

# Lesson Plans and Teaching Resources for The Widow's Broom

## 5 COMPREHENSION STRATEGY LESSON PLANS & PRACTICE PAGES

### Asking Questions Lesson Plan

**Asking Questions**  
Grade Level: 4 / Guided Reading Level: R

**Get Ready to Read**

- Learn about the book
- Get your brain ready to read
- Understand the meaning of important words found in the book

**Key Vocabulary**

**Learn About Comprehension Strategies**

- Think about the text you read
- Know what to do when you get

**Summary**

**The Widow's Broom** tells the tale of a witch's broom that lands in the yard of a widow named Minna Shaw. The broom has lost its power to fly witches through the sky and appears to be destined for ordinary sweeping duties until Minna realizes that it's so much more than a typical broom! Her first instinct is to tear the broom and its powers. In fact, Minna's neighbors caution her, referring to the broom as evil. They are determined to squash the magic of the broom, but Minna finds herself in an unusual situation as she grows more and more attached to the broom than to anything but ordinary.

**Link to What You Know**

- What do you know about witches and their brooms?
- Think of a time you had to solve a problem. What questions did you ask yourself as you were solving the problem?

**Important Words to Know and Understand**

**Fetch** – To go to another place to get something or someone and bring it, him, or her back

**Widow** – A woman whose husband or wife has died and who has not remarried again

**Why Readers Ask Questions While Reading**

Readers ask questions because it makes reading much more interesting. By asking questions readers can turn a text into a treasure hunt, where their job is to find the answers to their questions. When readers ask questions, they think about what they already know and what they want to find out.

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### Guided Reading Level

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### Activate Prior Knowledge

### Page by Page Guide and Strategy Questions

### Turn, Talk, and Reflect

**Making Connections**  
Grade Level: 4 / Guided Reading Level: R

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**Answer Key for Asking Questions**  
The Widow's Broom

**Your Turn to Practice Asking Questions**  
with The Widow's Broom

**Page 1:** Look at the front cover. What are you wondering about this book?

**Page 5:** What questions do you have about the witch? What do you think she is thinking about when she lands in the garden?

**Page 10:** What questions do you think Minna wants to ask the broom?

**Page 13:** What questions do you have about Mr. Spivey? What are you wondering about him? How does thinking about this help you understand the book?

**Page 21:** What is confusing about the events that take place on this page? How does thinking about this help you understand the book?

**Answer Key for Making Connections**  
with The Widow's Broom

**Your Turn to Practice Making Connections**  
with The Widow's Broom

**Page 2:** On this page, we learn that the witch has lost her power. Make a text-to-text connection and think about something you own that stopped working.

**Page 5:** We learn that the witch's broom that lost its power. Make a text-to-text connection and think about something you own that stopped working.

**Page 10:** We learn that the witch's broom that lost its power. Make a text-to-text connection and think about something you own that stopped working.

**Identifying the Author's Purpose**  
Grade Level: 4 / Guided Reading Level: R

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**Determining Importance**  
Grade Level: 4 / Guided Reading Level: R

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**Answer Key for Identifying the Author's Purpose**  
with The Widow's Broom

**Your Turn to Practice Identifying the Author's Purpose**  
with The Widow's Broom

**Page 5:** Why do you think the author had the witch land in Minna's vegetable garden? What was the importance of that?

**Page 7:** How did the author show readers by having the witch take the hot coal from Minna's burning fire? Include text evidence to support your thinking.

**Page 12:** Minna has locked the broom in the closet. What does the author want readers to know about Minna?

**Page 13:** How does thinking about this help you as a reader?

**Answer Key for Making Inferences**  
with The Widow's Broom

**Your Turn to Practice Making Inferences**  
with The Widow's Broom

**Page 7:** We learn that the witch has lost her power. Make a text-to-text connection and think about something you own that stopped working.

**Page 12:** How does making this inference about the broom in this part of the story help you as a reader?

**Page 13:** How does thinking about this help you as a reader?

### Author's Purpose

### Determining Importance

### Practice Pages and Answer Keys

# WRITING ABOUT READING (WITH OPTIONAL CCSS ALIGNMENT)

Strategy and Text Based Reader's Response Prompt

Common Core State Standard

"I Can" Statement

**The Widow's Broom: Making Connections**

Think about how Minna tricked the Spivey's to get them to leave town. How would you have handled the Spivey's?

