

The Upstairs Dragon

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

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 UPSTAIRS DRAGON

Lower level fiction

Text type: Humour

Reading age 8.8

Word count 1,608

Before Reading

Activate prior knowledge by asking students if they have read any humorous books or seen any funny shows like *Around the Twist*.

What helps to make these stories funny? Guide the discussion so that students understand that the characters are usually a little different to real people or the situations contain events that create unusual or sticky situations for the characters. For example, Lizzie McGuire's brother, Matt is always getting into trouble due to crazy situations.

Tell students that in some stories the author lets the reader know more than the characters about what is happening. In a comedy this enables the reader to be "in on the joke."

The reader can then journey along anticipating and predicting that funny things are going to occur.

COVER

Before Reading

Read the title and ask students to tell you what they think this story might be about.

Discussion and question guide:

- Describe what you think this character might be like. What gives you this impression?
- What do you think those red and white zzz mean?
- Read the blurb on the back cover. What do the words *eccentric* and *stubborn* mean? Lead the discussion so that students build understandings that *eccentric* means _____ and *stubborn* means _____. Are there times when you have been stubborn? When? What is *advice*? When might someone offer advice?
- Who and what are the main characters in this story?
- Think about all the information from the title, cover illustration, and blurb. What do you think might happen in this story?

CHAPTER 1

During Reading

Read page 4. What do you think Upstairs, downstairs refers to?

As you read Chapter 1, think about what you learn about the grumpy old man. Jot down a few notes about the old man that help you to form your opinion of him.

Think about what is funny about the old woman and old man. Why don't they know that they live so close to one another? Can you think of other things that should alert them to the fact that they live so close to each other?

The old man's friends give him some advice about the upstairs rooms. What do they suggest to him? Why do they make these suggestions?

After Reading

Discuss students' responses to the guide questions. Probe students to elaborate on their opinions of the old man. Encourage students to dip into the text to find words or phrases that helped them to form their opinions.

As the students discuss the funny elements about the old man and old woman, ask them to turn to page 6 and reread the first sentence quietly. What does it mean to be very shortsighted or almost as blind as a bat?

What does it mean to rent a room? How would you feel living above the grumpy old man?

What do the old man's friends advise him to do? Why? What is the old man's response to their suggestion?

CHAPTER 2

During Reading

Read page 8. What do you think this page suggests? Who might be introduced in this chapter?

Read Chapter 2 and jot down words that describe the old woman. Be ready to share your thoughts about the kind of person she is. Consider what you think it would be like to meet the old woman.

What does the old woman say she likes to do, which may be considered eccentric? Why do you think some people may think the old woman's idea is eccentric? What advice does the old woman's friend give her to solve the problem with her eccentric idea? Does the old woman think her friend's advice is good advice or poor advice? Why?

After Reading

What advice did the old woman's friend give her? Why didn't the old woman like the advice? Guide students to revisit lines 3 and 4 of page 9 to check if needed.

Did you learn anything about the old woman? Invite students to share responses about the old woman. Encourage students to clarify or add detail to explain where needed. If you met the old woman what would you expect her to be like? The discussion should lead to the old woman's idea of tap dancing. Do you think this is an eccentric idea? Why/Why not?

What advice did the old woman's friend give about tap dancing upstairs and being able to rent the downstairs rooms?

CHAPTER 3

During Reading

What does the word cantankerous mean? Invite responses and guide the discussion so that students build an understanding that cantankerous means _____.

Read Chapter 3 and jot down examples of how the grumpy old man and the eccentric old woman are cantankerous. You may also find other examples of things the old woman does that may be considered eccentric. Think about whether the old man behaves grumpily in this chapter.

What did the old man notice from time to time that he thought sounded like a dragon? Be ready to discuss why the old man couldn't work out what the strange noise was.

Record the old man's and the old woman's responses to the advice of their son and daughter.

After Reading

Share responses to the old man's and old woman's behaviour that students feel is cantankerous. Probe students to explain and clarify their thoughts where needed.

Are there more examples of the old woman's eccentric behaviour? What are they? Is there more evidence of grumpy behaviour from the old man?

How do the old woman's son and the old man's daughter feel about their parents' cantankerous behaviour? What tells you this? Encourage students to revisit parts of the book that support their understandings.

How would you feel if the old man was your father and the old woman was your mother? Why? How would your life be different if the old woman was your mother? Invite responses. How would your life be different if the old man was your father? Invite responses.

CHAPTER 4

During Reading

Read page 14. What does this suggest the chapter may be about?

Read Chapter 4. Jot down any tricky words. Read the sentence containing the word and think about what it could mean. Write down your ideas.

As you read take note of what the old man and his friends think about the strange noise coming from upstairs. Which of his friend's suggestions is correct? What does the old man think of this suggestion?

