–6. Check how well they understood the focus. If you are satisfied that students can apply it, set the reading assignment for the session. If not, provide corrective feedback as suggested on page 2 of this lesson plan.

We’re going to continue to ask and answer questions about the story as we read. We’re also now going to think about how the words and phrases the author chose give rhythm and meaning to this poem. Reread pages 3 to 6 silently. Poems are usually shorter than stories, so authors choose their words very carefully. How did this author use language to create a certain rhythm, or beat?

Some of the words rhyme. Some words are repeated.

Rhyming words and repetition can add to the enjoyment of a poem. Rhyming words and repeated words also help us to read the words with a certain rhythm. Now let’s look at page 6. Do you have any questions about the two rhyming words in the first line?

I know what growly means because I know what growl means. But I don’t know what scowly means.

Let’s figure it out. Scowly is an unusual word. I see the word scowl in it.

I think we need to figure out what scowl means. We could look it up in a dictionary.

Let’s do that. What did you find?

It means to frown, like one of the cats in the picture.

Let’s read the first line together. We can try to make our voice sound a little growly when we read the rhyming words. Now let’s read through the whole poem again and think about the author’s word choices throughout.

Formative Assessment: Phonics and Fluency Listen to each student read a section of the poem. Observe how easily they can decode two-syllable words that contain long vowel sounds such as eerie on page 3 and creatures on page 4. Pay close attention to fluency as well. If students need additional practice with decoding or fluency, provide the necessary support at the end of the session. Ask students to note words or phrases they find challenging for discussion after the reading.

LEARNING FOCUSES
RL.2.1, RL.2.4
Students return to the text to describe how words and phrases supply rhythm and meaning to the poem. They also continue to ask who, what, where, when, why, and how questions to clarify the meaning of the poem. They use text evidence to support their answers to those questions.

TEACHER TIP
Discuss the words in the poem that express noises, such as roar, screech, howl, caw, and scream. Talk about how these words help a reader better understand how the characters sound.

ELL SUPPORT
L.2.4 Vocabulary Support adjectives such as growly, sleek, and enormous in context using the ELL vocabulary strategies in Getting Started.
DISCUSSING THE TEXT  

Facilitate a discussion in which students explain how language choices supply rhythm and meaning to the poem. Guide them to ask questions and provide answers to understand key details in the text.

This author chose her words very carefully to help us understand and enjoy the poem. Let’s read the last four lines on page 6 together. Why do you think the author repeats these words throughout the poem?

*It adds another rhythm as we read.*

Who can add to that?

*It helps me remember what the poem is about and where everyone is going. I think it’s fun to read the parts that keep repeating.*

Now, does anyone have a question about the text on this page?

*I wondered why the word screech is in uppercase letters.*

Does anyone have an idea?

*I think the author wants us to read in a screechy voice. When I saw the word in uppercase letters, I heard a screech in my mind. I think we’re supposed to read it loudly.*

Introduce the word *scrawny* to students and invite them to share their understanding of the word. Read page 5 to clarify the meaning.

The word *scrawny* appears in the first line. What is your understanding of this word?

*I think it means skinny.*

Let’s read page 5 together and look at the illustration to find clues. Tell what you know about *scrawny* now.

*I think it’s bony and really thin, like these goblins.*

I like the way you used the illustration to help you figure out a word that may have been new to you.

Remind students that as they discussed the text, they asked and answered questions to help them understand the story.

I learned more about the poem as I listened to your questions and answers. Pause as you read to think about who, what, where, when, and why. Why is this a helpful strategy?

*It helps me understand what I’m reading. If I’m confused about something, someone else can help me figure it out.*

As we ask and answer questions, it’s important to listen carefully to each other. It’s helpful to look right at the speaker and focus on what he or she is saying. Also, we wait for our turn to speak so we don’t interrupt anyone.

Confirm students’ good use of the focuses and encourage students to keep the focuses in mind whenever they read stories and poems.

You were really thinking about how rhymes and repeated phrases give rhythm and meaning to the poem. You also were able to ask and answer questions about the story. Remember to use these strategies when you read other stories and poems.

