

For students reading at **Literacy Level C/4**, including:

- English-language learners
- Students reading below grade level
- Kindergarten and first grade emergent readers

## Objectives at a Glance

### COMPREHENSION

Students will:

- Identify characters and setting
- Identify sequence of events
- Monitor their reading by reading aloud to clarify
- Utilize text and graphic features
- Summarize the story
- Answer text-dependent questions
- Respond to the book

### GENRE STUDY

Students will:

- Recognize the characteristics of realistic fiction
- Determine the story's message

### VOCABULARY

Students will:

- Recognize high-frequency words
- Develop academic content (Tier Three) vocabulary
- Develop robust (Tier Two) oral vocabulary

### LANGUAGE

Students will:

- Recognize the sentence structure *I will make \_\_\_\_\_*
- Identify future tense using the word **will**

### PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Students will:

- Listen for initial **/m/**

### PHONICS

Students will:

- Use first-letter cues to solve words
- Recognize initial **"m"** in words

### FLUENCY

Students will:

- Read with dramatic expression

### CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT

Students will:

- Use one-to-one matching

### WRITING

Students will:

- Write to a picture prompt

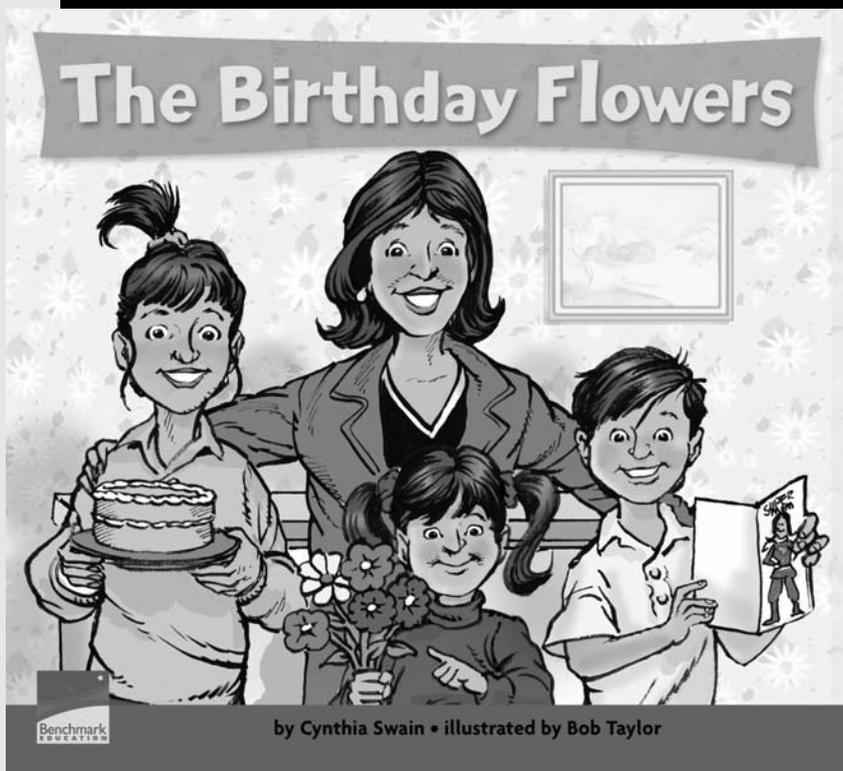
# The Birthday Flowers

### THEME: Plants

- A Plant Has Parts (Level C/4)
- **The Birthday Flowers (Level C/4)**
- A Seed Needs Help (Level E/8)
- Garden Lunch (Level E/8)

### GENRE/SUMMARY:

This story is realistic fiction. Anna, Pedro, and Sofia plan some birthday surprises for their mother, including making paper flowers.



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## Related Resources

The following Benchmark Education Company resources support the skills and strategies taught in this lesson.

