

Homeschooling Twinadoes Language Arts

First Grade Instructor Manual

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Week 1: *Sheila Rae, the Brave* by Kevin Henkes

Overview

Week 1 serves as our introduction to many aspects of language arts:

- While reading together, you'll help your child to notice their thinking about the story, to discuss their ideas, and to document and develop their ideas in pictures or writing.
- You'll introduce the concept of grammar and teach your child to identify and come up with nouns.
- You'll talk about how illustrators make choices when creating pictures for a story and how those choices can create feelings in us as readers, and you'll have your child look closely at the illustrations in *Sheila Rae, the Brave* to understand the story more deeply.
- You'll ease into writing with some basic fill-in-the-blanks that relate to the book's theme and check your child's comprehension of one of the week's vocabulary words.
- You'll also introduce four new words, discussing and interacting with them to develop your child's understanding of their meaning: *convince*, *dash*, *frightening*, and *familiar*.

Additional Materials Needed

- Sidewalk chalk (optional)
- Lunchbox or lunch bag
- Stick pretzels (could also use easily broken sticks, candy canes, some other hard candy or snack that breaks easily, two markers stuck together, etc.)
- Sticky notes or a piece each of red and green paper

Lesson 1

Reading Together

Whenever you read together, be sure that you read the title, author's name, and the illustrator's name when the illustrator is someone other than the author. Pause on both the front cover and the title page to examine the pictures.

Before reading:

- Look at the title and cover of the book. **Let's look at the cover of the book.** (Point to the title.) **The title is *Sheila Rae the Brave*.**
 - **What do you notice on this cover?**
- Discuss bravery.
 - **What do you think it means to be brave?**
 - **How can you tell if another person is brave?**
 - **How can you tell if you're brave?**

As you read:

- Stop to demonstrate your thinking about the story. The goal here is for your child to become aware of their thinking while reading, so what you share can be any thought that is authentic to you. For example, you might note that something Sheila Rae isn't afraid of is something you're afraid or not afraid of. You might share a story that something in the book reminds you of. You may comment on something you notice in the pictures or the text that is giving you more information about the story or the characters. You might note your reaction to an event in the book or a question you have while reading.
- Whenever you read, pause to create moments for contemplation. A great way to do this is to just not turn the page right away. Instead, take a few extra seconds to examine the illustrations and allow space for your child to share their reactions to the story. You can take as long as you need here to discuss the ideas that come up.

After reading:

- Have your student draw and/or write on page 2 of the Student Notebook.
 - **Write your thoughts about the story. Don't worry about retelling what happened in the story. Here you can draw or write anything that came to mind while you were reading: stories from your life or other things you've read that the story made you think about, your reactions to the story or thoughts about the story or the pictures, anything you were thinking about while we read.**
- Ask your student to share what they've written. If they primarily drew pictures, you might ask them if they'd like you to add any text to the drawing to make their

thinking clearer. Ask additional questions about what they've drawn to encourage them to think and explain more deeply. Some suggestions include:

- Why do you think that?
- Can you explain more about [something they mentioned briefly]?
- What in the story made you think of this?

Grammar

Read *DK Visual Guide to Grammar and Punctuation*, p. 8 “What is grammar?” and p. 12-13 “Nouns”.

Finding Nouns in the Text:

There are two options for completing this exercise:

1. **Student Notebook:** Draw a sidewalk on page 3 of the Student Notebook and fill each of the squares with common nouns found in the text.
2. **Take it Outside!** Do this activity on your own sidewalk (or driveway or patio – whatever you have to write on) with sidewalk chalk. Take a picture of your child's work to print and glue into the Student Notebook.

Look back through the beginning of the book at all the things that Sheila Rae isn't afraid of. The names of most of these are nouns! How many nouns can you find in the text?

Your child may write or draw for this exercise, depending on their preference and abilities.

You may want to read page by page, pausing between page turns to ask your child what nouns they heard and letting them add the nouns to their notebook/the sidewalk. Encourage them to write down what they're hearing or seeing in the text specifically, since you'll be looking more closely at illustrations tomorrow.

Lesson 2

Grammar

Scavenger Hunt for Nouns Around the House:

Get Moving! Use a lunchbox or other similar small box and pretend it's Sheila Rae's lunchbox. Prep some small pieces of paper for your child to write on and place in the lunchbox.

- Start by reviewing the common nouns you found in *Sheila Rae the Brave* during Lesson 1.
- **Today, we're going to fill Sheila Rae's lunchbox with common nouns. Let's look around the house to think of the names of some nouns.**
- As you find nouns around the house, write the words on small pieces of paper and add them to the lunchbox.

Vocabulary

Learn the Word "Convince":

When Sheila Rae was lost and scared, she tried to convince herself to feel brave.

When you *convince* someone, you get them to think or believe the same thing you do. Say that word with me: *convince*.

When you want to play tag or hide-and-seek on the playground, you try to convince the other kids it's a good idea to play. If your best friend loves cats, they might try to convince you that cats are the best pets in the world.

If you want to go to the library, you would need to convince your grown up to take you. Why? Can you think of other times you need to convince someone?

What's the word for when you try to get someone to think or believe the same thing you do? *Convince*.

Learn the word "Dash":

As soon as Sheila Rae could see her house at the end of the story, she *dashed* up the street with Louise.

***Dashing* is kind of like running, but when you *dash*, you're running very quickly and suddenly. Say the word with me: *dash*.**

If I forgot to set a timer for the cake, I might smell smoke and dash to the kitchen to take the cake out of the oven. If you're running late to get somewhere, you might dash to the car.