Use details from the story to compare what Minna did to what you would have done.

I can use details from the text to describe the actions of the character. CCSS: RL.4.3

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Reader's Notebook: Comprehension Strategy Slips (CCSS) | ©BookPagez.com

**The Widow's Broom: Determining Importance**

What kind of a person was Minna? Choose three character traits that describe her.

Use examples from the text to support the traits you choose. Explain why the traits are important to her character.

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**The Widow's Broom: Determining Importance**

What kind of a person was Minna? Choose three character traits that describe her.

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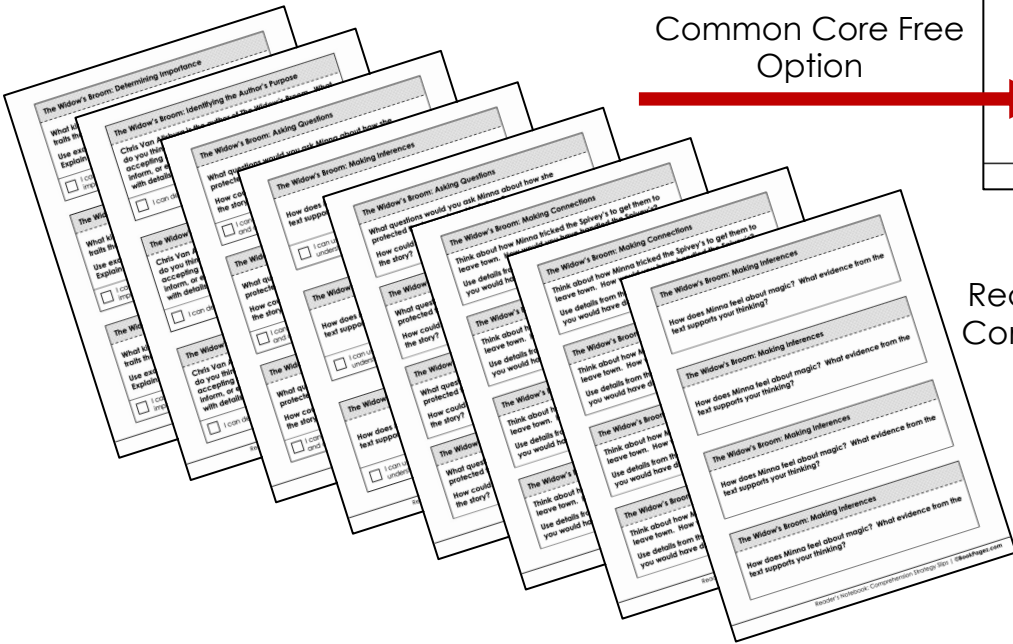
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Reader's Notebook: Comprehension Strategy Slips | ©BookPagez.com

Common Core Free Option



Reading Response Prompts for Each Comprehension Strategy Lesson Plan

## 5 COMPREHENSION STRATEGY GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

**Asking Questions**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Question Sentence Starters

How does...?	How does...?
I am confused when...?	I am not sure why...?

Question	Answer
Question	Answer
Question	Answer

Directions:  
1. Answer each of the questions.  
2. Carefully cut on the dotted line.  
3. Glue, tape, or staple into your reader's notebook.

Comprehension Strategy Graphic Organizer | ©BookPagez.com

Asking Questions

**Determining Importance**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Think about the book. Write all of the important information in the thought bubble below.

Now determine 3 BIG ideas, events, words, or facts that are important to you. Draw a picture to illustrate the most important parts of your book.

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

Directions:  
1. Answer each of the questions.  
2. Carefully cut on the dotted line.  
3. Glue, tape, or staple into your reader's notebook.

Comprehension Strategy Graphic Organizer | ©BookPagez.com

Determining Importance

**Identifying the Author's Purpose**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the author of your book?

What was the author's purpose for writing this book? How do you know?

To Persuade  To Inform  To Entertain

I know because...

What do you think the author wanted you to think about while reading this book?

Draw a picture of the most important thing the author made you think about while reading.

Directions:  
1. Answer each of the questions.  
2. Carefully cut on the dotted line.  
3. Glue, tape, or staple into your reader's notebook.

