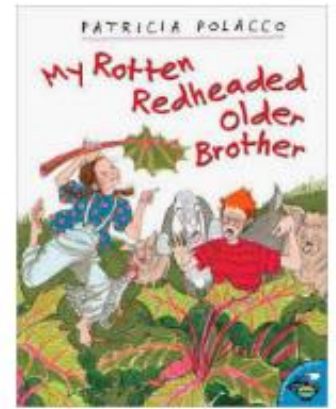


My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother

Written by Patricia Polacco

Illustrated by Patricia Polacco

This story explores the relationship between a young girl and her older brother. The young girl is tired of always losing competitions to her older brother, Richard. One night she makes a wish on a falling star to do something—anything—better than her brother.



Possible strategies for instruction

Comprehension

- **Make and adjust predictions; use text to confirm.**
 - Read the title and show students the front cover. Have the students make predictions about what the story will be about.
 - Pause after page 2 where it says, “as soon as she’d leave, he would do something terrible to me and laugh.” Have students use prior knowledge or experiences to predict the type of things the older brother might do. Once you read page 12 (with the same illustration as the front cover), stop and have students check their predictions and cite examples from the text that confirm them.
 - Pause on page 25 after reading, “It was from that exact moment that our relationship changed somehow.” Have students turn and talk to each other about what the author might mean and what might have changed in her relationship with her brother. At the end of the story ask students to confirm or correct their prediction.
- **Determine and analyze author’s purpose and support with text.**
 - While looking at the title and cover of the book, have students predict what the author’s purpose might be. This is also a good time to review the concept of fiction versus nonfiction by discussing whether and how this book falls into one category or the other.
 - At the end of the book have students reflect on their prior notion of the author’s purpose to either confirm or correct and cite examples that support their conclusions.
 - Discuss the difference between fiction and realistic fiction. Have students brainstorm ideas about what makes one piece of text fiction and another piece realistic fiction. Show students the front and back inside covers of the book and discuss why the author might have included those family photos.

Accuracy

- **Skip the word, then come back.**
 - Demonstrate this strategy by doing a “think-aloud” with the word *furiously* on page 12. Cover the word *furiously* in the sentence. Read the sentence and stop at the covered word. Say, “Hmm, if I get to a word I don’t know, what can I do? I think I’ll

skip the word and keep reading. Maybe the other words in the sentence will help me figure it out.” Read the whole sentence, skipping the covered word. Then go back to the covered word and model how to work through the process of using the first letter or first few letters and the meaning of the sentence to figure it out. Also model going back and reading a few sentences above the word, to see if that offers any help.

- Try this strategy with other words: *carnival* (page 19), *incredible* (page 19), *relationship* (page 25).
- **Flip the sound.**
 - To help students be aware of when a word doesn’t sound right or make sense, model the Flip the Sound strategy with the following words: *cooed* (page 11), *rhubarb* (page 11), *challenged* (page 12), *huge* (page 16), *wedge* (page 16).

Fluency

- **Reread text.**
 - Rereading a text helps readers apply the principle of “practice makes perfect” as well as helping to clarify our understanding and “mental images” of what’s happening in the story. Model this strategy by rereading page 28 without showing the picture. Have students comment on whether they noticed more expression, smoothness, and accuracy in the second read. Also ask them whether they changed their mental images by adding any details.
 - Remind students to practice this strategy not only during Read to Self but with a partner during Read to Someone.
- **Use punctuation to enhance phrasing and prosody (end marks, commas, etc.).**
 - Use pages 5 and 6 to demonstrate how the author’s use of punctuation as well as word choices such as *whispered*, *louder*, and *screamed* helps describe the characters’ moods and expressions.
 - This text is written with a lot of dialogue and frequent use of ... (ellipses) to help convey emotion. Use the two-paragraph dialogue on page 14 to discuss how the punctuation helps the reader know how it should be read.
 - Project or hand out a copy of page 14 and model reading the passage without punctuation and then reading it fluently with the punctuation. Discuss the differences, highlighting the meaning that is conveyed when the text is read fluently.

Expand Vocabulary

- **Tune in to interesting words and use new vocabulary in speaking and writing.**
 - Have students tune in to words that the author uses to help convey emotion or actions. One example is the word *jeered* on page 5. “Bet I can pick more blackberries

- that you can,' he *jeered* at me one day." Have the students discuss the mental picture that word invokes, and possible synonyms for it.
- Other examples are *challenged* (page 12), *furiously* (page 12), and *pursed* (page 13).
 - **Use prior knowledge and context to predict and confirm meaning.**
 - During the read-aloud, model strategies for using context clues (synonyms, definition, example, contrast, inference) to define unknown words. Some examples are *babushka* (page 1), *sneered* (page 10), *comforted* (page 11), *relish* (page 13), and *pop bottles* (page 25).

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.