



Running words: 407

Book Summary

This story looks at how trial-and-error experimentation can help solve a problem. Mr Harris is an avid vegetable gardener who is proud of his prize-winning cabbages. One day, he finds holes in the cabbages, made by earwigs. His neighbours Maria and Tom build a bug trap to catch the earwigs. Mr Harris tries the trap but it doesn't work. Maria and Tom revise their trap by adding a light stick to attract the earwigs. Mr Harris tries the improved trap and it works. In the end, all the neighbours want one of Maria and Tom's bug traps for their gardens.

Themes

Animals, birds, and insects;
Invention; Neighbourhood;
Problem solving

Features of the Book

- The information contained in the illustrations
- Content words for discussion: *invention, problem, solve, trap*
- Phonics and phonemic awareness: consonant blend – *tr*; short vowel sounds – *bug/but/munching/suddenly*; word ending – *ly*

Strategies

The Amazing Bug Trap introduces and reinforces the following strategies:

- making predictions;
- determining cause and effect;
- determining main ideas.

Materials

- Copies of the Sentence Strips reproducible for this book, cut and ready for use
- Copies of the BM, pencils

The Amazing Bug Trap

by Janine Scott

Introducing the Text

Begin by asking the students to think of any inventions that they or their family and friends have made. Write their answers in a list.

- *What was the invention?*
- *Did it work the first time it was used, or did it need changes and improvements to make it work better?*

Reading the Text

Hand one book to each student. Ensure that the content words (*invention, problem, solve, trap*) are integrated naturally into the discussion. An understanding of these terms will help the students appreciate the author's purpose and the decisions the characters make in the story. Encourage the students to use the information in the illustrations and text to make predictions, then to revise or confirm these as you work through the book.

Cover

Together, read the title and the name of the author on the cover and the title page. Look at the illustrations.

- *Where is the man on the cover?* (in a garden)
- *What is he looking at?* (an insect on a cabbage full of holes)
- *What do you predict this story is about?* (catching garden bugs with a trap)

Pages 2 to 3

- *What is the man doing?* (watering his vegetable garden)
- *What does he find?* (an insect and lots of holes on his cabbages)
- *What effect does the damage to his cabbages have on Mr Harris?* (He looks upset.)

Read the text together. Confirm that Mr Harris is an avid gardener who has found earwigs on his prize-winning cabbages, which has upset him. Have a student point out the speech marks on the page. Remind the students that these marks indicate who is speaking in the story.

Pages 4 to 5

- *Who has joined Mr Harris?* (two children from next door)
- *What does Mr Harris show the children?* (the holes in the cabbages)

Read the text together. Confirm that Mr Harris's neighbours Maria and Tom have come over to find out what is wrong, and Mr Harris shows them the damage from the earwigs.

- *How do you predict Maria and Tom will help Mr Harris get rid of the earwigs?*

Page 6

- *Where are Maria and Tom?* (at home)
- *What are they doing?* (sketching and using a computer)

Read the text together. Confirm that Maria and Tom are researching and designing a bug trap for Mr Harris. Discuss the importance of finding information about a problem in order to find a solution that works.

Page 7

- *Where are Maria and Tom now?* (at Mr Harris's door)
- *What are they holding?* (their bug trap)

Read the text together. Confirm that Maria and Tom give Mr Harris a bug trap to try in his garden.

- *What did Maria and Tom learn that earwigs like to eat more than cabbages?* (flowers)
- *Do you predict that the bug trap will work?*

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Page 8

- *Do you think the bug trap worked? How can you tell?* (No, Mr Harris looks angry, and Maria and Tom look concerned.)

Read the text together. Confirm that the bug trap didn't work. Discuss with the students what Maria and Tom learnt about the trap when it didn't work.

(The flowers weren't enough to attract the earwigs away from the cabbages.)

- *How do you predict Maria and Tom will improve their bug trap?*

Page 9

- *Where is Mr Harris?* (in his garden at night)
- *What is he holding?* (the bug trap with light shining from it)

Read the text together. Confirm that Maria and Tom have improved the bug trap by adding a light stick to attract the earwigs and that Mr Harris is trying the new trap.

- *How did Maria know that light would attract the earwigs?* (from her research)
- *Do you predict that the bug trap will work this time?*

Pages 10 to 11

- *How can you tell the improved bug trap worked?* (There are earwigs in the trap, and everyone looks happy.)
- *Was your prediction about the trap working correct?*
- *What do Maria and Tom do with the trap?* (show it to other people)

Read the text together. Confirm that the improved trap worked and that Maria and Tom show the trap to a group of neighbours.

Page 12

- *What are Maria and Tom doing now?* (making more bug traps)

Read the text together. Confirm that Maria and Tom are making more bug traps for their neighbours.

- *What effect does the success of the bug trap have on everyone in the story?* (They are very happy.)

Revisiting the Text

- Revisit the list of inventions the students made at the beginning of the story. Have them compare their inventing experiences with that of Maria and Tom. What would have happened if the students or Maria and Tom had given up instead of revising their inventions?
- Find and list the “tr” consonant blends in the story. With the students, add other words they know that begin with this blend.
- Find and list words in the story that end in “ly”. With the students, add other descriptive words that end in “ly” (adverbs) and describe how a person does an action (verb).
- Write the words *bug/but/munching/suddenly* on the board. With the students, create a list of other words that contain the short “u” sound.

Following Up

- Encourage the students to think about the main idea of the story – solving a problem through trial-and-error experimentation. Have them recount the chain of cause-and-effect events in the story, such as how the presence of earwigs caused Maria and Tom to build a trap, how their research caused them to add flowers (and later a light stick) to the trap, and how the trap's failure caused them to improve it.
- Give the students copies of the BM for this story. They can design and draw a trap to catch slugs and snails. Remind them to include labels in their design.