The eccentric old woman does some unusual things. Be ready to chat about what these are and why they are unusual. What could happen in the house as a result of the old woman's forgetfulness?

After Reading

Were your general predictions about the chapter correct? Invite feedback.

*What unusual words did you find? Revisit page 16 and reread the sentence containing the word *tetchily*. Invite discussion about what this word may mean. If necessary clarify that it means _____.*

Look at the illustration on page 15. What do you notice about the zzz's? What do you think the illustrator is telling us?

Which of the old man's friends was correct about the noise from upstairs? What did Bert suggest? Does Bert's suggestion make sense? Does the grumpy old man's suggestion make sense?

Ask students to identify the eccentric things the old woman does after she wakes up. What makes these things unusual? What do you think will happen if the old woman leaves the shower on all night?

CHAPTER 5

During Reading

Read page 17. Predict what this means?

Encourage students' predictions and discussion.

Read the rest of Chapter 5 and be thinking about what causes the old man's dreams. What does he think is going on and is he able to separate his dreams from what is really happening? Who assists the old man with his dilemma?

During the chapter the old man discovers something important. Be ready to discuss the discovery and how you expect the old man will react to the news. Would you expect him to be happy or unhappy about what he finds out? Why?

After Reading

What occurred in Chapter 5? Is it what you would have expected?

Ask the students to explain what prompted the old man to begin dreaming about the dragon's tears. Did he wake up enough to know that the wet bed was real and not a dream?

How do you think the old man will react when he finds out that the old woman is living upstairs? Probe the students to give detail about their opinions. What do you think will happen now that the old man knows about the old woman? How do you expect the old woman to react to the news?

Have you ever had any dreams that seemed real? Invite students to share their experiences.

CHAPTER 6

During Reading

- Read page 22. What do you think is meant by Three cheers for magnificent magnifiers? Prompt students to the word *magnifiers* to give a clue if needed. What are some other words for *magnifiers*? Encourage the students to predict how this story may end.
- Read the final chapter. As you read, write down the key things that happen in this chapter.
- Be thinking about how the story will end and try to remember the point at which you were able to guess the ending. Be ready to discuss where you think the story could go from here. What may change about the two main characters?

After Reading

Ask students to share the point at which they could guess the ending to this story. Reinforce that effective readers actively think about how stories might evolve as they are reading, and this can mean that they change their predictions along the way as they find out more information.

Invite the students to read out the key elements of the last chapter. List these on the board and tally how many students recorded each. Where appropriate ask students to justify their choices.

Discuss where the students predict the story could go from here and how the new friendship may change the characters.

How do you think having glasses will change their lives?

▲ CODE BREAKER

Think about the title of this book. Why does the author refer to the old woman as a dragon? Invite discussion about the old woman's snoring which caused the old man to think that there was a dragon upstairs.

In what other way could the word dragon refer to the old woman? Guide the discussion to build understandings that the word dragon can also be used to refer to the old woman's manner. Scan the text with a partner and look for evidence that the old woman may have behaved like a dragon. Record the page numbers and jot down some points ready for discussion.

Brainstorm other words that mean the same as grumpy.

■ MEANING MAKER

Think about the old woman in this story. Brainstorm all the things that the old woman liked to do that made others think she was eccentric. Record responses. Direct students to revisit the book if needed.

Chat with a partner about other things you would expect the old woman to enjoy doing. Jot down your ideas and be ready to tell the group why you think the old woman would enjoy these things.

Encourage discussion and probe for elaboration and justification as needed.

Do you think the old man would enjoy these things? Why or why not? What do you think the old man would enjoy doing? Direct students to revisit the text if needed.

◆ TEXT USER

Read the blurb of this book. What pictures do we immediately build of the characters? As we read the rest of the blurb, what else do we learn about them? Explain that the author has created unexpected interests, hobbies and mannerisms that make the unusual characters seem even more silly.

Ask the students to think about some funny things in the story. Encourage them to explain why it is funny that the old man and old woman don't know about each other living in the house. *Could this be possible in real life?* Guide the discussion to build understandings that authors create humour by putting unusual characters in odd situations.

How does this knowledge help us as readers? Guide the discussion to build understandings that readers know that they can expect crazy things to happen and that this can make sense in the story.

● TEXT CRITIC

To keep the reader entertained, the author helps us to think about the characters in a certain way. To do this, the author carefully chooses words to describe the characters and their actions.

In *The Upstairs Dragon*, the author describes the old man as grumpy and when we read about the old man chatting with his friends or talking with the firefighters, he speaks gruffly and answers with short responses. Lead students to understand that this is done deliberately to build the readers' knowledge about the man.

Discuss the way the author constructs the character of the old woman. *What is the picture we have of the old woman and how has the author made us think this way?* Direct students to revisit the book to search for words, phrases,

actions, or events that have been constructed to shape our thinking.

