

### Guided Reading with **MY STEPS**

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illustrated by Adjoa J. Burrowes

#### **Realistic Fiction**

**Guided Reading™ :J**

32 pages, 711 words

**DRA: 18**

**Intervention: 18**

**Guided Reading Note:** Level J is the benchmark for the beginning of the second grade. Children reading at this level are moving into a fluent stage, and the focus emphasizes comprehension and independent reading. Most of the reading should be done silently. Children are encouraged to: 1) make connections between their own experiences and the story, 2) “get” the author’s message and be able to discuss it with other readers, and 3) apply their reading skills and strategies. Most importantly, children should feel confident and eager to read. This is a time to build fluency and independence as children read a variety of genres and develop a sense of reading for different purposes.

#### **Focus:**

- understanding the author’s message
- connecting personal experiences with a story
- reading with expression and fluency
- following a longer, more complex story
- drawing conclusions and making inferences

#### **Supportive Text Features:**

- familiar words and concepts
- narrative sentence and text form
- variety of sentence structures
- sequential events

#### **Essential Components of Reading Instruction:**

Phonics: initial /s/ consonant blends and digraphs

Vocabulary: swoosh, preacher, stoop, springtime, shivery-cool, stomach, crooked, crumpled, squint, cement, hydrant, Popsicle, muscle

Fluency: reread the story independently or with a partner

Comprehension: determine what is important, make connections, ask questions

**High-frequency Words:** these, are, my, all, of, them, one, two, I, can, up, from, and, down, on, a, people, by, the, then, but, you, go, to, so, look(ing), at, is, with, come(s), out, in, has, made, when, was, see, now, so, not, like, if, that, way, each, have, but, that, they, day(s), there, how, first, which, get(s), than, were, them

### Getting Ready to Read

1. Introduce the concept and vocabulary by asking open-ended questions:
  - Have you ever played on the steps of a building? Tell me what you might play on the steps to a porch, house, or building.
  - Where is your favorite place to play with friends?
  - What kinds of things do you like to pretend with your friends?
2. Connect children's past experiences with the story:
  - Call children's attention to the title. Read: "My Steps."
  - Ask children to use the title and picture on the cover to predict what might happen in the story.
  - Show the back cover and read the copy. Ask children to think about what makes playing on the girl's front steps so much fun.
  - Have children suggest some words they might read in the book.
  - Give children the book and have them look through it. Ask them to find some hints about pretending in the story.
3. Remind children of the strategies they know and can use with unfamiliar words:
  - Ask them, "What will you do if you come to a word you don't know?"
  - Encourage children to use known sound chunks to decode unknown words, and to read on, returning to the word after completing the sentence.
  - Tell children also to think about what they know about pretending and playing with friends. Then encourage them to choose a word that makes sense in the sentence.
4. Be aware of the following book and text features:
  - The book contains numerous high-frequency words and many other familiar words.
  - The story is written in first person narrative form.
  - The amount of text on each page and placement of text varies throughout the book.
  - The story events are sequential and real, and take place over an extended period of time.
  - The illustrations support and extend the story, but most of the meaning is contained in the text.

## Reading the Book

1. Set a purpose by telling children to read about a girl who loves to play on her front steps.
2. Have children read the story silently. Each child should be reading at his or her own pace. After the group has read a few pages, check for understanding with simple comments such as: “What is the story about?” or “Tell me how the story begins.” Then direct children to continue reading. As they read, watch for indications of comprehension: changes in facial expressions, giggles, audible comments, rereading, turning back to a page.
3. Look for these reading behaviors during children’s first reading:
  - Do they have a strong sight vocabulary?
  - Do they use known sound chunks to read unknown words?
  - Are they showing signs of understanding the story?
  - Are they monitoring meaning and rereading when they lose meaning?
  - How are they dealing with following a longer, more complex story? Do they easily move from page to page? Are they reading fluently?
  - Are they using punctuation to gain meaning?
  - Do they make accurate predictions?
  - Are they connecting the text to their own experiences?
  - Do they react to the text even though they are reading silently? Do they laugh? smile? frown?
4. As children read, note what they are doing. Help them build independence by being available, but not intervening too quickly. Watch for changes in children’s facial expressions and use these as signals to ask questions such as: “What made you smile?” or “Do you need some help?” Also encourage children’s attempts by making comments such as: “I like how you are reading,” or “That was a good strategy.”
5. Possible teaching points to address based on your observations:
  - Review how to find a known part or sound chunk in an unknown word.
  - Show children how to use analogies to move from the known to the unknown when encountering new words.
  - Review using grammar (syntax) to unlock words by considering the sentence structure or parts of speech in the sentence.
  - Model asking questions or making “I wonder . . .” statements to extend comprehension.
  - Review how to determine what is important in a story.
  - Talk with children about how the author used words like “swoosh” and “slivery-cool” to create a special feeling in the story.
  - Review using punctuation marks to guide the meaning-making process.
  - Talk with children about how to read “OneTwoThreeFourFive” on page 32.
  - Point out the dialogue on pages 6, 30, and 32, and the ellipses on page 32.

