

Lesson 1 of 35: The Secret Anatomy of a Book

Focus: Application & Creativity

Materials Needed:

- A small stack of 3-5 of Mirabelle's favorite picture books. (Try to include a mix of hardcover and paperback if possible).
 - One book wrapped in gift paper with a ribbon.
 - A blank sheet of paper (construction paper or cardstock works well).
 - Crayons, markers, or colored pencils.
 - Optional: Fun extras like stickers, glitter glue, or letter stamps.
-

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, Mirabelle will be able to:

- Identify the three main external parts of a book: the front cover, the back cover, and the spine.
- Point to the title, author, and illustrator on a book cover.
- Create her own original book cover that includes a title, her name as the author, and an illustration.

Curriculum Alignment:

This lesson aligns with 1st Grade English Language Arts standards focusing on Print Concepts (e.g., CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.1.1), specifically recognizing the distinguishing features of a book.

Lesson Plan

Part 1: The Mystery Gift (5 minutes)

1. **Engage:** Present the wrapped book to Mirabelle. Say, "I have a special mystery gift for you to investigate today! What do you think could be inside?" Let her feel its shape and make a few guesses.
2. **Reveal:** Allow her to unwrap the gift. When she reveals the book, say, "It's a book! Books are like treasure chests, but instead of gold, they hold amazing stories and ideas. Before we can open the treasure chest, we have to look at the outside."

Part 2: Book Detective Training (10 minutes)

1. **Direct Instruction & Discovery:** Place the stack of her favorite books in front of her. Pick one up and say, "Let's be book detectives! Every book has secret parts that tell us clues about what's inside. Let's find them."
-

2. **The Front Cover:** "This is the **front cover**. It's like the front door of the book. What do you see on the front door?" Guide her to notice the picture.
3. **The Title:** "The front cover always has the book's name, which is called the **title**." Point to the title and read it aloud. Have her trace the letters of the title with her finger.
4. **The Author & Illustrator:** "It also tells us who wrote the wordsâ€”the **author**â€”and who drew the picturesâ€”the **illustrator**. Sometimes, one person does both!" Find the names and read them. Ask, "Which person tells the story? Which person draws the pictures?"
5. **The Spine:** Turn the book to the side. "This is the **spine**! It's like your backbone; it holds all the pages together. What do you notice on the spine?" (Usually the title and author's name). Explain that this is so we can see what a book is when it's on a shelf.
6. **The Back Cover:** Flip the book over. "And this is the **back cover**. It's like the back door! Sometimes it gives us a little clue or summary about the story inside." Read any text on the back cover.

Part 3: The Book Detective Challenge (5 minutes)

1. **Interactive Practice:** Challenge Mirabelle to be the lead detective. Say, "Okay, Detective Mirabelle, it's your turn! Pick another book from the pile."
2. **Give her a mission:** "Your mission is to show me...
 - o The front cover!
 - o The title!
 - o The spine!
 - o The author's name!
 - o The back cover!
3. Repeat with one or two more books, letting her take the lead in pointing out the parts. Give lots of praise for her great detective work!

Part 4: You're the Author! (15 minutes)

1. **Creative Project:** Say, "You are such an expert on book covers, now you get to make your own! Imagine you are writing a story. What would it be about? A magical cat? A trip to the moon? A girl named Mirabelle who is a superhero?"
2. **Set Up:** Give her the blank paper, crayons, and markers. Explain the task: "Your job is to design the front cover for your imaginary book. Remember, it needs three things:
 1. A **picture** that shows what the story is about.
 2. A **title** for your book.
 3. Your name as the **author and illustrator**!
3. **Create:** Let her draw and create freely. Help with spelling if needed, but encourage her to write the letters herself. She can use stamps for the title or dictate it to you if she prefers.

Part 5: The Grand Unveiling (5 minutes)

1. **Share and Assess:** When she is finished, ask her to present her book cover. "Tell me about your book! What is the title? Who is the author? What happens in your story?"
2. **Reinforce Learning:** As she presents, point to the parts she created. "I see you have your title right here, and your fantastic illustration, and your name as the author! You created a perfect book cover."
3. **Closure:** Display her artwork somewhere special, like on the fridge or a bulletin board. Say, "You've mastered the outside of the book. Next time, our investigation will take us... *inside* the book, to explore the title page and the world of the story!"

Differentiation & Notes for the Teacher:

- **For Extra Support:** If writing is challenging, focus on the illustration. Have her dictate the title and author's name for you to write down. Or, use pre-made letter stickers or stamps.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Encourage her to design the back cover as well, complete with a one-sentence "blurb" about what her story is about. She could also add a price or a barcode for fun.
- **Keep it Fun:** Use silly voices when reading the titles or act out the pictures on the covers. The goal is joyful exploration, not memorization. Your enthusiasm is the key!