Springboard 4

The Real-Life School Project

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Illustrated by Paul Konye

Text Type		Lower 1500–1800 words RA 8.8–9.2	Middle 1900–2400 words RA 9.3–9.7	Upper 2500–3000 words RA 9.8–10.2
Fact	**Procedure**	Build Your Own Easel	Making a Cheesecake	So You Want to Be a Cartoonist?
	Recount (Explanation)	Ten Milestones in Space	Rail Accidents	Three Terrible Hurricanes
	Information Report (Description)	Mythical Creatures	The World of Caves	Top Towers
	Information Report (Explanation)	A Weather Counting Book	Two Polar Regions	Seven Ancient Wonders
	Interview	Food Science FAQs	Hobbies	Fireflies and Glow-worms
	Biography	Ned Kelly	Mother Teresa: Saint of the Gutters	Edmund Hillary
	Explanation	How Forensic Scientists Work	How Musical Instruments Work	How Solar Energy Works
	Procedural Recount	How I Learned to Be a Nipper	How I Trained for the Junior Triathlon	How I Learned to Snowboard
Fiction	**Realistic Fiction** (Out of School)	Junkyard Treasure	Outback Betty's	Harry's Dream
	Realistic Fiction (In School)	On the Case	The Real-Life School Project	Ms McMahon
	Historical Fiction	The Wooden Horse Trick	Cheung Saves the Day	The Slave
	Fantasy	The Cloud Washerwoman	Sammy Stevens Sings	Finbar and the Long Trek
	Science Fiction	A New Source of Power	The Intergalactic Race	Eighth Moon
	Humour	The Upstairs Dragon	My Rhyming Grandpa	Catty Bimbar and the New-Age Pirates
	Mystery	Mystery Under the Big Top	The Mystery of Autoplane 500	The Mystery of the Missing Food
	Folktales	The Wicked Witch of the Singing Sands	Gulnara	Momotaro, Little Peachling

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We have designed these lesson plans so that you can have the plan in front of you as you teach, along with a copy of the book. Suggestions for teaching have been divided into questions and discussion that you may have with students before, during, and after they read. You may prefer to explore the meaning and the language in more detail before students read. Your decisions will depend on the gap between students' current knowledge and the content, vocabulary, and language of the book they are about to read. The more information students have up front, the easier it will be for them to read the text.
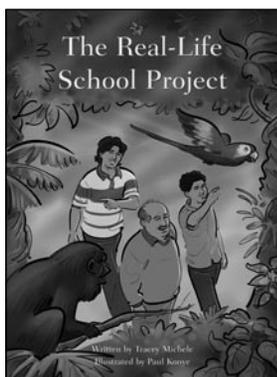
THE REAL-LIFE SCHOOL PROJECT

Middle level fiction
Text type: Realistic Fiction
Reading age 9.4
Word count 2,169

Before Reading

Tell students that authors may use made-up characters and put them into everyday settings. This is called *realistic fiction. These stories make it easy for the reader to relate to what is happening and imagine themselves within the story.*

What generally happens in these stories? Build understandings that the main character or characters that are introduced at the start have a problem to solve. *A sequence of events occurs, which lead the main character or characters to solve the problem.*

Ask students what a project is. Discuss the sorts of projects students have done in the past, and brainstorm topics suited to project work. Guide the discussion to cover where students can access information for projects.

COVER

Before Reading

Read the title and ask the students to consider what this story might be about.

Discussion and question guide:

- *Where do you think this story is set?*

- *What is a school project? What might a real-life school project be?*

- *What information can we gather from the illustration?*

Read the blurb on the back cover. Discuss the words *realistic fiction.* Guide students to understand that:

- the author has used an everyday situation as the setting in this book,

- the characters learn about a rainforest village,

- a project will be completed.

Consider the title, cover illustration, and blurb. What do you think happens in this story? Who do you think will tell this story? Who are the main characters?

CHAPTER 1

During Reading

Read the subtitle and look at the illustration on page 5. What do you expect to learn in Chapter 1? Guide the discussion to include learning about the characters and the project.

Read Chapter 1. As you read, take note of what you learn about Marco and his grandfather. Both Marco and his grandfather like to play particular games. What are they?

You will learn about the topic for the project and why the teacher has assigned this task. Be ready to chat about Marco's idea for the project and his grandfather's suggestion for the research. Take note of the special kind of information Marco's grandfather suggests would be helpful.

After Reading

What have you learned about the project? Why has Marco's teacher set this task?

What does Marco want to do his project on? What does Alfredo suggest may help him? What do you think the words electronic brain *refer to? What is* real-life information*?* Direct students to page 9 to check if needed.