### Early Explorers Partner

- *A Plant Has Parts* (Nonfiction, Level C/4)

### Emergent Comprehension Strategy Poster

- Identify Sequence of Events

### Text-Dependent Comprehension Resources

- *The Birthday Flowers* Comprehension Question Card
- Power Tool Flip Chart for Teachers
- Student Bookmark

### Assessment

- *Early Explorers Overview & Assessment Handbook*
- *Grade K Comprehension Strategy Assessment Book*

Birthday  
party hat  
cake  
decorations  
card  
present  
flowers  
breakfast in bed

## Make Connections and Build Background

- **Use Drama** **Say:** *We will read a book called The Birthday Flowers. The kids in the story make things for their mom's birthday. I will pretend to make something for my mom's birthday. I will make her a party hat. Pretend to do so. Then invite students to tell what they would make for a birthday. Encourage them to act out their ideas as well.*
- **Use a Graphic Organizer** Write the word **birthday** on the board. Underline it and read it aloud. Tell students you would like them to help you make a list of the ideas they acted out. Then read each line and ask the students to echo-read.

## Introduce the Book

- **Preview the Cover and Title Page** Give each student a copy of the book. Point to the front. **Say:** *This story is about making things for Mom's birthday.* Read the title and author and ask the students to echo-read. Invite them to tell what they see in the illustration. **Say:** *This is the book's cover.* Repeat the process with the title page. **Say:** *The cover and title page get us ready to read the book.* Using the think-aloud strategy, model how to make predictions about the book based on the cover and title page information: *The title tells me we will read about birthday flowers. I think someone in the story will make some flowers.* Allow time for students to share their own predictions about the story.
- **Introduce Characters and Setting** **Say:** *The people in the story are called characters.* Ask students to turn to pages 2 and 3, and point to each character as you read the matching name. Repeat the process, inviting students to echo-read. Then **say:** *The setting is where the story takes place. What is the setting of this story?* Help students use the illustrations to determine that the story takes place in the family's home.
- **Preview the Illustrations and Vocabulary** Revisit the illustrations on the cover and title page. **Say:** *The pictures in fiction books are called illustrations. Illustrations help us understand the words in the book.* Take students on a picture walk emphasizing the words **flowers, petals, stems,** and **leaves** as you talk about the illustrations and what is happening in the story. Make sure students can pronounce each vocabulary word.

- Locate High-Frequency Words to Monitor Meaning** Ask students to turn to page 8 and locate the word **some**. Ask them to frame the word and check it by running their finger under the word in a left-to-right motion. Then ask students to locate the word **some** on page 10. **Say:** *Some is an important word. Use the word some to help you while you read.*
- Preview Sentence Structure** For students who need additional support, write “I will make \_\_\_\_” on the board. Read the sentence structure aloud and ask students to repeat it several times. **Say:** *We used the words I will make when we talked about birthdays. The words I will make are in the book, too. Page 4 has a sentence with the words I will make.* Model how to frame the sentence between two fingers. Then read the sentence aloud and ask students to echo-read. Invite students to turn to page 6. **Ask:** *Can you frame a sentence with the words I will make?* Assist as needed, and then read the sentence aloud and ask students to echo-read. If students need additional practice, allow them to locate and read the sentence structure on page 8.
- Use Graphophonic Cues** **Say:** *Another word in this book is red. Say the word red. What letter do you expect to see at the beginning?* Allow time for students to respond, assisting as needed. **Say:** *Find the word red on page 10.* Once students locate the word, repeat the process with **birthday** on page 16. **Say:** *Use first-letter sounds to help you when you read.*
- Scaffold Spanish-Language Speakers** Say the word **petal**. **Ask:** *Does petal sound like a word you know in Spanish?* (Allow time for students to respond.) **Say:** *The word petal sounds like the Spanish word pétala. Petal and pétala mean the same thing. The words look similar, too.* Write the word **petals** on the board and ask students to locate it on page 10 in the book. Then invite students with other first languages to share their cognates.

