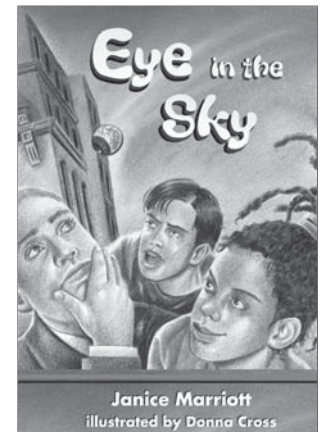


Eye in the Sky

by Janice Marriott

illustrated by Donna Cross



Book Summary

Ali can't resist buying the eyeball in the magic store. It's the perfect birthday present for her brother Damon. In a strange sequence of events, Ali's gift to her brother brings three very different people together.

Features of the Book

- The parallel plots
- The nonlinear story line
- The use of different typefaces for effect
- The way new characters are introduced
- The example of suspense writing
- The use of figurative language – *like fossilized ice-cream cones*
- The different characters' points of view

Purpose

Eye in the Sky can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** investigating the characterization in a text;
- S** describing the mental images evoked by text;
- S** identifying the feelings of characters and noting how these change;
- S** making judgments about characters from their actions;
- S** understanding the components of plot development;
- S** identifying how setting is important to a story's development.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Investigating the characterization in a text
- S** Describing the mental images evoked by text
- S** Identifying the feelings of characters and noting how these change

Introducing the text

Ask the students if they have ever bought something that seemed silly at the time but that they wouldn't want to lose.

- *Has anyone ever bought something from a magic store?*
- *Why did you buy it? Do you still have it?*
- *What would happen if it fell into the hands of a grandmother, a firefighter, or a teacher? What would they use it for?*

Now ask them to think about what they would buy their sister or brother from a magic store.

Look at the cover of the book.

- *Can you use the title or the illustration to predict what the book might be about?*
- *Does the blurb on the back cover help you at all?*
- *Do the things on the cover make you want to read the book?*

Discuss the cover and blurb and ask the students to predict the kind of book this might be.

- *Could it be a true story, a fantasy, or a mystery? Write down your prediction so we can look at it when you've finished reading.*

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read chapter 1. As they read, the students could think about the characters that are introduced.

- How does the author capture our interest in the story?
- What kind of relationship does Ali have with Damon?
- Have you ever felt like this about a brother or sister?
- What word would you use to describe these feelings?
- How would you describe the mood of the children's mother?

The students could now read to the end of chapter 2. Ask them to think about the characters that are introduced in this chapter.

- Why has the author introduced Marco and Eddie at this time?
- How do you think they will interact with Ali and Damon?
- Do you find the author's style of writing easy to follow? Does it make you want to read on?

The students could read the rest of the story independently. Ask them to think about how the plot develops.

- How does the author bring the characters together at the end of the story so that their problems are resolved?
- How do the feelings of the characters change between the beginning and the end of the story?

Descriptive language is often used to create visual images in the mind of the reader. For example, on page 42, the author describes the microphones as looking like “fossilized ice-cream cones.” The students could find other examples of similes and metaphors in the story and discuss them.



Revisiting the Text

The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.

S Making judgments about characters from their actions

Discuss the character of Mrs. Chan.

- Could Mrs. Chan be described as eccentric? What does this mean?
- What was she like?
- Why do you think she did the things that she did?
- Why do you think she was included in the story?

Ask the students to choose a character from the book and use the blackline master on page 68 to create a character outline for them. They need to qualify each statement with a reference to the text.

S Understanding the components of plot development

Discuss the way that a plot usually develops, with an introduction, the setting out of a problem, the building of suspense, and a resolution. Discuss a well-known story and identify each part of the plot.

- Is the plot of *Eye in the Sky* similar to this?
- How is it different? Is it easier or harder to follow?

Ask the students to choose one of the characters and write an outline of the story from that character's point of view.

- Would it be easier to understand the story if it were written by one of the characters?
- How would it be different to the way the author has written it?
- Do you think it would be as exciting?
- Could the plot still go backward and forward in time as it does in the book?

S Identifying how setting is important to a story's development

- How might this story have developed if it were set in the desert, at a theme park, or in the rain forest?

Ask the students to rewrite part of the story in a different setting.