

T E A C H E R ' S G U I D E

# GO! EXCEL

3

- ACTION/ADVENTURE
- CHEMISTRY
- FANTASY
- MUSIC
- OCEAN ANIMALS

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# Instructional Support Components

This guide contains instructional support for each book.



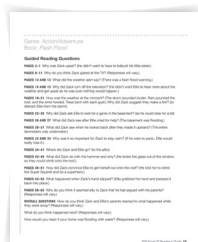
**GENRE OVERVIEW AND LESSON PLAN** (one for each genre): Use this page to introduce and discuss the genre. Lessons are appropriate

for whole class or small group instruction.



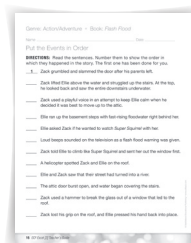
**BOOK LESSON PLAN** (one for each book): Use this page to introduce a book, to teach or review specific reading skills, and to introduce

special vocabulary in the books. Lessons are appropriate for whole class, small group, or individual instruction.



**GUIDED READING QUESTIONS** (one for each book): Use this page after the initial reading of a book. These questions allow for a deeper

rereading of the book and an exploration of the book's issues and character dynamics. Questions are appropriate for whole class, small group, or individual instruction.



**COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY** (one for each book): Use this page to monitor comprehension and build reading skills. Activities in this guide

are appropriate for paired or independent work.



**BOOK QUIZ** (one for each book): Use this page to assess comprehension. Quizzes are a mix of multiple choice and short-answer questions.

## Implementation Options

GO! Excel is intended as a supplemental set of books for classroom use. The lesson plans and guided reading questions in this guide are flexible and may be used with classes, small groups, and individual students. Here are some options for implementation:

- Display the books as part of a classroom library, and allow students to self-select titles. Use the reproducible activity and quiz for each book to monitor comprehension.
- Form small groups for genre exploration. Assign two or more books from a genre set to each small group. Use the genre overview and lesson plan to introduce the genre. As each group completes a book, use the guided reading questions to spur discussion and to check comprehension. Have the groups complete a presentation on how the books represent the genre they are exploring. Use the reproducible activities and quizzes for the books to monitor comprehension.
- Use selected titles for intervention with students reading below level. Assign a specific title to a group, and use the lesson plan in this guide to introduce the book and teach special vocabulary. Have the students read the book independently or as part of a small group. Use the guided reading questions after the first read to build comprehension and encourage book discussion. Then assign the reproducible activity. Students may work independently or in pairs. Use the quiz to assess comprehension.

Clark, C. & Rumbold, K. 2006. "Reading for Pleasure: A Research Overview." National Literacy Trust. Accessed October 16, 2019. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/reading-pleasure-research-overview/>.

Cullinan, B. E. 2000. "Independent Reading and School Achievement." Research Journal of the American Association of School Librarians 3: 1-24.

Nielsen. 2017. "Mobile Kids: The Parent, the Child and the Smartphone." Accessed October 20, 2019. <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2017/mobile-kids--the-parent-the-child-and-the-smartphone/>.

Scholastic Inc. and YouGov. 2019. "Kids & Family Reading Report, 7th Edition." Accessed October 16, 2019. <http://www.scholastic.com/readingreport/key-findings.htm>.

# Book Overview Chart

Book	Fiction/ Nonfiction	Theme	Readability Level	Lexile Level	Word Count
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## Action/Adventure Genre

Flash Flood	F	quick thinking to survive fast-rising waters	1.5	HL130L	1284
No Fear	F	facing a phobia of roller coasters	1.5	HL130L	1265
Tour Trouble	F	showdown with a shark while paddleboarding	1.5	HL130L	1271
Fires in the Wild	NF	spotting and fighting wildfires	1.5	HL170L	1236

