



A TEACHER'S CURRICULUM GUIDE

to the books by JASON CHIN



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Chin has created nonfiction books with an imaginative element. The text is clear, accurate, and age-level appropriate while the beautiful illustrations present sweeping panoramas of redwood forests, coral cities, the Galápagos Islands, and outer space. Chin makes environmental and scientific concepts accessible to readers and entertains them with creative visual displays of art. Visit Jason online at jasonchin.net.

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This guide presents strategies for engaging readers before, during, and after reading Chin's books. It also provides an extension strategy to further students' understanding and enjoyment of the books. These strategies are intended to support students:

Before reading to:

- Use prior knowledge to think about the topic.
- Make predictions about the possible meaning of the text.
- Preview the text by skimming and scanning to get a sense of the overall meaning.

During reading to:

- Monitor interpretation and understanding by questioning, thinking about, and reflecting on ideas and information presented in the text.

After reading to:

- Reflect upon the ideas and information in the text.
- Relate what they have read to their own experiences and knowledge.
- Clarify their comprehension of the text.
- Extend their understanding in critical and creative ways.

In addition, the Common Core State Standards are addressed throughout the before, during, and after reading strategies, as well as in the extension activities. Teachers are encouraged to adapt the activities to attain specific Common Core grade level standards for their classrooms and students. You know your kids best!

ABOUT THE BOOKS

GRAVITY

As in his previous books, Jason Chin tackles a complex subject and makes it accessible to readers in an unusual and innovative manner. *Gravity* poses questions such as:

What keeps objects from floating out of your hand?

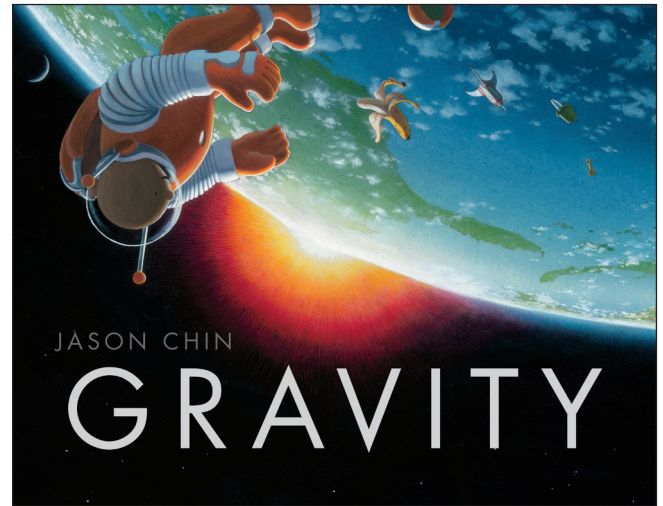
What if your feet drifted away from the ground?

What stops everything from floating into space?

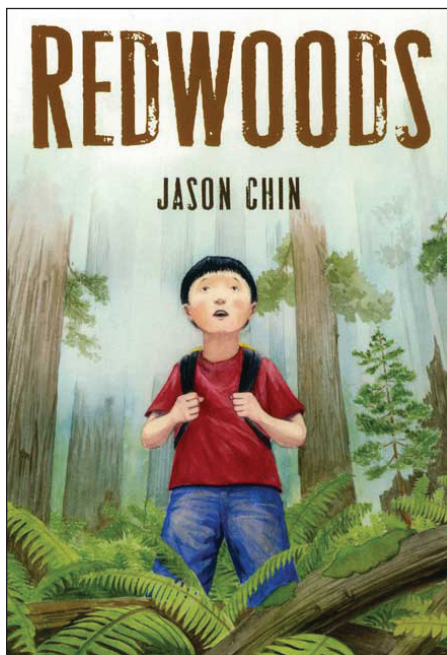
The answer of course is gravity. Sparse text and eye-catching illustrations will prompt readers to pause and ponder the world around them.

