



Critical Reading

Differentiated Instruction Across Genres



Understanding Main Idea and Theme



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Use Strategies to Understand What You Read

Sometimes you read to enjoy a good story. At other times you read to learn something new. No matter why you read, you need to **understand what you read**.

Using **reading strategies** will deepen your understanding of what you read. Use the strategies below to understand the reading selections in this book.

Before You Read

- ◆ Think about **why** you will read the selection.
- ◆ **Preview** the selection.
- ◆ Think about how the selection is **organized**.
- ◆ Think about what you **already know**.
- ◆ For a fiction selection, **predict** what the story is about and what will happen. For a nonfiction selection, **predict** what the selection is about and what information you will find.
- ◆ **Plan** how you will read the selection.

While You Read

- ◆ Make sure you **understand** what you are reading. If not, make some changes. For example, reread what doesn't make sense.
- ◆ **Ask yourself questions** about what you are reading.
- ◆ **Make connections** between what is in the selection and what you already know.
- ◆ Pay attention to **different kinds of type**, such as dark, or bold, type. Think about why it's different.
- ◆ Study any **pictures, photos, captions, charts, or graphs**.
- ◆ Create a **mental picture** of important details in the selection.

After You Read

- ◆ Think about **your predictions**. Were your predictions right?
- ◆ **Answer questions** about what you read.
- ◆ **Organize** important parts or details from the selection.
- ◆ **Summarize** the selection.

Lesson 1

A Wind Farm for Bay View?

Main Ideas and Newspaper Articles

A whole piece of writing can have a **main idea**. So can a paragraph. Sometimes main ideas are stated. When they are not, readers must figure them out.

A **newspaper article** is a short piece of writing in a newspaper. Newspaper articles can have stated and unstated main ideas. To **understand** the article, readers must know its main ideas.



Reader's Guide

Why does the article's title end with a question mark?

Use the Reader's Guide and the highlighted sentences to understand the **main ideas** in this newspaper article.

September 23, 2005—You go outside and feel a breeze. It cools you on a hot day. But can that same breeze also power your home?

"Absolutely," says Rick Barry. Barry is the president of Wind Energy, a group that wants Bay View to use wind power. Barry has suggested a plan for using wind power. Bay View residents disagree about whether it's the best use of city land and money.

Wind-power machines are tall poles topped with winglike blades. The wind makes the blades spin. The energy from the spinning blades becomes electricity. A group of wind machines is called a wind farm. Wind farms collect wind to make energy. Wind farms are located in open places where the wind blows **steadily**.

Barry's group wants to build a wind farm along the shore of Carroll Bay. The *Bay View Times* has learned that the shore land is owned by the city. Right now the land is not in use.

"Wind power is clean," Barry points out. "Because it's clean, it doesn't harm the air. The more wind power we use, the less smoke and gas go into the air. Wind power also costs less than fuels like oil and gas."

Mayor Sharon Patrick agrees. "The wind farm will save people money. It will also bring new jobs to Bay View," she points out.

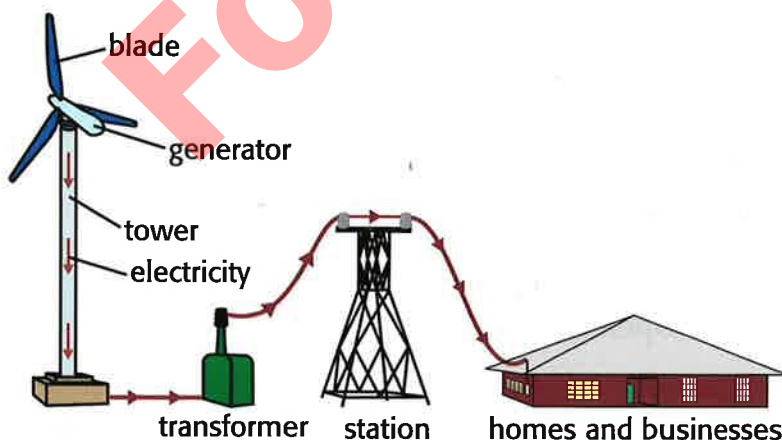
However, some people question Barry's plan. "I'm not **opposed** to wind farms," says city council member Dan Lee. "The problem is that we don't have enough open space in Bay View. We could use another park with trails for hiking and biking. Athletes don't have nearly enough soccer and baseball fields, either."

