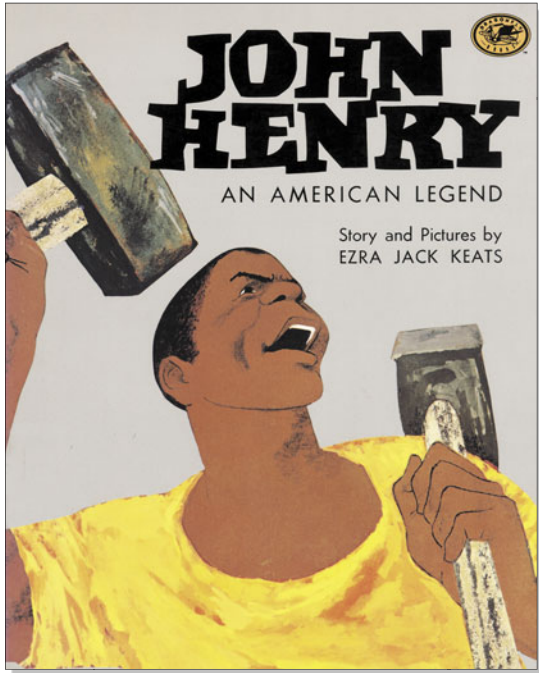


# John Henry



**T**his retelling of a classic American legend uses idioms and exaggeration to tell of John Henry’s amazing strength. He challenges a machine to a rock-drilling contest—and wins! The fine art of Ezra Jack Keats emphasizes the vitality of the story. *32 pages, 1196 words*

**Leveling Systems**

Avenues: ●● More Fluent Readers

DRA: 38

Fountas and Pinnell: P

Lexile: 520

**In This Guided Reading Lesson:**

**Skill Lessons:**

Background and Vocabulary	Read the Book	Respond to the Book	Comprehension/ Critical Thinking
<p><b>Speaker Words:</b> brag call out groan mumble shout whisper</p> <p><b>Story Words:</b> drill foreman frantic locomotive tame westward</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Spotlight STRATEGY</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Read Less Text</p>	<p><b>Storytelling:</b> Excerpt Read Aloud</p> <p><b>Identify Character Traits:</b> Trait Description</p>	<p>Make Comparisons <a href="#">(PDF)</a></p>

## Build Background

**Find World Extremes** Display the three books. Have volunteers identify which is the tallest, heaviest, or thickest. Help students start a list of questions using superlatives:

- What is the highest mountain in the world?
- What is the tallest building in the United States?
- What is the fastest animal in Africa?

Have partners research one question. Create a group chart:

World Extremes

Question	Answer	Details
What is the highest mountain in the world?	Mt. Everest	It is 29,035 feet high.

### Materials

- 3 books of different sizes
- encyclopedias (print or online)
- almanacs

## Build Vocabulary

**Use Speaker Words** Post the Key Vocabulary arranged from softest to loudest, for example: *whisper, mumble, brag, groan, call out, shout*. Explain: **These words tell how people sound when they talk.** Describe and model each word. For example, use a quiet voice to say: **When you whisper, you speak softly and quietly.**

Then write these sentences and have partners read them using the tones cued by the different speaker words: *"I am going to win," Jan \_\_\_\_\_.* *"No, you are not," Ami \_\_\_\_\_.*

**Same and Opposite** Introduce the Key Vocabulary. Then write these words on separate index cards: *fill, boss, wild, train, calmly,* and *eastward*. Distribute the cards to students. Ask: **Which word means the opposite of *tame*?** The student holds up the card for *wild*. Repeat the process to identify synonyms or antonyms for the remaining words.

### Key Vocabulary

brag  
call out  
groan  
mumble  
shout  
whisper

### Key Vocabulary

drill  
foreman  
frantic  
locomotive  
tame  
westward

# 1 Preview the Book

**Cover** A legend is a story that has been told for many years. Some legends are based on real people and events. Look for parts of John Henry's legend that might be true.

**Pages 4–7** One special night even the wind stopped its quiet **whispering**. Can wind really whisper? When a thing can do something like a person, it's called *personification*. Turn to page 6. John Henry was born with a hammer in his hand!