Questions to Check Comprehension of *Gravity*

1. What object(s) did you see throughout the book? Why were they there?
2. What would happen if gravity didn't exist?
3. How does gravity affect the sun, moon, and earth?
4. What interesting fact did you learn from the back of the book?
5. Why do you think Jason Chin wrote the text so that sometimes only one or two words were on a page and other times the print looked different?



A NEAL PORTER BOOK / Roaring Brook Press
978-1-59643-717-3 • \$16.99



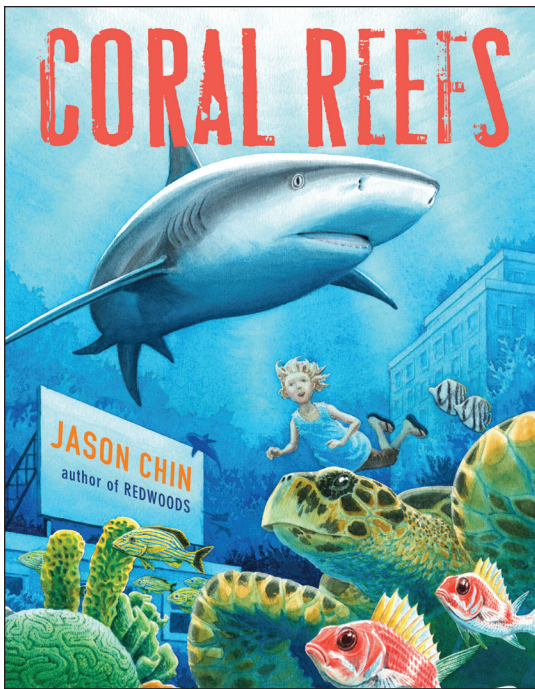
A NEAL PORTER BOOK / Roaring Brook Press
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REDWOODS

After a young boy finds an abandoned book about redwoods sitting on a bench, he is transported to Northern California where he learns more about the giant trees while being immersed in the rain forest environment. *Redwoods* is jam-packed with interesting and accurate information about these great natural wonders. Chin couples informational text with beautifully detailed illustrations in a book designed to stand as tall as the redwoods it explores.

Questions to Check Comprehension of *Redwoods*

1. At the beginning of the story, why are there dinosaurs outside the subway window and men from the Roman Empire sitting next to the boy?
2. Why are the redwoods located in a rain forest?
3. How do researchers climb the redwood trees?
4. What are some of the animals that scientists have found living in the redwood canopy?
5. Why do you think there is a squirrel in the illustrations?



A NEAL PORTER BOOK / Roaring Brook Press
978-1-59643-563-6 • \$16.99

CORAL REEFS

During an ordinary visit to the library, a girl pulls a not-so-ordinary book about coral reefs from the shelves. As she turns the pages, the girl is suddenly swept into the sea and is surrounded by coral cities that contain the mysterious plants and animals that live, hunt, and hide there. The straightforward nonfiction text is extended by Chin's fanciful illustrations that appeal to the imagination and extend readers' knowledge about coral reefs. Additional information about the threat to coral reefs and what readers can do to help, provide an instructive conclusion to this innovative book.

Questions to Check Comprehension of *Coral Reefs*

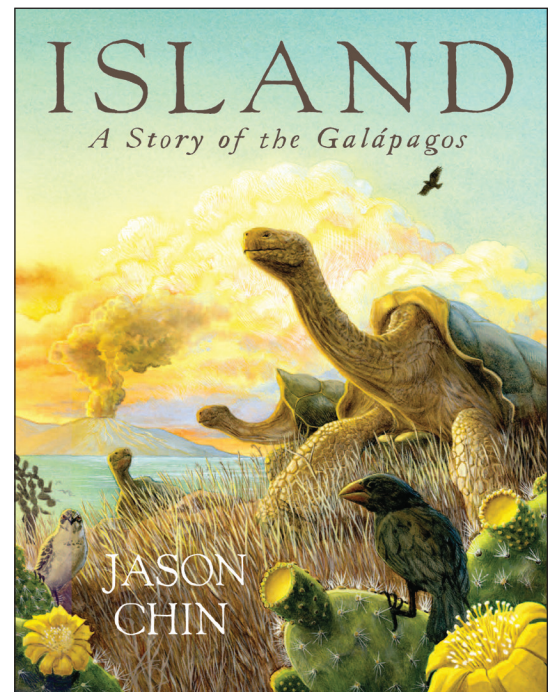
1. Why do you think that reefs are called "the cities of the sea"?
2. What kinds of animals are found living in the coral cities?
3. Why do the frogfish and common octopus change color?
4. What are some things that you can do to help the coral reefs?
5. What was the most interesting information you learned from *Coral Reefs*?