Comprehension Strategy Graphic Organizer | ©BookPagez.com

Identifying the Author's Purpose

**Making Connections**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Think about the book. What does the book remind you of?

What type of connection did you make?

Text-to-Self  Text-to-Text  Text-to-World

Draw a picture of your connection in the box below.

Directions:  
1. Answer each of the questions.  
2. Carefully cut on the dotted line.  
3. Glue, tape, or staple into your reader's notebook.

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Making Connections

**Making Inferences**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

What the Text Says (Use at least 3 in the text or picture)	What I Know (What do you know about the story?)	What I Can Infer (Infer, Predict, Conclude, Retain)

Directions:  
1. Answer each of the questions.  
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Comprehension Strategy Graphic Organizer | ©BookPagez.com

Making Inferences



# WORD WORK LESSON PLAN AND ACTIVITIES

Instructional Focus Based on the Words in the Book

**The Widow's Broom**  
By: Chris Van Allsburg  
Grade Level: 4 / Guided Reading Level: R

**Word Work**

**Instructional Focus:**  
Prepositional Phrase

**Background:**  
A **Prepositional Phrase** is a group of words with a noun or pronoun. The ending noun is the preposition. Prepositional phrases give direction, or time.

**Examples:**

through the woods	across the street
to the park	during the summer
around the world	inside the box

**Materials and Preparation:**

- A Copy of **The Widow's Broom**
- Chart Paper
- Common Prepositions Anchor Chart
- Prepositional Phrases Anchor Chart
- Colored markers
- A rock
- A hardcover book
- sandwich bags to hold cards for each pair of students
- Prepositional Phrases Card Sort, (students)
- Prepositional Phrases Practice Page
- Optional - Word Detective (1 per student)
- Optional - Activity to Extend Engagement

**Step 1: Introduce the Focus of Word Work**

**Introduce Prepositional Phrases**

- Draw students' attention to the Common Prepositions Anchor Chart.
- Tell students that a preposition is a word that is used before a noun or pronoun and gives more information.
- Show students the chart of common prepositions.
- Explain that today, you will focus on prepositional phrases that provide more information about location, direction, or time.
- Show students the rock and explain that this special rock is a tool you will use to learn about prepositions and prepositional phrases.
- Demonstrate setting the rock on the hard cover book and say "on".
- Move the rock under the book and say "under".
- Explain that we can use many of the words on the preposition list to show the location of the rock.
- Write "The rock is on the book" on the chart paper you prepared ahead of time with the definition of a Prepositional Phrase.
- Put a colored box around the word "on" and label it as a preposition.
- Underline "on the book" and explain that this is a prepositional phrase because it is a group of words that begins with the preposition "on", ends with the noun "book", and tells us the location of the rock.
- Ask the students to help you add more examples to the list. Hold the rock by the spine of the book and call on students to give a prepositional phrase to describe the rock's location. Remind them to begin with a preposition from the list. Write their responses ("near the book", "by the book", "beside the book" on the chart paper.
- Demonstrate examples of direction by moving the rock in relation to the book. Tell students the rock is moving "past the book" or "toward the book".
- Invite students to box the preposition and underline the prepositional phrases of the given examples.

Word Work Lesson Plan | @BookPagez.com

Step by Step Lesson Plan

Optional Activity to Extend Engagement

**The Widow's Broom**  
By: Chris Van Allsburg  
Grade Level: 4 / Guided Reading Level: R

**Word Work**

**Step 2: Connect Word Work to Reading**

**Extend Engagement**

- Select a student to begin. The student will take the rock used in the instruction lesson and the rock will call on students to describe a location with a prepositional phrase such as "under the desk" or "near the calculator".
- Encourage students to come up with as many prepositional phrases as they can to specify where the rock is.
- Challenge students to extend prepositional phrases for location and include directional and time phrases such as walking with the rock "toward the door" and going again "after lunch".

**Prepositional Phrases in the Text**

- Tell the students that the book they will read today has several examples of prepositional phrases.
- Point out a few prepositional phrases as you read the first few pages of **The Widow's Broom**.
- Discuss whether the phrases give us more information about location, direction, or time.
- On **page 7** tell the students they will now identify prepositional phrases on their own as you read. Tell them that holding up their fist signals a rock. They should quietly show their rock (their fist) when they hear prepositional phrases in the text.
- Students can listen and signal for prepositional phrases as you continue reading the text.