Marco had already researched on the computer at school. How is the information he obtained different from the information Alfredo is referring to?

Revisit page 7. Explain that diagrams and organizers are a way of showing information about a topic. *These sorts of pictures need to be read, just like the words.* Refer students to the information found on the organizer. *What could Marco do his project on?* Encourage quick responses from students as they access information from page 7.

What is a games forum? Discuss. *Which games do Marco and Alfredo like to play?*

CHAPTER 2

During Reading

Read the subtitle on page 10. What could this refer to? Discuss whether it refers to chess, *Nation Builder IV*, or something else.

In this chapter Alfredo surprises Marco with some of his skills. This makes Marco realize that Alfredo is not as out of touch with modern technology as he thought. What idea does it give Marco?

Read Chapter 2 and jot down what Marco and Alfredo discover while searching for information about the project. Write down any new or tricky words and think about what they could mean.

Find the words that are associated with using the Internet. Be ready to discuss what you know about these things later.

After Reading

What do you learn about Alfredo in this chapter? How does this make Marco feel? Students should infer that Marco is excited about Alfredo's computer competency. *What idea does it give Marco?*

What do they discover while searching for information? Guide the discussion about the online game. Ask students to share what they know about online games*. How does Marco feel about playing an online game while doing his project?*

What does the term strategy game *refer to in this chapter. Were our predictions correct or is it another game?* Discuss. Revisit page 13 to clarify if needed.

What is an ecotourist? Tell students that *eco* means the relationship between people and the environment and that a tourist is

someone visiting a place to see and learn about it. *What then is an ecotourist?* Assist students to generalize.

CHAPTER 3

During Reading
What does the subtitle and illustration suggest to you?

As you read Chapter 3, think about how the real-life information helps Alfredo and Marco build understandings of the rainforest. What elements of the interactive game help them feel like they are really there in the rainforest?

In this chapter you will meet another character. Be ready to chat about who this person is and why he is important to the story. What role does this character have in this book?

As you read, jot down the name of the place Marco and Alfredo learn about. Be ready to share how their learning experience is different from other ways of gathering project information. Be ready to share what Marco and Alfredo learn. Take some notes to help you to remember.

After Reading
Who do Marco and Alfredo meet and what is the role of this character? How is Agustin going to help Marco with his project? Where does he take them?

What do Marco and Alfredo learn from the online game? What is happening in Ecuador? What could happen to the rainforest if the clearing is not stopped?

What extra information do Marco and Alfredo gather by using the real-life experience? Guide students to understand that they are getting a simulated real tour, which includes sights, sounds, and commentary by someone who knows a lot about the environment. Building knowledge through an experience provides

greater understanding. How else is it different? Students should acknowledge that it makes the task more fun. *What word is used to describe this type of interaction between the person and the computer?* Students should indicate that this is an interactive game.

CHAPTER 4

During Reading
What does the title suggest to you? Based on the illustration on page 21, what kind of place do you think Ecuador is? Invite inferences.

Read this chapter and be ready to chat about what Marco and Alfredo learn about Agustin. Be prepared to share what Agustin would like to see happen. Jot down some notes about how Agustin sees his idea working and, if successful, what effect it would have on Ecuador.

Be ready to share your thoughts on Agustin's idea. Consider whether you think it could work. Be prepared to give reasons for you opinions. Can you think of anything that might prevent Agustin's plan from working?

After Reading
What have you learned about Agustin? What is his idea to protect the environment in Ecuador? His idea could bring about two positive changes. What are they? Refer students to page 23 to check if needed.

If you lived in Ecuador, how do you think you would feel about this idea? What would be a negative impact of having tourists around your home? How would this change your daily life? Discuss. Guide the discussion to include the shift from farming to tourism and the new skills people would need to acquire. Discuss the constant presence of strangers around your home and possible crime. Discuss that this community is built on farming, so that is

what they may like to do.

What do you think of Agustin's idea? What kind of person is Agustin? Think of some words to describe his character.

CHAPTER 5

During Reading

Read the subtitle and look at the illustration on page 25. What do the words and picture suggest about this chapter? Describe the body language of the villagers. Who is the man pointing at? What do you think they may be thinking?

As you read this chapter, you will learn how the villagers feel about the idea of ecotourism. Jot down their reasons for not supporting Agustin's idea. Think about whether this changes your opinion about the idea of ecotourism in Ecuador.

Be ready to chat about how Agustin is different to others in his community. Why do you think he thinks differently?

