



## Why Can't Calvin Fly?

In this lesson, students will use Questioning as a strategy to help them gain a deeper understanding of the story *Calvin Can't Fly* by Jennifer Berne. They will also use Questioning to examine the relationships between pictures and text in a story.

### **Anchor Standard: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7**

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7**

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

**Time Frame:** ~ 60-70 minutes

To allow students to investigate the tasks and concepts in this lesson fully, it may take more than one class period. If the lesson will extend across two class periods, a good place to pause the lesson is after the Explain section. When restarting the lesson, be sure to start with a brief review of using textual evidence to develop and answer questions while reading before students begin reading independently in the Elaborate/Extend section.

### **Materials**

Pictures of fisherman

Picture 1 of Calvin

Picture 2 of Calvin

T-chart for class discussion

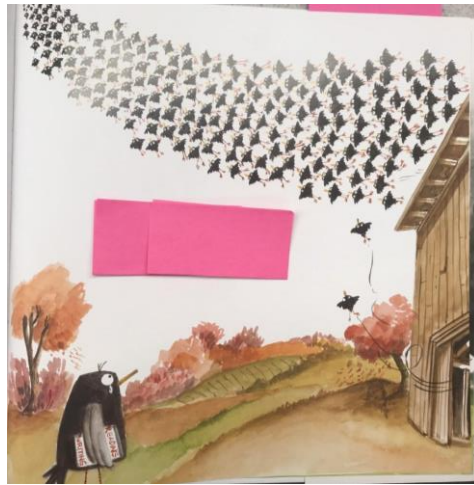
Book: *Calvin Can't Fly* by Jennifer Berne



*Stick Figure*



Fisherman



Picture 1



Picture 2

**Engage**

Show students the stick figure picture, and write this sentence on the board: "Bob is going somewhere." Ask the students to think about what they think Bob might be doing and also what questions they wonder about Bob or would need to ask to find out what he is doing and where he is going. Have students use Think, Pair, Share to raise ideas and questions, and record a few of their questions on the board.



Show the second picture with additional detail, and write a more descriptive sentence on the board: "Bob is going on vacation." Again ask students to think about what Bob might be doing and what questions they wonder, and Think, Pair, Share a second time. Ask students to talk about why it was easier to figure out some things in the second picture - raise questions such as these: *What did the second picture show that the first one did not? Which of your questions from the first picture were answered in the second picture? What details*

*helped you answer your questions, and what details helped you to find new questions? What questions do you still have?*

### Explore

Explain to students that the focus of the lesson will be on using a strategy of *questioning*. Explain that readers ask questions before, during, and after they read because it helps them understand what they are reading and the details of the story. When we ask questions as we read and look at the illustrations and then look for the answers to our questions, it helps us to understand the story better.

Explain that we will be looking at two illustrations of a character from a story we will read together. We will use the details in the illustrations to come up with questions we have about the character.



Show the first Calvin picture (showing Calvin crying). Ask students to point out what they see in the picture and what they wonder or would like to know about the character. Encourage students to spend a few quiet moments observing the picture and thinking about their questions, and then invite them to share. Write student questions on the board.



Students are using questioning to explore their own curiosity before getting into the text of the book.

Then show the second Calvin picture with the ribbons tied around Calvin. Ask students again to spend a few moments observing the picture and coming up with what they see and what they wonder or would like to know. Ask students to share observations and questions with a partner and then with the larger group. Encourage students to describe details from the illustration that may have helped them to come up with a question. Record student questions.

Ask students if they have any additional observations and questions now that they have seen two pictures of Calvin, and write those questions on the board as well.

### Look For

- Students who are asking questions about the character to help further their understanding of what's coming. (Strategic)
- Students who are asking questions that demonstrate they are using inferencing to understand the character, or who use combinations of details across the two pictures to develop ideas and questions. (Perceptive)
- Students who ask unusual questions or generate many questions. (Creative)



Students are focusing on key questioning words to help focus their attention on asking a variety of questions as they explore the story.

### Explain

Explain that in this lesson, we will be looking at illustrations and reading the text to help us understand more about a character and his experiences. Remind students that one of the ways we understand characters and stories better is by asking questions while we read.