## Set a Purpose for Reading

- Direct students’ attention to the birthday list. **Say:** *Now it’s time to whisper-read the book. Read to find out what Anna, Pedro, and Sofia make for Mom’s birthday.*

## Observe and Prompt Reading Strategies

- After the supportive introduction, students should be able to read all or most of the book on their own. Observe students as they read. Take note of the graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic cues they use to make sense of the text and self-correct. Prompt individual students who have difficulty problem-solving independently, but be careful not to prompt English-language learners too quickly. They may need more time to process the text as they rely on their first language for comprehension.

### Strategic Reading Prompts

Cue Source	Prompt	Example	Page
Graphophonic	Look at the first letter.	said	4
Syntactic	Think about the sentence structure.	I will make a card.	6
Semantic	Check the picture.	Happy Birthday!	16

## Use the Graphic Organizer to Summarize

- Ask students to think about their reading. **Say:** Look at our list. Which things did the kids make for Mom's birthday? Put a check mark beside the words students suggest, and then choral-read the check-marked words. Ask students to use the graphic organizer to tell the story to a partner.

Birthday  
party hat  
cake ✓  
decorations  
card ✓  
present  
flowers ✓  
breakfast in bed

## Genre Study

- **Say:** This story is realistic fiction. You could meet people like Anna, Pedro, Sofia, and Mom in real life. The things the characters do could really happen. What are some ways the story is realistic? Guide students to mention story events such as making a cake, making a card, making flowers, and celebrating a birthday.
- **Say:** Realistic fiction stories have themes. A theme is like a message from the author. I notice in *The Birthday Flowers*, Anna tries her best. She wants to make a nice cake for Mom's birthday. Who else tries their best in the story? Allow time for students to give examples of how each character tries his or her best. **Say:** The theme for *The Birthday Flowers* could be "Try your best." The author uses the characters to send readers a message. The author is telling us to try our best, too.

## Reading Strategy Mini-Lesson: Read Aloud to Clarify

- **Reflect** Ask students to think about the parts of the story that were hard for them to understand. **Ask:** What did you do to help yourself understand what you read?

- **Model Say:** I always want to understand what I read. Sometimes I'm not sure about a certain part. I go back and read that part aloud. This helps me figure out if something is wrong. I will turn back to page 12. The first time I read page 12, I was confused. What was Sofia making? Then I read it aloud: "Sofia made some stems. She made leaves, too." I better understand the words when I listen to them. Sofia made stems and leaves for the flowers. That makes sense.

- **Guide** Ask students to turn to page 14. **Ask:** Who looked at the flowers? (Allow time for students to respond.) How can we check? Let's read it aloud together. Then we'll be sure we understand who looked at the flowers. Read the page aloud together and briefly discuss how this clarifies or confirms the students' understanding.

- **Apply** Invite each student to turn to a tricky page. Then ask students to tell a partner about the page. Afterward, they should read the page aloud to make sure they understand it. Observe students as they read aloud to clarify, providing assistance if needed. See the *Early Explorers Overview & Assessment Handbook* for an observation chart you can use to assess students' understanding of the **read aloud to clarify** monitor-reading strategy. Then **say:** You can read aloud anytime you need to. Remember to go back and read aloud to help you understand.

## Answer Text-Dependent Questions

- **Explain** Remind students that they can answer questions about books they have read. **Say:** We answer different kinds of questions in different ways. I will help you learn how to answer each kind. Tell students that today they will practice answering *Find It!* questions. **Say:** The answer to a *Find It!* question is in the book. You can find the answer if you know what to look for. The answer is in one place. You can put your finger right on the answer.

