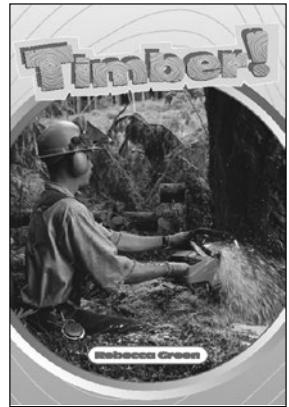


Timber!

by **Rebecca Green**



Book Summary

Wood is all around us. This book looks at the history of the timber industry and the importance of growing timber in a way that's friendly to the environment if we are to continue using this valuable resource.

Features of the Book

- Report
- Historical information and photographs
- Cross-section diagrams

Purpose

Timber! can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills and understandings:

- S** reading for a purpose;
- S** identifying main ideas and summarising information;
- S** exploring specialised vocabulary;
- S** examining how people have used natural resources to meet basic needs;
- S** exploring the way natural resources are used by industries to produce goods for distribution and sale;
- S** investigating how people manage natural resources to ensure continuity of supply.

Investigation Tools

- Looking Closer – Where Does Wood Come From?, pages 4–5
- What's the Background? – The First Settlers, page 7
- Making Connections – The Australian Gold Rush, page 12
- Digging Deeper – Paul Bunyan and Babe, page 18
- Step by Step – Cutting Down Trees, pages 22–23
- Weighing Both Sides – Logging in the Rain Forest, pages 28–29

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Reading for a purpose
- S** Identifying main ideas and summarising information

Introducing the text

Discuss why the students might read non-fiction texts. Answers could include, to find or check specific information, to write a report about a topic, or to find out more about something of interest.

- *How does your purpose affect how you'll read a text?*
- *How do you decide what information is the most important?*
- *What questions do you ask as you try to work out what's important?*

Discuss the students' experiences with finding the main ideas in a text. This discussion could include determining the difference between "important" and "interesting" ideas and deciding if the information is a main idea or a supporting detail.

Explain that they will practise determining the main ideas in each chapter of *Timber!*.

Reading and discussing the text

Read the blurb and the table of contents with the students. Write the chapter titles on the board.

- *How can the table of contents help us find main ideas?*
- *What would you expect to find in the introduction?*

Ask the students to read the introduction and the Looking Closer investigation tool on pages 4 and 5 and think about the purpose of these pages. (They make connections with the reader, give an overview and a brief background, and define the key element – wood.)

- *What is the main idea of the introduction?* (The timber industry is very important because we depend on wood for many things.)

When the students have summarised the main idea, write it on the board next to the heading “Introduction”. Discuss the cutaway diagram on pages 4 and 5.

Ask the students to read Chapter 1, then model some of the strategies for identifying the main ideas. For example, deciding if the idea is important or merely interesting (making spoons and bowls is interesting but not the most important idea); tracking the reasons for logging (to build homes and equipment, to clear land for farming, to build ships and houses, to support the pioneers to produce timber to sell).

- *It seems there were many reasons for the growth of logging. How can we capture these into one idea?*

Work with the students to craft a summarising sentence, such as “Logging increased as the country needed land for farming and timber for housing and equipment.” Write the summary on the board.

Discuss ideas that could be considered part of the main idea, for example, the reasons for people settling in America, the gold rush, the places logging camps were set up.

The students can now read the rest of the book and identify the main ideas for each chapter. Some students will need you to continue modelling and guiding their thinking. If the students can do this on their own, have them discuss their ideas with a partner before writing the main idea beside each chapter on the board.

When the main ideas have been listed, remind the students of the purpose for reading: to summarise the information. Have them read over the main ideas from the board.

- *Does this give a good summary of the book?*
- *Would it be helpful for someone looking for information about the timber industry?*
- *Where might you find summaries like this?* (book reviews, a library catalog, a list of references)
- *How could you use a summary?* (to help choose books for further reading or for research)

Finally, review the purposes for reading informational texts and the reasons for writing and reading summaries.

Revisiting the Text

The activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson, during later reading sessions as mini-lessons, or as independent activities.

S Exploring specialised vocabulary

Direct the students to the glossary on page 31, then ask them to reread the book to find challenging words that are not in the glossary. Some words may have a different meaning in context. Examples could include “structure” (page 3); “practise” (page 7); and “industries” (page 9).

☞ The students can use the blackline master to write an extension of the glossary with these and other words they find.

S Examining how people have used natural resources to meet basic needs

S Exploring the way natural resources are used by industries to produce goods for distribution and sale

The students can create a timeline of the development of the timber industry in North America, using the information in the book and other sources, such as the library or the Internet.