

# The Stories Julian Tells

**Synopsis** In this first book of Ann Cameron's popular series, readers are introduced to Julian's active imagination, as well as the fun—and trouble—it brings to his life.

## Introduction: Explore Realistic Fiction

Say, *This is a fun-to-read book about a boy named Julian. This book is realistic fiction. The characters and events in the story are made up, but they could happen in real life.* Clarify that the book does at times seem like fantasy because the author uses vivid details to describe what Julian imagines, but the fantasy elements exist only in Julian's imagination and in the stories he tells, not in the reality of the story.

Introduce similes, metaphors, and personification. Explain that figurative language is used to create vivid and interesting descriptions. *Similes and metaphors describe things by comparing them to other things, usually things that are very different. Similes use the words like or as, and metaphors do not.* Provide examples of similes and metaphors, such as “The cat’s tongue felt like sandpaper” or “The stars were diamonds scattered across the sky.” Then explain that personification is when objects or animals are described as having human traits. Provide a few examples, such as “The wind danced through the leaves.” Ask students to watch for examples of figurative language as they read the book, and to record what they find.

## Vocabulary

**Tier Two:** fluffy, ignorant, invisible, loosened, ordinary, quiver, special, visible

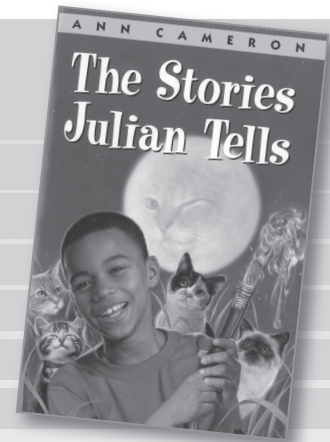
**Tier Three:** catalog, craters, fertilizers, figs, mastodon, pliers

## Word Work

**3.1.A.v** Decode multisyllabic words in context and independent of context by applying common spelling patterns including: Using knowledge of derivational affixes (e.g., -de, -ful, -able).

Introduce vocabulary in context as it appears within the book before or during reading. Write *visible* and *invisible* and *ordinary* and *special*. Discuss the prefix *in-* and how adding it to *visible* changes the meaning. Explain that *visible* and *invisible* are antonyms, or words that have opposite meanings. Explain that *ordinary* and *special* are also antonyms and have students describe something *ordinary* and something *special*. To help clarify the meanings of *ignorant* and *loosened*, have students suggest one or more antonyms for each word.

*What would you use a catalog for?* Have students describe items they have seen in catalogs. Guide students in identifying the base word in *fertilizers*, have them look up the base word’s meaning in a dictionary, and then discuss how the meaning of the base word relates to the vocabulary.



**Author:** Ann Cameron

**Genre:** Fiction/Chapter Book

**Guided Reading Level:** O

**TEKS:** 3.1.A.v, 3.2.B, 3.4.A,  
3.110.14.A, 3.110.14.C

## English Language Support

Offer realia, gestures, or photos to support the introduction of the new vocabulary. Bring in examples of catalogs to show students. Quiver in fear or excitement to demonstrate the meaning. Show students a photo of figs and a detailed image of the moon with its craters visible. Share a photo of a mastodon and discuss their relationship to elephants.

## Understanding the Text

**Literal:** *Why do Julian and Huey have to make pudding?* (because they ate the one their father made) *How does Julian finally lose his tooth?* (biting into an apple) *Why do Julian and Gloria fly a kite?* (to make their wishes come true)

**Interpretive:** *What is the real reason Julian keeps growing taller while the fig tree does not?* (The tree can't grow because Julian keeps eating its leaves.) Discuss where Julian gets his active imagination and storytelling abilities. Use the text for examples.

**Applied:** Discuss the book's structure. Ask students whether it is more like a novel or a short story collection. Have students justify their answers by comparing this book to other books they have read. Discuss how Julian's stories are similar to tall tales. Compare his stories to familiar tall tales, such as Pecos Bill or Paul Bunyan.

## Phonics and Word Recognition

**3.1.A.v** *Decode multisyllabic words in context and independent of context by applying common spelling patterns including: Using knowledge of derivational affixes (e.g., -de, -ful, -able)*

**3.4.A** *Identify the meaning of common prefixes (e.g., in-, dis-) and suffixes (e.g., -full, -less), and know how they change the meaning of roots.*

Have students refer to the chapter "My Very Strange Teeth." Ask them to search for words from the first few pages that contain the / $\overline{oo}$ / sound. List the words. (*Huey, you, tooth, do, two, new, to, loose*) Identify the various spelling patterns that produce the / $\overline{oo}$ / sound (*ue, ou, oo, o, wo, ew*) Discuss which patterns are common and which are not. Brainstorm and build word lists reflective of the most common spelling patterns.

## Fluency

**3.110.14.A** *Establish purposes for reading selected texts based upon own or others' desired outcome to enhance comprehension.*

Model reading aloud the first few pages of the chapter "Catalog Cats." Point out how you use punctuation, descriptions, and a character's personality to guide you when reading dialogue. Direct students to continue reading a few more pages of the chapter quietly to themselves. *As you read the dialogue, imagine how each character would speak the words.*

After a few minutes, have students turn back to the beginning of the chapter. Have volunteers take turns reading aloud a page or so of the chapter at a time. As needed, guide their reading of the dialogue by modeling or offering suggestions for improvement.

## Reading Literature

**3.2.B** *Ask relevant questions, seek clarification, and locate facts and details about stories and other texts and support answers with evidence from text.*

**3.110.14.C** *Monitor and adjust comprehension (e.g., using background knowledge, creating sensory images, re-reading a portion aloud, generating questions).*

Revisit the students' recorded examples of figurative language from their initial reading of the book. Choose several similes and metaphors and have students identify the two things being compared in each. (for example, page 10: *eyes/lightning*; page 70: *kite/tired bird*) Then discuss personification and have students justify why each is an example of figurative language. (*page 34: seeds cannot dream; page 69: a kite cannot climb*) Discuss how the book would be different if the author had not used figurative language.

## Writing

Ask students to think about Julian's imagination and storytelling. Remind students of the similarity between the events in the book and tall tales they may have heard, including the use of exaggeration and personification. *Think of something ordinary that happened to you in the last few days. Now write about what happened, but use exaggeration and your imagination to make it a special and extraordinary event.* Provide time for sharing.