

FOR VISUAL READERS
TOON BOOKS®

**Benjamin Bear
 in Bright Ideas!**

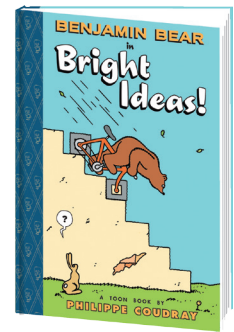
by *Philippe Coudray*

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Guided Reading Level = M

Lexile Level = BR

by Amy Lee,
 Educational Outreach



ELA COMMON CORE STANDARDS

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS	
Who is Benjamin Bear? How would you describe him to someone who doesn't know who he is?	RL.1.1, RL.2.1
What happens in a typical Benjamin Bear story?	
Have students retell one of the Benjamin Bear stories in their own words.	RL.1.2, RL.2.2
Have students explain a Benjamin Bear story panel by panel in their own words.	
In "A Good Night's Sleep" (page 22), why does Benjamin decide to sleep under the hammock? How does he know leaves will fall?	RL.1.3, RL.2.3
In "The Crossing" Benjamin sees the rabbit in the first panel. Why does he decide to build a bridge?	

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS	
In "Ringleader" (page 26), how can you tell who the leader is? Describe the different Saturn aliens.	RL.1.7, RL.2.7
Benjamin Bear is very big and strong compared to other animals in the story. When does his size and strength come in handy? How does he use them to solve problems smaller animals can't solve?	
A number of Benjamin Bear stories deal with crossing a river. What are some of the different ways Benjamin does this?	RL.1.9, RL.2.9
In "A Good Night's Sleep" (page 22) and "Two for One" (page 23) Benjamin deals with a similar problem. What is the problem? How is the problem the same in both stories? How is it different?	

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE	
Why does Benjamin say "oops" in "All tied up" (page 28)? Use details from the story to support your reasoning.	RL.1.4, RL.2.4
In "Sharing" (page 7), the rabbit and the hedgehog both say the ball is "MINE." When Benjamin shows up, they both say it's "his." What changed?	
In "Bird-watching" (page 30), Benjamin answers the question "How do birds feed their babies?" with a window showing "the whole story." Discuss with students how birds actually feed their young.	RL.1.5, RI 1.5, RL.2.5
Have students pick any of the stories and then have them name the problem, the solution, and how Benjamin gets from one to the other.	
Explain to students how speech balloons work. In "A gift for you" (page 29), what do Benjamin and his friend say out loud? What are they thinking?	RL.1.6, RL.2.6
Split students into groups of two and have them read aloud any story that has just Benjamin and the rabbit. Then switch off.	

SPEAKING AND LISTENING / WRITING	
Have students retell any of the stories in the book, using their own words to describe what happens. Could these stories have been in any other form than comics? Have students create their own Benjamin Bear comics.	SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.4, SL.1.6 SL.2.1, SL.2.3, SL.2.4, SL.2.6
Have students explain which Benjamin Bear story is their favorite and why. Have them write an alternate ending to it.	W.1.2, W.2.2, W.1.5, W.2.5
Have students exchange their ideas and comment on each others work. Allow them the opportunity to revise their work afterwards.	



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Lesson Plan for *Benjamin Bear in Bright Ideas!*

by Philippe Coudray

BY ALEXA ROSSELLI

Overview	<i>Benjamin Bear in Bright Ideas</i> is a great book for students to explore Reader's Theatre for the first time. Rather than having to perform a whole story, students can perform just a single page. Most pages have just one or two characters. By focusing on presenting the main idea of each page, students will have to read closely to understand what the facial expressions mean, why something is funny, and how to recreate it.
Subject	English Language Arts
Grade Level	K-2nd grade
Suggested Time	45 minutes
Materials	Pens, pencils, notebook paper.
Objectives	Students will learn about and practice visualization by stopping and jotting while reading. They will listen to a pictureless read aloud and focus on visualization.
Before Reading:	Introduce students to the concept of Reader's Theatre. Reader's Theater is a specific integrated performance strategy where students read aloud from a text or a script based on a text and the audience imagines the narrative coming to life from hearing the words aloud. Performers use their body language, voice, facial expressions, and movement to bring the words alive. Getting ready for a performance requires all the performers to develop fluency in their reading and an understanding of the text—including character development and relationships, rising action/ climax/ and falling action, and writing techniques the author uses to convey messages.
Reading:	<p>Begin by doing a read aloud of <i>Benjamin Bear and Bright Ideas</i> for the whole class. Give students time to laugh and enjoy each page before moving on. At the end of the read aloud, explain to students that they, in partners, will be performing one page from the story for the whole class. Assign partners, and then assign specific pages. If students have specific requests, honor them. This exercise should be fun. Run off a copy of each page of the book that is assigned for Reader's Theatre, and make sure each student has a copy of the page he or she is performing.</p> <p>In their pairs, have students practice performing their page. How can they bring this to life? What props do they need, if any? Can they pretend to have things that they do not have? What do the characters say? How do they feel? Pay special attention to facial expressions. If students do not understand how a character feels, or how it affects the scene, encourage them to ask for your assistance.</p> <p>Also, this is a funny book. Many pages contain unexpected twists in logic that amuse the reader. Encourage students to try and identify what is funny about their scene, and really bring that to life in their performances.</p>
Performance	<p>If you have an audience attending, seat them. Draw the order of the performances with the cold call popsicle sticks.</p> <p>Each scene should take just a minute or two, but remember, the goal of Reader's Theater is to help students read more fluently. Make sure you allow plenty of time for students to perform at their own paces.</p>

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