ISLAND: A STORY OF THE GALÁPAGOS

Charles Darwin first visited the Galápagos Islands almost 200 years ago, only to discover a land filled with plants and animals that could not be found anywhere else on earth. How did they come to inhabit the island? How long will they remain? Jason Chin incorporates meticulous research with vivid, colorful artwork to chronicle the life of an island—born of fire, rising to greatness, its decline, and finally the emergence of life on new islands. This engaging book features a dynamic balance between sophisticated concepts and readable text. Intriguing endpapers and additional information about Darwin and the Galápagos Islands make this a remarkable picture book for older readers.

Questions to Check Comprehension of *Island: A Story of the Galápagos*

1. How were the islands formed?
2. How did plants and animals come to live on the island?
3. Why did animal characteristics such as the seagulls' eyes or the tortoises' shell change over time?
4. Who was Charles Darwin and what did he do?
5. What is unique about the Galápagos Islands?



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COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

Notice & Note: Before students begin reading, have them examine the book jacket, read the title, and explore the endpapers. Then ask the following questions:

- What type of book do you think this might be?
- What do you think you might learn from this book?
- Why do you think that you will learn that information?

Give One, Get One: Form two columns and write “Give One” at the top of the left-hand column and “Get One” on top of the right-hand column. Divide the students into two groups. Ask the first group to brainstorm all the things they know about the subject matter of the selected title and record their answers on the “Give One” portion of the paper. Then have the other group of students provide additional information which they have researched on the “Get One” side of the paper.

Word Wave: Select eight to ten descriptive words and/or scientific terms from one of Jason Chin’s books that might be unfamiliar to students. Then write a sentence for each word to share with students that will assist them in not only learning the word but also understanding what it means.

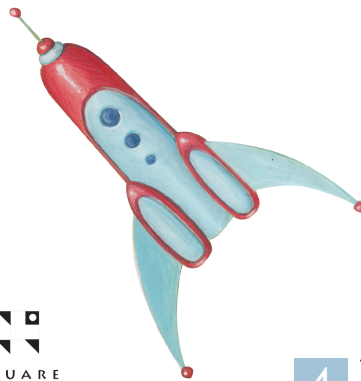
Fact or Fantasy?: Have students conduct a picture walk through each title and identify what things or events are fact and which are fantasy, and why.

Anticipation Guide: Activate and assess students’ prior knowledge and stimulate their interest in the book by:

- Identifying major concepts from the reading.
- Determining ways these concepts might support or challenge students’ beliefs.
- Creating three or four statements about the topic that address important points, concepts, ideas, and misconceptions.
- Sharing the guide with students. Have them respond to each statement, formulate a response to it, and prepare to defend their opinion.
- Discussing each statement with the class and having them indicate if they agree or disagree with each statement.

Closer Look: After examining the first four pages of the book have students select one of the objects depicted in the illustration. Then as they read the book, have them post a sticky note on each page that contains that object.

CCSS: RI K.5, K.7, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 2.4 2.5, 2.7, 3.4, 3.7



During Reading

Sticky Note Questions: As students read, have them write questions on sticky notes and place them on the page that generated their question. After they have finished reading, these questions can be discussed with another student or in small groups.

Pair Share: Pair students and have one be the “teller” and the other the “listener.” Read aloud one or more pages from one of Jason Chin’s books. The “teller” retells the information then the “listener” adds any important details that the “teller” omitted or corrects inaccurate information.