Underline the **main idea** of this paragraph.

steadily all the time; at the same speed

What is the unstated **main idea** of this paragraph?

opposed against



← A generator in a wind machine turns wind power into electricity.

And for the last two years, my son and his friends have been asking for a place to ride their skateboards. Right now they're not allowed to ride them on sidewalks. Riding them in the street is dangerous."

Jane Flores is also on the city council. "A wind farm wouldn't bring in as much money as other businesses," she states. "We could build stores. We could build more vacation homes for summer tourists. The wind farm is a nice idea, but it doesn't do enough for us."

What is the unstated **main idea** of these paragraphs?

Other people are against the wind farm but for very different reasons. Ed Phillips is the president of Visit Bay View. The group works to bring tourists to Bay View. "People come here to relax on the beach," he says. "They won't come to the beach if all they can see are giant windmills along the shore."

"Right now the land is beautiful because it's open," says Katie Rao. "Wind machines will make it ugly."

"We bought our house because of all the nearby open space," says Jake Peary. "I don't want to look at a wind farm."

What is the unstated **main idea** of these paragraphs?

Meg Davies isn't worried about people or money. "The wind machines will frighten my pets and scare away the wildlife in the bay," says Davies.

"Even worse," adds Jesse Johnson, "the wind-machine blades are dangerous. In other places that have wind machines, birds fly into the blades. Those machines kill and hurt innocent animals! Do we really want to build something like that?"

The city council will discuss the wind farm at the council meeting next Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. The meeting is open to the public. 🍎

🍎 **Read Fluently** 🍎 Reread the fluency section aloud with a partner. Use your voice to show the speakers' feelings.

Check Your Understanding

Circle the letter for the best answer to each question.

1. Which is the unstated **main idea** of the first paragraph?
 - A A breeze cools people on a hot day.
 - B Wind is the best kind of energy.
 - C Wind can be used to make power for homes.
 - D A wind farm will make a lot of money for Bay View.
2. Which of these **details** supports the idea that the wind farm is bad?
 - A A wind farm will bring jobs to Bay View.
 - B Electricity will cost less in Bay View.
 - C Rick Barry is the president of Wind Energy.
 - D Wind machines will block the view of the beach.
3. What is the stated **main idea** of the article?
 - A "We bought our house because of all the nearby open space," says Jake Peary.
 - B Bay View residents disagree about whether it's the best use of city land and money.
 - C Other people are against the wind farm but for very different reasons.
 - D Wind farms are located in open places where the wind blows steadily.

Deepen Your Understanding

Write your answers on the lines.

4. How are Dan Lee's and Jane Flores's reasons different?

5. How do you think people who live near the beach feel about a wind farm near them?

Get Organized

The newspaper article gives reasons for building the wind farm and reasons against building it. Complete the chart below to show these reasons.

[illegible]

From Reading to Writing

Suppose someone wants to build a wind farm in your community. Write a paragraph on separate paper. Give your opinion about building the wind farm. Support your opinion with two reasons from the article and a reason of your own.

Plan Your Writing Complete the organizer below to get ready to write.

My Opinion

Reason

Reason

Reason

For the Best Score

- ☐ I clearly state my opinion.
- ☐ I support my **main idea** with three reasons.
- ☐ I use two reasons from the article and one reason of my own.
- ☐ I write in paragraph form.



