Guided Practice

Model and Apply

- Tell students that conclusions about Bradbury's style and motivations come from not only his writing, but also his **biographical information**. Go over the following causes and possible effects with students.
- Cause: Bradbury has loved dinosaurs from an early age. Effect: This love may have prompted him to create stories about dinosaurs.
- Cause: Bradbury also loves airplanes, rocket ships, trolley cars, and trains. Effect: Bradbury's love of these inventions probably caused him to feature them in his works.
- Using the information contained in "The Dragon," have student pairs come up with at least two Cause/Effect scenarios based on what they know about Bradbury so far.



Chinese lacquered art with dragon representation.

Here is what Ray Bradbury has said about "The Dragon":

It is hard to talk about 'The Dragon' without giving away its secret, telling you the surprise. So all I can talk about is the boy I was that became the young man who thought about, and the older man who wrote, this story. I loved dinosaurs from the age of five, when I saw the film *The Lost World,* filled with prehistoric monsters. I became even more enamored with these beasts when at age thirteen, *King Kong* fell off the Empire State and landed on me in the front row of the Elite Theater. I never recovered. Later, I met and became friends with Ray Harryhausen, who built and film-animated dinosaurs in his garage when we were both eighteen. We dedicated our lives to these monsters, to dragons in all their shapes and forms. Simultaneously, we loved airplanes, rocket ships, trolley cars, and trains. From this amalgam of loves came our lives and careers. We wound up doing *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* as our first film. Not very good, but a beginning. He went on to *Mighty Joe Young* and I to *Moby Dick* and its great sea-beast. When I was in my thirties I wrote 'The Dragon' and combined two of these loves. You'll have to read the story to find out which ones. Read on. A

Ray

A **Literary Focus** **Biographical Approach** What personal interests led Bradbury to write "The Dragon"?

THE DRAGON

by **Ray Bradbury,** adapted by **Vicente Segrelles**

Read with a Purpose Read these selections to see what happens when the past meets the present.

Preparing to Read for this selection is on page 427.



Selection Readability	
Easily Accessible Accessible Challenging	graphic format; easy to follow dialogue
Lexile	**550**

Selection Summary

Two knights travel to a foreign land to slay a vicious dragon. The knights charge the dragon, only to be thrown back by its sheer power. The scene then shifts, revealing that rather than a fire-breathing dragon, the knights have rammed a speeding train.

Direct Teach

Think About/Talk About

Read with a Purpose Have students read the Read with a Purpose statement. Remind them that a graphic story tells a story in a sequential, visual way. Based on the title and the Read with a Purpose statement, which of Bradbury's biographical interests do students recognize?

Analysis

Literary Focus

Possible response: *He doesn't say which specific interests, but he talks about dragons, dinosaurs, prehistoric monsters as well as airplanes, rocket ships, trolley cars, and trains.*

Extend the Discussion

Speculating Do the men live in this land? How do you know? Why might they be there? ***Possible response:*** *The men are from another land. One man says, "They say [the dragon's] eyes are fire . . ." This implies that the men have not seen the dragon themselves. They are probably there to capture or kill the dragon.*

Guided Practice

Model and Apply

- Review with students the concept of **drawing conclusions**. Read aloud the dialogue and captions on this page. Then, tell students that the author does not tell the reader where the men are. Based on the look of the land, however, the reader might conclude that they are not on Earth. Or, the reader might conclude that the men are on Earth, although long ago, as is suggested by the style of the men's clothing.
- **Turn-and-Talk** Tell students to read the next page. After they are finished, have them work in pairs to come to a conclusion about the story, Bradbury's style, or his motivation for writing the story based on the dialogue and captions.



B

B **Read and Discuss** What information has the author given us in these first four panels?

Differentiating Instruction

English-Language Learners

Students will probably need help with the knights' archaic language. Explain that the knights are from a different time period in which the people speak an older form of English. You may want to have students complete the Extend the Discussion activity on the following page since it addresses archaic language. Otherwise, provide students with help in understanding the selection's archaic terms, words, or sentences.