USING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Make two headings on the board: Grumpy and Eccentric.

Brainstorm: Ask students to brainstorm things that make them grumpy. List under the heading Grumpy. Ask students to brainstorm things that they do that may be considered eccentric. List under the heading Eccentric.

(I, P, V)

Draw: the old woman and the old man. Label any distinguishing features, eg, broken nose.

(P, S, B)

Record: List the qualities that make the old woman eccentric and those that make the old man grumpy. (V, P)

Innovate: Organize students into small groups. As a group students write a jingle about the grumpy old man and the eccentric old woman using the tune of a rhyme or short song they know. Include actions. (V, P,B, M)

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 Upstairs Dragon

Name _____

Record the main idea or ideas for each chapter.

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



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The Upstairs Dragon

Name _____

Locate these words in the book.

Read the sentence each word is found in and predict what the word means.

Check to see if one of the meanings matches or is close to your prediction. Record this definition.

1. cantankerous

My prediction _____

Dictionary meaning _____

2. dilapidated

My prediction _____

Dictionary meaning _____

3. magnificent

My prediction _____

Dictionary meaning _____

4. magnifiers

My prediction _____

Dictionary meaning _____



The Upstairs Dragon

Name _____

Similarities and Differences

Record the characteristics that are different down the sides and the similarities in the middle.

The Old Man		The Old Woman
Similarities		



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The Upstairs Dragon

Name _____

Think of a new title for this book. Depending on your new title, you may need to design a new illustration for the front cover.

You also need to rewrite the blurb. When you rewrite the blurb, you need to consider that this is a humorous book and try to convey this to the reader. The blurb needs to spark the readers' attention and make them want to read this book.

Finally, think of a new title for each chapter.

Title _____

Blurb _____

Cover Illustration

Chapter 1 _____

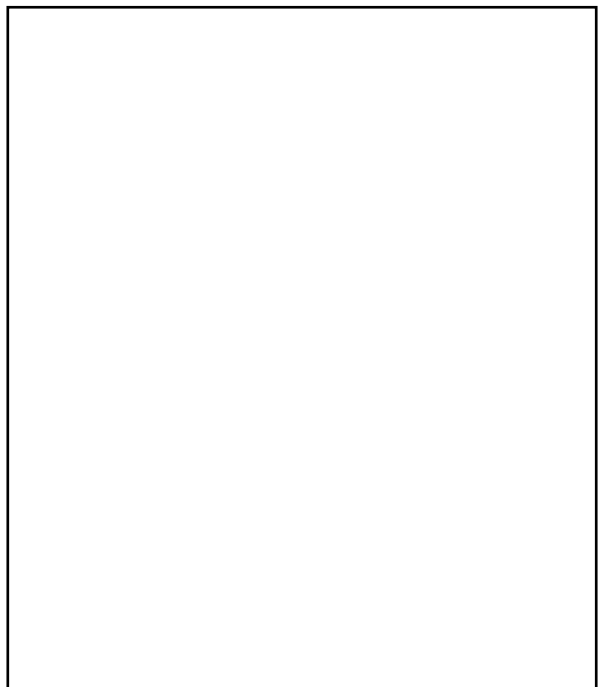
Chapter 2 _____

Chapter 3 _____

Chapter 4 _____

Chapter 5 _____

Chapter 6 _____



The Upstairs Dragon

Name _____

Think about how you felt as you read this story. The author carefully chose characters, words, and events to make the reader feel a certain way.

1. What sort of mood did the author create for this story?

2. Think of some words that describe how you felt as you read the story. Find words in the story that made you feel this way.

3. What did you enjoy most about this story? Why?

4. What did you enjoy least about this story? Why?

5. How did the author want you to think about the main characters? How do you know? Use examples from the book.

7. Did the characters remind you of characters from other books or movies? If so, list names and explain why.

8. What did the author want you to think about the old man's friends?



The Upstairs Dragon

Name _____

Multiple Intelligences (interpersonal, intrapersonal)

Pretend you are the grandson or granddaughter of the old man or the old woman. Write a letter to explain that you are coming to visit and suggest some things you could do together when you come. Try to think of things that the old man or old woman would enjoy doing.



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The Upstairs Dragon

Name _____

This story uses exaggerated character traits and an unusual situation to create a humorous story. Consider how the author used the characters and the series of funny events in this story to keep the audience laughing and on the edge of their seats.

How did the author use characters' stubbornness to make the book funny?

Would this book have been so funny if the characters were not stubborn? Why or why not?

How did the old man's grumpiness stop him from enjoying life?

How did the old woman's adventurousness lead to her snoring?

What led to the old man thinking the old woman was a dragon?



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Notes



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Notes



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