## Chemistry Genre

Fresh Start	F	transitioning from chemical to natural ingredients	1.5	HL160L	1216
Logan's Lesson	F	using science to survive when lost in the woods	1.4	HL150L	1293
Saved by Science	F	chemistry-based solutions save a family dinner	1.4	HL140L	1237
Genetically Modified Organisms	NF	engineering food and more	1.5	HL130L	1218

## Fantasy Genre

Last Wish	F	unexpected consequences of a magical wish	1.1	HL80L	1265
Real Wizard	F	finding inner talent	1.5	HL130L	1289
True Warrior	F	proving oneself; rebelling against gender-based stereotypes	1.5	HL140L	1290
Tales from the Sea	NF	mysterious humanlike ocean creatures	1.5	HL90L	1299

## Music Genre

Hot Air	F	choosing the right instrument	1.3	HL160L	1228
Live It Up	F	getting backstage at a concert	1.5	HL110L	1199
Music Mix-Up	F	feeling betrayed when a friend shares lyrics not meant for anyone else	1.3	HL120L	1226
Behind the Scenes	NF	the making of a concert	1.5	HL140L	1233

## Ocean Animals Genre

Night Watch	F	keeping guard over a sea turtle nest	1.4	HL170L	1300
Spot	F	saving a unique seal	1.5	HL140L	1266
Whale Tale	F	rescuing a whale caught in a net	1.4	HL170L	1197
Dangerous Jellyfish	NF	fascinating facts about jellyfish	1.5	HL110L	1208

# Comprehension Skills Chart

Book	Page Number	Reading Skill	Vocabulary Words
<b>Action/Adventure Genre</b>			
Flash Flood	14	sequence of events	alert, barrier, rescue, shatter, surge
No Fear	18	cause and effect	blare, choke, pale, steep, storm
Tour Trouble	22	sensory details	loudspeaker, paddleboard, sound, strict, thrash
Fires in the Wild <b>NE</b>	26	main ideas and details	dense, firestorm, hot spot, last resort, pack
<b>Chemistry Genre</b>			
Fresh Start	31	drawing conclusions	blot, chemicals, clog, freshen, toxic
Logan's Lesson	35	summarization	carbon, filter, polish, reflect, zigzag
Saved by Science	39	making inferences	centerpiece, erupt, experiment, project, takeout
Genetically Modified Organisms <b>NE</b>	43	advantages and disadvantages	bacteria, gene, modified, side effect, trait
<b>Fantasy Genre</b>			
Last Wish	48	point of view	clench, freebie, genie, mutter, skitter
Real Wizard	52	making connections	cauldron, repel, rift, spell, swoop
True Warrior	56	problems and solutions	boar, charms, filly, lunge, tusks
Tales from the Sea <b>NE</b>	60	reading a timeline	ancient, island, manatee, mast, settler
<b>Music Genre</b>			
Hot Air	65	idioms	beam, clatter, loot, spare, survey
Live It Up	69	external and internal conflicts	arena, blend, jostle, stowaway, usher
Music Mix-Up	73	fact and opinion	distracted, leftovers, prank, scaly, wince
Behind the Scenes <b>NE</b>	77	5 Ws and H questions	agent, cue, lyrics, perk, press
<b>Ocean Animals Genre</b>			
Night Watch	82	character traits	hiss, shoo, shore, stake, tune out
Spot	86	personification	bait, cove, herd, nudge, tourist
Whale Tale	90	story elements	blowhole, coast, dock, fin, pod
Dangerous Jellyfish <b>NE</b>	94	notetaking	bell, dead zone, expert, swarm, tentacle



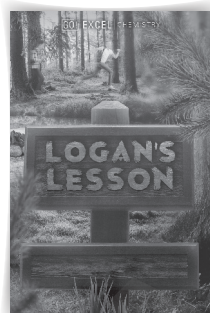
# Genre: Chemistry

**DESCRIPTION** Chemistry is often viewed as one of the most challenging courses for students in high school. Yet its importance is clear. From the tiniest molecules to the effects of chemical reactions, chemistry is an integral part of our day-to-day existence. The books in this genre explore the many ways that knowledge of chemistry can be helpful in a variety of situations. The fiction books look at topics as varied as going green, surviving in the wilderness, and solving problems using common household items. The nonfiction book allows for debate about the pros and cons of using science to replicate processes we see in nature. Linking chemistry concepts with literature can spark discussions about what students know, would like to know, or feel strongly about in terms of scientific information.

