



Story Summary

Pistachio is worried about her dog. All he does is sleep . . . and eat . . . and sleep. What a boring life! An audition call for a theater production seems like the perfect answer. When Dog is chosen for the role, his life is abruptly transformed with a new job and a new name: Maurice the Magnificent, star of *Sleeping Beauty!*

Unfortunately, Maurice is not the only one being swept up in the excitement. Pistachio can talk about nothing else, until her best friend Madeline is completely fed up. Then disaster strikes: Maurice is dog-napped! Pistachio is distraught, and Madeline will not even lift a finger to help. Can Pistachio save both her dog and her friendship?

An exuberant new installment for the popular Princess Pistachio from beloved author-illustrator Marie-Louise Gay.

Pair this book with:

Princess Pistachio by Marie-Louise Gay

Princess Pistachio and the Pest by Marie-Louise Gay

Marie-Louise Gay has come a long way since she failed art class in the third grade. The author and/or illustrator of over sixty books for children, she has captured the imaginations of children and their parents with her whimsical cartoons and beloved characters like Stella and Sam, Caramba and Henry, and Princess Pistachio. In 2013 Marie-Louise was awarded the Claude Aubry Award, which is presented by IBBY Canada for distinguished service within the field of children’s literature.



Early Reader Ages 5–8 | ISBN: 978-1-77278-021-5 | Pages: 52

THEMES

Humor, Friendship

BISAC CODES

JUV045000 JUVENILE FICTION / Readers / Chapter Books
 JUV039060 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Friendship
 JUV019000 JUVENILE FICTION / Humorous Stories

READING LEVEL

Lexile Measure: 560L | Fountas & Pinnell: L

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Comprehension; Reading Comprehension; Reading; Grammar: Writing Devices; Writing; Mathematics: Probability

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS:

ACTIVITY	MAIN SUBJECT AREA	SPECIFIC SKILLS AND TOPICS
Read-Aloud	Comprehension Grammar: Writing Devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • infer, predict, make connections • identify verbs, adverbs, adjectives, similes, and metaphors
Guided Reading	Reading Comprehension Grammar: Writing Devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • infer, predict, make connections • identify verbs, adverbs, adjectives, similes, and metaphors
Independent Reading	Reading Comprehension Grammar: Writing Devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • infer, predict, make connections • identify verbs, adverbs, adjectives, similes, and metaphors
Tall Tale Telling	Reading Writing Mathematics: Probability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read and write far-fetched stories • state probability of events



THE READ-ALOUD

Read the book aloud to the whole class or just to students whose instructional reading level is below Fountas and Pinnell level L. The discussion points given below can be used either on the first or a subsequent reading but should be used before the follow-up worksheets are assigned.

Learning expectations:

Students will:

- use comprehension strategies to understand texts
- distinguish between stated and implied ideas in oral texts
- identify some elements of style, including voice, word choice, and types of sentences, and explain how they help readers understand texts
- identify specific elements of texts and explain how they contribute to the meaning of the texts

You Will Need

- *Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent*
- Chapter follow-up worksheets 1–4

How To:

Before Reading

Prepare a chart with the headings “Strong Verbs,” “Adverbs,” “Similes,” and “Metaphors.”

During Reading

Chapter 1, Page 7: Read the page aloud. Draw students’ attention to “snoring like a frog with a cold.” What would that sound like? Tell students that a phrase like that is called a simile and that they should be on the lookout for other similes in this book. Write this simile on the chart. Give a couple more common examples of similes and invite students to tell any that they know. Draw students’ attention to the word *spin*. The author could have said the dog’s legs move, but the word *spin* is more descriptive because it tells us *how* the legs move. We call that a strong verb. Then the author

tells us more about how the legs spin by adding the adverb *frantically*. Add *spin* and *frantically* to the chart and invite students to be on the lookout for more similes, strong verbs (e.g. *whimpers, drools*) and adverbs throughout the reading. Invite a few students to share one word to describe the dog. Would a dog like that dream of the things Pistachio imagines?