**Examples of Prepositional Phrases Found in the Text:**

- from the bed
- through the widow's house
- in a chair
- by the fireplace
- on the hearth
- into the flame
- beside the fire
- toward the garden
- over the tree tops

**Step 3: Guided Word Work Practice**

**Interactive Exploration**

- Tell students that understanding prepositional phrases will help them visualize while reading and elaborate and add clarity in their writing.
- Remind them that prepositional phrases give information about location, direction, or time.
- Explain that they will work in partnerships to sort prepositional phrases by type.
- Give each partnership a **bag of cut phrase cards**.
- Tell students there is a slip that includes the headings "Location", "Direction", and "Time". They will sort prepositional phrases in the correct columns under the headings.
- Instruct students to discuss and justify their thinking.

Word Work Lesson Plan | @BookPagez.com

List of words in the book that match the instructional focus

**Prepositional Phrases Card Sort Interactive Activity**

Location	Direction	Time
At the beach	Through the woods	Before noon
In the car	To the zoo	After dark
On the mountain	Toward the door	In a week
By the cafeteria	Around the block	Throughout the day
On the chair	Against the wind	Until midnight
Behind the bookshelf	Up the hill	Between meals
In a notebook	Along the path	During dinner

Guided Word Work Practice | @BookPagez.com

Interactive Activities

Independent Practice Pages

**The Widow's Broom**  
By: Chris Van Allsburg  
Grade Level: 4 / Guided Reading Level: R

**Word Work**

**Step 4: Independent Word Work Practice**

**Practice Page**

- Give each student a copy of **Prepositional Phrases** practice page.
- Read the directions with the class.
- Tell the students to complete the practice page.
- Monitor students while they work.

**Step 5: Reconnect and Reflect on Word Work**

**Group Discussion**

- Bring the students back together.
- Ask students to explain what they learned about words based on the work they completed.
- Invite students to turn and talk with a partner about their word work.
- Invite 2-3 students to share what they learned with the group.

**Step 6: Extend Word Work (optional)**

**Extension Activity**

- Ask students to be on the lookout for **prepositional phrases** in their own reading. Tell them to write their words on a sticky note and add them to the anchor chart (review the added sticky notes with the class later in the day or before moving on to the next word work lesson).
- Alternatively, students can keep track of the words using the **Word Detective worksheet**.

Word Work Lesson Plan | @BookPagez.com

**Word Detective: Prepositional Phrases Extension Activity**

**Directions:**  
Be a word detective!  
Be on the lookout for **prepositional phrases** while you read. Write the word that you find along with the title of the book where you found the word, the page, and the sentence with the word or phrase.

Word	Book Title	Page	Sentence

Word Work Extension Activity | @BookPagez.com

**Answer Key for Prepositional Phrases Word Work Practice Page**

**Part 1:** For each sentence, put a box around the preposition and underline the prepositional phrase. Remember prepositional phrases begin with a preposition and end with a noun or pronoun.

- The students ate their lunch in the classroom.
- They did the
- There is a rock
- By the river.
- The fire crack

**Part 2:** Prepositional Phrases give information about Location, Direction, or Time. Label each show what information the prepositional phrase offers. Then rewrite the sentence with a new prepositional phrase.

Example: The rambunctious, the rambunctious.

- They're go
- They're
- We baked
- We baki

**Part 2:** Prepositional Phrases give information about Location, Direction, or Time. Label each sentence with **L** for Location, **D** for Direction, or **T** for Time to show what information the prepositional phrase offers. Then rewrite the sentence with a new prepositional phrase of a different type. Label the type of your new prepositional phrase.