## Overview of Books



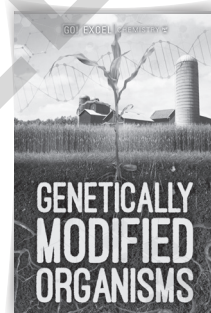
Moving from Chemical  
to Natural Ingredients



Using Science to  
Survive in Nature



Solving Problems  
with Chemistry



Engineering Food  
and More

**INTRODUCING THIS GENRE** Write the word *chemistry* on the board. Ask students what they think of when they see or hear this word. If possible, do an online search for chemistry-related articles and videos. Discuss the wide variety of topics found. Ask students to think about how scientific processes are part of their daily lives. Note that there are chemical reactions in the food we eat, the air we breathe, the products we use to clean our homes, our emotions, and basically everything we see and touch. As a class, brainstorm examples of chemistry in action. List students' ideas on the board.

Show students the covers and titles of the four books in this set. Provide an opportunity for students to make predictions about the texts before reading. Point out that the fiction books focus on the fact that understanding scientific processes and experiments can help people in real-life situations. Encourage students to think about science experiments they have done as they read. Explain that the nonfiction book is about genetically modified organisms where scientists are able to create something like a fish in a lab. Ask students if they would be willing to eat a fish that was scientifically created and not hatched from an egg laid by a mother fish. Have them explain why or why not.

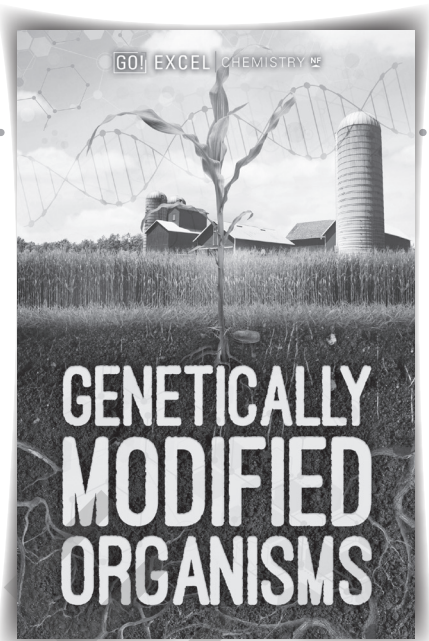
**PARTNER SHARE** Assign partners and have students spend a few minutes talking about what they like about science and science experiments. Instruct them to discuss experiments they have attempted and how they worked out. Encourage them to share which book in the set looks the most interesting to read.

Genre: Chemistry

Book: *Genetically Modified Organisms*

**SYNOPSIS** This nonfiction book examines the increased use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). GMOs are created by taking a desirable gene from one organism and splicing it into another to make a plant or animal better in some way. To many people, GMOs are a solution to world hunger and diseases. Others argue that the risks outweigh the benefits. This book shows both sides and features a bar graph to show the proliferation of GMO crops.

**PREPARING TO READ** Show students the cover of the book. Read them the following preview:



*Genetically Modified Organisms*

Imagine being able to feed nutritious food to hungry people worldwide. One way scientists are trying to do this is through the use of genetically modified organisms, or GMOs. Learn more about GMOs and the debate over their use.

Ask students to turn to a partner and discuss what they know about GMOs and how safe they think they are. Then have volunteers tell the group some of their ideas.