Critical Reading

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Understanding

Plot



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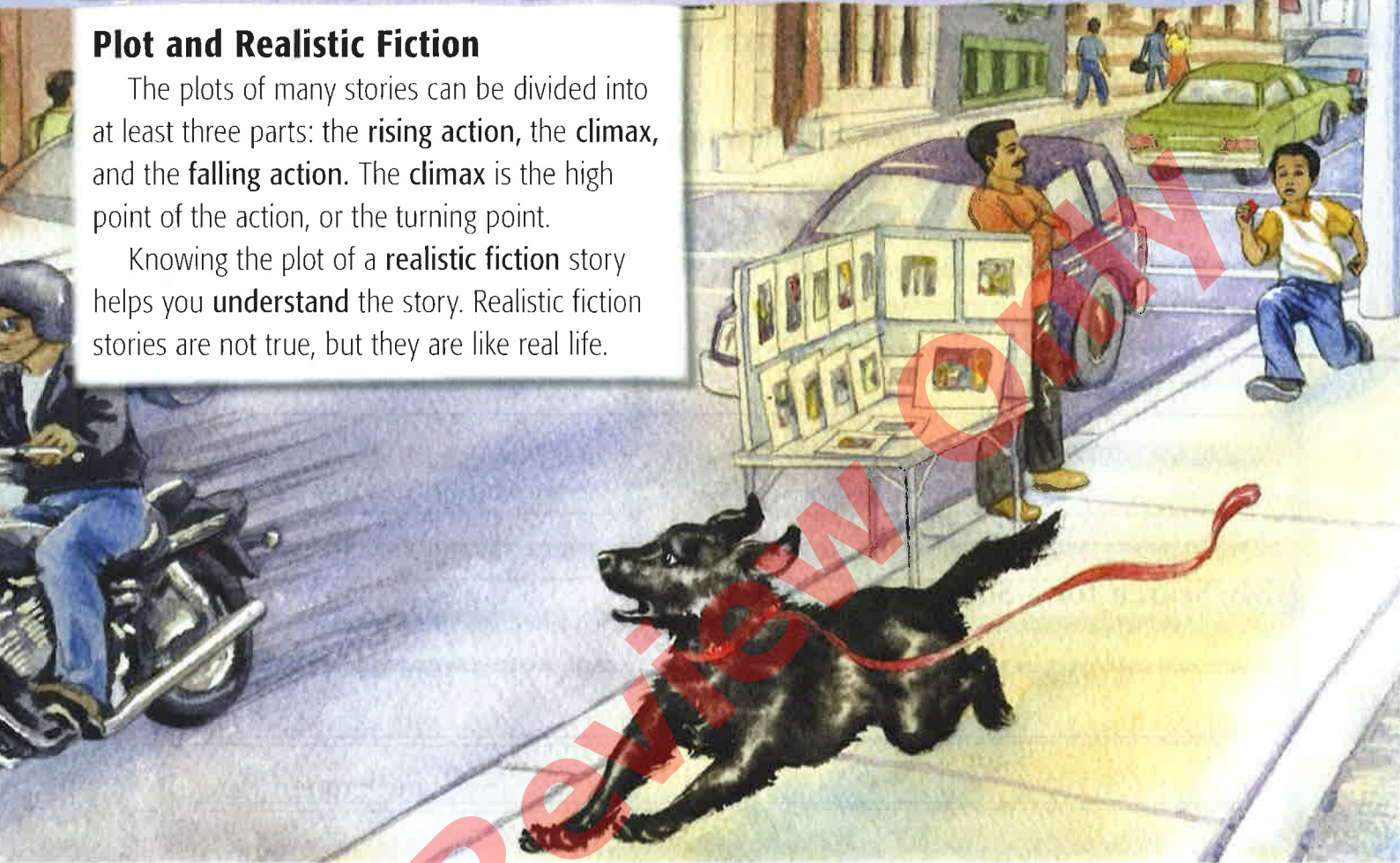
Lesson 3

Flash Lost and Found

Plot and Realistic Fiction

The plots of many stories can be divided into at least three parts: the **rising action**, the **climax**, and the **falling action**. The **climax** is the high point of the action, or the turning point.

Knowing the plot of a **realistic fiction** story helps you **understand** the story. Realistic fiction stories are not true, but they are like real life.



Reader's Guide

Complete the chart with what you know so far.

Setting

Characters

Main Character

Use the Reader's Guide and the highlighted sentences to understand the **plot** of this realistic fiction story.

Flash trotted next to Victor. It was walk time, Flash's favorite time of day. Victor always walked Flash through his city neighborhood in the afternoon.

