Companion Lesson 1: Reading
to support students with special needs in reading

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Owney Companion Lesson 1:  
for Students with Special Needs in Reading

Introduction:  
This lesson plan is for students in the 2nd and 3rd grade who receive services under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which requires them to receive reading instruction in a special education setting. The lesson is developed for students who have a specific learning disability that impacts their ability to access the general education reading curriculum without special education services. This lesson is developed to be used during the time the general education teacher is utilizing the “Our Stories” Owney unit lessons in the regular classroom (pp. 44-55).

Essential Questions
• What strategies help us better understand a story?
• What can we use to make predictions about a story?

Key Points
• There can be both fiction and non-fiction books written about a living thing such as a dog. Develop an understanding of the value of both types of stories.
• Think while reading by making connections and predictions while reading a story.

Objectives
• Students will be able to identify a book as fiction or non-fiction and demonstrate comprehension of the text.
• Students will begin actively thinking while they are reading by making predictions and connections while they read.
Lesson Description
This is a reading lesson that uses some of the Owney books as well as other books to help the students develop an understanding of the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. The lesson will focus on developing comprehension skills such as predicting and making connections.

Opening
Using an electronic whiteboard or a flip chart to write and discuss the definitions of a non-fiction book and a fiction book. Make a simple chart with the captions “Fiction” and “Non-Fiction.” Using the Owney books on the materials list model how you can correctly identify a book as fiction or non-fiction.

Guided Practice
Read one of the Owney books modeling to the students how to make self to self (S-S) connections, text to text (T-T) connections, and predictions while reading the book to the students. Use sticky notes in the book as you are reading to the students. Encourage the students to make their own connections and predictions while you read.

Assessment
Students will do a room walk and find one example of a non-fiction book, thus demonstrating their developing skills by making connections and predictions on sticky notes.

Historical Fiction Option
If using a whiteboard for the opening, the e-Book Tales from the Rails by Jerry Rees and Stephen Michael Schwartz is a great example of historical fiction.
Independent Practice
The students will select a book at their reading level and use sticky notes to make predictions and connections while they read.

Closing
Have the students share a few of their connections with their classmates. Have the students share their predictions and discuss whether the predictions came true.