Characteristics of the Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Nonfiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Structure</td>
<td>Events in chronological order, Section heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>History of bridges, Different kinds of bridges, Their effect on people’s lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes and Ideas</td>
<td>People have used stronger and stronger materials to build bridges, Changes in design are made as people’s needs change, The need for each bridge is unique and so is each bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Literary Features</td>
<td>Question-and-answer format in some places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Complexity</td>
<td>Mix of short and complex sentences, Compound and complex sentences with phrases: But trains are very heavy, and the bridges weren’t strong enough to hold them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Words</td>
<td>Some place names that might be unfamiliar: San Francisco, Michigan, West Virginia, Some multisyllabic words that might be challenging: balancing, beautiful, disappear, exciting, together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>Photos on most pages with captions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book and Print Features</td>
<td>Ten pages of text with mix of black-and-white and four-color photographs (and one graph) on all pages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Big Bridges by Elizabeth West

Build Background
Help students to recall bridges they have seen or used. Build interest by asking such questions as these: Were you walking across the bridge or traveling over it by car? What was the bridge made of? What did the bridge cross over? Read the title and author’s name and talk about the cover photo. Tell students that this book is nonfiction, so they will notice special nonfiction features like photos, captions, and section heads.

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

Page 2: Explain that this book is about bridges of all kinds.
Suggested language: Turn to page 2 and read the caption. When this bridge was built excitement filled the air because people could travel to a new place. A rope bridge like this swings when you use it — that causes a lot of excitement, too.

Page 3: Explain that this book starts in the distant past and ends in modern times. Point out that the ancient bridge in the picture seems to have two parts, with one part balancing on another.

Page 6: Explain that there are bridges in every state. The graph on this page lets you compare the number of bridges in four states. Which state has the most bridges? Why do you think some states have more bridges than others?

Page 7: Ask students to look at the picture on page 7. What would it be like to walk across the Golden Gate Bridge on a foggy day when parts of the bridge seem to disappear in the fog? Would you like to try it?

Pages 7–10: Have students look at the pictures of bridges on pages 7 through 10. These are some of the most famous bridges in the United States. Why do you think they’re all different?

Now turn back to the beginning and read to find out why bridges were built.

Target Vocabulary

balancing — keeping steady, p. 3
cling — to stick to or hold tightly, p. 9
crew — group of people doing work, p. 5
stretch — to extend or spread out, p. 3
excitement — feeling of great happiness, p. 2
disappears — passes from sight, p. 7
foggy — in a thick mist or low clouds, p. 7
tide — the rise and fall of the sea, p. 5
Read
Have students read *Big Bridges* silently while you listen to individual students read. Support their problem solving and fluency as needed.

Remind students to use the Infer/Predict Strategy to find clues to help them figure out more about the selection.

Discuss and Revisit the Text

Personal Response
Invite students to share their personal responses to the book. 
**Suggested language:** Have you ever thought about how bridges are built? What have you learned from this book that explains that?

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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Bridges are not all alike because they’re built in different places.</td>
<td>• Some bridges are beautiful as well as useful.</td>
<td>• The author’s language makes it easy to understand the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bridges can be made of wood, stone, iron, steel, and even rope.</td>
<td>• Bridge designers have to be sure each bridge fits its place.</td>
<td>• The author makes it clear that she appreciates the craft of building bridges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bridges need to be safe.</td>
<td>• Over time, bridges got more complicated in design because they needed to be stronger and last longer.</td>
<td>• The book is full of photographs of examples of many kinds of bridges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Choices for Further Support

- **Fluency** Invite students to choose a passage from the text to read aloud. Suggest that they try reading pages 7–10 as though they are conducting a tour of famous bridges.

- **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. Point out that words ending in *–er* are used when the author compares two things, as on page 3: *These bridges lasted longer, and they were safer, too.* Help students identify what bridges are being compared.
Writing about Reading

Vocabulary Practice
Have students complete the vocabulary questions on BLM 4.1.