- Work with words from the story with initial /s/ consonant blends and digraphs: school, scrape, splash, stand, steps, stick, stomach, stone, stoop, strangers, street, sweep, swoosh; shadow, shady, shivery, shoes, shoots, shovel. Explore other words with these sounds.
- Model how to revisit the text to find specific examples or ideas in the story. Revisit MY STEPS to find examples of pretending in the story.

### After the First Reading

1. Have children confirm their predictions about what happened in the story.
2. Connect the story to children's experiences pretending and playing with their friends.
3. Call children's attention to how the step activities change with the seasons. Discuss the seasonal factors that influence the activities.
4. Have children take turns reading pages of the story aloud. Encourage them to read with expression and make their reading sound like the girl in the story is really talking.
5. Discuss why children who live in cities often play on their porch, stoop, or steps.
6. Compare the pretend playing in MY STEPS with the pretending in MUD TORTILLAS. How do the children's activities differ? How do the reactions of the grown-ups differ?

### Second Reading

1. Have children reread the book silently or to a partner, focusing on the science facts.
2. This is a time for assessment. While they are reading, watch what children do and what they use from the teaching time. Alternatively, you might take a running record on one child as an assessment of the child's reading behavior.

### Cross-Curricular Activities

**Art:** Many porch/stoop activities involve chalk. Give children "sidewalk chalk" and let them draw on the concrete outside. Encourage them to work together and create large pictures of real or imaginary, "pretend" things.

**Music:** Teach children the song "Oh Playmate, Come Out and Play With Me." The words, music, and hand clapping instructions for the song can be found at: [www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/playmate.htm#clapping](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/playmate.htm#clapping). Talk about how the events in the song are similar to and/or different from those in MY STEPS.

**Science:** Have children build a set of steps with blocks. Then give them a board to use as a ramp. Have them push and pull some toys or other objects up and down the ramp and steps. Talk about the purpose of steps and ramps. Where do

we see both steps and ramps? Which seem to make work easier? When would steps be more useful than a ramp? When would a ramp be better than steps?

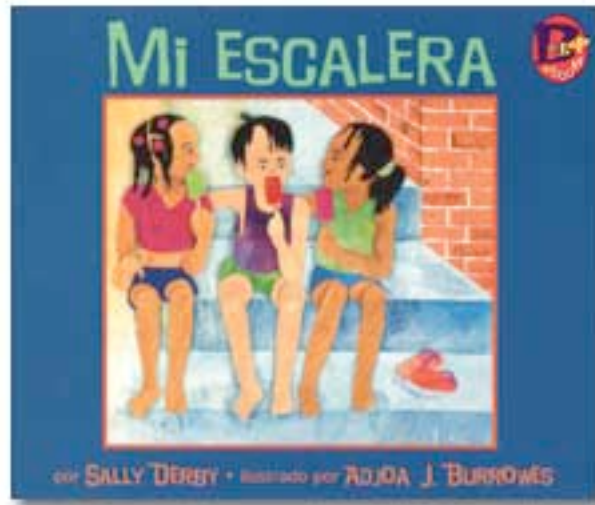
The story in MY STEPS takes place over several seasons. List the weather conditions for each season in the book and then compare them to the weather where children live. The seasons may be explored in more depth as part of a weather unit.

**Math:** The girl in the story has five steps in front of her house. If necessary, review counting by fives. Then give children a variety of small objects to count (beans, coins, buttons, marbles, pebbles, and so on). Have children divide the objects into groups of five and then count by fives. Children may also count the value of a pile of nickels by counting by fives.

**Social Studies:** In many communities, the front porch or stoop of a home is a place to gather and socialize. Elicit children's ideas about how this custom came about and why people regard the front porch as a very important part of the neighborhood.

If your school building has steps, let children make up some of their own games to play there.

**Writing:** Let children work independently to write their own stories about pretend games they like to play or games they play on the steps to their homes. Let volunteers read their stories with the class.



## Guided Reading with **MI ESCALERA**

**Guided Reading™ :J**  
24 pages, 756 words

**EDL/DRA:18**

**Intervention:18**

Level J is the benchmark for the beginning of the second grade. Children at this level are becoming fluent readers. All of the directions given for the introduction, first reading, and second reading of the English edition can be used with the Spanish edition of the book. The focus of the teacher's support should be on building confidence, fluency, and comprehension. This is a time for growing independence. To read the book successfully, children need the same kinds of support as their English-speaking classmates. Second language learners often benefit from acting out new words, seeing pictures, and talking about them using concrete examples.

The Spanish edition has many familiar words. The story is written in narrative style. If children do not know some of the words, present them with synonyms to help deepen their comprehension of the new words and the story. You may also use real objects to support their learning of new vocabulary.

Review with children the way dialogue is indicated and how exclamation points are used in written Spanish. Dashes are used to indicate dialogue and exclamation points are used at both the beginning and end of sentences. The marks appear "upside down" at the beginning of each sentence and "right side up" at the end.

Help children find a way to read the story with expression. Encourage them to read the words so they sound like the girl is talking.

The book language used may differ from children's oral language. Comparing any differences will help children read and understand the story. Also help children understand that we often speak differently than we write, and that both ways of using language are important.

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