After Reading

There is a problem for Agustin. What is the problem? Guide students to discuss the concerns the villagers have about tourists coming into the village. Refer students to page 26 to check if needed. *Do you think their concerns are reasonable? Explain why or why not. How might some of the other villagers feel about Agustin?*

Why do you think Agustin thinks differently from others in the village? Guide the discussion to build understandings that Agustin is more comfortable with modern technology, which is evident from his online game. Direct students to the illustrations.

Do you feel that in general, the rest of Agustin's community are as comfortable with

change as Agustin? Can you understand their concerns about the changes that Agustin would like to make? Invite discussion.

CHAPTER 6

During Reading

What will happen? What clues do the subtitle and illustration on page 29 provide? Discuss.

As you read the last chapter, you will see how Agustin's idea unfolds, and learn about Marco's plans for his project.

Jot down what you learn about Agustin's idea. Was he able to proceed with the plan for ecotourism in Ecuador, or was the plan overthrown by the rest of the community? Be ready to share what Agustin tells Marco and Alfredo.

Has this online game assisted Marco to gather information for his project? Does he have enough ideas to get started? Write some notes about what Marco decides to do.

What common interest does Marco discover he has with his grandfather?

After Reading

What happened with Agustin's idea for ecotourism? Discuss its implementation and how well things are going within the community. *How do the villagers feel about the plan after one year?* Refer students to page 30 to check if needed. *How do you think the villagers feel about being better off than they were before? How do you think Agustin feels about what has happened? Give reasons.*

What did Marco and Alfredo notice about the site after they clicked yes*? Discuss that the experience was so interesting and absorbing for Marco that he forgot he was playing a game.*

How has the real-life research helped Marco plan his project? What will he do?

What are your thoughts about this type of research? Give reasons.

◉ CODE BREAKER

Sometimes words are put together in such a way that we need to think beyond what the individual words mean, in order to understand what the real message is.

Turn to page 5. Alfredo says to Marco, Let's attack that homework. *It would be funny to imagine someone actually attacking their homework. What does Alfredo mean?* Discuss.

Think about this one. I'm so hungry, I could demolish that cake. *If we took that literally, it would be quite a sight! What is meant by this statement?* Discuss.

Turn to page 6. Here the author has compared a computer to an electric brain in such a way that she says the one is actually the other. When this is done, we say that the author has used a metaphor, or is speaking metaphorically. Think about the meaning of this metaphor: He is hopping mad. *Do you imagine a man hopping around angrily or crazily?* Discuss.

◉ MEANING MAKER

How does this story relate to you? Have you ever done a project? Has anyone searched online for information for their project? How did Marco's search make his learning easy and interesting? Encourage discussion and invite students to share their experiences.

Make a list on the board of interesting things students have used the Internet to search for. *What else does Marco use the computer for? Do you play any games on the computer?* Make a list of games students play.

What did Alfredo play on the computer? How else can you use the computer? Discuss email, chat rooms, and messaging.

What else can people do online? Build understandings that banking, shopping, and other services can be done without going into a centre. *How do you think this has made life easier for people? What do you think will happen in future years to make your life easier?* Discuss.

◉ TEXT USER

This book is interesting because it has a story within a story. The author has cleverly linked one idea with another and created two stories with their own problems and solutions.

Chat with a partner about these questions. Take some notes and be ready to share your responses.

What is the main story about? What is the problem or task in the main story?

What is the smaller story within the main story? What is the problem in the smaller story?

How is the problem or task sorted in the main story? How is the problem solved in the smaller story? How is the smaller story linked to the main story?

What did you think about how the author wrote this story?

◉ TEXT CRITIC

The Internet is a great tool for gathering information and learning more about things that interest you. *How was the Internet useful for Marco when searching for information for his project? Have you ever searched for information online?* Invite discussion.

What are some of the problems with finding information online? Guide students to understand

that not everything you read online is true. *How do you know if information you gather online is accurate?* Invite students to infer ways to check for accuracy.

Why is some information found online inaccurate? Explain that anyone can put information on the internet. Some information is just the opinion of the person who made the site. Sites with true information usually add the details of where the information originally came from, or the sites may be part of an educational body such as a university. This helps the reader to check whether what they are reading is true.

USING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Students can work individually, in pairs, or in small groups for this task.