- **Model** Use the *Find It!* question on the Comprehension Question Card. **Say:** *I will show you how I answer a Find It! question. First I will read the question: "What will Anna make?" I need to look for important words in the question. These words tell me what to look for in the book. What words do you think will help me? (Allow student responses.) Yes, I'm looking for Anna's name. I'm also looking for the word **make**. Now I will look back in the book. Page 4 says: "'I will make a cake,' said Anna." This sentence has Anna's name and the word **make**. Put your finger on this sentence. The sentence answers the question. The answer makes sense. I have found the answer.*
- **Guide** Ask students to answer the other questions on the Comprehension Question Card. Use the Power Tool Flip Chart and Student Bookmark to provide additional modeling as needed. Remind students to ask themselves: *What is the question asking? How can I find the answer? Does my answer make sense? How do I know?*

## Build Comprehension: Identify Sequence of Events

- **Explain** Create an overhead transparency of "The Birthday Flowers" graphic organizer on page 8 or draw it on the chalkboard. **Say:** *Fiction books tell stories. The events in stories happen in order, or sequence. Good readers pay attention to the sequence of events. This helps readers get the most out of the story.*
- **Model Say:** *Let's figure out the sequence of events in The Birthday Flowers. We need to start at the beginning. On page 4, Anna makes a birthday cake. Making a birthday cake is the first thing that happens. I will write about that in the top box of the graphic organizer. Now I will read on to see what happens next. On page 6, Pedro makes a card. I will write about that in the next box. On pages 8–13, Sofia makes flowers. I will write about that, too.*
- **Guide Say:** *Let's find out what happens then. Look on page 16. Do you see the word **then**? What happens? Allow time for students to respond, assisting if needed. **Say:** Yes, then Mom comes home. Mom coming home is the next event in the story sequence. Let's add it to the graphic organizer.*

- **Apply** Ask students to work with a partner to figure out what happens at the end of the story. Remind them that a sequence happens in order, so they will need to read on to find it. After each partnership shares, agree on how to word the entry on the graphic organizer. Finally, read the completed graphic organizer aloud and invite students to echo-read.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**The Birthday Flowers**  
Identify Sequence of Events

Anna makes a birthday cake.

↓

Pedro makes a card.

↓

Sofia makes flowers.

↓

Mom comes home.

↓

The kids give the cake, card,  
and flowers to Mom.

THE BIRTHDAY FLOWERS © 2007 Benchmark Education Company, LLC

**Teacher Tip** Use Benchmark Education Company's K–2 Emergent Comprehension Strategy Poster Set to provide additional instruction in identifying sequence of events. Use BEC's *Comprehension Strategy Assessment* books to assess students' ability to identify sequence of events in other brief, grade-level texts.

## Home Connection

- Give students the take-home version of *The Birthday Flowers* to read to family members. Encourage students to work with a friend or family member to draw a picture of something they have made for a birthday or something someone has made for them. Invite them to bring their drawings to share with the group.

## Reader Response

Invite students to respond to the book in a way that is meaningful to them. Model and use think-alouds as needed to scaffold students before they try the activities on their own.

- Tell about something one of the children in the story will make. Start by saying \_\_\_\_ will make \_\_\_\_.
- Draw a picture of some flowers. Then tell a partner how you did it.
- Think about the theme of the story. Tell about a time you did your best.
- Act out the story with three partners.
- Write about a connection you made to the story.
- Write about your favorite part of the story.

## Write to a Picture Prompt

- **Write a How-To** Tell students they will describe how to do something they see in a picture. Then they will write about what they described.  
**Say:** *I like the pictures in this book. I like to see what the kids make. I can tell how to make something I see in a picture. Look at pages 4 and 5. Anna will make a cake. Here is how: Add eggs and water to the mix. Put the batter in a pan. Then bake the cake. What else will Anna need to do?* Allow time for students to respond.  
**Ask:** *Which picture do you like best? Describe how to do something you see in the picture.* Allow time for students to respond, prompting further if needed.  
**Say:** *You have described how to do something you saw in the picture you chose. Now write how to do it. After you are finished, read your description to a partner.*

## Concepts About Print

- **Use One-to-One Matching** Turn to page 4.  
**Say:** *A sentence is made of words. Let's count the words in this sentence. Point to each word as you count aloud. How many words are in the sentence? (seven words) We must match our voices to each word when we read. Model how to move your finger under each word as you read it aloud. Then invite the students to read with you and mimic your actions.*