**Pages 8–9** Read aloud the first sentence. This sentence is long, but I can break it into shorter parts. Reread the sentence, pausing as noted: "As he grew up / he did a man's work / with his father." I can understand better when I read small groups of words.

**Pages 10–11** John Henry didn't want a **tame**, easy job. He worked on a riverboat. One night, the boat was in trouble. Point to John Henry. Brave John Henry saved everyone!

**Pages 12–15** Next he built railroad tracks **westward** from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Turn to page 14. At the mountain, the **foreman**, or boss, **called out** loudly for all the workers to hear. He told them to blast a tunnel big enough for a **locomotive**, or train, to pass through.

**Pages 16–19** How can we understand the first sentence on page 17 more easily? (read shorter parts, and then read them together) The tunnel fell! John Henry **groaned** in pain, but he saved everyone. Then he quietly **mumbled** for help.

**Pages 20–21** One day, a man brought a **drill** that made holes in rocks. He showed off and **bragged** that it worked faster than six men. John Henry agreed to race the drill.

**Pages 22–29** John Henry worked as fast as he could. The worried drill worker **frantically** put coal into his machine.

**Pages 30–31** Finally, John Henry won the race! Everyone **shouted** loudly. But the big man did not hear. He died the way he was born: with a hammer in his hand.



## 2 Read the Book

**Independent Reading** Have students read the book silently or to a partner. Observe as each student reads aloud.

- Use the **Good Reader Guide** on pages 7 and 8 to coach students as they read.
- **Spotlight Strategy: Read Less Text** Students may have comprehension breakdowns on pages with long sentences (pages 11, 12, 13, 15, 20, 21, 23, 24). Remind these students to reduce the amount they read by breaking sentences into smaller chunks.

## 3 Respond to the Book

**Storytelling** Have students choose their favorite part of the legend to read aloud. Encourage them to use the speaker words (shout, whisper, groan, call out, mumble, brag) as clues to what tone and expression to use. After the students read to the group, have the group tell which part they read especially well.

**Identify Character Traits** Explain: **You can tell what people are like from what they say or do.** Turn to page 8 and read aloud this sentence: **“John Henry thought, ‘I’m taller and stronger than anyone around.’”** These words show that John Henry believes in himself. He is a self-confident man.

Demonstrate recording the information in a T Chart. Then have groups work together to identify more dialogue and actions that demonstrate John Henry’s personality traits. Record their ideas on the group chart.

Have students choose a trait they share with John Henry and describe a time they demonstrated the trait. For example: *I am enthusiastic. I am always happy to try new things.*

### Materials

- T Chart from *Picture It! Big Book*, page 20

Answers will vary. Sample response:

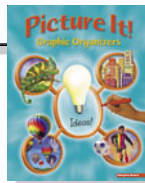
# T Chart

John Henry

John Henry is...	Words that show this:
self-confident	page 8: John Henry thought, "I'm taller and stronger than anyone around."
well-liked	page 11: A thunderous cheer went up for John Henry!
enthusiastic	page 13: "My hands are just itchin' to hold a hammer again."
brave	page 14: "It'll be awful dangerous." "That suits me fine."
cheerful	page 16: John Henry's singing echoed through the tunnel.
competitive	page 21: John Henry stepped forward. "Try me!"
tireless	page 24: John Henry ripped hole after hole into the tunnel wall.
quick	page 28: He moved so fast the men could see only a blur.

Use only a black dry-erase marker.

20



Picture It! Big Book, page 20

# from John Henry

Take a Running Record		Number of Errors	Number of Self-Corrections
page			
7	And John Henry was born, born with a hammer in his hand! "Bang! Bang! Bang!" rang little John Henry's hammer through the cabin, as he crawled about. "What's that rascal up to now?" his mother chuckled. And before she knew it, he was big enough to help her around the house.		
8	As he grew up, he did a man's work with his father. One day John Henry thought, "I'm taller and stronger than anyone around. It's time I went out into the world." He said goodbye to his mother and father, and off he went. He worked on farms and in cotton fields, but all that was too tame. So he got himself a job on a riverboat.		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>