Think Aloud: Model this strategy for students by asking and responding to questions as the book is read aloud:

- What do I know about the subject ?
- What do I think I’ll learn?
- Do I understand what I just read on that page?
- What was the most important information on that page?
- How does this fit with what I have already read?

Questioning the Author: Have students construct meaning from the text by attempting to determine Chin’s purpose for writing the text and what he is trying to convey. Prompt students to ask as they read:

- “What is the author trying to tell you?”
- “Why is the author trying to tell you that?”
- “Is that expressed clearly?”

Think-Pair-Share: As students read, have them ask and/or write down questions from the text and illustrations. Next, pair them with another student to discuss each others questions. Finally, students share their thinking with a small group or the whole class.

Click or Clunk: At the end of each sentence have students stop and ask, “Did I understand this sentence?” If they did, then they say “Click” and continue reading. If not, then they say “Clunk” and reread the sentence and discuss it with another student to make sure they are comprehending the text.

CCSS: RI K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2, 1.8, 2.1, 2.8, 2.1, 3.1 3.8



After Reading

Exit Slips: Have students do one of the following:

- Write down one thing they learned.
- Write down one question generated from their reading.
- Sketch one connection they had from the book.

What's the Main Idea?: First have students write down the main idea of each title. Then have them list four details from each book that support their answers.

Compare and contrast: Provide other books or materials on each subject matter for students to read. Then ask them to compare and contrast Jason Chin's books using a Venn diagram or other graphic organizer to show their thinking.

Coding the Text: Have students return to the text using different colored sticky notes. Designate the following colors to indicate:

- Blue—two new vocabulary words
- Pink—two examples of new information
- Yellow—one or two examples of the main idea
- Green—two examples of information that sparked a question

Text Flow: Write down the sentences from the book on sentence strips, then have students read the sentences in order to support fluency. Next, have them reread the book so that the text flows smoothly as they read it aloud.

CCSS: RI K.3, 1.3, 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, 2.3, 2.6, 2.8, 2.9, 3.6, 3.9

Extension Strategy

Nonfiction Book Clubs:

Part One: Independent Reading: Students read Jason Chin's books for about 10 minutes (or however long is developmentally appropriate).

Part Two: Partner Reading: Students are formed into groups of four. Each child has an opportunity to be the expert and share what he or she has learned so far about their topic. As the other students in the group listen, they write down one thing they learned from the expert.

Part Three: Share: As a whole group, each student has a chance to share one thing they learned from their book club group.

PSR: This strategy encompasses before, during, and after reading strategies.

- *Before—Predict:* What will the text be about? Have students write down their predictions after examining the cover, endpapers, title page, and illustrations.
- *During—Support:* Give evidence from the text or personal experience. As students read the text, they can use sticky notes or a bookmark to record the evidence to support their prediction(s).
- *After—Reflect:* How does the text compare to your predictions? Students then write and/or orally share their predictions as well as findings.

Prompting the Reader: Write the following prompts on cards then have students respond to one or more of these prompts in pairs or in small groups while revisiting the text to support their response:

- I thought . . .
- I can't believe . . .
- I think the author . . .
- I wonder why . . .
- What if . . .
- I was surprised . . .
- It reminds me of . . .
- I like the way . . .

Author/Illustrator Study

Reading Jason Chin's books provides the perfect opportunity to conduct an author/illustrator study. Locate information about Chin on his website www.jasonchin.net to learn about his writing and art. Compare and contrast his four books to determine how he writes about his topics and illustrates them. In addition, students can respond to the following questions:

- What would you ask Jason Chin if you met him?
- Why do you think Chin wrote each book?
- What kind of research did Chin conduct to write and illustrate his book(s)?
- How does Jason Chin create his art?
- Why do you think Jason Chin's books contain informational text with imaginative illustrations?
- Would you read other books by Jason Chin? Why or why not?

CCSS: RI K.1, K.6, 1.1, 1.6, 1.8, 2.1, 2.6, 2.8, 3.1, 3.9



Guide was written by Cyndi Giorgies, a professor of children's and young adult literature at the University of Las Vegas, Nevada.