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Space Taxi: Archie Takes Flight
Space Taxi: Water Planet Rescue
by Wendy Mass and Michael Brawer

FOCUS ON COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Many books can meet most, if not all, Common Core Standards. However, we have found that some books speak strongly to a few standards. These one-page applications connect a focused text and the Common Core Standards as written for second and third graders—leaning on the text’s literary strengths.

2.RL.1 and 3.RL.1

Sticky notes and reading journals can encourage students to record their questions and notice specific details in the text as they read. Asking questions is an important comprehension strategy, helping students deepen their understanding and fostering discussions of stories. As students read *Space Taxi*, ask them to write questions on sticky notes. Model sample questions on an anchor chart. At the end of each chapter, ask students to stop, think, and record their ideas on sticky notes or in their reading journals.

2.SL.1 and 3.SL.1

Sticky notes and journals also support students as they discuss their reading with peers. These standards call for Collaborative Discussions, in pairs, small groups and as a whole class. Students can share their questions and answers, noting others’ observations and deepening their collective understanding of the stories.

2.RL.3 and 3.RL.3

As students take off reading these stories, they will need to develop a full picture of the characters, especially Archie Morningstar, this series’ intrepid hero. Students can use their reading journals to record concrete details from the text, as well as their observations on the characters’ traits, motivations, and feelings. With *Archie Takes Flight*, focus on Archie so that students have a clear picture of the main character and narrator. Pause after the first chapter, “Take Your Kid to Work Day”, and record their observations on an anchor chart. Notice how the illustrations can add to students’ mental picture of the characters.



2.RL.5 and 3.RL.5

Strong readers have a clear understanding of story structure. As these standards note, students must be able to describe how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action. Use a plot-diagram anchor chart to help students describe the beginning of the story, the rising action, the problem that the characters need to fix, and the final resolution. After Archie discovers that his dad's taxi actually flies into space, what is the problem he needs to help solve? Notice how illustrations can help identify key moments in the story.

2.LS.5 and 3.LS.5

Students in second and third grade are developing their understanding of the nuances in word meanings and the use of figurative language. How does Archie's description that he is floating in the air like a balloon (p. 43 from *Archie Takes Flight*) create a visual sense for readers, showing them just how funny this scene is? Encourage students to notice descriptive language —this will help them as they start writing their own stories. Ask students to cite other examples of figurative language from the books.

2.W.3 and 3.W.3

Students have fun writing their own stories, especially after reading outlandish stories about taxis in space and talking cats. This standard asks students to write narratives to develop real or imagined events. Students should be able to introduce the story, use dialogue and descriptions of actions, use temporal words to signal the order of events, and provide a sense of closure. Noticing how characters and plot develop in the stories they read helps students write their own stories. Teachers might give a specific prompt related to *Space Taxi*, such as: "Imagine your dad took you to work, but it was nothing like what you expected. Describe what happened that was a surprise."