

# Walk Tall

by Angie Belcher



## Book Summary

This book includes an interview with a stilt walker and information about the contemporary and historical use of stilts in different countries. There are fact boxes, photographs, and maps throughout the text.

## Features of the Book

- Diagrams and maps
- Fact boxes
- Measurements
- Specialized vocabulary – *marathons, stilts*

## Word Study Opportunities

- Compound words – *Bigfoot, footrests*
- Double consonants – *borrow, called, carry, slipped, stepped, wobble*
- Initial blends “pr,” “sp,” and “str” – *practice, products, pruners; special, spirits; Stretch, strong*
- Multisyllabic words – *California, centimeters, kilometers, marathons, important*

## Purpose

*Walk Tall* can be used to introduce and reinforce the following standards-related skills:

- S** using visual, structural, and meaning cues to read unknown words;
- S** using the illustrations to gain a deeper understanding of the text;
- S** exploring problem resolution;
- Ph S** exploring word families;
- S** using charts and diagrams to record information.

## The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Using visual, structural, and meaning cues to read unknown words
- S** Using the illustrations to gain a deeper understanding of the text
- S** Exploring problem resolution

## Materials needed

- A copy of the text for each child and one for the teacher
- A dry-erase board or chart paper and markers
- A long ruler or tape measure
- A world map or globe
- Optional: the blackline master and a pencil for each child

## Introducing the text

Together, look at the cover of the book and read the title. Read the blurb on the back cover.

- *What are stilts?*
- *Who uses them? Why?*
- *What is interesting about stilts and stilt walkers?*

## Reading and discussing the text

This can be taken over two days. If your group can read the book with less support, adjust the lesson plan accordingly.

## Day One

Discuss strategies that the children can use for reading unknown words. (Predict what the word might be and ask: Does it look right? Does it sound right? Does it make sense?)

Read the contents page and pages 3 and 4 together.

- Why do you think Bill Coleman calls himself “Stretch”?
- What does the word “marathon” mean?
- How does Bill raise money for people?

Remind the children to use the glossary to find the meaning of unfamiliar words.

- How does the text layout change on page five?
- How do you know who is speaking?

Read the questions on pages 5 to 10 with the children before they read these pages silently.

- How do the photographs on pages five and seven help you to understand the text?
- What problems does Bill have when he is on stilts?

Read page 11 with the children. Use a long ruler or a tape measure to show how high the stilts would be. Ask the students to read pages 12 to 14 to find out the different ways that people use stilts.

- What is meant by “Past and Present”?

Draw a two-column chart on chart paper. Write “Problem” at the top of one column and “Solution” on the other.

- How have stilts been used to solve problems?

Write the answers on the chart under the correct headings.

Locate the places mentioned on pages 16 to 20 on the map or globe together. Ask the children to read chapter 3 silently.

- How are stilts used in different places?

Discuss how the layout of the book puts text and illustrations together to make reading easier.

## Day Two

Briefly recap what the students have learned about stilts and stilt walking so far. Remind them of appropriate strategies for reading unknown words.

The children can now read chapter 4 silently.

- What was the farmer’s problem?
- How did the stilts help the farmer?

The children can now read the rest of the book independently.

- Which of these stilt walks do you think would be the hardest? Why?
- How does the photograph on page twenty-eight make you feel?

## Revisiting the Text

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

**S** Using visual, structural, and meaning cues to read unknown words

Ask the children to locate words or phrases in the text that they found difficult to read. Write them on the board.

- What strategies did you use to help you read these words?

Write the following sentence on the board: “People in some parts of India also d\_\_\_\_\_ on stilts.” Ask the children to predict what the word might be. Write their suggestions on the board.

- Does it look right?
- Does it sound right?
- Does it make sense?

Identify words from the children’s suggestions that could be correct.

**PhS** Exploring word families

Write “walk” on the board and ask the children to help you list the words that can be made from this root word (walks, walked, walker, walking). Repeat the activity with “learn.” Ask the children to find other root words in the text that can be added to in this way. Record them on the board and read them aloud together.

**IS** Using charts and diagrams to record information

Review chapter 3 with the children. Use the world map or globe as you discuss the different places that are mentioned in the book.

- Why would tree pruners need stilts?
- Tell me about the illustration on page seventeen.
- The stilts on page eighteen are from Africa. How are they different from the African stilts in the Ekoi story?
- Why do dancers in India use stilts?
- Do you think the story on page twenty is true? Why?

**B** The children can complete the blackline master on page 93