Formative Assessment: Comprehension Using the Quick Start Planner, note this lesson’s learning focuses. Observe each student’s articulation and use of text evidence to evaluate individuals’ effective use of the learning focuses.
PHONICS AND FLUENCY FOLLOW-UP

Phonics Practice Write eerie and creatures on a whiteboard or chart paper. Separate the two syllables in this way: ee rie, crea tures. Then use the Read the Parts routine to help students decode the word.

Let’s use our Read the Parts strategy to read this word. First we’ll say each part. Then we’ll say the whole word. Listen to me: ee rie, eerie; crea tures, creatures. Now you read the parts (point to each part; students read the parts). Say the word.

eerie

Let’s repeat for our next word. Let’s go back to pages 3 and 4 and read these words in our books.

Fluency Practice Remind students that reading fluently is not the same as reading quickly. Fluent readers read with accuracy and expression. Fluent readers change their voices to help the reader understand what the story or poem is about. They can make their voices sound excited, frightened, happy, or sad.

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE: COLLECT TEXT EVIDENCE

Formative/Summative Assessment Have students continue to use the blackline master on page 11 for collecting evidence as they read. Students will continue to collect details from the text to answer the question: The author told the story as a poem. Did the rhyme, repeated words, and rhythm help give meaning to the story? Tell why. Use evidence from the story to support your answer. Review students’ collected evidence as you evaluate their mastery of the learning focuses.
Session 3

RETURNING TO THE TEXT 5 minutes

Explain that students will reread the poem, asking questions to help them understand key details in the poem.

Last time we talked about how word choices bring rhythm and meaning to the poem, and we asked more questions to help us understand the poem. As we reread, we'll continue to ask questions to understand key details. Why do you think this is an important strategy?

Sometimes we don’t understand parts of a poem or a story. When we ask questions, we find out more. We can learn from each other’s questions too.

READING THE TEXT CLOSELY 10 minutes

Review the learning focuses. Ask students to reread pages 7–10. Check to see how well they can apply the focuses. Then have them reread the poem with the learning focuses in mind.

Let’s reread pages 7 through 10. What questions do you have about this part of the poem?

I wondered what a gremlin is.

Who can talk about how we might answer this question?

I used the picture to help, but I still wasn’t sure. So I could use a dictionary.

What did you find?

It’s an imaginary creature that wrecks machines.

How does the illustration help you understand more about gremlins?

I see that they’re driving a taxi, and a car is a machine.

Let’s read the description of the skeletons on page 7 aloud. What do you notice about the author’s description?

She wrote “big, bony” to describe them. Both words start with “b.”

That’s called alliteration. How does that language add to the poem?

It makes the poem more interesting to read and hear.

Let’s reread the rest of the poem and keep asking questions about it.

DISCUSSING THE TEXT 10 minutes

Facilitate a discussion that links the three learning focuses. Remind students to ask questions and use the illustrations to understand the poem’s characters, setting, and plot. Discuss how words and phrases contribute to the meaning and enjoyment of the poem.

Turn to a partner and discuss your favorite part of the poem. Did you have any questions about that part?

My favorite part was when all the creatures climbed toward the mountain on pages 14 and 15. I wondered about Thunder Mountain. Was it another character?

That’s a good question. Who has an idea about that?

I think Thunder Mountain is a character because it’s talking.

LEARNING FOCUSES

RL.2.1, RL.2.4, RL.2.7

Students continue to read closely and ask and answer who, what, where, when, why, and how questions. They describe how words and phrases supply rhythm and meaning to the poem, and they use illustrations and text evidence to help them understand the poem.

VOCABULARY

RL.2.4

As students reread the poem, encourage them to find phrases that appeal to the senses, such as sailed in more quietly, clacked in, and big hairy creatures. Discuss how these phrases help the reader understand and enjoy the poem.

COMPREHENSION SHARE

Take time to read the poem aloud. You’ll notice how the rhymes and repeating stanzas help you understand and enjoy the poem.
That makes sense. How does the illustration on page 15 help you understand the setting and the characters?

I see that the characters are walking upward, probably up the mountain. They all look excited, especially the witch! I see the full moon and it reminded me that it’s a full-moon party.