**READING SKILL** Write the words *advantages* and *disadvantages* on the board in a T-chart. Ask students to describe what these words mean. Point out that many nonfiction books present both advantages and disadvantages of a topic and then leave readers to form their own opinions about the subject. Charting these pros and cons to review at a glance can help readers make up their minds. Have students brainstorm some advantages and disadvantages of a science breakthrough like cloning or living in space to practice this skill. Then instruct students to think about the advantages and disadvantages of GMOs as they read this book.

**VOCABULARY LESSON** This book includes a few words that are at a higher level than the rest of the book but are necessary for communicating the content. Teach these words before students read the story. Write each word on the board. If appropriate, have the students write each word on an index card and then trace the letters as they say the word.

**bacteria** one-celled organisms

**gene** the basic unit of DNA that passes on a certain trait

**modified** changed in some way through a process

**side effect** something that happens in response to a drug or chemical in addition to what was supposed to happen; often unpleasant

**trait** a distinguishing feature of an organism

Have students work with partners or small groups to come up with sentences using each of the vocabulary words. Ask students to share the sentences with the class.

Genre: Chemistry

Book: *Genetically Modified Organisms*

## Guided Reading Questions

**PAGES 3–7** What are some of the problems associated with using sprays to kill bugs on plants? (The sprays are costly and can be harmful to both humans and plants.)

**PAGES 8 AND 9** What is the abbreviation for genetically modified organisms? (GMOs) What are GMOs? (living things that scientists make in labs by changing their genes)

**PAGES 10–13** Where do many traits come from? (genes) How did farmers insure good traits were passed on? (They put animals together that had traits they liked. Good genes were passed on to the babies.)

**PAGES 14–17** Where do many think pet dogs came from? (friendly wolves)

**PAGES 18–21** How did farmers grow crops that were healthier and tasted better? (kept the seeds from the best fruits, vegetables, and grains and planted those)

**PAGES 22–27** When was the first GMO made? (the 1970s) How are genes moved? (with a needle, a special gun, or with chemicals)

**PAGES 28–31** Why are GMO papayas better? (They do not get a virus that hurts regular papayas.) How did scientists change tomatoes? (They modified their genes to make them last longer.)

**PAGES 32–35** What does the chart on page 35 tell you about certain GMO crops? (Responses will vary.)

**PAGES 36 AND 37** How have scientists helped children in poor countries get more Vitamin A? (They have genetically modified rice to make it contain Vitamin A.)

**PAGES 38–45** What are some reasons that people are fearful of GMOs? (There could be side effects. GMOs may cause food allergies.)

**PAGES 46–49** What is meant by, “This puts nature off-balance”? (Changed plants can push others out and disrupt the food web, causing animals to die out too.)

**PAGES 50–53** Why don't some trust the tests that have proven GMOs to be safe? (They fear the results may be fake because some of the tests were done by the companies that make GMOs.)

**PAGES 54–59** What are some advantages and disadvantages of GMO fish? (Advantages include that they grow fast and are cheaper than traditional fish. Disadvantages are that they are not natural, people may not want to eat them, and they could mate with wild fish and change them.)

**PAGES 60–63** How long might it take to know what GMOs do to the earth? (years)

**OVERALL QUESTIONS** What are the good and bad aspects of GMOs? (Responses will vary.)

Would you eat genetically modified plants or animals? Why or why not? (Responses will vary.)

Are today's GMOs any different from selective breeding that farmers have done for ages? Why or why not? (Responses will vary.)



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## The Good and the Bad

**DIRECTIONS:** Place these facts in the correct column of the T-chart below.

1. Vitamins can be added to GMOs.
2. The GMO papaya plant resists viruses.
3. Nobody knows if there are side effects.
4. GMO plants may use less water.
5. GMOs may cause food allergies.
6. It can be difficult to stop GMOs from spreading.
7. GMOs may put nature out of balance.
8. GMO crops are bigger.

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer the question below. Use complete sentences.

