

# Finding Freedom

by Sharon Hill

## Summary

This nonfiction text explores the different ways blind or visually impaired people get from one place to another. These ways of navigating include guide dogs, canes, signs written in Braille, and sound-wave technology.

## Features of the Text

- Specialized vocabulary – *visually impaired, sound-wave technology, Braille, ultrasound, transmitter, receiver, synthesizer, GPS*
- Photographs with captions
- Fact boxes
- Historical information

## Purpose

*Finding Freedom* can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** making connections with the text;
- S** identifying and making generalizations;
- S** restating information from different points of view.

## The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Making connections with the text
- S** Identifying and making generalizations

## Introducing the text

Ask the students to form pairs, then blindfold one student in each pair. Their partner can then lead them around the room, ensuring that they don't come to any harm. Have the students swap roles and then discuss their experiences.

- *How did you feel about not being able to see?*
- *Did you trust that you would be safe? Why?*
- *What did you find most challenging?*

Discuss the cover and title.

- *What kind of "freedom" does the title refer to?*

## Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read to the end of page 3.

- *What do you think are the most difficult aspects of getting around for blind people?*
- *What do you know about the methods used by blind people to navigate?*

Reread the first sentence on page 2 together. Explain that this is a generalization – a statement that is generally true.

- *Is getting around always difficult for all blind people?*
- *How does the author support her generalization that getting around is difficult for blind people?*

Explain that generalizations must be supported with details. Encourage the students to question the text and to recognize how a generalization is "generally true" but not necessarily "absolutely true in every instance."

Ask the students to read to the end of page 6, looking for other generalizations. Discuss the first sentence on page 4 and the caption on page 5, both of which are generalizations.

- *When might a guide dog be distracted?*
- *Would every Labrador retriever, golden retriever, and German shepherd be a good guide dog? Why?*
- *What other qualities might a good guide dog have?*

Ask the students to read to the end of the text. When they have finished reading, encourage them to make generalizations about blind people's lives in the early 1900s and the ways technology has made navigating easier for them. When one student makes a generalization, have the other students ask questions such as "How do you know that?" and "Would that always be the case?"

## Following Up

The students can:

- use the blackline master on page 39 to write from the point of view of a visually impaired person or a guide dog
  - invite a visually impaired person to school to discuss how they get around and how technology helps them to navigate
  - draw a flow diagram to show how a puppy becomes a guide dog
  - research GPS to find out other ways that it is used for navigation.