Example: The rambunctious puppies played inside their pen. L  
The rambunctious puppies played until it was dark. T

- They're going for a drive along the beach. \_\_\_\_\_
- We baked delicious cupcakes before dinner. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Independent Word Work Practice | @BookPagez.com

Word Detective

# ASSESSMENTS

Running Record Assessment:  
Use the first 100 words from the text to assess oral reading fluency



Running Record				
Title: <i>The Widow's Broom</i>		Guided Reading Text Level: R	Word Count: 100	
Name: _____		Date: _____		
Accuracy Rate: (# of words correct/100 words) _____				
Error Rate: (# of incorrect words/100 words) _____				
Self-Correction Rate: (# of words self-corrected/100 words) _____				
Time: (in seconds) _____		Words Per Minute: (100/seconds read x 60) _____		
Easy 95% - 100% Accuracy		Instructional 90% - 94% Accuracy		Hard 50% - 89% Accuracy
E = Errors SC = Self-Correction M = Meaning S = Structure/Syntax V = Visual			COUNT	
			E	SC
			E MSV	SC MSV
Page				
2	Witches' brooms don't last forever. They grow old, and even the best of them, one day, lose the power of flight.  Fortunately, this does not happen in an instant. A witch can feel the strength slowly leaving her broom. The sudden bursts of energy that once carried her quickly into the sky become weak. Longer and longer running starts are needed for takeoff. Speedy brooms that, in their youth, outraced hawks are passed by slow			
Tested By: _____			©BookPagez.com	

Common Core Assessment:  
One question for each Reading Informational OR Reading Literature standard (1-8)



The Widow's Broom CCSS Assessment	Name: _____ Score: / 9
<b>Directions:</b> Use what you know about <i>The Widow's Broom</i> to answer each of the following questions.	
1. What can you infer about Minna when she helps the witch who landed in her garden?	
<input type="radio"/> A Minna is afraid of witches and magic. <input type="radio"/> B She is a kind, compassionate, and brave person. <input type="radio"/> C Minna's garden is important to her. <input type="radio"/> D Minna is a person who doesn't mind doing chores.	
2. Mr. Spivey was not accepting of the broom because it was different from broom to be. What does Mr. Spivey say about the broom?	
<input type="radio"/> A He says it is dangerous and evil. <input type="radio"/> B He says he doesn't want to get to know the broom. <input type="radio"/> C He tells the neighbors to tease the broom. <input type="radio"/> D He tells Minna the broom should start doing more chores.	
3. Which best describes the broom?	
<input type="radio"/> A It is a helpful and good companion for Minna. <input type="radio"/> B It was very patient and didn't want to cause trouble. <input type="radio"/> C It is a hard worker, a fast learner, and a good friend. <input type="radio"/> D All of the above.	
4. What does Mr. Spivey mean when he uses the phrase, "We'll all be sorry"?	
<input type="radio"/> A They will all have to apologize to the broom. <input type="radio"/> B Something bad will happen and they will feel regret. <input type="radio"/> C You never know what is going to happen. <input type="radio"/> D They will all have to help with extra chores.	
CCSS Assessment 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Standards for Literature	

5. Which of these events happened first in <i>The Widow's Broom</i> ? (RL.4.5)
<input type="radio"/> A Minna taught the broom to do chores. <input type="radio"/> B The Spivey boys teased the broom. <input checked="" type="radio"/> C Minna found the broom sweeping. <input type="radio"/> D Mr. Spivey got upset about the broom.
6. Mr. Spivey had strong feelings about the broom. From his point of view, why was the broom dangerous? (RL.4.6)
<input checked="" type="radio"/> A The broom was magic and magic can be scary. <input type="radio"/> B The broom worked hard and Minna could become lazy. <input type="radio"/> C The broom could take over Minna's farmhouse. <input type="radio"/> D The broom was helpful and could do many chores.
7. How do the illustrations support the text of the story? (RL.4.7)
<input type="radio"/> A They show how much the broom misses the witch. <input type="radio"/> B They show how dangerous the broom can be. <input checked="" type="radio"/> C They show the emotions of the characters. <input type="radio"/> D The illustrations do not support the text of the story.
8. Which of these messages is presented in the story? (RL.4.9)
<input checked="" type="radio"/> A You don't have to fear something just because it's different from what you expect. <input type="radio"/> B Chores build character. <input type="radio"/> C A good friend can make everything better. <input type="radio"/> D Being lonely can be good for you.
9. What is the genre of this story? (RL.4.10)
<input type="radio"/> A Realistic Fiction <input type="radio"/> B Biography <input checked="" type="radio"/> C Fantasy <input type="radio"/> D Nonfiction
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Answer Key