Observe: Take a pencil and paper with you as you walk around your school or a part of your school. Identify things in your school environment that could be improved. Examples are planting more trees, stopping erosion, cleaning up rubbish, and composting. (B)

Record: Write down your ideas for improvement. (V)

Plan: Choose one idea and write your plan to improve this area. (I, V)

Share: Share your ideas during group discussion. (V)

Implement: Make your improvements. (B)

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

The theory of multiple intelligences was developed by Howard Gardner, a professor of education at Harvard University. Howard Gardner's theory suggests that the current view of intelligence, as measured by IQ tests, is far too limited and discriminates against students who think in different ways. He proposes taking a broader perspective and has identified eight different intelligences. These are:

- verbal-linguistic intelligence – word smart
- logical-mathematical intelligence – number/reasoning smart
- visual-spatial intelligence – picture smart
- bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence – body smart
- musical-rhythmic intelligence – music smart
- interpersonal intelligence – people smart
- intrapersonal intelligence – self smart
- naturalist intelligence – nature smart

Multiple intelligences have enormous potential as a tool in furthering reading and language development. Traditionally, the teaching of language and reading has focused mainly on two intelligences: logical-mathematical and verbal-linguistic. This means that many students who possess different intelligences do not receive the necessary opportunities, encouragement, instruction, or reinforcement to succeed with reading as well as they might.

The Real-Life
School Project

Name_____

This story has an interesting structure. The main story is about Marco's school project. The story within the main story is about Agustin's ecotourism idea. Complete the details below as you read.

Marco's project

Plot	
Setting	
Main characters	
Qualities of main characters	
Problem/task	
Solution	

Agustin's idea

Plot	
Setting	
Main characters	
Qualities of main characters	
Problem/task	
Solution	

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The Real-Life School Project

Name_____

Unjumble these words from the story. The unjumbled words are in the box below.

lneoni _____

uform _____

cejtrpo _____

attrsgye _____

nevroinetmn _____

cooetuisrm _____

carodEu _____

ronecsvtaoin _____

esrach ingnee _____

conservation	ecotourism	Ecuador
environment	forum	online
project	search engine	strategy

Write the meanings for these statements:

1. That joke **cracked me up**!

_____

2. She **flew home** to get her wallet.

_____

3. They're **driving me up the wall**.

_____

4. He's got **a smile from ear to ear**.

_____

5. She's **on top of the world**.

_____

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The Real-Life School Project

Name_____

Make links from the story to yourself, to another text (book, movie, show, advertisement), and to the world. For example:

Story to self: I participated in Clean Up Australia Day and . . .

Story to text: The story reminded me of the movie *Fern Gully* because . . .

Story to world: I saw Greenpeace on the news . . .

This part of the story		Link to me
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	reminds me of →	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

This part of the story		Link to another text
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	reminds me of →	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

This part of the story		Link to the world
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	reminds me of →	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

The Real-Life
School Project

Name_____

1. Did the theme of this book appeal to you? Give reasons.

_____

_____

2. Did the title, cover illustration, and blurb make you interested to read this story? Give reasons.

_____

_____

3. What will you remember about this book?

_____

_____

4. Do you think the author wrote this story to appeal to boys, girls, all children, or adults? Explain.

_____

_____

5. Could you relate to this story? Give reasons.

_____

_____

6. Do you enjoy books such as this one that relate to real life? Why?

_____

_____

7. Did you like the way the author had a story within another story? Why?

_____

_____

8. Has this raised your interest in caring for the environment? Why?

_____

_____

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The Real-Life School Project

Name_____

True or false? Circle your answer and then explain each of your answers.

The Internet is a great place to search for information.   True/False

Why? _____

There is a lot of true information on the Internet.   True/False

Why? _____

Everything on the Internet is true.   True/False

Why? _____

I can find a lot of interesting things to read on the Internet.   True/False

Why? _____

The Internet is a safe place for me to meet people.   True/False

Why? _____

There is a lot of great stuff for kids online.   True/False

Why? _____

I don't need to check information if it is online.   True/False

Why? _____

I can play games online.   True/False

Why? _____

It is safe to give my home address to people I meet online.   True/False

Why? _____

The Internet is a great place to learn more about my hobbies.   True/False

Why? _____

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The Real-Life
School Project

Name_____

Multiple Intelligences (intrapersonal, naturalist)

In the box below, brainstorm environmental issues that you know about. Choose one issue and write a letter to your local government member to express how you feel about it. List any ideas you may have to deal with this issue.

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The Real-Life School Project

Name _____

1. What does the word **fiction** mean?

    _____

    _____

2. What does the term **realistic fiction** mean?

    _____

    _____

3. In what ways was *The Real-Life School Project* easy for you to relate to?

    _____

    _____

4. Would you agree that the more fiction you read, the easier it becomes to read? Why?

    _____

    _____

5. Think of a theme that could be used for a realistic fiction story.

    _____

    _____

6. Describe the characters from *The Real-Life School Project*.

    _____

    _____

7. Do you think you could relate well to Marco, Agustin, and Alfredo? Explain.

    _____

    _____

8. Could this story really happen? Explain.

    _____

    _____

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Notes

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