See **Differentiating Instruction** for lesson plans and strategies for teaching English-language learners.

Readers Gaining Proficiency

To help students understand the flow of the panels in this selection, point out the distinction between speech bubbles and narration boxes. Tell students that the arrows in speech bubbles indicate which character is speaking, and that the narration boxes are set in a box in a panel. They do not indicate speech. Tell students that narration boxes give readers other details about the story.



C Read and Discuss How do the illustrations help build suspense?

Think About/Talk About

Comprehension

B Read and Discuss

Possible response: *The author has told the reader that the two knights will try to slay the dragon.*

C Read and Discuss

Possible response: *The illustrations help build suspense through their dark background and by showing the light grow larger as it approaches the knights.*

? Extend the Discussion

Breaking Down Difficult Text What does the author mean in the third panel on the previous page when he uses the words "Be you afraid, then gird on your armor"? ***Possible response:*** *One knight is saying to the other, "If you are afraid, then put on your armor."*

Predicting What do you think will happen in the next panel? ***Possible response:*** *The knights will attack the dragon.*

Advanced Learners

Acceleration Have students use the library to locate and explore at least two examples of graphic novels. When they are familiar with the format, have students select a non-graphic selection from this collection and transform it into graphic form. Explain to students that the storyline should stay the same.

See **Resources for Teaching Advanced Students** for lesson plans and strategies for teaching advanced learners.

Learners with Diverse Needs

Students with diverse needs may benefit from viewing one panel at a time. Help students use scrap paper to cover panels, revealing only one at a time. Students should read the words and study the illustration. Be sure they understand the main idea of the panel before they move on to the next panel.

See **Differentiating Instruction** for lesson plans and strategies for teaching learners with diverse needs.

Guided Practice

Model and Apply

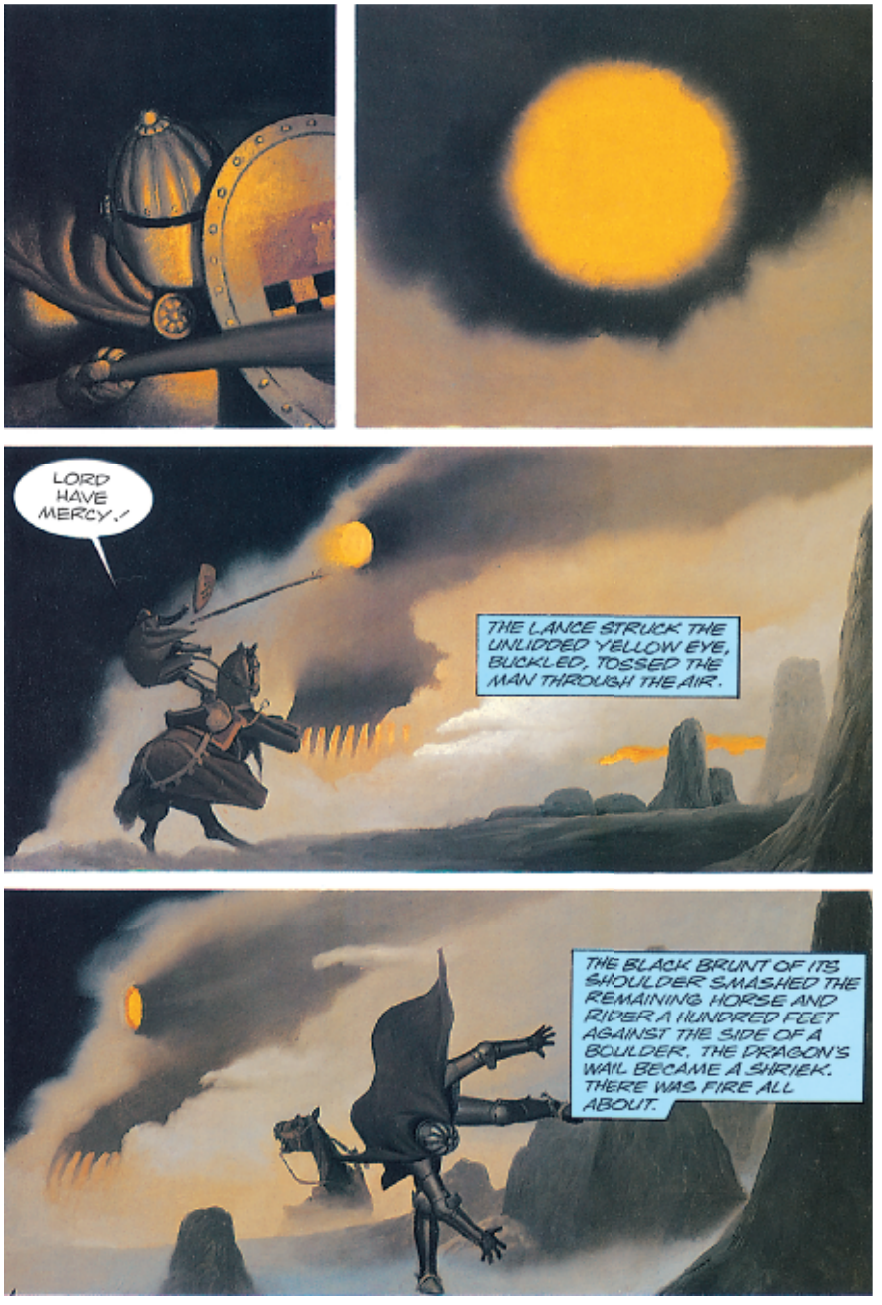
- Tell students that, just as the initial *w* is silent in English words that begin with *wr-*, the initial *k* is silent in most English words that begin with *kn-*.
- Write the following examples on the board:

