

Topic: Family in the Military

Text Type: Narrative Fiction

Word Count: 409

Lexile® Measure: 660L

Skills: Reading for Meaning
Phrasing with Prepositional Phrases
Expression
Rate
Timed Reading

Lesson 1

Time: 10–15 minutes

Skills: Reading for Meaning

Student Pages: “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy)

Lesson 2

Time: 25 minutes

Skills: Phrasing with Prepositional Phrases

Student Pages: “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy)

Lesson 3

Time: 15–20 minutes

Skills: Expression

Student Pages: “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy)

Lesson 4

Time: 15 minutes

Skills: Rate

Student Pages: “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy)

Lesson 5

Time: 15–20 minutes

Skills: Timed Reading

Student Pages: “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy)

Teacher Pages: “Bitter, Sweet” (Teacher Copy), Fluency Chart

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Reading for Meaning

Distribute "Bitter, Sweet" (Student Copy). **Follow along with me as I read this passage. The title is "Bitter, Sweet."** Read the passage aloud to students. Read the passage with proper expression, phrasing, and intonation. Model appropriate rate as you read. After reading, ask the following questions to engage students in a discussion about the passage:

- **What is this passage about?**
- **What are some words you would use to describe Sondra? Why?**
- **What did this story make you think of?**

Discuss any words students may not be familiar with.

Assign partners. Avoid pairing students of significantly different proficiencies. This results in less frustration. Also, the more proficient reader may serve as a model. Partners should be changed periodically.

It is important to model the expectations of partner reading. You may do this by role-playing with one student, or you may select two students to role-play the following:

- how to sit with your partner (Have partners sit close together so that the partner who is reading can use a low inside voice and still be heard.)
- how to read with your partner (Partner A reads. Partner B listens carefully and follows along. Partner A underlines lightly with a pencil any words he or she finds interesting or does not know. Partners may also assist with words if needed by using the following correction procedure:
 - If a student reads a word incorrectly, skips a word, or does not know a word, his or her partner points to the word and says, "What is this word?"
 - If the student reads the word correctly, the partner says, "Yes, that word is _____. Please reread the sentence."
 - If the student does not know the word, the partner says, "That word is _____. Please reread the sentence."
 - The student repeats the word and rereads the sentence.)
- how to dialogue with each other after the reading (Have students discuss what the passage is about and which words in the passage they found interesting or did not understand.)

After these procedures have been modeled, have students practice. Discuss behaviors that are unacceptable as well.

Independent Practice

Now, I want you to get with your partner and read “Bitter, Sweet” together. Using a pencil, lightly underline any words you find interesting or do not know as you read. Partner A will read the first paragraph and stop. Then partner B will read the same paragraph. Discuss what you read and any words you found interesting or did not understand. Then follow the same procedure with the following paragraphs until you reach the end of the passage.

Walk around and observe students as they read together. If necessary, remind students of the expectations for partner reading.

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy). **We will practice reading “Bitter, Sweet” fluently.**

Reading fluently means reading the words correctly, at an appropriate rate, and with correct phrasing and intonation. Reading fluently is not about reading fast but about reading at an appropriate rate. Fluent reading should sound like you are talking. The way we read a text affects our comprehension.

Each lesson will focus on one or two aspects of fluency. **Today, we will practice phrasing.**

Phrasing involves grouping certain words together when speaking. As we talk, we automatically chunk words into groups. This is also important when reading. There are some words that sound better chunked together, and when this is done, the ideas are easier to understand.

Grammar is important in chunking text. Knowing about prepositions helps to chunk text appropriately. A preposition is a word that comes before a noun or before a phrase that acts like a noun. It shows the connection, or relationship, between the noun and another word or phrase.

For example, John went **to** the game. The word **to** is a preposition. It shows the connection between “John went” and “the game.” Without the preposition, the sentence would be confusing. It would read, “John went the game.”

In the sentence “John went **to** the game,” “**to** the game” is a prepositional phrase. Prepositional phrases are usually chunked together. Although these phrases are not the only words you chunk while reading, recognizing them can help with fluency.

Here is a list of some prepositions. Have the following list of prepositions written on the board, and read them with the students:

about, above, across, after, against, along, among, around, as, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, but, by, concerning, despite, down, during, except, excepting, for, from, in, inside, into, like, near, of, off, on, onto, out, outside, over, past, regarding, round, since, than, through, throughout, till, to, toward, under, underneath, unlike, until, up, upon, with, within, and without

Let’s look at the first paragraph after the asterisks in the passage and circle all the prepositions. Guide students in circling the prepositions, as shown on the next page.