Flash pointed his nose in the air. He smelled hot dogs, the poodle from next door, and the squirrels in the park. He also smelled humans and their smelly machines.

Flash felt his leash pull tight. He quickly sat down and waited while Victor bent over to tie his shoe.

Victor also talked into something red. He held the red thing next to his ear. Victor wasn't looking at Flash.

Suddenly Flash heard a roaring sound, and he flattened his ears. He didn't like that sound because the thing making it might hurt Victor. Flash felt an urge to chase the loud thing away. He pulled on his leash, but Victor didn't pull back, so Flash took off.

Flash raced down the sidewalk, trying to catch the loud thing that had roared past him. Victor called to Flash, but Flash had to catch the loud thing.

The loud thing sped away. It was too fast for Flash, but Flash chased after it anyway. Finally the loud sound faded away.

Flash stopped and looked around. He wanted a drink of water, and it was almost time for the tasty food that Victor fed him. Flash wanted to get a drink, eat, and then take a nap.

However, Flash had a problem. He didn't know where he was, and he didn't know where to find Victor. Flash sniffed the ground and grass and trees around him, but nothing smelled familiar.

Flash trotted down the sidewalk until he saw a place he knew—the park! He ran through its gates and down the path to the playground. Victor would be here—Victor brought Flash to the park a lot! Flash walked slowly, looking and sniffing for Victor.

Near the water fountain, Flash saw a white, longhaired dog. He ran up to the dog, hoping he might lead the way to Victor.

"Where's your owner, doggie?" said the woman with the dog. She reached out for Flash, but Flash didn't want her to touch his leash because only people he knew did that. He **skittered** into the bushes.

What happens in this part of the rising action?

How does Flash try to solve his problem?

skittered ran nervously



● The woman and her dog began to walk away. Flash decided to follow them because the dog might know where to find some water and food. Soon they left the park. Flash trotted along behind the woman and the dog.

“Flash! Flash! Come here, Flash!”

The voice of the man was familiar, so Flash stopped. It belonged to George, who usually stood by the door at Flash and Victor’s home. Flash had found his way home! Flash ran to George, who gave him a dog treat. Flash crunched the biscuit as George reached out and gripped Flash’s leash.

Within minutes Victor came running down the street. Flash wagged his tail excitedly as Victor hugged him.

Later that afternoon, Flash curled up on his dog bed and decided he would never run after loud things again. He didn’t like being away from Victor. Victor had fed him, and now he was ready for a nap. Flash yawned, stretched, and closed his eyes. It was good to be home. ●

● The highlighted paragraphs are the **climax** of the story. What happens in this part?

● What does Flash learn?

● **Read Fluently** ● Reread the fluency section aloud with a group. Group members should read the parts of the narrator, Victor, and Flash.

Check Your Understanding

Circle the letter for the best answer to each question.

1. What is Flash's problem in the story?
 - A He gets lost after he runs away from Victor.
 - B A strange woman tries to grab his leash.
 - C He finds George and his home.
 - D He wants to chase a loud thing.
2. Which of the following is not part of the **rising action**?
 - A Flash and Victor start out on a walk.
 - B Flash gets away from Victor.
 - C George gives Flash a biscuit.
 - D Flash runs to a white, longhaired dog.
3. In the **falling action** of the story,
 - A Flash follows the woman and her dog out of the park.
 - B Victor runs down the street and sees Flash.
 - C George gives Flash a treat and grabs his leash.
 - D Flash smells hot dogs and the squirrels in the park.