Ask students to identify some of the key words we often use to begin our questions - *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how*. Circle those words where they appear in the questions students already shared about the pictures from the Calvin story.

Explain that you will read the Calvin story and model asking and answering questions about a character as you go along to help understand the story better.

Read the first page of the book and ask, “What is a starling?” Record the question on a T chart like the one below. Invite students to record ideas on their own copy of the T chart if desired.

Questions I have about the text	Answers & Evidence

Continue to read the next two pages, and ask students if we can answer the first question yet. Following the first sentence on the third page (“Right from the beginning Calvin was different...”), record a question such as “How is Calvin different?” Continue reading, and ask students if they can begin to answer the question after that two-page spread (Calvin likes to read and his siblings enjoy more typical bird

activities). (Record text evidence/answer on chart.)

Read pages 5-6, and ask a question such as this: "I wonder... What might happen to Calvin if he doesn't do any regular bird activities?"



Explain that as you continue to read, students should think of their own questions they wonder about Calvin. Continue to read the story, pausing after reading a couple of pages to allow students to generate and record their questions on individual whiteboards. Encourage students to put checks beside their questions that are answered as you continue to read.

At the pages where the original two pictures discussed appear, ask students how their questions are the same and different now that they have read some of the story. Revisit the original questions to see which we can now answer, and discuss what new questions students may have.

Ask students to consider these questions in a Think-Pair-Share: How did the illustrations/pictures help you answer your questions? How did the text help you answer your questions?

Emphasize that the pictures provided a limited understanding of the story. When we use the pictures and the text together we get a much better understanding of the story (and answers to your questions).

At the end of the story, ask students to look back over the questions that they asked and share how the questions helped them in understanding the story and the character.

#### **Look For**

- Students who are able to synthesize many ideas from their questions to explain the outcomes. (Communicative)
- Students who determine early on that Calvin will fly at the end of the story. (Perceptive)
- Students who use a variety of types of questions. (Communicative)
- Students whose questions target key details of the story. (Strategic)



Students are extending their use of questioning words and a questioning approach to reading to their own other texts.



## Elaborate/Extend

### *Target Task*

Students will use questioning in other books by working with a picture book at their own level. Explain that as students are reading, they will need to generate **at least 4 questions** about their character and write them on sticky notes. When students find an answer to a question while reading, they can place the sticky note in the book where the text evidence is found.

### *Extend the Task*

For students who were observed engaging in one of the high-potential behaviors or who demonstrated advanced understanding in the Explain section of the lesson, this target task can be extended in one of the following ways (note that this *replaces* the target task above and should not be done *in addition to* the target task):

- Tell students that as they generate their questions, they should make sure that their 4 questions begin with 4 different question words (i.e., *who, what, when, where, why, and how*). (Students may generate more than 4, but there should be at least 4 questions with 4 different question words.) When students find an answer to a question while reading, they can place the sticky note in the book where the text evidence is found.
- After students read, have them develop 1 question that can *only* be answered by looking at illustrations, 1 question that can *only* be answered from the text, and 1 question that can *only* be answered by a combination of illustration and text.



### *Scaffolding and Support*

For students who may need some support generating questions or providing text-based answers, have them take a “picture walk” of the text first. Invite them to say what they notice and/or what they wonder about some of the pictures they see. You might also provide students with sentence frames to facilitate their questioning. Examples could include:

- Why did my character \_\_\_\_\_?
- How will my character \_\_\_\_\_?
- What if my character \_\_\_\_\_?



### **Look For**

- Students who ask questions that demonstrate they are trying to

make inferences based on details about their character  
(Perceptive)

- Students who ask many and varied questions (Curious)

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**Evaluate**

Students will assemble at the end of the reading period to share.

Ask students *“What did we learn today about asking questions while we read? How did we use both the illustrations and the text to ask and answer questions?”*

Invite students to share with a partner one question that they were able to ask and answer about their independent reading book. Have a few partners share out their questions.

