

# The Boy Who Found His Smile

The inspiring story of how one simple surgery can change a child's life

## About the Story

**Lexile:** 950L (combined)

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

## Learning Objective:

to explain how cleft surgery can change a child's life, using details from two texts

## Key Skills:

summarizing, author's craft, key ideas, inference, tone, interpreting text, text structures, reading for information

## Essential Questions:

- What inspires one person to help another?
- How can one person's experience reflect the struggles of many?
- What is our responsibility to help those who live in less privileged parts of the world?

## Standards:

The articles and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: **R.1, R.2, R.4, R.5, R.6, R.9, W.2, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.5, L.6.** For more standards information—including TEKS—go to *Scope Online*.

**PAIRED TEXTS**  
Read the texts on pages 18-21.

**The Boy Who Found His Smile**  
Oswa was born looking different from most kids. Some people were cruel to him. His future looked bleak. Then one day, his whole life changed.  
By RANEE THOMPSON

**As You Read** What are some of the challenges that children born with clefts face?

**18** **19** **20** **21**

**Changing Lives, One Surgery at a Time**  
Meet one of the many amazing people behind Smile Train. Interview by Melissa Friedman

**What Would Happen?**  
Oswa's parents did not abandon him. Osa's experience: They observed him with love and tried to protect him. They ignored their neighbor's suspicion about his child's condition. "I couldn't see," admits his mother. The grandfather, who was a welder, was so proud of his grandson that he would not let anyone see him.

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## Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of materials at [scope.scholastic.com](http://scope.scholastic.com).

### Audio:

- The article and interview
- Vocabulary

**Literature Connections:** ideas for connecting to curricular texts

### Activities to print or project:

- Vocabulary
- Reading for Information
- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- Core Skills Workout: Text Evidence\*
- Quiz\*
- Contest Entry Form

\* Available on two levels

# Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

## Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

### 1 Preparing to Read

#### Do-Now: Preview Text Features

(5 minutes)

As students come into your classroom, have them immediately open their magazines and preview the text features. Ask them to predict how the boy's "whole life changed," as the subheadline on page 18 states it did. Then have them skim the interview on page 21 and predict how it relates to the article.

#### Preview vocabulary.

(5 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project our **Vocabulary Words and Definitions**.

Review the words as a class. You may have the students complete the activity or assign it as homework. Highlighted words: *cacophony, cleft, despondent, developing countries, environmental, genetic, integral, malnutrition, ostracized, palate*

### 2 Reading and Discussing

#### "The Boy Who Found His Smile" and "Changing Lives, One Surgery at a Time"

(30 minutes, activity sheets online)

- Invite a student to read aloud the As You Read box on page 18.
- Read the article and the interview as a class. Optionally, play the audio from Scope Online while students follow along in their magazines.
- Invite students to share any immediate reactions.
- Break students into groups to discuss the following questions.

#### Close-Reading Questions

▶ What do you learn about Osawa in the first section of "The Boy Who Found His

Smile"? (summarizing) *You learn that he had a condition called a cleft lip that made him unhappy. It made eating and speaking difficult and people treated him cruelly because of it.*

▶ Reread the fourth and fifth paragraphs.

Why might author Lauren Tarshis have posed this question and then answered it? (author's craft) *The question in paragraph 4 suggests that perhaps Osawa had done something to deserve his cruel treatment; the answer in paragraph 5 shows that he had not done anything wrong and thereby emphasizes the unfairness of how Osawa was treated, which builds readers' sympathy.*

▶ How does the author support the idea that living with an untreated cleft can be devastating? (key ideas) *The author supports this idea by including examples of the social, physical, and financial hardships faced by those who live with untreated clefts. She writes that in some parts of the world, children with clefts are teased and bullied, that they may have trouble "eating, speaking, and breathing," and that they may never get married or have jobs (19).*

▶ When Osawa first saw his mouth after the operation, he said, "I look like my friends!" Why might this have been important to him? (inference) *Osawa had been excluded because of his appearance. To him, looking like his friends meant he would be accepted in a way he never had been.*

▶ Reread the subheadline on page 21.

What does it tell the reader about Allison Friedman's attitude toward Smile Train? (tone) *The subheadline describes those who work for Smile Train as "amazing people." This tells the reader that Friedman admires the organization.*

► **Reread Adina Lescher's answer to the second question, about life for kids with clefts. What does she mean when she says it's "heartbreaking" that kids live with untreated clefts because their families can't afford surgery?** (interpreting text) *She means that a lack of money is not a good reason for kids with clefts to have to suffer and that she is deeply upset by this.*

► **Consider Lescher's answer to the third question, about some of the challenges Smile Train addresses. What sections of "The Boy Who Found His Smile" contain similar information?** (text structure) *In Lescher's answer, she explains that money, transportation, and superstition are all barriers to helping kids with untreated clefts. Similar information is contained in the sections "High Costs" and "What Would Happen?" of "The Boy Who Found His Smile." The section "High Costs" explains why Osawa's parents could not afford surgery and the reasons that Osawa was bullied. The section "What Would Happen?" explains the transportation challenges Osawa's parents faced in getting Osawa to a hospital.*

- Reconvene as a class to discuss the following critical-thinking questions.

## Critical-Thinking Questions

► **What does reading the interview add to your understanding of Osawa's story?**

*Answers will vary. Students may say that it helps them understand the work of Smile Train from a different point of view or that it helps them understand the "bigger picture" of the organization. Students may also say that it helps them understand that kids like them may have helped Osawa by raising money for Smile Train.*

► **Why is it important to read stories like "The Boy Who Found His Smile"?** *Answers will vary. Students may say that reading stories like this one makes them feel more grateful to live in a place where medicine is more available. They may also say it makes them more compassionate and empathetic about the struggles of others and perhaps even inspires them to help.*

## 3 Skill Building

### Featured Skill: Reading for Information

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Have students work in groups to complete the **Reading for Information** activity. This activity will prepare students to respond to the writing prompt on page 21. *For alternate culminating tasks, see the box below.*

# Differentiate and Customize

### For Struggling Readers

In a well-organized paragraph, explain how Osawa's life changed because of the surgery.

### For Advanced Readers

Write an essay explaining how cleft surgery can change a child's life. Use information from the article and the interview as well as information from Smile Train's website. Go to [smiletrain.org](http://smiletrain.org) and click on "Our Stories" and then "Patient" to read stories about other children like Osawa.

### For Changemakers

Come up with a project to support Smile Train and its work. Organize and implement your project, then make a presentation about what you did and how it went. Your presentation can be a video, slideshow, essay, or speech.

### For Journalists

Imagine you are a journalist and you're going to interview a doctor who works with Smile Train. Write the list of questions you'd ask.