

For students reading at **Literacy Level F/9**, including:

- English-language learners
- Students reading below grade level
- First grade readers

Objectives at a Glance

COMPREHENSION

Students will:

- Identify characters and setting
- Identify sequence of events
- Monitor their reading by retelling what they've read
- Utilize text and graphic features
- Summarize the story
- Answer text-dependent questions
- Respond to the book

GENRE STUDY

Students will:

- Recognize the characteristics of animal fantasy
- Determine the story's message

VOCABULARY

Students will:

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

WORD STUDY

Students will:

- Use compound words

LANGUAGE

Students will:

- Recognize the sentence structures *Let's* _____ and *Ten more* _____
- Use contractions

PHONICS

Students will:

- Problem-solve by searching all the way through words
- Recognize words with CVCe long "i"

FLUENCY

Students will:

- Read with appropriate pacing

WRITING

Students will:

- Write to a picture prompt
- Write to a text prompt

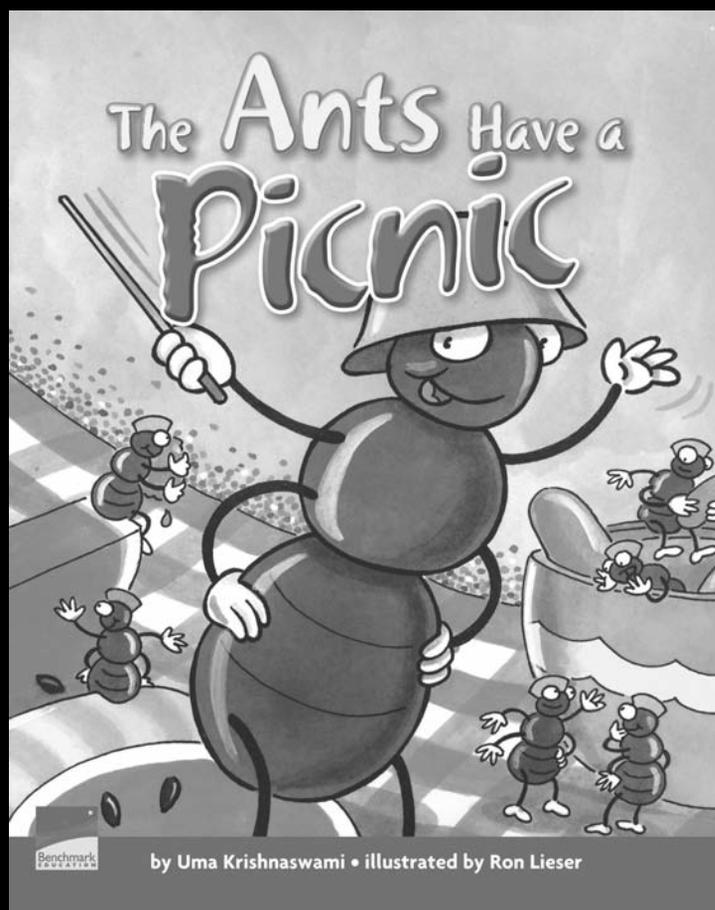
The Ants Have a Picnic

THEME: Number Families

- Hooray! 100 Days (Level F/9)
- **The Ants Have a Picnic (Level F/9)**
- Fun with Fives (Level H/13)
- Shopping with the Nicholas Family (Level H/13)

GENRE/SUMMARY:

In this animal fantasy, 100 hungry ants discover a picnic and get into all the food before the family returns.



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Related Resources

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

Early Explorers Partner

- *Hooray! 100 Days* (Nonfiction, Level F/9)

Early Comprehension Strategy Poster

- Identify Sequence of Events

Text-Dependent Comprehension Resources

- *The Ants Have a Picnic* Comprehension Question Card
- Power Tool Flip Chart for Teachers
- Student Bookmark

Assessment

- *Early Explorers Overview & Assessment Handbook*
- *Grade 1 Comprehension Strategy Assessment Book*

Picnic

cupcakes
sandwiches
chips
cookies
hot dogs
juice
apples

Introduce the Book

- **Preview Cover and Title Page** Give each student a copy of the book. Point to the front. **Say:** *This story is about ants at a picnic.* Read the title and author, and ask students to echo-read. Invite them to tell what they see in the illustration. 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 says ants have a picnic. I wonder how ants can have a picnic. People have picnics. I think the ants go to some people's picnic.* Allow time for students to share their own predictions about the story

- **Introduce Characters and Setting** **Say:** *The people and animals 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 at a beach.

- **Preview 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 **ant, group, march, picnic, row, jump, hot dogs, carrots, popcorn, chips, watermelon, salad, and cupcakes** as you talk about the illustrations and what is happening in the story. Make sure students can pronounce each vocabulary word.