9. After reviewing the advantages and disadvantages, what is your overall opinion of GMOs?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Comprehension Quiz

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the question. Then fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

**1.** Where are genetically modified organisms made?

- A. labs  C. farms  
 B. factories  D. in nature

**2.** What was the first GMO animal?

- A. cow  C. mouse  
 B. dog  D. chicken

**3.** Why don't some people trust the research that says GMOs are safe?

- A. It claims GMOs cure cancer.  C. It is based on only one test.  
 B. All doctors are against it.  D. Results may have been faked.

**4.** Which of these is not one of the positive effects of GMOs?

- A. Animals grow faster.  C. GMO pigs have more meat.  
 B. There may be unknown side effects.  D. Eggs from GMO chickens may help treat cancer.

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer the question below. Use complete sentences.

**5.** What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of GMOs?

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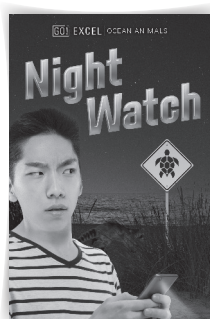
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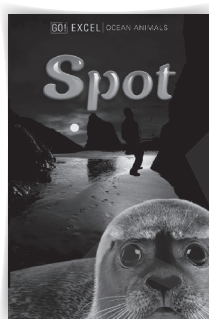
# Genre: Ocean Animals

**DESCRIPTION** Books about ocean animals reveal fascinating facts about creatures many people find strange and even mysterious. While some scientists study the ocean and the animals that call it home, most people know little about these creatures outside of trips to the beach or aquariums and what they have read or seen in videos. In today's world, ocean animals face many threats to their survival. Learning more about these threats can be a call to action for tweens as human behavior is responsible for most of them. Each of the three fiction books in this set features an ocean animal in a dangerous situation and a middle-school-aged main character who has an opportunity to lend assistance. The nonfiction book gives readers detailed information about a variety of jellyfish. All of the books bring aspects of oceanography to life and raise awareness for some of the denizens of the deep.

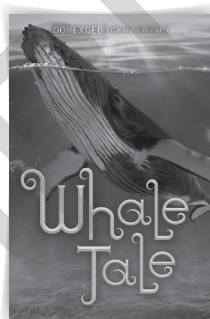
## Overview of Books



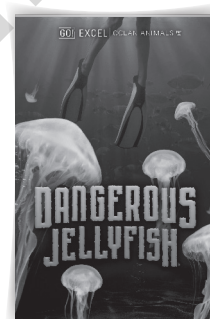
Keeping Guard  
Over a Nest



Saving a Seal



A Grateful Whale



Fascinating  
Jellyfish Facts

**INTRODUCING THIS GENRE** Write the words *ocean animals* on the board. Ask students to brainstorm a list of animals that live in the ocean. Next discuss threats that ocean animals face. Talk with students about why these dangers exist and what can be done to minimize them. Have small groups research different ocean animals and the top two or three threats to their survival and present their findings to the class. Then challenge students to think of a way they personally could do something to help an ocean animal and why it would be important to do so.

Show students the covers and titles of the four books in this set. Preview the covers and look through the pages. Encourage students to make predictions about the texts before reading. Explain that the three fiction books deal with ocean animals facing a danger of some type that may be natural or attributable to humans. The nonfiction book, on the other hand, deals with the danger jellyfish can present to humans. Tell students to focus on these different dangers as they read and consider how they might share this information with others to raise awareness.

**PARTNER SHARE** Assign partners and have students spend a few minutes discussing their knowledge of or experience with ocean animals. Encourage them to share which book in the set looks the most interesting to read.

Genre: Ocean Animals

Book: *Spot*

**SYNOPSIS** This book explores genetic variations in members of a species and the issue of illegal animal poaching. Alex is spending a week at his grandmother's beach house. A herd of seals lives nearby. Alex feels a connection to a unique red seal despite his grandmother's warning that it is a wild animal. One day, Alex spots two men taking photos of the seal and has a bad feeling about their intentions. Soon he and his grandmother are working to disrupt the men's dubious plans.