Chapter 1, Pages 8–9: Read the pages aloud. Invite students to listen for strong verbs and similes. If they don’t notice them, provide them and record them on the chart. Strong verbs: *snorts, grunts, heaves, waddles*; similes: *snoring like a small train engine*.

Chapter 1, Pages 10–11: “The author tells us Dog is astonished. Show me your face if you are astonished. Why is Dog astonished in this picture? What do you think Pistachio is planning to do? Would the mom allow Pistachio to take Dog to school if she knew?” Point to the picture on page 11. “Who might this be? It is Pistachio’s little sister Penny, who catches Pistachio stuffing Dog into her schoolbag. Let’s read to find out what Pistachio has to do to keep Penny from yelling and letting Mom know what’s going on.” Read the pages aloud. Invite a student to explain what Pistachio did to make her sister keep quiet and another to predict how things might go if Pistachio does take Dog to school.

Chapter 1, Pages 13–15: After reading, invite students’ reactions to Chichi’s and Fatima’s show and tell, and to predict what Pistachio might do.

Chapter 1, Pages 16–18: After reading, have students help you add strong verbs (*peeks, presents, whispers, snorts, dumps, flops, flap, flutter, sniffs, stuffs, stares, transported*), adverbs (*promptly, instantly*) and similes (*flops out like a pile of laundry, ears flap like clothes on a line, face as red as a tomato*) to the chart.

Chapter 2, Pages 19–21: Display a selection of emojis. As you read Madeline’s reaction, invite students to identify an emoji that corresponds at each stage. Re-read the first sentence on page 20 aloud. “Do fireworks actually go off in Pistachio’s mind? What does the author mean by that? The author is comparing Pistachio’s thoughts to fireworks. In what way are her thoughts like fireworks? A sentence like this is called a metaphor. A metaphor is a lot like a simile, but it does not use *like* or *as*.” Add this metaphor to the chart, as well as strong verbs (*roars, gasps*) and adverbs (*impatiently*).

Chapter 2, Pages 22–23: “Is Madeline acting like a good friend? Is she telling the truth? Is there a way she could have expressed these opinions and still acted like a good friend?” Continue to add strong verbs (*skips*), similes (*cheeks burning like wildfire*), metaphors (*eat her words*) and adverbs to the chart as you read the rest of the story.

Chapter 2, Pages 24–25: After reading aloud, ask students to infer why Pistachio sighs.

Chapter 2, Page 26: After reading, ask, “How does the author use sensory description to help us infer how Pistachio is feeling?”

Chapter 2, Pages 28–29: After reading, invite students to predict what might happen next.

Chapter 2, Pages 30–31: Read the pages aloud. Are students surprised?

Chapter 3, Page 33: Explain what an adjective is. Distribute dictionaries that give the parts of speech for each word. Have students find an adjective and pair it with a name (not someone in the class) that begins with the same letter. Write these on a new chart that resembles the one on the worksheet. Tell students that this is what Pistachio did when the director told her that Dog needed a stage name. As you read page 33, invite them to identify the adjectives and names. Add these to the chart.

Chapters 3 and 4, Pages 34–52: As you read, continue adding to the lists of strong verbs, adverbs, similes, and metaphors. Refer to the section on Guided Reading for possible discussion points for these chapters.

After Reading

After each chapter, explain what students need to do and how they can use the chart to help them complete the follow-up worksheets. Give time and support for them to complete the sheets. Keep the chart posted in the classroom and add to it as your students discover more strong verbs, adverbs, similes and metaphors. Encourage students to refer to the chart for ideas when they are writing their own stories.

GUIDED READING

Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent is a perfect guided reading selection for students whose instructional reading level is Fountas and Pinnell level L or M. Students whose instructional reading level is N or higher should be able to complete the reading independently.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- read a variety of literary texts
- use comprehension strategies to understand texts
- identify some elements of style, including voice, word choice, and types of sentences, and explain how they help readers understand texts
- identify specific elements of texts and explain how they contribute to the meaning of the texts

You Will Need

- *Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent*: one copy for each student plus one copy for yourself
- Chapter follow-up worksheets 1–4
- Guided reading table or similar instructional space

How To:

Many discussion points are given for each chapter. Use only the ones you believe your group of students will need in order to successfully read the chapter and complete the follow-up sheet (if you are using it).

