

Title/Author: *A Seed is Sleepy* by Dianna Hutts Ashton with illustrations by Sylvia Long

Suggested Time to Spend: 5 Days (5 20-30 minute sessions)

Common Core grade-level ELA/Literacy Standards: RI.2.1, RI.2.2, RI.2.4, RI.2.6, RI.2.8, RI.2.10,

W.2.2, W.2.8; L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.4, L.2.5, L.2.6; SL.2.1, SL.2.2

Lesson Objective:

Students will explore the author's use of figurative language and vocabulary to describe the complex life of a seed.

## Teacher Instructions

### **Before the Lesson**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis below. **Please do not read this to the students.** This is a description to help you prepare to teach the book and be clear about what you want your children to take away from the work.

#### Big Ideas/Key Understandings/Focusing Question

How does the author's carefully chosen words help us to understand and remember information about seeds?

#### Synopsis

This picture book uses personification to help students understand the complex and adaptive life of a seed. The book describes many of the characteristics of seeds using the stem, "A seed is \_\_\_\_" with unusual adjectives like *secretive* and *adventurous*. Each page offers rich, factual information about seeds and has captioned illustrations.

2. Go to the last page of the lesson and review “What Makes this Read-Aloud Complex.” This was created for you as part of the lesson and will give you guidance about what the lesson writers saw as the sources of complexity or key access points for this book. You will of course evaluate text complexity with your own students in mind, and make adjustments to the lesson pacing and even the suggested activities and questions.
3. Read the entire book, adding your own insights to the understandings identified. Also note the stopping points for the text-inspired questions and activities. *Hint: you may want to copy the questions vocabulary words and activities over onto sticky notes so they can be stuck to the right pages for each day’s questions and vocabulary work.*

### The Lesson – Questions, Activities, and Tasks

Questions/Activities/Vocabulary/Tasks	Expected Outcome or Response (for each)
<p><b>FIRST READING:</b> Read aloud the entire book with minimal interruptions. Stop to provide word meanings or clarify only when you know the majority of your students will be confused.</p>	<p>The goal here is for students to enjoy the book, both writing and pictures, and to experience it as a whole. This will give them some context and sense of completion before they dive into examining the parts of the book more carefully.</p>
<p><b>SECOND READING:</b></p> <p><b>Reread page 2. (Display on a document camera or projector, if possible.)</b></p> <p>“A root word is a word or part of a word that we use to make other words. What root word do you see in <i>sleepy</i>? What does it mean to be sleepy?”</p> <p>“What things about a seed make the author think that “A seed</p>	<p>Note: In many cases throughout the text, vocabulary is accessible through root words. Showing students how to separate roots/endings with an “easy”, familiar word sets the stage for this.</p> <p>Sleep Feel tired, ready for sleep</p> <p>“lies there,” “tucked inside,” “beneath the soil,” “snug,” “still”</p>

is sleepy?”

**Activity:**

Let’s act out what we look like when we feel sleepy.

**Reread pages 3 and 4.**

“Help me reread the large sentence in cursive on page 3.”

An adjective is a word that describes something. What adjective does the author use to describe a seed here?

Remember, a root word is a word part or part of a word that we use to make other words. What root word do you see in **secretive**?

What does secret mean?

What do you think it means when someone or something is **secretive**?

**Listen as I read the rest of these pages.**

**(Read all the informational text that accompanies this adjective, pausing to explore pictures and clarify meaning.)**

Now, that we have read some more, what do you think it means when someone or something is **secretive**? What, in the text, makes you think so?

Point to each word as students read chorally:

*A seed is secretive.*

Secretive

Secret

A secret is something that you don’t want others to know about.

They have secrets—things they don’t want others to know.

They don’t show you what they are like right away. It says the seed “does not reveal itself too quickly” OR “It says some seeds take 10 years to turn into flowers.”

Why does the author use the word *secretive* to describe seeds? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Can seeds really keep secrets? What if they could?

Take out your graphic organizer.

1. Copy the word *secretive* from the board. Put it at the end of the sentence at the top of the page.
2. Under "This sentence seems to mean..." draw a funny picture to show a seed acting like a person being secretive.
3. Under "but what the author *really means* is..." draw and label an example from the text of why a seed might need to be secretive.
4. When students have finished, have them use their drawings to turn and talk to a partner about the following question: "Why does the author think seeds seem *secretive*?"

**Reread through page 10.**

"Help me reread the large sentence in cursive on pages 11 and 12."

"Which adjective does the author use to describe a seed here?"

"What root word do you see in *adventurous*? What does *adventure* mean?"

Because it's hard to tell what the seed is going to be. (It's like the seed is keeping it a secret!) It can take a season or even years before the seed grows into a flower.

See sample graphic organizer on next page.

Each student will need two copies of the graphic organizer found at end of this document. You may choose to make double sided copies so student have one page to manage.

The teacher may want to model how root words can be used to help with spelling as well.

Help students, as needed, to draw and write using an example from the text. Model this first drawing if necessary.