  knight

  know

  knuckle

- Tell students to think of other English words that begin with *kn-*. Allow them to consult a dictionary if necessary. ***Possible responses:*** *knack, knapsack, knead, knee, kneel, knife, knit, knock, knot, knowledge*



Ⓓ **Read and Discuss** What has happened to the knights?

Cross-Curricular Connection

HISTORY: Knights' Armor

The knights in the story wear armor typical of the Middle Ages. On the previous page, the text reads, "They seized their lances with mailed fists and urged their horses forward.""Mailed fists" refers to the chain mail armor knights wore for protection. Chain mail consists of interlocking rings of steel, woven by hand. It covered small areas, such as hands. The knights in the story are also shown wearing plate armor, which covered a knight's entire body. A knight's status was reflected in the quality and style of his armor.

Activity Have students work with a partner to conduct research in order to learn more about medieval armor. Tell students to create a diagram of a knight and his weaponry. Students should note the time period of their knight.



E Reading Focus **Drawing Conclusions** What attitudes and beliefs of Bradbury's are revealed in this story?

Think About/Talk About

Comprehension

D Read and Discuss

Possible response: *Both knights are destroyed easily by the mighty dragon.*

E Reading Focus

Possible response: *Through the story, Bradbury reveals his belief that technology will bring danger, and possibly harm, to people.*

? Extend the Discussion

Evaluating Why do you think Bradbury shifts the point of view from the last page to this page?
Possible response: *By shifting the point of view, Bradbury reveals that the knights are not fighting a dragon, but a train.*

Check for Understanding

Monitor Students' Progress Guide the class in answering these comprehension questions.

1. What does the scream of the dragon turn out to be? [*The dragon's scream turns out to be the train's whistle.*]
2. What do the knights think the light on the front of the train is? [*They think it is the dragon's eye.*]
3. How are the knights' opinions of the dragon different from the reality? [*The knights think they are fighting a dragon. In reality, they are charging a train.*]