Chapter 1

1. Gather a group of students of similar reading level (at or near level L) at your small group instruction space. Give each student a copy of *Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent*. Invite them to look at the cover while you read the title and author-illustrator's name. Do students recall reading other books about Princess Pistachio or other books by Marie-Louise Gay? Which character on the front might be Princess Pistachio? Which might be Maurice? Point out that both names are alliterative and invite students to be on the lookout for other alliterative names in the book. Invite observations about the cover. Where might the girl and dog be going?
2. Turn to page 7. Introduce the chapter. "This is Pistachio Shoelace. She sees herself as a princess. She loves her dog. Read this page to find out how the dog spends his days." Invite students to read silently or softly. Urge them to read the whole page, skipping over any tricky words and going back to try them again once they finish. Once all have finished reading, help students clear up any decoding difficulties. Draw students' attention to "snoring like a frog with a cold." What would that sound like? Tell students that a phrase like that is called a simile and that they should be on the lookout for other similes in this book. Give a couple more common example of similes and invite students to share any that they know. Invite students to share one word to describe the dog. Would a dog like that dream of the things Pistachio imagines?
3. Turn to pages 8–9. "Pistachio thinks the dog needs excitement and adventure. The author tells us some things the dog does, and these help us understand what the dog wants." Direct students' attention to page 9, paragraph 3. Holding your copy of the book so students can see it, point to each verb in turn, telling them these are things the dog does,

and have students use their decoding skills to figure out each one and say them aloud. Stronger decoders will be helping the weaker ones. Help as needed. Afterward, ask, "Does Dog want adventure and excitement? What does he want?" This accomplishes two things: it primes students' minds with these verbs, some of which might be tricky (*heaves, waddles, sighs*), and it gives them practice using a character's actions to infer their feelings or character traits. Point out that these are strong verbs, not just ordinary verbs like go or get. They are strong because they are very specific and help the reader visualize what the characters are doing. Tell students that you want them to be on the lookout for other strong verbs as they read this book. After this brief discussion, have students read the pages silently or softly. Address any difficulties. Did anyone notice a simile on this page?

4. Pages 10–11: "The author tells us Dog is astonished. Show me your face if you are astonished. Why is Dog astonished in this picture? What do you think Pistachio is planning to do? Would the mom allow Pistachio to take Dog to school if she knew?" Point to the picture on page 11. "Who might this be? It is Pistachio's little sister Penny, who catches Pistachio stuffing Dog into her schoolbag. Read to find out what Pistachio has to do to keep Penny from yelling and letting Mom know what's going on." Have students read the pages silently or softly. Invite one to explain what Pistachio did to make her sister keep quiet. Address any difficulties. Invite students to predict how things might go if Pistachio does take Dog to school.
5. Page 13: "The name of Pistachio's teacher is a compound word." Show students where this word is and show them how to look for a word they know in it, then cover that part up with their finger while they decode the other part. Invite students to read the page independently.
6. Pages 14–15: Draw students' attention to the italics on page 15. Explain that these are the Latin or scientific names for the butterflies Fatima is showing and that students need not pronounce them. Invite students to read independently and then share their opinions about both Chichi's and Fatima's show and tell items. Invite students to predict what will happen next.

7. Page 16: Invite students to read independently and give their opinion on the class's reaction to Pistachio's presentation. How would they have responded? Did anyone notice a simile on this page?
8. Page 18: Invite students to read independently. How does Pistachio feel? Encourage students to move beyond simple words like *bad* or *sad*. If necessary, suggest words like *embarrassed* and *humiliated*. How do we know? Encourage students to give evidence from the text (*face as red as a tomato, sits and stares straight ahead, wishing she were invisible*). Have they ever felt this way? Can they find a simile on this page?
9. Give students the follow-up worksheet for chapter 1 and explain what they will need to do. For example, turn back to page 7. Point to the word *spin* in the third sentence. What part of speech is this? Point to the word *frantically* and explain that this word is an adverb and explains how the legs spin. Adverbs are useful words, but using too many of them can make writing sound awkward. That's why good writers like Marie-Louise Gay use them sparingly. Students will need to be careful detectives to find them. Like *frantically*, many adverbs end in *-ly*, so this can help them in their search. They will also need to search for an interjection. Give an example of one, like *Whoops!*, that you have pre-written on a card. Have them complete the follow-up page.