Point to each word as students read chorally:

*A seed is adventurous.*

adventurous

adventure, an exciting or unusual experience or journey

What does it mean to be *adventurous*?"

"What things about a seed make the author think that "A seed is adventurous?"

**"Listen as I read the rest of these pages (through page 16)."  
(Read all the informational text that accompanies this adjective, pausing to explore pictures and clarify meaning.)**

"Why does the author use the word *adventurous* to describe seeds? Use evidence from the text to support your answer."

Let's continue to use your graphic organizer.

1. Copy the word *adventurous* from the board. Put it at the end of the second sentence on the page.
2. Under "This sentence seems to mean..." draw a funny picture to show a seed acting like a person being adventurous.
3. Under "but what the author *really means* is..." draw and label an example from the text of why a seed might seem to be adventurous.
4. When students have finished, have them use their drawings to turn and talk to a partner about the following question: "Why does the author think seeds seem *adventurous*?"

to be full of adventure, not afraid to do new and dangerous or exciting things

[-ous = full of]

It leaps, floats, dandelions parachute seeds 100 miles, clings to shoestring, tumbles through bears' belly, search for less crowded places, strike out, leap from pods

Because seeds aren't afraid to take an exciting journey. A seed goes out on its own, floats through the air, travels in a bear's belly. "It must strike out on its own, in search of a less crowded place to put down seeds."

**THIRD READING:**

“Help me reread the large sentence in cursive on pages 15 and 16.”

“Which adjective does the author use to describe a seed here? Let’s think about the word *inventive*.”

“What root word do you see in *inventive*?”

“What does it mean to invent?”

“What do you think it means when someone or something is **inventive**?”

**“Listen as I read the rest of the text on these two pages.”  
(Read all the informational text that accompanies this adjective, pausing to explore pictures and clarify meaning.)**

“Why does the author use the word *inventive* to describe seeds? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.”

Take out your graphic organizer.

1. Copy the word *inventive* from the board. Put it at the end of the second sentence on the page.
2. Under “This sentence seems to mean...” draw a funny picture to show a seed acting like a person being inventive.

Point to each word as students read chorally:

*A seed is inventive.*

inventive

invent

to create or design something new that didn’t exist before

They tend to come up with new ideas, or create new ways to do/make things.

Seeds find lots of ways to move from their plant out into the world to find a place to grow. “leap from its pod,” “cling to a child’s shoestring,” “tumble through a bear’s belly,” “to land where there is plenty of sunlight, soil, and water.”

3. Under “but what the author *really means* is...” draw and label an example from the text of why a seed might be described as *inventive*.
4. When students have finished, have them use their drawings to turn and talk to a partner about the following question: “Why does the author think seeds seem *inventive*?”

**Reread from page 17 through page 20.**

**“Help me reread the large sentence in cursive on pages 21 and 22.”**

“Which adjectives does the author use to describe a seed here? Let’s think about the word hungry.”

“What root word do you see (maybe hear?) in *hungry*?”

“What does it mean to be hungry?”

“What do you eat when you are hungry?”

“What things about a seed make the author think that “A seed is hungry? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.”

**“Listen as I read the rest of these pages (through page 24.”  
(Read all the informational text that accompanies this adjective, pausing to explore pictures and clarify meaning.)**

Point to each word as students read chorally:

*A seed is thirsty...and hungry.*

thirsty and hungry

hunger

to have hunger, feel the need to eat food

sandwich, apple, yogurt, etc.

“It feasts on minerals in the soil.”

The root “digs down deep.”

The shoot “reaches for the sun.”

“Plants make their own food through a process called photosynthesis.”

<p>“Why does the author use the word <i>hungry</i> to describe seeds?”</p> <p>Take out your graphic organizer.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Copy the word <i>hungry</i> from the board. Put it at the end of the second sentence on the page.</li><li>2. Under “This sentence seems to mean...” draw a funny picture to show a seed acting like a person being hungry.</li><li>3. Under “but what the author <i>really means</i> is...” draw and label an example from the text of why a seed might be described as <i>hungry</i>.</li><li>4. When students have finished, have them use their drawings to turn and talk to a partner about the following question: “Why does the author think seeds seem <i>hungry</i>?”</li></ol>	<p>It helps us understand that seeds need to be nourished in order to become plants. They find food in the soil and make food using photosynthesis.</p>
<p><b>FOURTH READING:</b></p> <p>Reread the entire text, stopping frequently to ask about the meaning of words you have worked closely with (<i>sleepy, adventurous, inventive, hungry</i>), as well as words that you did not work closely with (<i>fruitful, generous, clever, awake</i>). Use a simple, repetitive question like the following: “What things about a seed make the author think that “A seed is _____?”</p> <p>Ask students to use evidence from the book to explain their thinking.</p> <p>Add new words to a word wall or display on a piece of chart paper. Use them frequently in class to reinforce student understanding.</p>	<p>Look for students to apply the strategy of using the root word and/or the supporting text and illustrations to understand the meaning of each word.</p>