Make Connections and Build Background

- **Use Drama** **Say:** *We will read a book called The Ants Have a Picnic. Some ants in the story find a picnic spread out on a blanket. I will pretend I am one of the ants. I will eat a cupcake at the picnic.* Pretend to take a bite of a cupcake. Then invite students to suggest other foods ants might eat at a picnic. Encourage them to act out their ideas as well.
- **Use a Graphic Organizer** Write the word **Picnic** on the board and underline it. Read the word and ask students to help you list the different types of picnic foods they mentioned. As students respond, write the words under the heading. Then read each word and ask students to echo-read.

- **Preview Sentence Structures** For students who need additional support, write *Let's _____* on the board. Read the sentence structure aloud and ask students to repeat it several times. **Say:** *The word **let's** is in the book. Page 6 has a sentence with the word **let's**.* Model how to frame the sentence between two fingers. Then read the sentence aloud and ask students to echo-read. Invite them to turn to page 16. **Ask:** *Can you frame a sentence with the word **let's**?* Assist as needed, and then read the sentence aloud and ask students to echo-read. If they need additional practice, allow them to locate and read the sentence structure on pages 4 and 5. Finally, repeat the process with *Ten more _____* on pages 8, 9, 10, and 11.

- **Use Graphophonic Cues** **Say:** *Another word in this book is **sand**. Say the word **sand**. What letters do you expect to see after the **ls**?* Allow time for students to respond, assisting as needed. Then ask them to find the word **sand** on page 5. Repeat the process with **food** on page 4. **Say:** *Search all the way through a word to help you when you read.*

- **Scaffold Spanish-Language Speakers** Say the word **group**. **Ask:** *Does **group** sound similar to a word you know in Spanish?* (Allow time for students to respond.) *The English word **group** sounds similar to the Spanish word **grupo**. **Group** and **grupo** mean the same thing. The words look similar, too.* Write the word **group** on the board and ask students to locate it on page 12 in the book. Repeat the process with **march** on page 6 and **marchar, no** on page 14 and **no**, and **in** on page 5 and **en**. Then point out that the word **to** on page 7 sounds like the Spanish word **tú** but does not mean the same thing. Finally, invite students with other first languages to share their cognates.

Set a Purpose for Reading

- Direct students' attention to the Picnic list. **Say:** *Now it's time to whisper-read the book. Read to find out what the ants eat at their picnic.*

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	Search all the way through the word. Are you blending the right sounds?	seeds	11
Syntactic	You read "Five group of ants are at the picnic now." Let's read this sentence together and make it sound right.	Five groups of ants are at the picnic now.	11
Semantic	What do you see in the picture that would make sense in this sentence?	hungry	15

Use the Graphic Organizer to Summarize

- Ask students to think about their reading. **Say:** *Look at our list. Which picnic foods did we read about in the book? Put a 3 next to any matching responses. Then ask students to name other foods the ants found at the picnic. Add these words and put check marks beside them. Choral-read the checkmarked words. Then ask students to use the graphic organizer to tell the story to a partner.*

Picnic	
cupcakes	3
sandwiches	
chips	3
cookies	
hot dogs	3
juice	
apples	
carrots	3
popcorn	3
watermelon	3
salad	3

Genre Study

- **Say:** *This story is an animal fantasy. You could see real ants and real people at a picnic. But fantasy means some things could not happen in real life. What parts of this story are fantasy? Guide students to mention that the ants talk to one another, give commands, and count to 100. They wear helmets and hats, and use flags, ropes, and parachutes.*
- **Say:** *Animal fantasy stories have themes. A theme is like a message from the author. I notice that The Ants Have a Picnic has a happy ending. The family has a problem, but they solve the problem in a fun way. How does the family solve their problem? (They go to a diner and eat inside.)* **Say:** *The theme for The Ants Have a Picnic could be “Turn a bad situation into something good.” The author uses the characters to send readers a message. The author is telling us to turn our bad situations into something good, too.*

Reading Strategy Mini-Lesson: Retell What You’ve Read

- **Reflect** Ask students to think about the parts of the book that were hard for them to understand. **Ask:** *What did you do to help yourself understand what you read?*
- **Model** **Say:** *I want to make sure I understand what I read. One way is to retell the important parts of the story. I will turn back to page 4. First I will read the page: “Let’s eat outside. Let’s have a picnic,” says Mom. Dad gets the food. Tom and Lori get the blanket.” Now I will say this part of the story in my own words: A family gets food and a blanket for a picnic.*
- **Guide** Ask students to turn to page 5. Read the page aloud together. Ask the following questions, allowing time for students to respond after each one: *What do you see? What is this page about? What are the characters going to do? How could you tell this part of the story in your own words? If students have difficulty, model a retelling of your own, such as Tom and Lori go play and Mom and Dad get drinks. The family leaves their picnic on the blanket.*
- **Apply** Ask each student to turn to his or her favorite page. Then ask students to read the page to a partner and retell that part of the story in their own words. Observe students as they read and retell. If more support is needed, use the prompts in the “Guide” section. See the *Early Explorers Overview & Assessment Handbook* for an observation chart you can use to assess students’ understanding of the **retell what you’ve read** monitor-reading strategy. Then **say:** *You can retell anytime you read. Remember to use retelling to help you understand.*

