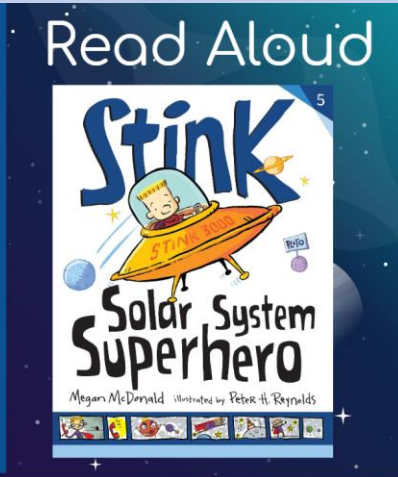


Teaching Point: Readers can explain how the author's choice of words contribute to **mood** or emphasize aspects of character or setting.

The **mood** in this part of the text seems **tense**. Stink and Skunk are arguing with Riley and the author uses the words "butted in" to show how Riley interrupts them. People can feel tense when others interrupt.



Passage from the story:

"I don't see why everybody's so down on Pluto," mumbled Stink, adding a touch of purple-gray to his planet. "Pluto's cool. It might be small, but it doesn't just do what all the other planets do. It has its own orbit."

"Yeah," said Skunk. "I don't get why they voted to take it away."

"Because Pluto's puny like a dwarf," Riley butted in. "Pluto gets its butt kicked by all the other planets. If an asteroid came, Pluto would be all 'Aah! I'm scared,' and shrink away."

"Nah-uh!" said Stink.

"Yah-huh. Ask anybody. I learned it at Space Camp."

"Space Camp, Space Camp, Space Camp!" said Stink. "People should boycott Space Camp for telling lies about Pluto."

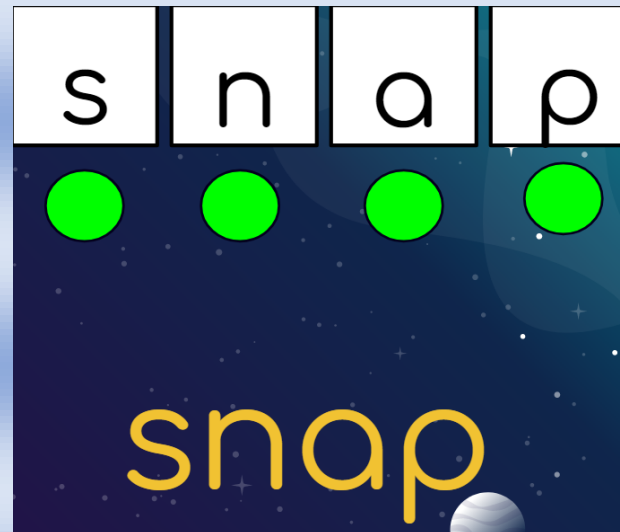
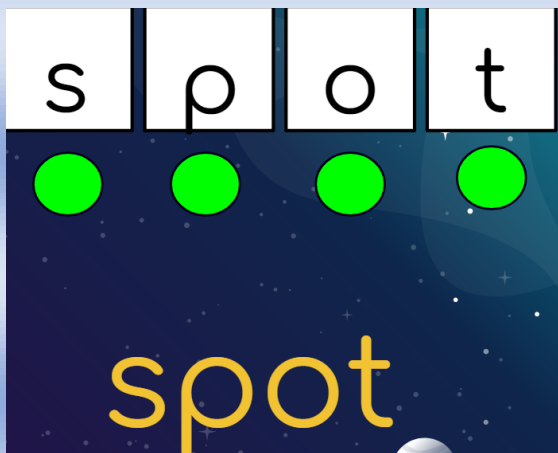
"Stink! Riley!" Mrs. D. said sharply. "What's going on back there? You're supposed to be working on your Science."

Riley's hand shot up into the air. "This is Science," she said. "That's what we were fighting about."

Mrs. D. came over to their tables. "What seems to be the problem?"

"Riley says there's no Pluto," said Stink, "and I say there is."

Teaching Point: Readers can use their knowledge of the blends sl, st, and sn to help them figure out unfamiliar words.



Teaching Point: Readers can explain (tell about) how the author uses words and phrases to inform, explain, or describe.

All about Mercury, the smallest planet.

Mercury planet is named for the Roman god, Mercury, the fastest of all the gods.



This planet is the densest planet next to Earth.

Mercury is the densest planet next to Earth. It has a solid core and crust. Its core is made of metal – mostly iron. Its crust is made of rock. Because Mercury is so small, it has a very weak magnetic field. Gases, like oxygen or hydrogen, blow away into outer space. Mercury doesn't have a blanket of gases to protect it like Earth. Instead, it has a very thin atmosphere. When comets and meteors enter the Earth's thick atmosphere, they usually burn up long before they reach Earth. When comets and meteors enter Mercury's atmosphere, they don't slow down. Instead, they slam into the planet, causing craters and pock marks.

Explain how the author uses words and phrases to inform, explain, or describe.

Text Evidence	How the Author Uses Words and Phrases to Inform, Explain, or Describe
Solid core and crust	The author uses this phrase to explain the meaning of the word, dense.
Doesn't have a blanket of gases	The author uses this phrase to explain that the atmosphere of Mars is thin.