Deepen Your Understanding

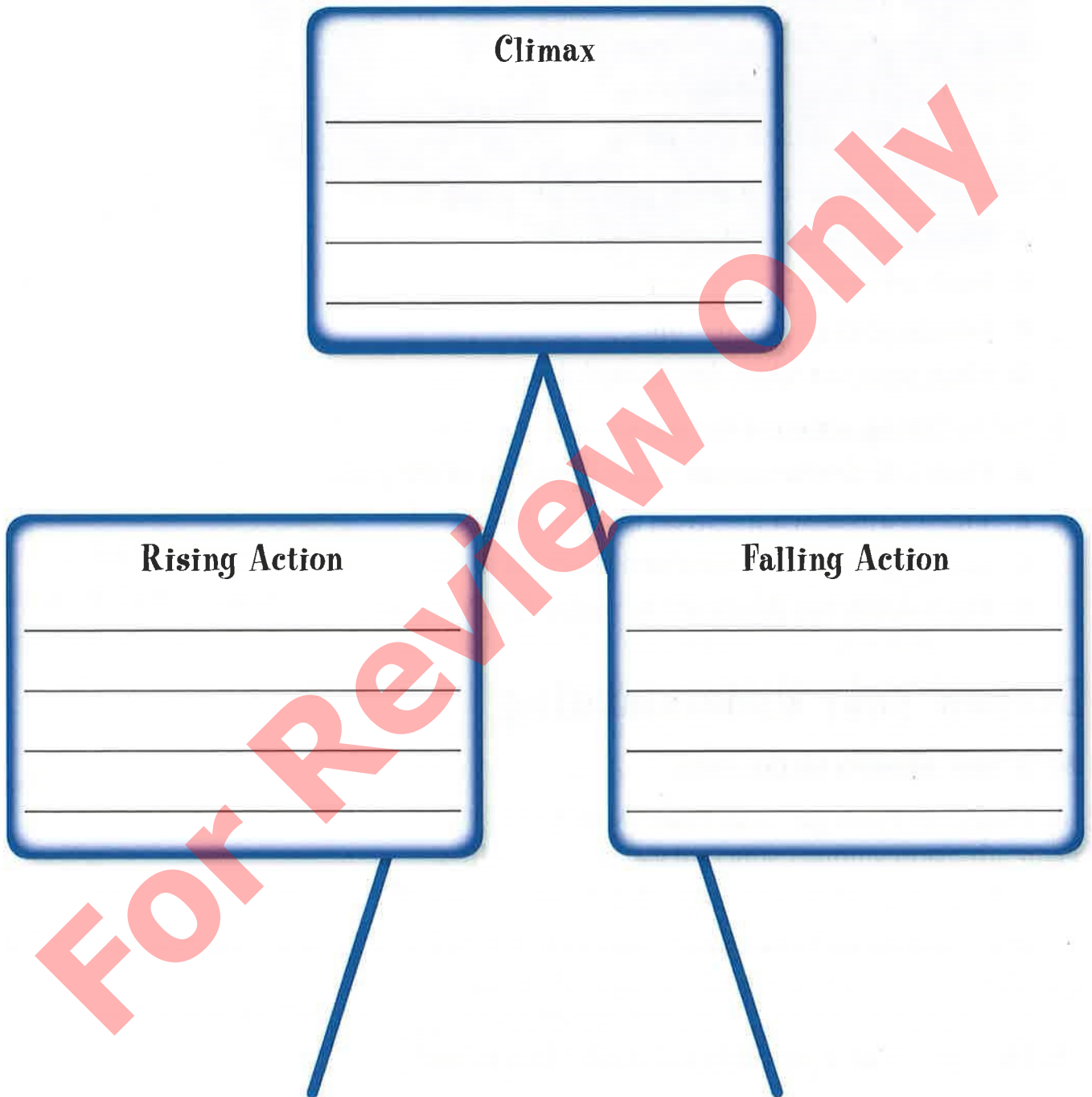
Write your answers on the lines.

4. How does Flash get away from Victor?

5. How does Victor probably feel while Flash is lost?

Get Organized

Use the **plot** diagram below to show the plot of "Flash Lost and Found."



From Reading to Writing

When Flash gets lost, he has a problem. On separate paper, write a paragraph that summarizes the story from Flash's point of view.

Plan Your Writing Use the organizer below to get ready to write.

Story Events

Flash's Words

Flash gets away because Victor isn't holding his leash tightly enough.

Flash goes into the park. He tries to find a familiar smell. He follows a woman and her dog.

Flash sees the doorman at his building. He lets the doorman hold onto his leash. Then Victor comes.

Flash is home in bed and feels glad to be there.

For the Best Score

- ☐ I summarize the story by telling the main story events.
- ☐ I tell the events from Flash's point of view.
- ☐ I write my summary in paragraph form.



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