Answer Text-Dependent Questions

- **Explain** Remind students 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 today they will practice answering Prove It! questions. **Say:** The answer to a Prove It! question is not stated in the book. You have to look for clues and evidence to prove the answer.*

- **Model** Use the first *Prove It!* question on the Comprehension Question Card. **Say:** *I will show you how I answer a Prove It! question. I will read the question to figure out what to do. The question says: "Where does the story take place?" This question asks me to make an inference. I know because I have to find clues and evidence about the story's setting. I already know an inference has only one or two clues. What can I use for clues and evidence? (Allow student responses.) Yes, I can use the words and the illustrations. On page 5 Tom says he wants to play in the sand. The picture on pages 14 and 15 shows waves and boats. Now I know the story takes place near water. I have located the clues and evidence I need. The clues support my answer. My answer makes sense.*

- **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?*

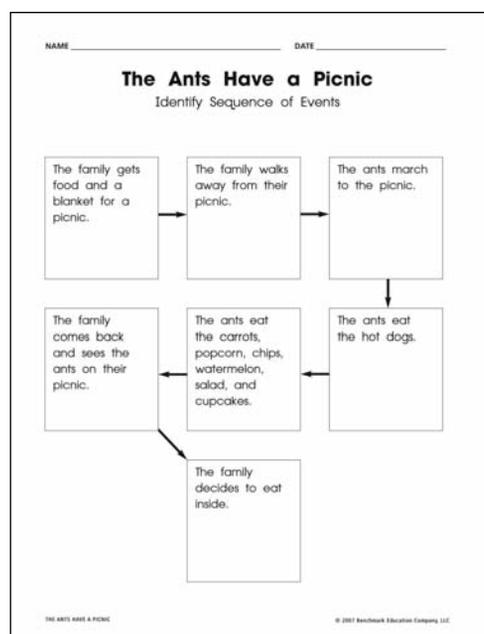
Build Comprehension: Identify Sequence of Events

- **Explain** Create an overhead transparency of the "The Ants Have a Picnic" 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 Ants Have a Picnic. We need to start at the beginning. On page 4, the family gets food and a blanket for a picnic. Getting food and a blanket is the first thing that happens. I will write about the food and blanket in the first box of the graphic organizer. Now I will read on to see what happens next. On page 5, the family walks away from their picnic. I will write about walking away in the next box. On page 6, the ants march to the picnic. I will write about the ants marching, too.*

- **Guide Say:** *Let's find out what happens next. Look on page 7. What do the ants do? (Allow time for students to respond, assisting if needed.) Yes, the ants eat the hot dogs. Ants eating hot dogs is the next event in the story sequence. Let's add this event to the graphic organizer.*

- **Apply** Ask students to work with a partner to figure out the rest of the events in the story. Remind them that a sequence happens in order, so they will need to keep turning the pages. After each partnership shares, agree on how to word the entries on the graphic organizer. Finally, read the completed graphic organizer aloud and invite students to echo-read.



Teacher Tip Use Benchmark Education Company's K–2 Early 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 Ants Have a Picnic* to read to family members. Encourage students to work with a friend or family member to draw 100 ants. Invite students 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.

- Draw a picture of a family having a picnic.
- Tell about your favorite picture in the book.
- Tell what you would do if you found ants on your picnic.
- Tell a partner what you liked best about the story.
- Write about how Lori and Tom felt when they saw the ants.
- Write about what the family will do next time they have a picnic.

Write to a Picture Prompt

- **Write a Personal Narrative** Tell students they will think about their own experiences with picnics or ants. Then they will write about the experience. **Say:** *I like the pictures in this book. Some of the pictures make me think of my own experiences. The picture on page 13 reminds me of an experience: I went to a barbecue once. I took a cookie from a plate. An ant was crawling on the cookie. Does this picture make you think about an experience?* Allow time for students to respond. **Ask:** *Which picture do you like best? What experience does the picture make you think about?* Allow time for students to respond, prompting further if needed. **Say:** *You have used a picture to remember an experience. Now write about your experience. After you are finished, read your narrative to a partner.*

Write to a Text Prompt

- **Analyze the Problem and Solution** **Say:** *Think about how the family solved their problem in the story. How else could they have solved the problem? Write your idea. When you are finished, read your solution to a partner.*

Phonics: CVCe long “i”