**Assess Fluency**

**Student reads with appropriate:**

- expression
- intonation
- attention to punctuation
- rate
- phrasing

**Assess Strategy Use**

**Self-Monitors:**

- asks questions
- clarifies
- paraphrases
- uses visuals
- confirms word meaning
- uses punctuation clues
- uses signal words

**Self-Corrects:**

- asks questions
- rereads
- reads on
- searches for new clues
- adjusts reading rate
- translates
- reduces amount read

**Calculate Accuracy Rate**


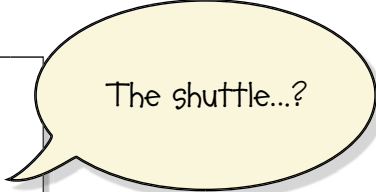

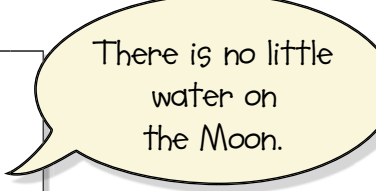
$$(118 \text{ words} - \frac{\text{total errors}}{\text{total errors}}) \div 118 \text{ words} = \text{ } \%$$

**Determine Instructional Needs**

<p><b>If Accuracy Rate Is</b> → <b>Then Have Student</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> below 90% read a lower-level text</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> between 90–94% continue at this level</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 95–100% read a higher-level text</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student needs more coaching in</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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# Good Reader Guide

Use these strategies to coach students as they read independently.

Text	Student Miscue	Coaching Strategies
The rocket is going very fast.	 <p>The rocket is gro... going very fast.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observe or ask questions to discover the strategies the student is using, identify the strategy by name, and praise student's use of it. Then have student read on.</li></ul>
The shuttle orbits the Earth.	 <p>The shuttle...?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prompt student to find clues in pictures and/or surrounding context.</li><li>• Encourage use of cognates and/or word families to guess a meaning. Have student try the guess in the sentence.</li><li>• If the word is phonetically regular, cover it and then reveal each syllable or letter pattern as student sounds out the word. Have student pronounce the word and try it in a rereading.</li><li>• Have student skip the word and read on.</li></ul>
No one has been to Mars.	 <p>Nobody has been to Mars.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ignore if the miscue does not affect comprehension.</li><li>• Validate student's strategic use of picture or context. Point out print cues, such as first letters. As student sees that spoken and printed words do not match, ask him or her to self-correct.</li></ul>
There is no liquid water on the Moon.	 <p>There is no little water on the Moon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct attention to pictures or other cues in the text. Ask questions to help student revise the first reading independently.</li><li>• Talk about pictures and context to make sure the word is in student's vocabulary. Then have student reread.</li></ul>

# Good Reader Guide

Use these strategies to coach students as they read independently.

Text	Student Miscue	Coaching Strategies
Craters look like dark circles when you look up at the Moon.	Craters look like dark when you look up at the Moon. <b>Skips important words</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repeat and ask: <b>Does it make sense?</b></li><li>• Read together; then have student start over.</li><li>• Have student track the print and sweep a finger to the next line.</li></ul>
There are mountains on the Moon.	There...are mountains...on...the... Moon <b>Reads slowly, word-by-word, without comprehension</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assign a book at an easier reading level, allowing student to build fluency and comprehension.</li><li>• Recall the book's topic and/or title. Ask questions to tie the ideas in the text to the ideas in the preview.</li><li>• Have student paraphrase small but meaningful chunks of text, relating it to own experience.</li></ul>
That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.	That's one small / step for / man, one / giant leap for / mankind <b>Reads aloud with poor phrasing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Highlight punctuation cues. Write out a section of the text. Demonstrate appropriate phrasing and help student mark the text to show how to group words. Then have student reread.</li><li>• Relate text to student's personal experience to help student read with appropriate expression.</li></ul>
The Moon is full tonight.	TheMoonisfulltonight <b>Reads quickly, without comprehension</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Model slowing down and pausing to ask yourself questions periodically. Encourage student to apply these strategies.</li></ul>
The Moon is Earth's only natural satellite.	? <b>Gets stuck; is unable to use any strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask questions to discover why student is stuck.</li><li>• Suggest strategies and supply words.</li></ul>