**PREPARING TO READ** Show students the cover of the book. Read them the following preview:

Alex becomes attached to an unusual red seal on the beach near his grandmother's house. However, as Alex soon discovers, what makes this seal unique also puts it in grave danger. Can he and his grandmother help protect it?

Ask students to turn to a partner and discuss what they think will happen in this book based on the cover and the preview. Then have volunteers tell the group some of their predictions.

**READING SKILL** Write the term *personification* on the board. Underline the word "person" in the term. Explain that personification is giving human characteristics to non-human objects. In this way, the author makes the object seem like a person. Authors use this technique to help readers picture something more vividly. Share this example with students: "The clouds danced across the sky." Discuss what they picture when they hear this and why. Encourage students to look for examples of personification as they read *Spot*.

**VOCABULARY LESSON** This book includes a few words that are at a higher level than the rest of the book but are necessary for communicating the content. Teach these words before students read the story. Write each word on the board. If appropriate, have the students write each word on an index card and then trace the letters as they say the word.

**bait** a small portion of food used to attract and catch an animal

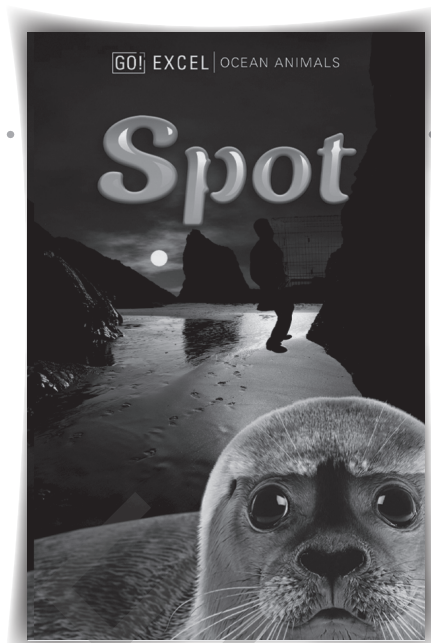
**cove** a part of the coast where land partially surrounds an area of water; a small bay

**herd** a large group of animals

**nudge** to push gently

**tourist** a person who is visiting a place for fun

Have students work with partners or small groups to come up with sentences using each of the vocabulary words. Ask students to share the sentences with the class.



*Spot*



Genre: Ocean Animals

Book: *Spot*

## Guided Reading Questions

**PAGES 3–5** How did the ocean seem to be welcoming Alex back? (The waves kept rolling in.)

**PAGES 6 AND 7** What did Alex do while at Gram's each summer? (He helped with chores.) What did she do in return? (She fed him well.)

**PAGES 8–11** Why was Alex on the roof? (He was removing a tree branch that had fallen on it.)

**PAGES 12–15** What warning did Gram give Alex every year? (to not get too close to the seals because they are wild animals and have sharp teeth)

**PAGES 16 AND 17** What was different about the seal Alex saw? (It was red with dark spots.)

**PAGES 18 AND 19** Why did Gram say not to name the seal? (because it was not a pet)

**PAGES 20–25** What did Alex buy at the bait shop? (a jar of fish and a beach ball)

**PAGES 26–29** What did Alex do when the seal came near the boat? (tossed the ball into the water)

**PAGES 30 AND 31** What did Spot do with the ball Alex threw? (He swam to the ball and nudged it with his nose back to the boat.)

**PAGES 32–35** How did Alex reward Spot? (Every time Spot brought the ball back, Alex gave him a fish.)

**PAGES 36 AND 37** What did Alex see when he went to visit Spot? (Two men were taking photos of Spot. They got into a white van and drove off.) How did that make Alex feel? (nervous)

**PAGES 38–43** What did Gram tell Alex about the men he saw? (She said their plan was to take wild animals and sell them.)