- Ask students to locate the word **five** on page 11. Write **five** on the board. Explain that often a vowel followed by a consonant and final “e” is long. Cross out the “e” and underline the “i” as you **say:** *The letter “e” at the end of the word is silent. The “e” doesn’t make a sound. It makes the “i” say its own name.* Slowly draw your finger under the word as you blend the sounds. Then ask students to do the same in their books. Repeat the process with **time** on page 14, **outside** on page 4, and **inside** on page 16.
- Ask students to brainstorm words with the long “i” sound. Acknowledge all correct responses, and record the words that have the CVCe pattern on index cards. Then spread the cards out in a pocket chart or on a table. Read each word, inviting students to echo-read.
- **Say:** *Try to find the word I’m thinking of. Then you may pick up the matching card. Model the process using one of the words, such as **How do you go headfirst into a swimming pool? (dive)*** Then invite each student to make up a question about one of the words.

Vocabulary

- **Academic Content Vocabulary** Review the story with students and record the words **ant, picnic, row, hot dogs, carrots, popcorn, chips, watermelon, salad, and cupcakes** on index cards. Read the words aloud with students. Then invite them to label illustrations in the story with the cards and explain their placement of the words.
- **Robust Oral Vocabulary** **Say:** *In the story, the family is **disappointed**. **Disappointed** means things don’t turn out as you hope. First everyone was excited. Then everyone was **disappointed** when ants spoiled the picnic. Say the word with me: **disappointed**. Here is another way a person can be **disappointed**: A girl loves to play soccer. The girl hurts her ankle and can’t play in the big game. Now tell about a time you have been **disappointed**. Try to use the word **disappointed** when you tell about it. You could start by saying, “I was **disappointed** when ____.” (Allow time for each student to respond, assisting if needed.) What is the word we’ve been talking about? Yes—**disappointed**. Let’s try to use the word **disappointed** many times today.*

Word Study: Compound Words

- **Model Say:** *Authors sometimes use compound words when they write. A compound word is made of two words put together. I see a compound word on page 4: "Let's eat outside." The word **outside** is a compound word. Write the word **outside** on the board. Draw a line under each part as you **say:** The words **out** and **side** make the compound word **outside**.*
- **Guide** Invite students to read page 6 with you. **Ask:** Which word is a compound word? (**anthill**) What two words make the compound word **anthill**? (**ant, hill**) Write the word **anthill** on the board. Draw a line under each part as you and students say **ant** and **hill**.
- **Apply** Ask students to find the compound words on pages 9 (**popcorn**), 11 (**watermelon**), 13 (**cupcakes**), and 16 (**inside**). If more support is needed, utilize all or part of the "Guide" process.

Language Development: Contractions

- **Model** Ask students to turn to page 4 and read the first two sentences with you. Write the words **Let's** and **let us** on the board. Read the words aloud and ask students to echo-read **Say:** *Sometimes authors use contractions. A contraction is a short way of writing two words. **Let's** is a short way to write **let us**. **Let's** and **let us** mean the same thing. I use the contraction **let's**, too.* Invite students to join you in pantomiming some simple actions as you share sentences with the word **let's**, such as: **Let's** look out the window.
Let's clap our hands.
Let's turn to the right and bow.
- **Guide** Ask students to find the contraction **let's** on pages 5, 6, and 16, and read the sentences aloud. Then invite them to say the sentences using the words **let us** in place of **let's**. **Ask:** *Do the sentences mean the same thing when we say **let us**? Why do you think the author uses the word **let's**?*

- **Apply** Pair students and ask them to invite each other to do something using the word **let's**. As partners share their sentences with the group, write them on the board and underline the word **let's** in each one.

Fluency: Read with Appropriate Pacing

- **Say:** *Good readers do not read everything at the same pace, or speed. Instead, good readers change their pace to match what is happening in the story. Changing the pace makes the story more interesting. Changing the pace helps the reader understand the author's ideas. It also helps the listener understand the reader.*
- Ask students to turn to page 14. Read the first sentence quickly. **Say:** *I read this sentence quickly. Reading quickly shows that Mom is hungry and wants to eat right away.* Read the second sentence at a slower pace. **Say:** *I read this sentence more slowly. Reading more slowly shows that Dad is worried about the ants.* Read the page again, asking students to echo-read.
- Ask students to look at the illustrations on pages 15 and 16. Suggest that they read page 15 slowly to show that Tom and Lori are sad. Then suggest that they read page 16 more quickly to show that Mom has a fun solution to the problem. Choral-read the pages with students, adapting the pace as discussed.
- Invite students to take turns rereading *The Ants Have a Picnic* with a partner. Remind them to change their pace to match what is happening in the story.

NAME _____

DATE _____

The Ants Have a Picnic

Identify Sequence of Events