Responding
Have students complete the vocabulary activities on page 11. Remind them to answer the Word Teaser on p. 12. (Answer: fling)

Reading Nonfiction
Nonfiction Features: Captions and Photos Remind students that nonfiction books like Big Bridges have many features to help readers find and understand important information. Photos with captions are examples. Explain that captions can be short phrases or full sentences. Captions tell what a photo, map, or diagram is about. The photos themselves are an important source of information. Have students look at the photo on page 7. Ask students what information they can learn from this photo and its caption. (The bridge is near the ocean. Orange paint protects the steel from the salty air.) Have students choose two photos from the book and write new captions for them.

Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text
Have students write a response to the prompt on page 6.

Assessment Prompts
• In paragraph 2 on page 3, find the word that means almost the same as “staying in a steady position.”
• On page 5, which words help the reader to know the meaning of crew?
• How does the picture on page 9 and its caption help readers to understand the meaning of the word cling?
**English Language Development**

**Reading Support** Pair advanced and intermediate readers to softly read the text aloud. Beginning speakers may also read the captions on their own.

**Cultural Support** Use a map of the United States to help students locate the general area of the bridges shown on pages 7 through 10. On page 8, use the map to help students visualize the first sentence: *Michigan has two parts divided by water.*

**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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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 2: bridges</td>
<td>Speaker 2: Crews of workers build bridges.</td>
<td>Speaker 2: They let people go to new places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 1: Why do bridges need to be strong?</td>
<td>Speaker 1: How do the workers know what to do?</td>
<td>Speaker 1: Why did railroad trains change the way bridges were made?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 2: Strong bridges are safer.</td>
<td>Speaker 2: First someone has to plan the bridge.</td>
<td>Speaker 2: The bridges had to be strong enough to hold the heavy trains.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Target Vocabulary**

Fill in two more Examples and Non-examples for **stretch**.

Then create your own Four-Square Maps for two of the remaining Target Vocabulary words. Possible responses shown.

**Vocabulary**

- balancing
- cling
- crew
- excitement
- foggy
- tide

**Definition**

- make longer or longer

**Example**

- a rubber band
- elastic
- a piece of taffy

**Sentence**

Stretch your arm and you can reach the top shelf.

**Non-example**

- a piece of lumber
- a small car
- a rubber band

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Big Bridges

Thinking Beyond the Text
Think about the questions below. Then write your answer in one or two paragraphs.

On page 2, the author says, “When a new bridge is built, excitement fills the air.” Then she asks the question “Why?” Answer in your own words why you think people get excited when a new bridge is built.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
**Target Vocabulary**

*Fill in two more Examples and Non-examples for *stretch*. Then create your own Four-Square Maps for two of the remaining Target Vocabulary words.*

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Definition</strong></th>
<th><strong>Example</strong></th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>make bigger or longer</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th><strong>Sentence</strong></th>
<th><strong>Non-example</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stretch your arm and you can reach the top shelf.</td>
<td>• a piece of lumber</td>
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<td></td>
<td>•</td>
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</table>

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**Lesson 4**

**Big Bridges**

**Target Vocabulary**
Big Bridges • LEVEL M

Big Bridges

Running Record Form

Behavior Code Error

Read word correctly ✓
Repeated word, sentence, or phrase ®
Omission •
Substitution cut
cat
Self-corrects cut

Total Self-
Corrections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>page</th>
<th>Selection Text</th>
<th>Errors</th>
<th>Self-Corrections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>When a new bridge is built, excitement fills the air. Why? Every bridge changes lives. Bridges let people go new places. Bridges save travel time. Bridges can be small or big. They can be wood, stone, iron, or steel.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>People need bridges. They use them to cross rivers and valleys. Long ago, bridges were very simple. People would stretch a log across a stream. Then they could cross, balancing carefully as they went. Next, people built stone or wood bridges. These bridges lasted longer, and they were safer, too.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Then people started building railroads.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

Accuracy Rate
(# words read correctly/94 × 100)

Total Self-
Corrections

Grade 3
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