## FINAL DAY WITH THE BOOK - Culminating Task

- Divide students into small, heterogeneous groups. Assign each small group a different pair of pages with one stem, “A seed is \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Invite small groups to reread the pages and recall evidence that supported the author’s claims that “A seed is \_\_\_\_.” Then, ask the groups to work together to write a cohesive paragraph of 4-5 sentences that includes a topic sentence, concluding sentence, and at least 2 supporting details showing the support.
  - Student sample: *A seed can seem hungry. As it grows into a plant, it’s roots dig down deep to find minerals to eat. A plant’s leaves make food, too. Plants need food like people need food. That’s why they seem hungry!*
  - Student sample: *Seeds can seem sleepy sometimes. It might look like a seed is just lying there in the dirt being very still. They can be tucked inside a flower or deep in a cone, just like a person tucked under the covers. Some seeds wait a long time before they germinate. Some wait for warm temperatures. Just like people, seeds seem sleepy but they wake up!*

Vocabulary

<p><b>These words merit less time and attention</b>                      (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/ processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students )</p>	<p><b>These words merit more time and attention</b>                      (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with)</p>
<p>Page 2 - snug - to fit comfortably close of too close</p> <p>Page 7 – freckle - a small brownish mark found on the skin</p> <p>Page 12 – parachute – a fabric canopy (like an umbrella) with straps that allow a person or object to fall through the air slowly from a height</p> <p>Page 13 –currents – the flow of water or air</p> <p>Page 15 – pod – a seed case</p> <p>Page 17 – generous -- willing to give or share</p> <p>Page 21 – gravity - the force which attracts things towards the Earth and causes them to fall to the ground</p>	<p>Page 3 - secretive – unwilling to reveal information</p> <p>Page 3 - reveal – make something known</p> <p>Page 5 – fruitful – produces fruit, produces results</p> <p>Page 11 – adventurous – daring or risky, not afraid to do new and dangerous or exciting things</p> <p>Page 16 – inventive – displaying creativity, able to create or design something new that didn’t exist before</p> <p>Page 20 germinate – to begin to sprout or grow</p> <p>Page 20 – ancient – very old, from long ago</p> <p>Page 20 – dormant – not active, not growing</p> <p>Page 23 – clever – smart</p>

### Fun Extension Activities And Other Useful Resources

- **Seed Scavenger Hunt:** Have each child bring (or provide for each child) one adult sized, large sock. After reading the story, have each child put one sock on over his/her shoe. Walk outside on the playground, through an open field, park, or nature trail. Talk about the different characteristics of seeds and point out difference flowers and seeds. After the walk, have child take off socks and look for what is stuck to their sock. Talk about what kinds of seeds were found, why they stuck to the sock and how that is important to the seed's growth.
- **Act it Out:** Reread pages 21-24. Ask students to act out/imagine the movement of a seed (feel gravity pulling, roots digging into soil, etc.)
- **Discover the Parts of a Seed:** Reread pages 17-18. Soak lima bean seeds in water and split open to examine parts of the seed.

### Note to Teacher

- This text provides a great opportunity to teach the concept of personification. Many visual resources are available online to help students understand this concept (search using the words "images" and "personification"). If you choose to introduce the term, be sure to point out that students can use the root word, "person" to understand what "personification means.

*A seed is* \_\_\_\_\_.

This sentence ***seems*** to mean...

But what the author ***really*** means is...

*A seed is* \_\_\_\_\_.

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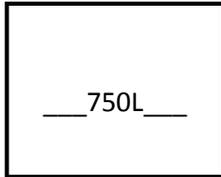
This sentence ***seems*** to mean...

But what the author ***really*** means is...

**What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex?**

**1. Quantitative Measure**

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your read-aloud in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.



Most of the texts that we read aloud in K-2 should be in the 2-3 or 4-5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2-3 band            420-820L  
 4-5 band            740-1010L

**2. Qualitative Features**

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension\*, note specific examples from the text that make it more or less complex.

<p>Seeds are complex and interesting. There is a lot more to a seed than one might think. Seeds have special characteristics that help them survive (adaptations).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Meaning/Purpose</b></p>	<p>Repetition, “A seed is...” followed by facts and captioned illustrations.</p> <p>Both literary and informational</p> <p><b>Structure</b></p>
<p>Vocab: secretive, reveal, textures, inventive, generous, ancient, dormant</p> <p>Word endings/root words: secretive, adventurous</p> <p>Fig. language: personification – author uses adjectives typically used to describe people to describe seeds.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Language</b></p>	<p><b>Knowledge Demands</b></p> <p>Might be best to couple with informational text as first read.</p> <p>Concept of personification may need to be deepened/clarified once it has been introduced through the text.</p>

**3. Reader and Task Considerations**

What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

*Vocabulary – TDQs that draw students to meaning of unknown words, use of picture support, opportunities to act out selected vocabulary words.*

How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

*This text suggests that something as small and common as a seed is filled with complex characteristics that help it grow and survive. Students will understand that sometimes words mean something different than they seem – this book provides an introduction to figurative language and the idea that authors choose words carefully.*

**4. Grade level**

What grade does this book best belong in? 2<sup>nd</sup> grade