

# Instructional Overview

**Maniac Magee**  
By: Jerry Spinelli  
Grade Level: 6 / Guided Reading Level: W

**Book Club**

**Instructional Focus:**  
Figurative Language

**Background:**  
Identifying and understanding figurative language is a skill readers need to have in their toolbox as they read more complex texts. Authors use figurative language for several reasons; to illicit emotion, to help readers create mental images, and to draw readers into the story. In order for readers to fully comprehend a text, they need to know how to understand the literal and figurative meanings of similes, metaphors, hyperboles, personifications, idioms, symbolism, tone, and word connotations.

**Maniac Magee** is an ideal novel for a Book Club focused on figurative language because it is rich with examples of a wide variety of types of literary devices. Author Jerry Spinelli's telling of the larger-than-life tale of Maniac Magee would not be the same if he had not relied on his expertly chosen words to bring drama, humor, and emotion to this important story.

**Instructional Overview:**

**Meeting #1**  
Introduce Figurative Language ("Before the Story")

**Meeting #2** (Chapters 1 – 11)  
Identifying and Understanding Similes, Metaphors, and Hyperbole

**Meeting #3** (Chapters 12 – 21)  
Identifying and Understanding Personification and Idioms

**Meeting #4** (Chapters 22 – 32)  
Understanding Tone and Connotation

**Meeting #5** (Chapters 33 – 39)  
Exploring Symbolism as Figurative Language

**Final Meeting** (Chapters 40 – 46)  
Reflecting on the Impact of Figurative Language

Maniac Magee Book Club | @BookPagez.com

Instructional Focus

Description of the  
Instructional Focus

List of Materials and Preparation

**Maniac Magee**  
By: Jerry Spinelli  
Grade Level: 6 / Guided Reading Level: W

**Book Club**

**Materials and Preparation:**

- ☐ Determine which students will participate in the **Maniac Magee** Book Club (4-6 students)
- ☐ Gather copies of **Maniac Magee** by Jerry Spinelli (1 per student)
- ☐ Prepare copies of the Book Club Calendar (1 per student)
- ☐ Prepare copies of the Expectations for Book Club (1 per student)
- ☐ Prepare copies of the Book Club Reading Response Board (1 per student)
- ☐ Prepare Reader's Notebooks (1 per student)
  - These may be spiral notebooks or several sheets of lined paper stapled together, or bound in a folder.
- ☐ Prepare Picture It! Activity
- ☐ Prepare Figurative Language Idea Web (Sample)
- ☐ Prepare Tracking Figurative Language with **Maniac Magee** graphic organizer
- ☐ Prepare Tone anchor chart
- ☐ Prepare Changing the Tone Activity (Sample)
- ☐ Prepare Sample Reader's Notebook Entry for Symbolism
- ☐ Definition and examples of figurative language on chart paper or iPad
- ☐ Optional: Prepare Vocabulary Resources (1 set per student)
- ☐ Optional: Prepare Student Self-Evaluation Forms (1 per student per meeting)
- ☐ Optional: Prepare Assessment Resources (1 set per student)
- ☐ Copy or Post Definitions of Figurative Language

Maniac Magee Book Club | @BookPagez.com