Who can describe words or phrases that helped them understand the poem?

I liked how the author said the creatures “clattered and they snorted like a giant monster train.” Me too; those words helped me to think about the noise. Those words were fun to read.

Ask partners to read their favorite parts of the poem aloud and discuss more questions.

In pairs, take turns reading your favorite part aloud. Talk about any questions you might have. Remember to take turns and listen to each other. Wait for your partner to finish speaking before you talk. These rules will help you be respectful listeners.

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE: WRITE TO SOURCE

Formative/Summative Assessment
Have students continue to use the blackline master on page 11 as they finish reading. Then ask them to write a response on a separate sheet of paper that answers the question: The author told the story as a poem. Did the rhyme, repeated words, and rhythm help give meaning to the story? Tell why. Use evidence from the story to support your answer. Have students use the text evidence they collected to support their writing.

Writing Task: Informative

Summative Assessment
Invite students to write a magazine article about the party on Thunder Mountain. Guide them to use the planning organizer on page 12 to help organize their articles. Consider having students combine all of their articles and publish them as a classroom magazine.

As you read We’re Off to Thunder Mountain, you took notes about the creatures’ party. Now you’ll write a magazine article describing the party. Imagine what might happen at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the party. Think about who will be at the party and the different noises the creatures might make. Use other details to describe what happens. Think about a strong ending to conclude your article in an interesting way.
**WORD STUDY**

**Root Words** Help students find word meanings by using a known root word.

Let's look at the word restless on page 3. I noticed that some of you seemed unsure about the meaning of this word. Who can find the root word?

*rest*

Now let's look at the suffix -less. What does this suffix usually mean?

*without*

How does that help us figure out the meaning of restless?

*The word means “without rest.” I can also use what I know about that word. When I feel restless, I move around a lot.*

That meaning makes sense in the sentence—the witch wants to roam because she is restless.

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**VOCABULARY**

**Word Meanings** Help students develop vocabulary by discussing vocabulary strategies.

Who can share a word from the book that you didn’t understand?

*throng on page 8*

Who has an idea to help us figure this out?

*I used the words around throng to help me. I think it means they joined the group because of how the story was going.*

Who else would like to share a strategy for figuring out the meaning of throng?

*Look it up in a dictionary. Think about another time when you heard the word used.*

Those are great strategies. Who can use the word in another sentence?

*The throng of children waited in line for tickets.*

If we use the word *crowd* instead of *throng*, the sentence still makes sense. A throng is a big group, or a crowd.

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**PHONICS**

**Two-Syllable Words with Long Vowels** This book contains some two-syllable words with long vowel sounds. Use the Read the Parts routine you practiced with students on page 4 to read the following words: ra vens, grow ing, a greed, to night.

Let’s practice using our Read the Parts routine with more words that contain long vowel sounds you know. I’ve written them here and underlined the separate parts. To read them, we’ll say each underlined word part. Then we’ll say the whole word. Listen to me: ra ven, raven. We’ll read the rest together. Ready? (Read parts and words with students.)
Comprehension: Ask and Answer Questions

Answer the questions below about key details in *We’re Off to Thunder Mountain*.

**Who** is going to the party?
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

**Where** is the party?
__________________________________________________________

**When** will the party take place?
__________________________________________________________

**What** will happen at the party?
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

**How** do they get to the party?
__________________________________________________________

Score: ____________
Collect Text Evidence

The author told the story as a poem. Did the rhyme, repeated words, and rhythm help give meaning to the story? Tell why.

Use this chart to collect evidence to help you answer the question. Be sure to include page references as you take notes. You may need more than one copy of this chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Evidence</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Score: ________
Writing Task: Planning Your Magazine Article

Write a magazine article about the party at Thunder Mountain. Review the answers to your “who,” “what,” “when,” “where,” “why,” and “how” questions. Imagine what might happen at the party and tell about the events in order. Include details to describe the events. Plan your article using this graphic organizer.

Introduction

Topic:

Body

First:

Next:

Last:

Closing

Note: Use a separate sheet of paper or a computer to write your article. Don’t forget to revise and edit when you finish writing.

Score: ____________