

Sofa Boy

Written by: Scott J. Langteau

Illustrated by: Rion Vernon



His mother warned him that he was spending too much time on the couch playing video games but he ignored her. He also ignores the signs when his arms start to stick to the couch. With each passing day he becomes more entangled with the couch until the two become one. A good warning to all that spend too much time playing video games and not listening to mom.

Possible strategies for instruction:

Comprehension:

- **Use prior knowledge to connect with text:**
 - Before beginning the story ask students if they ever become so wrapped up in a videogame or a television show that they don't realize they have been sitting for hours. If so, do their parents say anything to them while they are sitting? Discuss the longest they have sat playing video games. Did it bother them to waste that much time on a video game?
- **Make a picture or mental image:**
 - The subject matter of this book is something that all the kids can picture mentally. Cover the front of the book and show the images after reading each page, giving students time to think about what it would look like. When finished with the book, give students the opportunity to share how their mental pictures differed from the images in the book.

Accuracy:

- **Skip the word, then come back:**
 - Before reading the book, select a few words to cover. When reading the book to the class, skip over the covered words to model the strategy. After reading the page and skipping the covered word, go back and try to figure out the skipped word. Start by rereading the sentence and asking for ideas. Next, tell students the first letter of the word and again ask for ideas. Some of the words to cover would be:
 - peculiar (p.1), lodged (p. 2), reciting (p. 5), horrendous (p. 7), devoured (p. 8), surrendered (p. 12)

Fluency:

- **Use punctuation to enhance phrasing and prosody (end marks, commas, etc):**
 - The text provides many opportunities to read with expression. Before beginning the book, tell the class to pay attention to your voice and the expression used when reading. When finished reading the book, ask students what they noticed about your voice and expression, and why they think you made the adjustments you did.
 - P. 2 - "It seems their quiet little boy (you know, the one who has the slouch?) has become lodged - if you will, or more "at one" with his couch"
 - P. 8 - "His arms and legs were soon devoured by cushion squares and lazy glue. And while wriggling and writhing he dropped his best controller too!"
 - P. 15 - "So today he's on exhibit in the museum - it's open now. And some say if you lean in closely...."
- **Read text as the author would say it, conveying the meaning or feeling:**
 - The opportunities in this text to express feeling are limitless. Read the book to the class using all the expression and phrasing you can, and then go back and reread it in a monotone voice.

Expand Vocabulary:

- **Tune into interesting words and use new vocabulary in speaking and writing:**
 - There are a lot of interesting words used in this text. After reading the book with the class, go back and reread each page aloud looking for interesting or unknown words with the class. Use the chosen words to make an interesting word list for the week. These words can then be used in the students writing journals throughout the week. Some of the words that might be identified include:
 - peculiar, slouch, lodged, intensely, constant, reciting, trance-like, heeded, horrendous, devoured, pruned, bound.
- **Use dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries as tools:**
 - After coming up with our list of interesting and new vocabulary, have students look up any words that the class has not yet been able to define. If there are several words needing to be looked up, assign students a word to look up during the next round and have them report back during the next focus lesson on what the word means.

This text can be used with nearly any strategy on the CAFE menu. The above strategies are a highlighted collection to use as a springboard for further instruction.