Teach (cont.)

Sasha and Sondra were jammed together on the gym floor with all the other fifth graders. There was a mood of excitement in the air. The students squirmed and chattered. A group of parents laughed near the stage. The twins' mom was laughing, too, which annoyed Sondra. How could she laugh on a day like this?

Now, let's underline each preposition with the word or group of words that goes with the preposition. This is called a prepositional phrase. These words are read chunked together. Guide students in underlining the prepositional phrases, as shown below.

Sasha and Sondra were jammed together on the gym floor with all the other fifth graders. There was a mood of excitement in the air. The students squirmed and chattered. A group of parents laughed near the stage. The twins' mom was laughing, too, which annoyed Sondra. How could she laugh on a day like this?

Now, let's practice reading together. Model reading the prepositional phrases in chunks, and have students repeat after you. Then read the entire paragraph together.

Guided Practice

Let's look at another paragraph. Underline the prepositional phrases in the eighth paragraph. Have students underline the prepositional phrases in the eighth paragraph. Monitor them as they work, and provide assistance when necessary. Once students are finished, have them take turns sharing the prepositional phrases that they underlined. Direct and correct when necessary.

Ms. Walton, the president of the parents' group, stepped up to the microphone. "Good morning, everyone," she said. "I'm here to make a special presentation." Everyone stopped chatting and listened—and then, as the stage curtains parted, everyone gasped. In the center of the stage sat a gigantic yellow box with a gigantic yellow bow on top.

Now, let's practice reading together. Read the prepositional phrases as chunks with the students. Then read the entire paragraph with the students.

Independent Practice

Now, it is time to practice with your partner. Have students underline prepositional phrases in the remaining paragraphs. Then have them read the passage in pairs as before, one paragraph at a time. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on proper phrasing. If necessary, model how to use proper phrasing again.

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy). **We will continue to practice reading fluently. Today, we will practice reading with proper expression.**

Reading with expression means reading while showing a character’s feelings with your voice. This is important in reading. There are some signals in the text to help shape a character’s voice, such as exclamation marks and question marks.

An exclamation mark at the end of a sentence lets the reader know that the sentence should be read with strong feeling. A question mark lets the reader know that the sentence should be read as a question, with a rising tone. We also get clues about how a character sounds by thinking about the meaning of the words the character says. Quotation marks are used to let us know that someone is speaking.

The first time we see quotation marks is at the beginning of the passage. Listen as I read this conversation between Sasha and her mom. Read the following aloud with proper expression:

“Do we *have* to go to school today, Mom?” asked Sasha.

Her twin sister, Sondra, didn’t say anything. She just stirred the cereal around in her bowl.

“Yes, honey, you *do* have to go to school,” replied their mother. “I know it’s a sad day. But we have to ‘soldier on’ like Dad always says. It’s our way of helping him complete his mission.”

Notice how I change my voice, depending on which character is speaking. I imagine that Sasha first speaks in a somewhat whiney voice and that her mom speaks in a reassuring voice because she understands it is a hard day for the girls. Also, notice that the words *have* and *do* are italicized. This signals that the words should be emphasized.

Reading with expression adds drama and makes the passage more interesting.

Guided Practice

Let’s practice reading this conversation between Sasha and her mother together. Read with me while expressing the feelings of the characters. Have students read along with you.

Independent Practice

Review the expectations for partner reading with students. **Now, with your partner, practice reading the passage. Think about how the character would say the words.**

Have each pair of students read the passage together, one paragraph at a time. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on their reading with proper phrasing and expression. If necessary, model reading with proper phrasing and expression again.

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Teach

Redistribute or have students take out “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy). **Let’s continue to practice reading fluently. This time we will focus on rate.**

Rate is the speed at which you read the passage. Most of the time, reading is done at a normal pace. But sometimes, to add interest, you might read a sentence more quickly or slowly than the rest of the passage. The message that the author is conveying lets you know how to read the words.

This passage is read at a normal rate. Reading the passage at a rate that sounds like talking will help you better understand the message that the author is conveying.

Guided Practice

Let’s practice with the first four paragraphs. First, listen to me read. Read the first four paragraphs aloud fluently.

Now, read with me. Try to make your voice stay with mine. Read along with students.

Independent Practice

Now it is your time to practice with your partner. Have students read the passage with their partner. Partners should take turns reading one paragraph at a time. After both have read the passage, have students discuss what the passage is all about. Walk around and listen in as students are reading. Comment on phrasing, expression, and rate. If necessary, model appropriate phrasing, expression, and rate again for students.

Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.

Timed Reading

Redistribute or have students take out “Bitter, Sweet” (Student Copy). **While you are reading with your partner today, I will listen to each of you read. I will call you over one at a time and have you read for 60 seconds. Then we will set fluency goals together. Remember what is expected during partner reading. I want each partner to read the passage twice. You may begin.**

While students are reading, call one student over at a time, and listen to him or her read the passage for 60 seconds. Encourage students to do their best reading.

For each student, use a copy of “Bitter, Sweet” (Teacher Copy) to mark words that the student has trouble reading. If the student does not know a word, point to the word and say, “This word is ____.” Have him or her read the word and continue reading the passage.

As the student reads, listen for proper rate, phrasing, and intonation. Provide positive feedback on the student’s efforts when he or she is done.

When the student begins reading, start a timer or use a clock with a second hand. At the end of 60 seconds, tell the student to stop reading. Subtract the number of words that gave the student trouble from the total number of words the student read. This results in the student’s Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM).

(Total Number of Words Read) – (Number of Problematic Words) = (Number of Words Correct Per Minute)

Example: (101 Words Read) – (3 Problematic Words) = 98 WCPM

Give the student a Fluency Chart. Assist the student in charting his or her WCPM with a bar graph. The student should keep the graph to record readings of various other passages over time. Readings of the same passage may be recorded as well. Each time a passage is read, have the student write its title in the Title section of the chart and shade in the correct amount for WCPM on the graph. It will be motivating for the student to see his or her growth over time.

The student will need to set his or her own fluency goal. Take the student’s initial WCPM, and help him or her set a reasonable goal. A reasonable goal would be adding one or two words to his or her WCPM each week. The goal can be a monthly goal or a six- to nine-week goal.

Have students take the passage home and continue to practice. They can read the passage to a family member while practicing appropriate rate, phrasing, and intonation. They can also have a family member time them as they practice reading for 60 seconds.



Bitter, Sweet

"Do we *have* to go to school today, Mom?" asked Sasha.

Her twin sister, Sondra, didn't say anything. She just stirred the cereal around in her bowl.

"Yes, honey, you *do* have to go to school," replied their mother. "I know it's a sad day. But we have to 'soldier on' like Dad always says. It's our way of helping him complete his mission."

Sasha and Sondra's dad was a lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He was on a tour of duty overseas—and had been for a long time. Today was the day he was *supposed* to have come home. The girls had planned a party, complete with his favorite foods, music, and friends.

But then they had received some terrible news: their father's tour had been extended. Now they weren't sure when he would return.

"Besides," continued their mother, "you don't want to miss the assembly, do you? Remember, today is the day the parents' group is going to have its big 'reveal!'"

* * *

Sasha and Sondra were jammed together on the gym floor with all the other fifth graders. There was a mood of excitement in the air. The students squirmed and chattered. A group of parents laughed near the stage. The twins' mom was laughing, too, which annoyed Sondra. How could she laugh on a day like this?

Ms. Walton, the president of the parents' group, stepped up to the microphone. "Good morning, everyone," she said. "I'm here to make a special presentation." Everyone stopped chatting and listened—and then, as the stage curtains parted, everyone gasped. In the center of the stage sat a gigantic yellow box with a gigantic yellow bow on top.

"Our spring fund-raiser was very successful this year," continued Ms. Walton. "It has enabled us to have a special surprise—"

The students started to babble again. They tried to guess what was in the box. "New computers!" someone shouted. "A new snack machine!" someone else yelled. A third kid said "New teachers!" and everybody laughed.

Just then, the lid on the box started to wiggle, and its sides fell away. A big heap of tissue paper shook and broke apart.

Standing in the middle of the stage was the twins' father.

Later on, Sasha and Sondra wouldn't remember clambering over everyone and stumbling up onto the stage. All they would remember was getting caught up in a big bear hug with both of their parents, reunited in a family homecoming embrace.



Bitter, Sweet

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Her twin sister, Sondra, didn’t say anything. She just stirred the cereal around in her bowl.	27
“Yes, honey, you <i>do</i> have to go to school,” replied their mother. “I know it’s a sad day. But we have to ‘soldier on’ like Dad always says. It’s our way of helping him complete his mission.”	46
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But then they had received some terrible news: their father’s tour had been extended.	115
Now they weren’t sure when he would return.	129
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