

Guided Reading with

## MY STEPS

*Guided Reading: K*

*DRA: 20*

*Intervention: 19*

written by Sally Derby

illustrated by Adjoa J. Burrowes

**Overview:** In this award-winning story, a young African American girl uses her imagination when playing on her front steps. Of all the fun places her steps take her to, they always lead her back home.

32 pages, 711 words

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Focus:**

- understanding the author’s message
- connecting personal experiences / background knowledge 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

**Phonics:**

- initial /s/ consonant blends and digraphs

**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*

**Common Core Standards**

- R.1, R.2, R.4, R.7
- RF.1, RF.2, RF.3, RF.4
- W.1, W.2, W.3
- SL.1, SL.2, SL.4
- L.1, L.4

**ELL/ESL**

*Mi escalera*

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### 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 apartment 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 book vocabulary:

- Hold the book. Call children’s attention to the title. Read: “*My Steps.*”
- Ask children to use the title and picture on the cover to predict what they would expect to read about 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 story.



- 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 look for chunks of words they know and to blend the sounds quickly.
- Suggest that children read on past an unfamiliar word in order to use the context of the story to unlock the meaning of the word. Encourage children to return to the word after completing the sentence or section.
- Tell children 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 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 vary 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 text, but most of the meaning is contained in the text.

**Guided Reading Note:** Children reading at level K are becoming more fluent, and the focus emphasizes comprehension and independent reading. Most of the reading should be done silently. Children are also encouraged to: 1) independently apply their reading skills and strategies, 2) make connections between their own experiences and the story, and 3) "get" the author's message and be able to discuss it with other readers. 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.

## 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. Listen to children as they read by leaning close or bending down beside each child. After the group has read a few pages, check for understanding with simple questions such as: "What is the story about?" or "Tell me how the story begins." Then direct them to continue reading. As they read, watch for indications of comprehension: changes in facial expressions, giggles, audible comments, rereading, turning back to a page.



You may want to make notations about what you notice.

### 3. Look for these reading behaviors during the first reading:

- Do they rely on the print while 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 signals to ask questions, such as: "What made you smile?" or "Where do you need some help?"

- Encourage children's attempts by making comments such as: "I like how you are using a different strategy when the first one you tried didn't work."
- If children are struggling with deciding which strategy to use, suggest a specific strategy that would help them get meaning in the most efficient way, such as, "Did you think about chunking the word?"

### 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.
- Review how to determine what is important in a sentence or story.
- Model asking questions or making "I wonder..." statements to extend comprehension.
- 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 compare and confirm their predictions with what actually happened in the story.**
- 2. Ask children if they had difficulty with any words or ideas, and what specific strategies they used to make sense of the story.** Encourage children to be specific about showing the parts that gave them trouble and telling how they went about sorting things out.
- 3. Connect the story to children's own experiences with pretending and playing with their friends.**
- 4. Call children's attention to how the step activities change with the seasons.** Discuss the seasonal factors that influence the activities. How does the girl adapt to each season?
- 5. Ask children to talk about anything that surprised them or was a new piece of information that they didn't know before they read the story.**

**6. 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.

**7. Discuss why children who live in cities often play on their porch, stoop, or steps.**

**8. Compare the pretend playing in MY STEPS with the pretending in MUD TORTILLAS**

(<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/2619>)

and **ELIZABETHI'S DOLL**

(<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/2387>).

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.**
- 2. This is a time for assessment.** Keeping notes on children's progress during a guided reading session will be a helpful resource for giving children on-going feedback about themselves as readers as well as helping you record how they develop over time.
  - While they are reading, watch what children do and what they use from the teaching time.
  - You might also take a running record on one child as an assessment of the child's reading behavior.



- You might also listen in on each individual reader, observing as children use appropriate or inappropriate strategies. This information will be valuable for any additional strategy discussions after the second reading.

### Cross-Curricular Activities

**Art:** Many porch/stoop activities involve chalk. Give children “sidewalk chalk” and let them draw on the concrete or asphalt 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: [http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/games/songs/childrens/oh\\_playmatemp3.htm](http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/games/songs/childrens/oh_playmatemp3.htm). 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?

**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 fives 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 or campus has steps, let children make up some of their own games to play there.

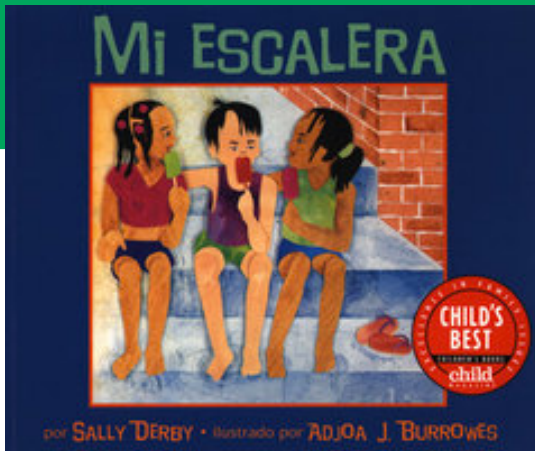
**Writing:** Let children work independently to write their own stories about pretend games they like to play or games they play on the steps to their homes. Let volunteers read their stories with the class.

Have children go home and observe what they can see from their front door of their house or apartment building. Alternatively, children can observe what they can see from an entrance at school. In a paragraph, children should describe all that they can see just from their front door or entryway.

In a letter to the main character, children can describe their favorite game to play and provide reasons why they recommend the girl plays that game or activity on her front steps the next time she is outside.



## BEBOP CLASSROOM CONNECTION



*Guided Reading: J*  
*EDL/DRA: 18*  
*Intervention: 18*

Guided Reading with

# MI ESCALERA

Level J is the benchmark for the beginning of the second grade. Children at this level are becoming fluent readers. All 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 comprehension, fluency, and confidence. 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 children's comprehension of the new words and the story. You may also use real objects to support the 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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Mi escalera

Guided Reading Level: J

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