**PAGES 44–47** Who did Gram call to report the men? (She called the wildlife department and the local sheriff.)

**PAGES 48–51** What idea did Gram propose? (to go up on the roof that night and watch the beach)

**PAGES 52–57** What did they see? (The white van arrived, and the men got out carrying a large cage. They had flashlights and a rope.)

**PAGES 58–63** What happened next? (Two sheriff's cars appeared. The men dropped the rope and raised their hands in the air.)

**OVERALL QUESTIONS** What do you think about the arrangement Gram and Alex have for the summers? (Responses will vary.)

Have you ever had a chance to observe a wild animal in its natural setting? What was it like? (Responses will vary.)

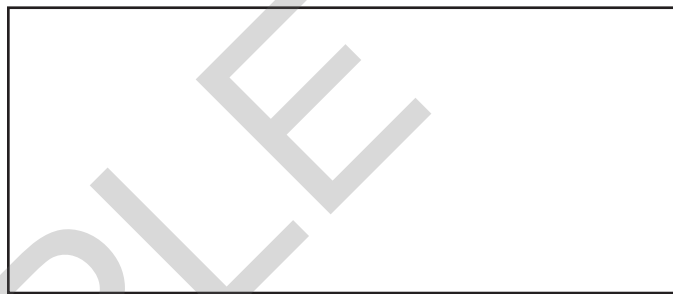
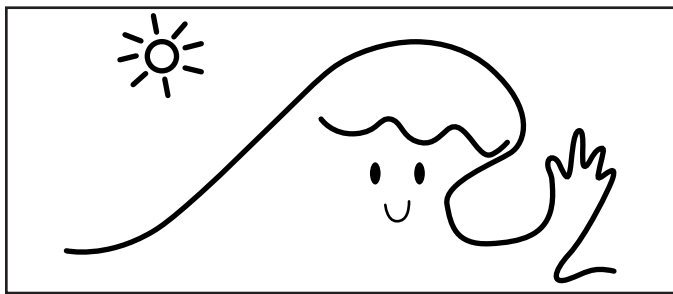
What do you think about the sale of wild animals as pets? (Responses will vary.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Personification

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the examples of personification from *Spot*. The images show the *literal* meaning. Write what the phrase *actually* means. Then write your own example of personification about the underlined topic and illustrate it.

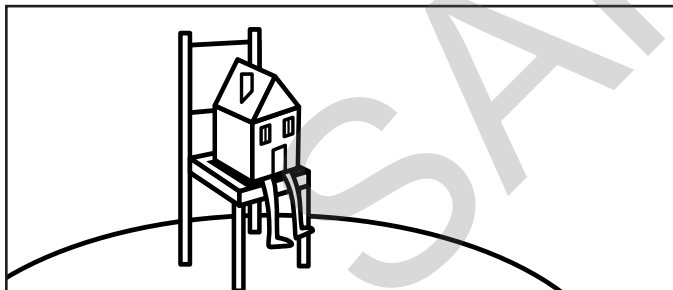
1. Alex felt like the sea was welcoming him back.



What this really means: \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Her little house sat on a hill.



What this really means: \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer the question below. Use complete sentences.

3. Why do you think authors use personification?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Comprehension Quiz

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the question. Then fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

**1.** What deal did Gram and Alex have for his visits?

- A.** Neither one used electronics.       **C.** He cooked, and she sewed.
- B.** He did chores for money.       **D.** He did chores, and she fed him well.

**2.** What was different about the seal Alex nicknamed Spot?

- A.** It was black.       **C.** It was a pup.
- B.** It was red.       **D.** It was huge.

**3.** What did Alex do to encourage Spot to play fetch?

- A.** rewarded him with fish       **C.** used a training whistle
- B.** took pictures of him       **D.** used a baseball

**4.** What did Gram say about the men Alex saw?

- A.** They were movie makers.       **C.** They sold wild animals.
- B.** They owned a circus.       **D.** They were hunters.

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer the questions below. Use complete sentences.

**5.** What do you think the punishment should be for the men who planned to take Spot? Why?

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