**Lesson 1 Teacher's Guide**

**My Teacher, My Dad**
by Dixie Lee Petrokis

Fountas-Pinnell Level J
Humorous Fiction

**Selection Summary**
When Alma's dad comes in to her classroom as a substitute teacher, he lets the class have fun all day. Alma is uncomfortable with all the fun, though. After she reminds her father that school is for learning, he returns the next day and shows the class that learning can be fun, too.

**Characteristics of the Text**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Humorous fiction</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Structure</td>
<td>Third person narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organized chronologically</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem presented on second page</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Substitute teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes and Ideas</td>
<td>Learning can be fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family members can have disagreements, but by talking they can solve problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Literary Features</td>
<td>Conversational language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Complexity</td>
<td>Some longer, more complex sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questions and exclamations in dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Feeling words, such as proud and worried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Words in the past tense, such as strolled, gasped, smiled, worried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>Humorous illustrations of a classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illustrations support the text, especially the emotions of the characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book and Print Features</td>
<td>Nine pages of text; illustrations on every page</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Captions for the illustrations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Use of italics for emphasis (Learning was fun!)</td>
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My Teacher, My Dad by Dixie Lee Petrokis

Build Background
Help students think about substitute teachers by asking questions such as the following:
What makes a good substitute teacher? What activities have different substitute teachers introduced to your class? Read the title and author and talk about the classroom activities shown on the cover illustration. Ask students to point out details on the cover that suggest this story is humorous fiction.

Introduce the Text
Guide students through the text, noting important ideas and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so they can read the text successfully. Here are some suggestions:

Page 3: Explain that this is a story about a girl named Alma and what happens when her father appears in her classroom as a substitute teacher.
Suggested language: Turn to page 3. Alma sees that her father is the substitute teacher. Look how he is dressed and look at the expression on Alma’s face. Read the last sentence: When Alma saw him, she felt a big lump in her throat. How do you think Alma feels? What might be the problem in this story?

Pages 5-6: Alma’s class was supposed to have a math test, but look at what Mr. Alvarez is having them do instead! How do you think class members feel about the change? Why?

Page 7: Point out the word in the caption: worried. Can you tell from the picture how Alma feels? Why might she be worried?

Pages 8-9: Draw attention to Alma and her dad in the illustrations. What do you think they could be talking about?

Page 10: Draw attention to the illustration. The next day at school, Alma felt proud of her dad. Why does Alma feel proud of her father? How can you tell? Why do you think her feelings have changed?
Now turn back to the beginning of the story and read to find out how Alma and her dad solve the classroom problem.

Target Vocabulary

announced – made known to many people

principal – the leader of a school, p. 2

strolled – walked slowly, without hurrying, p. 3

certainly – surely or definitely

proud – feeling pleased with yourself, p. 10

worried – feeling concerned about something bad that may happen, p. 3

fine – very nice, or of excellent quality

soared – an animal or object flew up toward the sky
Read
As the students read, observe them carefully. Guide them as needed, using language that supports their problem solving ability.

Remind students to use the Summarize Strategy and to tell important parts of the text in their own words.

Discuss and Revisit the Text

Personal Response
Invite students to share their personal responses to the story. Would you like Alma’s dad to teach your class? Why or why not?

Ways of Thinking
As you discuss the text, help students understand these points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Within the Text</th>
<th>Thinking Beyond the Text</th>
<th>Thinking About the Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Alma is worried when her dad comes to her class to teach wearing a funny outfit.</td>
<td>• School cannot just be games, but learning can be fun.</td>
<td>• The dialogue in the story sounds very realistic, the way children really talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The class likes the fun things Mr. Alvarez does with them, but Alma tells him her class needs to learn, too.</td>
<td>• Problems can be solved by talking.</td>
<td>• Captions help explain the story illustrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The next day, Mr. Alvarez comes to school dressed like a teacher.</td>
<td>• By the end of the day, everyone agrees that learning can be fun.</td>
<td>• The author’s attitude is that problems can be solved when people listen to each other thoughtfully.</td>
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</table>


Choices For Further Support
• **Fluency** Invite students to choose a passage from the text to read aloud. Remind them to pay attention to punctuation to help them read with expression.

• **Comprehension** Based on your observations of the students’ reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind students to go back to the text to support their ideas.

• **Phonics/Word Work** Provide practice as needed with words and word parts, using examples from the text. Remind students that many words in the story have the inflectional ending –ed. For example, in the sentence, Then a new teacher strolled into the room, the ending –ed has been added to the word stroll, to show it happened in the past. Have students make a list of story words ending with –ed. Ask them to write the base word for each.
Writing about Reading

Critical Thinking
Have students complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 1.7.