Chapter 2

10. Page 19: "This chapter is called 'The Audition.' What is an audition?" Have students read the page.
11. Pages 20–21: Invite a student to read the first sentence aloud. "Do fireworks actually go off in Pistachio's mind? What does the author mean by that? The author is comparing Pistachio's thoughts to fireworks. In what way are her thoughts like fireworks? A sentence like this is called a metaphor. A metaphor is a lot like a simile, but it does not use like or as. Be on the lookout for both similes and metaphors in this chapter." Have students read the pages. Did anyone notice a strong verb or an adverb?

12. Pages 22–23: Have students read the pages silently or softly. "Is Madeline acting like a good friend? Is she telling the truth? Is there a way she could have expressed these opinions and still acted like a good friend?" Did anyone notice a strong verb or a simile?
13. Pages 24–25: Have students read the pages. Help with any decoding difficulties, for example *dachshunds* or *Chihuahua*. "Why does Pistachio sigh?" Did anyone see an adverb?
14. Page 26: Have students read the page. Did they notice any strong verbs?
15. Pages 28–29: Have students read and predict where Dog might be.
16. Pages 30–31: Have students read the pages silently or softly. Did anyone notice a simile, strong verb, or adverb? Is anyone surprised at the outcome?
17. Have students complete the chapter follow-up page.

Chapter 3

18. Explain what an adjective is. Distribute dictionaries that give the parts of speech for each word. Have students find an adjective and pair it with a name (not someone in the class) that begins with the same letter. Tell students that this is what Pistachio did when the director told her that Dog needed a stage name. Have them read page 33.
19. Pages 34–35: Tell students that the girl in the picture is a manicurist and is painting Dog's nails a lovely shade of peony pink. Students will also learn that Dog and Pistachio get interviewed by the "press." Do students know what that means? Have them read the pages silently or softly and share their reactions.
20. Page 36: "Here, the author tells us that the audience is *hypnotized* by Maurice's performance. As you read, think about what the author means by that. You will also see the word *ovation*. Does anyone know what that means?" After students have read the page, ask why people give a standing ovation and why Madeline might remain seated. Is she acting like a good friend? Why might she be acting this way?

21. Pages 38–39: After students have read the pages, ask students how they feel about someone who talks non-stop about something or someone that is important to them. Let's find out how Madeline feels about it.
22. Pages 40–41: Like Mr. Grumblebrain, Madeline has a compound word for a last name. Have students use the same technique as before to decode it. Invite students to read the pages. Do they agree with Pistachio that Madeline is jealous? Did students notice any strong verbs?
23. Have students complete the chapter follow-up page.

Chapter 4

24. Page 43: Invite students to read the page. “What has happened? How do we know? What evidence is in the text?” (Maurice is gone. Evidence: the chapter title, the dressing-room is empty, the dog collar is on the floor, and a half-chewed bone is abandoned.)
25. Pages 44–45: Have students read silently or softly. What are they thinking? Where have they seen the phrase “fat furball” before? Did anyone notice a simile (*as dry as sandpaper*) or metaphor (*heart stands still*)?
26. Page 46: Have students read silently or softly. What are they thinking? If students suspect Madeline, ask them if Pistachio also does. Did anyone spot any adverbs, similes, or metaphors on this page?
27. Pages 48–49: Have students read silently or softly. Are they as surprised as Pistachio seems to be? Did they see any strong verbs or metaphors?
28. Page 50: “Pistachio is going to find out why Madeline has not been acting like a good friend.” Have students read the page. Discuss briefly how, when friends have problems with one another, there is usually fault on both sides. Describing your own feelings and apologizing as Madeline did is an important part of reconciliation. Pistachio thinks about her own role in the problem but does not apologize for it out loud. What do students think about that?
29. Page 52: Have students read the page and share overall impressions.
30. Have students complete the follow-up sheet for chapter 4.