Engage



*Bob is going on a vacation.*

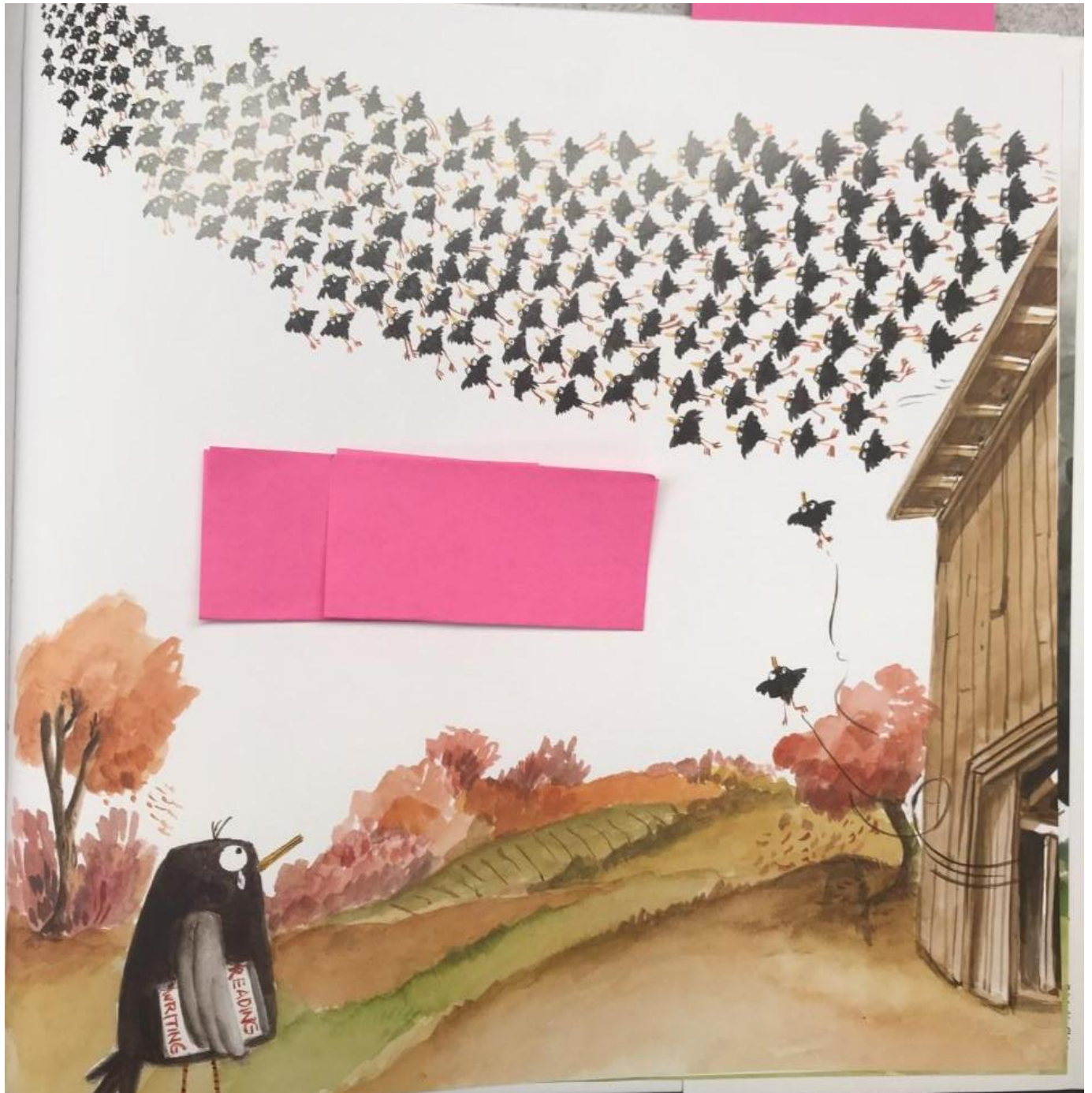




*Bob is going somewhere.*

Explore

Picture 1



Picture 2



**T Chart For Calvin Questions**

Questions I have about the text	Answers & Evidence