## Phonemic Awareness: Listen for /m/

- Tell students you will read a sentence from *The Birthday Flowers*. Ask them to listen for a word that begins with the **/m/** sound: *"'I will make a cake,' said Anna"* (page 4). Reread the sentence if needed so students can identify the word **make**.
- **Say:** *I will say some words. Some begin with the /m/ sound, like **make**, and some do not. Please listen carefully. Say **mmm** if you hear a word that begins with **/m/**: **market, gift, mother, balloons, candles, music.***

## Phonics: Initial “m”

- Write the letter “m” on the board. Tell students they will go on a letter “m” hunt in *The Birthday Flowers*. Ask them to locate words that begin with “m” on pages 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 16.
- Ask students to brainstorm words beginning with /m/. Make a list on the board. Read each word, inviting students to echo-read.
- **Say:** *I will make up riddle about one of the words. You can guess which one it is. Then I'll circle the letter “m” in the word. That's how you'll know you guessed correctly.* Model the process using one of the words on the list. For example: *I am made of dirt mixed with water. What am I? (mud).* Then invite each student to make up a riddle about one of the words and circle the letter that makes the /m/ sound.

## Vocabulary

- **Academic Content Vocabulary** Review the story with students and record words that apply to plants: **petals**, **stems**, **leaves**, and **flowers**. Invite students to look at the illustration of Sofia's flowers on page 15 and describe each part using one of the words.
- **Robust Oral Vocabulary** **Say:** *In the story, the children are **creative**. **Creative** means you are good at making something. Say the word with me: **creative**. Here are some ways people are **creative**: They draw pictures. They write poems. They knit sweaters. They build with blocks. They bake cookies. They make up songs. Now, tell about a way you are **creative**. Try to use the word **creative** when you tell about it. You could start by saying, “I am **creative** when I \_\_\_\_.” Allow time for each student to respond, assisting if needed. *What is the word we've been talking about? Yes—**creative**. Let's try to use the word **creative** many times today. We can use the word at school and at home.**

## Language Development: Future Tense

- Model **Say:** *Sometimes authors use the word **will**. The word **will** means something hasn't happened yet. It is going to happen later. Let's*

*turn to page 4 and read the first sentence together: “‘I will make a cake,’ said Anna.” This means Anna hasn't made the cake yet. She is going to make it. I use the word **will** too. Use the classroom calendar to support the concepts of today and tomorrow as you model present and future tenses:*

*Today I made oatmeal for breakfast. Tomorrow I **will** make oatmeal.*

*Today I made up a funny story. Tomorrow I **will** make up a story.*

*Today I made a check mark on a chart. Tomorrow I **will** make a check mark.*

- **Guide** Write the sentence *I will make supper tonight* on the board. Read it aloud and ask the students to echo-read. Circle the word **will**. **Ask:** *Have I made supper yet? When will I make supper?*
- **Apply** Pair students. Ask them to make up sentences using the sentence frame “I will make \_\_\_\_.” As they share their sentences with the group, write them on the board. Ask the partners to tell when the actions in their sentences could happen.

## Fluency: Read with Dramatic Expression

- **Say:** *In fiction books, characters say things. We can tell when characters are talking. We look for quotation marks around characters' words. Point out the quotation marks on page 4. Then ask students to find other places that have quotation marks (pages 6, 8, and 16). **Say:** *Good readers think about the story while they read. Good readers think about what the people are saying. Then they try to talk like the people in the story.**
- Ask students to turn to page 4. First, read Anna's words flatly, with no expression. Discuss how this makes the listener feel. Then read the page again using a happy, excited voice. Ask the students to echo-read.
- Ask students to turn to page 6. Choral-read the page with them using a happy, excited voice.
- Invite students to take turns rereading *The Birthday Flowers* with a partner. Remind them to talk like the people in the story.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# The Birthday Flowers

Identify Sequence of Events