INDEPENDENT READING

For students whose Fountas and Pinnell instructional reading level is N or higher (and for some students at level M), assign the reading independently, but still give instruction and support for the completion of the chapter follow-up worksheets.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- read a variety of literary texts
- use comprehension strategies to understand texts
- identify some elements of style, including voice, word choice, and different types of sentences, and explain how they help readers understand texts
- identify specific elements of texts and explain how they contribute to the meaning of the texts

You Will Need

- *Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent*: one copy for each student
- Chapter follow-up worksheets 1–4

How To:

1. Have students read one chapter a day and complete the corresponding follow-up sheet.
2. Before students begin working on each follow-up sheet, give a brief refresher on verbs, adverbs, adjectives, similes and metaphors, as necessary.
3. From the second day on, before students read the next chapter, have students share their responses to the follow-up sheet from the day before with one another.

TALL TALE TELLING

Students will enjoy hearing more of this type of far-fetched humorous story and writing their own.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- describe probability as a measure of the likelihood that an event will occur, using mathematical language (i.e. *impossible, unlikely, less likely, equally likely, more likely, certain*)
- read a variety of literary texts
- write short texts using a variety of forms

You Will Need

- *Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent*
- *How Likely is It?* worksheet
- A selection of far-fetched stories with fairly realistic characters—for example *Officer Buckle and Gloria* by Peggy Rathmann, *Miss Nelson is Missing!* by Harry Allard, *The Day I Swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish* by Neil Gaiman, *Wash On!* by Michèle Marineau, and many books by Robert Munsch, including *Fifty Below Zero*. Early chapter books include the Amelia Bedelia books by Peggy Parish.
- *And to Think that I Saw it On Mulberry Street* by Dr. Seuss
- Pencils and writing paper
- The chart you made during the read-aloud

How To:

1. Use the *How Likely is It?* worksheet as the basis for a discussion about to what extent this is a realistic story. Many things about the story will be familiar: pets, annoying siblings, going to school, a rocky friendship, an audition. Nothing happens that is magical or science fiction. But enough hilariously unlikely things happen to make this story “far-fetched,” pushing it toward the realm of a tall tale. You might wish to begin completing the worksheet as a class and have students finish it independently.

2. Read some other far-fetched tales with contemporary characters (as opposed to tall tales set in frontier times). Picture book examples include *Officer Buckle and Gloria* by Peggy Rathmann, *Miss Nelson is Missing!* by Harry Allard, *The Day I Swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish* by Neil Gaiman, *Wash On!* by Michèle Marineau, and many books by Robert Munsch, including *Fifty Below Zero*. Early chapter books include the Amelia Bedelia books by Peggy Parish.
3. Read *And to Think that I Saw it On Mulberry Street* by Dr. Seuss.
4. Have students write and illustrate their own far-fetched stories. Encourage them to use realistic characters, such as themselves, their pets, and their families. They can begin with a realistic event, either one that actually happened or one that could have happened, and then embellish it to make it hard to believe, the way the boy in *And to Think that I Saw it On Mulberry Street* did.
5. Encourage students to revise their work by replacing five verbs with stronger verbs, adding no more than one or two adverbs, and/or inserting a simile or a metaphor.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/language_l8currb.pdf

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/math_l8curr.pdf

This guide was created with support from Ontario Creates



Name: _____

Beside each event from *Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent*, write one of these words to describe how likely it is that the event would happen in real life if the characters were real:

impossible	highly unlikely	unlikely	likely	highly likely	certain
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Pistachio's dog sleeps most of the time.	
Pistachio takes her dog to school in her backpack without her mom knowing.	
Pistachio forgets about show and tell.	
Pistachio presents her dog for show and tell.	
Dogs are wanted for a theater production.	
Madeline laughs at the idea of Dog acting in a play.	
A chihuahua plays the trumpet.	
The director chooses Dog after he sleeps through his audition.	
There are rehearsals every day after school.	
A manicurist paints Maurice's nails pink.	
A coiffeur curls Maurice's hair.	
Maurice is interviewed by the press.	
Reporters want to know when Maurice started dreaming of being an actor and what his favorite color is.	

