

The Maze Craze



by Sally Stone

Book Summary

This book looks at the minotaur maze in ancient Greece, the huge hedge mazes of Hawaii and Hampton Court, and modern mirror and maize mazes.

Features of the Book

- Comparisons to convey meaning
- Maps
- Measurements
- Specialized vocabulary – *challenge, craze, hedge, image, maize, maze, reflections*

Word Study Opportunities

- Alliteration – *maize mazes, many mazes, minotaur maze, mirror mazes*
- Compound words – *everyone, sunblock*
- Initial blends “cr,” “pl,” and “st” – *craze, Crete; place, plants; star, stone*

Purpose

The Maze Craze can be used to introduce and reinforce the following standards-related skills:

- Ph S** identify the use of repetition, rhythm, rhyme, and alliteration in texts;
- S** using visual, structural, and meaning cues to read unknown words;
- S** making connections between own experiences and the text;
- S** understanding the author’s purpose;
- S** writing text that has a beginning, middle, and end.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Identify the use of repetition, rhythm, rhyme, and alliteration in texts
- S** Using visual, structural, and meaning cues to read unknown words
- S** Making connections between own experiences and the text

Materials needed

- A copy of the text for each child and one for the teacher
- A dry-erase board or chart paper and markers
- A world map or globe
- Optional: the blackline master and a pencil for each child

Introducing the text

Look at the cover of the book and read the title together.

- *What do you think this book is about?*
- *What do the words “maze” and “craze” mean?*
- *What is interesting about the title?*

Brainstorm what the children know about mazes and write their ideas on chart paper. Read the blurb on the back cover together.

Reading and discussing the text

This can be taken over two days. If your group can read the book with less support, adjust the lesson plan accordingly.

Day One

Discuss the contents page together. Write “Many Mazes,” “Minotaur Maze,” and “Mirror Mazes” on the board.

- *What do you notice about these chapter headings? (They all start with “m.”)*

Explain that this is called alliteration.

- *What is a “minotaur”? (illustration on page 7)*
- *What is “maize”? (photograph on page 28)*

Ask the children to read chapter 1 silently.

– *What can mazes be made from?*

Ask the children to read chapter 2 silently. Locate Greece and Crete on the map or globe.

– *How would you describe Theseus?*

– *What did he do with the string?*

– *How did this help him find his way out?*

Read the chapter heading on page 13 together.

– *What is a hedge?*

– *Why would hedges be good for making mazes?*

Ask the children to read chapter 3 silently. Find England and Hawaii on the map or globe.

– *Why were hedge mazes first built?*

Day Two

Ask the children to review what they have learned about mazes so far. Discuss strategies that they can use for reading unknown words (use the glossary; reread; think about which word would look right, sound right, and make sense).

Ask the children to read chapter 4 silently.

– *Why are mirror mazes easy to get lost in?*

– *How is the Chicago maze different from others you have read about?*

Write “Maize Mazes” on the board.

– *What do you notice about these words?*

Explain that words that sound the same but have a different meaning are called homophones.

Ask the children to read the rest of the book independently.

– *What problems do people sometimes have in mazes?*

– *How can these problems be solved? (by using maps and having people who will find you if you get lost)*

Revisiting the Text

The activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson or during later reading sessions as mini-lessons or individual activities.

S Understanding the author’s purpose

– *Why do you think the author wrote this book?*

– *Why do you think she included a story in a nonfiction book?*

– *What did you like most about this book?*

– *What would you change?*

– *How do you think the author would feel about your changes?*

Encourage the children to discuss these questions in pairs, then to report back to the group.

Ph S Identify the use of repetition, rhythm, rhyme, and alliteration in texts

Write “The Maze Craze” on the board.

– *Why do you think the author chose this title?*

– *Do you like it? Why?*

Write the chapter headings “Many Mazes,” “The Minotaur Maze,” “Mirror Mazes,” and “Maize Mazes” on the board.

– *Why do you think the author chose these chapter headings?*

Encourage the children to think of other examples of alliteration or rhyme using the word “maze” (mini mazes, magic mazes, amazing mazes, she plays in the maze).

S Writing text that has a beginning, middle, and end

Look at the illustrations in chapter 2 together. Ask the children to retell the story to a partner, making sure that their retelling includes a beginning, middle, and end. Invite the children to retell the story to the group or another child in the class.

B The children can complete the blackline master on page 86.