

The Big One

Joe thinks he's the only one in his family who loves to fish

About the Story

Levels

Lexile Level: 370L

Guided Reading Level: O

DRA Level: 34

Learning Objective

This witty, sweet story about a boy who makes a fishing fan out of his father has a special emphasis on character. Students will understand how the main character feels throughout the story, as well as the events that cause him to feel that way.

Key Skills

Character, text features, vocabulary, close reading, inference, plot, character's motivation, explanatory writing

Standards Correlations

This article and lesson support the following standards:

Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.3, R.4, W.2, SL.1, L.4, L.6

TEKS: 3.2, 3.4, 3.8a, 3.8b, 3.20c, 3.29, 3.30

For more standards information, check our website.

FICTION A Storyworks original

Nobody understands why Joe loves fishing. But one day, he catches something very special.

THINK AND READ
Character As you read the story, think about how Joe feels in each part.

LOOK FOR WORDS WHOSE MEANING IS BOLD

Why do I love fishing so much? Most people think it's boring. You don't do much—you just wait. Almost always, you don't catch anything. But every once in a while, you catch something. And maybe once in your life, if you're lucky, you catch 'The Big One.' This is a story about the day I caught The Big One.

PAUSE AND THINK: What does Joe mean by "if you're lucky, you catch 'The Big One'"?

On My Own
Nobody in my family goes fishing. But one day last year, my dad's friend took us fishing. I caught a huge bluefish! Nobody else caught anything. **Wow,** that moment on, I knew I

The Best News
Then, during a winter club meeting, I got the best news. "I'm going ice fishing," said Mr. **He**. He was the leader of our club. **We'll** wake up at 5 a.m. and drive **there**. Then we'll fish on a frozen **all day** in cold weather. **Best**, like worms, used to catch fish

PAUSE AND THINK: How is Joe different from other members of his family?

THE BEST NEWS

Your Teaching Support Package

Here's your full suite of materials, all of which you'll find at scholastic.com/StoryworksJr:

Activities to print or project

- Pause and Think questions
- Vocabulary
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions
- Quiz
- Fiction Reading Kit: This will help build key reading skills, including our featured skill, character. It also includes inference.

Differentiated story

- Higher level: originally appeared in *Storyworks*

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1. Preparing to Read

Preview Text Features (10 minutes)

- Direct students to the text features, including the bubble on the first page that says “Fiction.” Ask: What does this tell you? Point out the subheads and the **Pause and Think** boxes at the end of each section. Explain that the questions in these boxes will help them better understand the story.

Set a Purpose for Reading

- We have created a fiction package that helps students focus on one important aspect of the story—in this case, how the main character feels throughout the story. The tasks in the **Think and Read** and **Think and Write** boxes work together to support this skill focus. Have one student read the task in each box.
- Read aloud the first Pause and Think box on page 11. These questions will check basic comprehension. (Students will delve into higher-level questions with the close-reading questions, available in this guide and online.)

Introduce Vocabulary

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

- This story includes four vocabulary words highlighted in bold: *bait*, *rippled*, *reeled*, and *grime*.
- The words are defined at the bottom of the column in which they appear. Discuss the meanings of the words, looking at how they are used in the story to help students further understand them.
- Distribute our **vocabulary activity** for more practice with these words.

2. Close Reading

Reading and Unpacking the Text

(activity sheets online)

- **First read:** Students should read the story through one time for general comprehension. Whether your students read as a class, in small groups, or independently, ask them to answer the Pause and

Think questions along the way.

- **Second read:** Distribute the **close-reading and critical-thinking questions**. (For struggling readers, you can distribute the sheet of Pause and Think questions, also available online.) Preview them as a class.
- Have students read the story again, pausing to answer the questions.

Close-Reading Questions (20 minutes)

- **Read the last three lines of “On My Own.” How do you think Joe’s mom and dad feel when they say “Wow” and “Gee”? How do you know?** (inference) *They’re trying to act excited, but they’re just not interested. You know this because they don’t say anything else, and they don’t ask any questions to learn more about what Joe is telling them.*
- **In “Time to Fish,” why does Joe feel embarrassed that his dad is drinking hot chocolate?** (character) *Joe feels embarrassed because everyone else’s parents were fishing, not inside the tent drinking hot chocolate.*
- **In “A Surprising Catch,” why does Joe’s dad take the elephant home? What do the last three lines of this section tell you about the fishing trip?** (plot) *Joe’s dad wants Joe to understand that the stuffed animal is special, even if it wasn’t what he wanted to catch. The last three lines tell you that Joe’s dad really did enjoy himself on the fishing trip.*
- **In “A New Fishing Fan,” how does Joe feel when his dad asks to go fishing? Why?** (character) *Joe is surprised and happy. He didn’t realize his father had such a good time on their trip that he would actually want to fish again.*
- **In the last line, what does Joe mean when he says he caught The Big One?** (inference) *In this case, Joe’s dad is The Big One. Joe “caught” him as a fishing partner.*

Critical-Thinking Question (7 minutes)

- **By the end of the story, why does Joe’s dad want to join Joe on his next fishing trip?** (character’s

motivation) *Joe's dad ended up having a good time on the first fishing trip with Joe. It didn't matter that they didn't catch any fish because they were talking and laughing and creating memories together. He wanted to do that again with his son.*



3. Skill Building Character

- Call on a volunteer to read aloud the Think and Write box at the bottom of page 15.
- Download and distribute our **Fiction Reading Kit**, which focuses on key reading skills, including the featured skill, character. Have students work in small groups to complete it.

Customize Your Class

For Independent Readers

Go over the text features and vocabulary in class, then have your students read the story for homework and answer at least two **close-reading questions** as well as the **critical-thinking question**.

For Small Groups

Break the class into groups to do a second read. They should answer some or all of the **close-reading questions**. Then ask them to discuss the illustrations. How do the drawings help students better understand the events in the story? Each student can pick a favorite illustration and explain why it helped him or her comprehend the story.

Differentiate Your Teaching

For Struggling Readers

Instead of using the **close-reading** and **critical-thinking questions**, print out the **Pause and Think** questions and have students answer them. These basic comprehension questions help ensure that students can follow the story's events.

For Advanced Readers

Ask students to consider what the story would have been like if it had been told from Joe's dad's point of view. Have them write a one-paragraph summary of events told by Joe's father.

Audio version

Your students will hear the story narrated, boosting comprehension and fluency.

Differentiated article

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