**Catapults**

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| Level | M |
| Content Area | Science |
| Reading Focus | Students will learn to use the comprehension strategies of Visualising and Making Connections as they read, think, talk and write in response to the text. |
| Text Type | Informational |
| Academic Vocabulary | city, distance, energy, land, lifting, machine, moon, rock, throwing, town, universe, war, water, weight, wheel |

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| **Topic Talk** | * Have students think, pair, share what they know about catapults. Ask: “What do they do? What were they used for?” * Read the title and back cover blurb aloud, and look closely at the cover. * Have students think, pair, share their prediction about why the author may have written this book. * Ask: “What sorts of things do you think we may learn from this book?” |
| **Contents** | * Open to the contents page, and read the titles of the chapters aloud. * Ask students to think, pair, share: “What new things have you discovered about the book from the chapter titles?” * Introduce students to “Nat the Ant” at the bottom of the page and read the speech bubble aloud. |
| **Opening Chapters** | * Read aloud the chapter 1 title. * Before reading, ask students to close their eyes and visualise what is happening in the text as you read. * Read page 2 aloud to the students, up to the breakout. * Have students think, pair, share about what they visualised. * Ask: “How did visualising help you to understand what was happening better in the text?” * Read the breakout aloud together. * Ask students to think of a text-to-text connection from chapter 1. Ask: “What ideas on this page can you connect to another book you have read or movie you have seen?” * Ask students to look closely at the image on page 3. * Have them close their eyes and visualise the catapult in action. Point out the burning object at the end of the catapult arm, and have them use all their senses to imagine what happens next. * Read the chapter 2 title and pages 4 and 5 aloud. * Ask students to make a connection to the idea of walls. Remind them that their connection could be text-to-self, text-to-text, or text-to-world. Have some students share their connections (and the type of connection) with the group. * Read page 6 and pause at the ant question. * Remind students to use all their five senses to visualise their answer to the ant question and then share their ideas with a partner. * Read pages 7 and 8 aloud. * Remind students that the title for this chapter was a question: “Why were catapults invented?” * Have students work together to summarise what they learned in the chapter and how it answered the question. * Set a purpose for reading from chapter 3 to the end of the book:   + Try to picture what you are reading as you go to practise visualising.   + Try to make connections as you go, between this book and other texts, or to yourself, or your world knowledge.   + Pause at the ant questions to answer them, and read the Ant Tunnel carefully. |

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| As students read on independently, you can check in with them to discuss the ant questions, or personalise learning by using the *Mini-Lessons* and *Fluency, Language and Text Features* to scaffold parts of the book that might be unfamiliar or challenging.  Bring students together again for reflection using the “After Reading” prompts. |

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| **After Reading** | 1. Have students compare the similarities and differences between the way catapults were used in ancient times, and how they are used today. 2. Discuss any section of the book where students found visualising useful for understanding the text. 3. Ask: “What connections did you make to the text while you were reading?”, and “How did they help you to understand the text better?” | |
| **Writing Prompts** | *Fiction* | Imagine that you are in charge of one of the catapults in this book. Write a story about where you are, when your story is set, what you are doing, and why you’re doing it. |
| *Informational* | Write a safety notice about how to be safe, and how to keep others safe, while using a slingshot. |
| *Letter writing* | Imagine that you live in ancient times, and the queen is about to attack an enemy castle. Write a letter to the queen, explaining about catapults – how do catapults work, how do you make one, and how should the queen’s army use one? |
| *Opinion* | Do you think catapults were a good invention, or a bad one? Write a short piece about what you think and explain why you think that. |
| *Research* | Find out about a siege where catapults were important. When, where, and why did this siege happen? Who was involved? How did the siege end? |