Responding
Have students complete the activities at the back of the book. Use the instruction below as needed to reinforce or extend understanding of the comprehension skill.

Target Comprehension Skill

Story Structure  
Remind students that they can think about a problem a character has by looking at what happens in the story. Model the skill, using this Think Aloud:

Think Aloud
Alma has a problem. Her father is a fun teacher, but she and her classmates aren’t learning anything. How can she solve that problem? On page 9, Alma and her dad sit on the front steps and talk. By the end of the story, Alma and her dad have solved their problem.

Practice the Skill
Write two sentences about Mr. Alvarez’s problem and how he solves it.

Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text
Have students write a response to the prompt on page 6. Remind them that when they think beyond the text, they use what they know and their own experience to think about what happens in the story.

Assessment Prompts
• Find the sentence on page 5 that shows why Alma’s dad made the classroom so much fun.
• Tell one word to describe the relationship between Alma and her dad.
• Complete this sentence in your own words: At the end of the story, the reader can probably tell that Alma
English Language Development

Reading Support Make sure the text matches the student’s reading level. Language and content should be accessible with regular teaching support.

Idioms Explain the meaning of the phrase *a big lump in her throat* (page 3) and talk about how that shows Alma’s feelings.

Oral Language Development

Check student comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches your students’ English proficiency level. **Speaker 1** is the teacher; **Speaker 2** is the student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning/Early Intermediate</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Early Advanced/Advanced</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> Who is the girl in this story?</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> What does Mr. Alvarez say about tests?</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> How can you tell that Alma’s dad listens to her?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> Alma</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> Tests aren’t fun.</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> The next day, he dresses like a teacher and shows the class that learning can be fun, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> Where does the story take place?</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> What does Alma’s father ask her on the way home from school?</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> Did you have fun?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> in a class</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> Did you have fun?</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> Did you have fun?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> Who is teaching Alma’s class?</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> Alma’s dad, Mr. Alvarez</td>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> Alma’s dad, Mr. Alvarez</td>
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<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> Alma’s dad, Mr. Alvarez</td>
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**Critical Thinking**

Read and answer the questions.

1. **Think within the text**. Who is the new teacher in Alma’s class?
   - Alma’s father

2. **Think within the text**. Why do the students like Mr. Alvarez?
   - because he lets them do fun things, such as sing, blow bubbles, tell stories

3. **Think about the text**. What is the first main event that happens in the story?
   - The principal of Alma’s school tells the class their teacher is sick.

4. **Think beyond the text**. What does Alma want the class to think about her Dad? How do her words and actions show this?
   - Possible response: She wants the class to know that her dad cares about learning. She frowns when he wears a funny outfit, and later she looks worried.

**Responding**

**Story Structure**

Alma has a problem when her class gets a new teacher. Copy the story map below. Fill in the story events. Then tell how Alma solves her problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Plot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alma, Mr. Alvarez</td>
<td>school</td>
<td>Alma worried that her father was too much fun in class.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Write About It**

**Text to Self**

What have you had fun learning? Write a paragraph that describes what you did. Use exact words and colorful details to tell what made it fun.

**Making Connections**

Think of a time when you had fun learning. Write about what happened.

Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.

Name __________________ Date ________

Lesson 1: My Teacher, My Dad
Thinking Beyond the Text
Write a paragraph answering the following questions:

On pages 8 and 9, Alma and her father talk about school. What does Alma learn about her father because of their talk? What does Mr. Alvarez learn about Alma? How does their talk solve their problems? Use details from the story in your answer.
Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions.

1. **Think within the text**  Who is the new teacher in Alma’s class?

2. **Think within the text**  Why do the students like Mr. Alvarez?

3. **Think about the text**  What is the first main event that happens in the story?

4. **Think beyond the text**  What does Alma want the class to think about her Dad? How do her words and actions show this?

Making Connections  Think of a time when you had fun learning. Write about what happened.

Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.
“Hi, kids!” said Mr. Alvarez. “I’ll be your teacher while Mrs. Harvey is out sick.” He wrote his name on the board.

Then he smiled and said, “I know you were planning to take a math test this morning. But tests aren’t fun.”

The kids all looked at each other.

“So let’s sing songs!” Mr. Alvarez said.

So the class sang songs.

Then they blew giant bubbles, told stories, and had a snack.

Then Mr. Alvarez showed them how to make hats out of colored balloons.

“Your dad is great!” Cory told Alma. “School is so much better now that he’s our teacher.”