Find 5 other events in the book that you think are either "highly unlikely" or "impossible." Circle "highly unlikely" or "impossible" for each.

1.	highly unlikely	impossible
2.	highly unlikely	impossible
3.	highly unlikely	impossible
4.	highly unlikely	impossible
5.	highly unlikely	impossible

Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent Chapter 1

Name: _____

1. A verb is an action word. A strong verb is one that is so specific, it helps us picture how the action was done. In chapter 1, the author uses verbs like **heaves** and **muffers** to help us visualize the action. Find 5 more strong verbs in this chapter.

2. An adverb describes a verb or an adjective. It can help explain how an action is done. But using too many adverbs can make writing sound awkward. Marie-Louise Gay chooses her adverbs carefully and uses only a few. You will need to be a careful detective to find them. Find 3 adverbs in this chapter and the verb each one helps explain. Hint: they often end in **-ly**.

Adverb	Page	Verb it helps explain

3. Authors often describe things by comparing them to something else. A comparison that uses **like** or **as** is called a simile. For example, on the first page, Dog is described as **snoring like a frog with a cold**. Find 2 more similes in this chapter.

4. A variety of sentence types helps make writing interesting. One type is an interjection, a single word that expresses strong feelings. Find an interjection in this chapter. _____

Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent Chapter 2

Name: _____

1. A verb is an action word. A strong verb is one that is so specific, it helps us picture how the action was done. In chapter 2, the author uses verbs like **droop** and **peers** to help us visualize the action. Find 5 more strong verbs in this chapter.

2. An adverb describes a verb or an adjective. It can help explain how an action is done. But using too many adverbs can make writing sound awkward. Marie-Louise Gay chooses her adverbs carefully and uses only a few. You will need to be a careful detective to find them. Find 3 adverbs in this chapter and the verb each one helps explain. Hint: they often end in **-ly**.

Adverb	Page	Verb it helps explain

3. Authors often describe things by comparing them to something else. A comparison that uses **like** or **as** is called a simile. A comparison that does not use **like** or **as** is called a metaphor. For example, on page 20, we read that **Fireworks go off in Pistachio's mind**. Find 1 simile and 1 metaphor in this chapter.

4. The last 3 sentences on page 20 and the first sentence on page 21 describe how Madeline's emotions progress from a smile to "tears streaming down her face." Draw an emoji to represent each of these four sentences.

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Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent Chapter 3

Name: _____

1. A verb is an action word. A strong verb is one that is so specific, it helps us picture how the action was done. Find 5 strong verbs in this chapter.

2. An adjective describes a person, place or thing. Pistachio uses a dictionary to find adjectives to describe her dog. She pairs each adjective with a name beginning with the same letter. In a dictionary, find 3 adjectives you might use to describe a famous dog. Beside each one, write a name beginning with the same letter.

Adjective	Name

3. On page 36, Maurice gets a standing ovation. What is a standing ovation? _____

4. When Maurice gets a standing ovation, why do you think Madeline stays seated? _____

Princess Pistachio and Maurice the Magnificent Chapter 4

Name: _____

1. A verb is an action word. A strong verb is one that is so specific, it helps us picture how the action was done. Find 5 strong verbs in this chapter.

2. An adverb describes a verb or an adjective. It can help explain how an action is done. But using too many adverbs can make writing sound awkward. Marie-Louise Gay chooses her adverbs carefully and uses only a few. You will need to be a careful detective to find them. Find 3 adverbs in this chapter and the verb or adjective each one helps explain. Hint: they often end in **-ly**.

Adverb	Page	Verb or adjective it helps explain

3. There are two metaphors on page 48. Explain what the author meant by each one.

a) An owl ... **sails off**: What did the owl do? _____
What is the author comparing the owl to? _____
How is the owl like that? _____

b) **dark velvet night**: What is velvet? _____

How is the night like velvet? _____

4. On page 43, what clues does the author give that Maurice is gone, without actually saying so? _____