Can you think of another time you would need to dash? Explain why you need to dash, and then dash off (across the room).

What's the word for when you're running quickly and suddenly? *Dash*.

Writing

Finish the sentences on page 4 of the Student Notebook by filling in the blanks.

Lesson 3

Reading Together

During this lesson, you'll re-read *Sheila Rae the Brave*, focusing on the illustrations to more deeply understand the story.

Before reading:

- **When an author writes a story, they make choices about how to tell the story. In the same way, an illustrator of a story makes choices about the artwork for a picture book. We can't know what the author or illustrator was thinking when they decided to write or draw something a certain way, but we can talk about what effect their choices have on us – how we think of the story and illustrations or how they make us feel.**
- **Let's read *Sheila Rae the Brave* again and take a closer look at how it's illustrated.**

As you read:

- Take time to notice the illustrations and what else we learn from them that isn't written in the text. Particularly point out what Sheila Rae's sister, Lousie, is doing throughout the story.
- Cover:
 - **What do you think is going on in this picture? What do you see in the picture that makes you say that?**
 - Look at the title. **How would you describe what these letters look like?**
- Title Page:
 - **This is the title page.**
 - **What's going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that? What more can you find?**
 - **Why do you think Sheila Rae's bear is on this page?**
- Story:
 - **Notice the shape of the illustrations. Some are square and some are rectangular. Why do you think that is?**
 - **What kind of feeling does that give you?**
- Last page:
 - Pause on the last page. **What do you notice about this picture?**
 - Allow your child to bring up the circle shape at the end, or mention it to them if they don't. **Why do you think this illustration is a circle instead of a square or rectangle?**

After reading:

- Discuss bravery again:

- **Was Sheila Rae’s bravery what you expected?**
- **How do you think Sheila Rae would describe what it means to be brave?**
- **Do you think Sheila Rae is brave? Do you think Louise is brave? Why or why not?**
- **How would you describe bravery?**
- **Return to what your child wrote in their Student Notebook. Is there anything you would add to these thoughts now that we’ve read the book again?**

Vocabulary

Learn the Word “Frightening”:

After Sheila Rae realizes she’s lost, she listens to the noises around her and finds them *frightening*.

When something is *frightening*, it might make you feel scared, anxious, or nervous. Say that word with me: *frightening*.

Different people often find different things frightening. Some kids think a really tall, steep slide is frightening. Having to cross a busy street with lots of fast moving cars could also be frightening.

Note: The nuance that is tricky here is that this isn’t just scary. Something that makes you really nervous can also be frightening.

Make it Hands-On! Play “Snap the Stick.”

You will need: stick pretzels (could also use easily broken sticks, candy canes, some other hard candy or snack that breaks easily, two markers stuck together, etc.)

Sheila Rae imagined the trees were monsters, but she wasn’t afraid of them, and she broke their fingers off. We’re going to pretend these pretzels are sticks for a game and break them just like Sheila Rae did.

I’m going to name some items and actions one at a time. If you don’t think what I say is frightening, break the stick. If you think what I say is frightening, don’t break the stick.

(As your student answers, ask them why they think the thing is frightening or not frightening. Answers will vary, and some children may think things are scary that others don’t. Make this a discussion with your child and share your own thoughts after they’ve shared theirs.)

- **Standing on the edge of a tall cliff**

- Playing ball at the park
- A puppy
- A tyrannosaurus rex
- Popping a balloon
- Smelling a flower

What else can you think of that you find frightening? Why do you think it's frightening?

What's the word for something that makes you feel scared, anxious, or nervous? *Frightening.*

Learn the Word "Familiar":

When Sheila Rae gets lost on her walk, suddenly nothing around her looks *familiar*. *Familiar* means something or someone you know well. Say that word with me: *familiar.*

Your toys are familiar to you, but your friend's toys might not be. Your friends are familiar to you, but a new kid you meet at the park isn't.

Make it Hands-On! Continue playing "Snap the Stick" using this new vocabulary word.

If what I say is familiar to you, break the stick. If what I say isn't familiar, don't snap the stick.

Which of these things might be *familiar* to you? Why or why not?

- The library in your town
- A Chinese New Year celebration
- Watching your favorite show
- Your friend's pet
- A fancy shirt

What's the word that means you know something well? *Familiar.*

Lesson 4

Vocabulary Review & Synthesis

Get Moving! Play “Yes/No”:

You will need: sticky notes or a piece each of red and green paper

Today we’re going to play a game to review the vocabulary words we’ve learned this week.

Pick a “yes” spot and a “no” spot on the floor. Mark them with sticky notes or red/green paper if you like.

I’m going to read a sentence that uses one of our new vocabulary words. If the sentence makes sense, jump to the “yes” spot. If the sentence doesn’t make sense, jump to the “no” spot. Once you jump there, tell me why you picked “yes” or “no.”

- **I wanted to convince my mom to buy me the toy.** (yes)
- **Susie was feeling exhausted, so she dashed to her bed.** (no)
- **I’ve never been to Arkansas, so I’m very familiar with it.** (no)
- **Henry finds coyotes quite frightening.** (yes)

Grammar

Finding Nouns in the Illustrations:

Look at the illustration where it first occurs to Sheila Rae that she doesn’t know where she is. How many nouns can you come up with from the things, animals, and people in the illustration?

Look at the illustration of Sheila Rae and Louise’s yard at the end of the book. How many nouns can you come up with that name the things, animals, and people in the illustration?