

Best Practices

NEW EDITION

in Reading

Level

E



**Build Comprehension!
Develop Critical Thinking!**

TABLE OF CONTENTS



LESSON 1 Make Predictions

FICTION Learning the Curve 5

NONFICTION World Cup Goal 11

LESSON 2 Question

FICTION Follow in My Footsteps 19

NONFICTION Long Ago on the Land Bridge 25

LESSON 3 Draw Conclusions

FICTION The Great Presentation 33

NONFICTION Winning the Noise Battle 39

LESSON 4 Visualize

FICTION Finding the Unexpected 47

NONFICTION Soaring Underground:
Adventure and Science in Caves 53

LESSON 5 Understand Genre

FICTION The Mystery of the Missing Hawks 61

NONFICTION Saving the Oak Trees 67

LESSON 6 Make Inferences

FICTION A Special Talent 75

NONFICTION Phillis Wheatley: A Young Poet 81



LEARNING THE
curve



Diego wants to help his team improve before the last week of soccer camp, when they will play the first round of the championship. Will a talented older player named Max be able to help Diego and his teammates?

Think About Genre

There are many genres, or types of literature. One type is a **fiction** story. Fiction stories are made up. In **realistic fiction**, the setting, characters, and plot all seem as if they could happen in real life. Think about a realistic story you have read. List two things that made the story seem as if it could really happen.

1. _____

2. _____



Think About the Topic

Read the introduction to “Learning the Curve.” Think about what you already know about soccer. Circle the three statements that best describe this sport.

- It’s played on a grassy field.
- The ball is hit with a stick.
- A goalie guards the net.
- Players stand on a base.
- It’s a game played around the world.

Preview and Predict

Take a quick look at the story. Think about the title, introduction, and illustrations. Predict what might happen at soccer camp.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

STRATEGIES

- MAKE PREDICTIONS
- MAKE CONNECTIONS
- UNDERSTAND GENRE
- QUESTION

LEARNING THE *curve*



MAKE PREDICTIONS

Use the title, illustrations, and events that you have seen or read in the story so far to predict what might happen next.

I can tell Diego is impressed with the way that Team Cheetah plays.

What might Diego do about his wish?

Wow, thought Diego. Team Cheetah’s best player, a seventh-grader named Max Edwards, was racing up the field to score another goal. It would be his third goal of that day’s soccer camp **scrimmage**! Diego and the other fifth-graders hoped that one day they would play as well as Max and his teammates.

Max passed the ball to his teammate, Paul, who gently knocked it back to Max. In a quick, **fluid** motion, Max struck the ball with his foot. It sailed upward and curved just beyond the goalie’s reach. The ball slid against the white net with a pleasing *swish, swish* sound.

“GOAL!” shouted the happy players of Team Cheetah.

“Now that’s teamwork,” Coach Williams called from the sideline. “Just what we like to see!”

Diego was excited about the fifth-grade championship that would be held the last week of soccer camp. There would be two rounds, and Diego really hoped that his team would make it to the final round.

Diego wanted his team—Team Viper—to score more and play well together, like Team Cheetah. He hoped they would improve before the first round of the championship.

fluid (FLEW-id) smooth; flowing
scrimmage (SKRIHM-ij) a practice game



When Diego tried to score a goal, the ball usually went straight to the goalie's hands. But Max knew how to give the ball enough spin to make it curve and sink. The goalie could never guess which direction the ball would take. Diego knew Max's excellent kick had something to do with the angle of his foot, but he didn't know what.

As Diego stretched his muscles after the game, he **debated** whether Max would be willing to help. Even though Max was older, he was always friendly. But Max might be too busy to give Diego serious advice about soccer. Finally, Diego decided that he had nothing to lose by asking Max for help.

When Diego saw him later, he said **apprehensively**, "Hey, Max, you scored some awesome goals today."

"Thanks, Diego," said Max, bouncing a soccer ball against his knee.

"I can't seem to get any shots past the goalie," said Diego. "Any chance you'd show me how to kick like that?"

Max grinned and said, "Sure. After all, if you play for the school team next year, we'll be playing together."

"Oh, thanks!" said Diego, thinking how great it would be to play for the middle school soccer team.

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Think about your own experiences to help yourself understand what a character may be feeling.

I know it can be hard to ask someone older for help.

Tell about a time you asked someone older for help.

UNDERSTAND GENRE

(realistic fiction)

Realistic fiction includes details that seem real.

Write one example of how a character acted like a real person.



apprehensively (ap-rih-HEN-siv-lee) nervously

debated (dih-BEY-tihd) carefully thought about different possibilities





QUESTION

As you read, ask yourself questions to make sure you understand what is happening in a story.

According to Max, what are the two skills that can help a team score goals?



charged (CHAJRJD) ran toward something

lofted (LAWFT-ihd) kicked high in the air

The boys met at the field the next day. Max lined up several soccer balls. “You know, the key to scoring is getting a good pass from a teammate. It also helps to create spin by scooping the ball with the side of your foot.”

Diego **charged** at the ball and kicked it into the air.

“That’s good,” said Max. “Just flick your foot more.”

Diego remembered Coach saying that skills could be learned, and that practice really helps. He kicked another ball and then another. With each kick, the soccer ball **lofted** higher and curved more.

Diego talked with his teammates about making good passes and working together. They drew sketches of plays and practiced them. Diego didn’t mind losing, but he wanted Team Viper to play their best.

During the first round of the championship, Team Viper got the ball past the other team’s goalie twice. After the game ended, Diego thought of that swish sound, and he wanted more of it. He hoped that the final round would go as well as the first.

Coach Williams was especially proud of the Vipers’ teamwork in that first game. He named Diego “Team Player of the Game.”

“Wow, congratulations,” said Max. “I sure hope to see you on the school team next year!”

Diego couldn’t wait.