

CHAPTER 5 – The Literacy Program

Classroom Activity: Shared book teaching opportunities

Here are six lesson plans for working with a big book based on the story of the Gingerbread Man. These sessions will need to be adapted to suit the children in the classroom. The activities involve all language modes: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Lesson 1 Shared reading: introducing the book

This introductory lesson focuses on reading the book aloud for enjoyment and on sharing a passion for reading with children.

Before reading

Ask children if they know the story of the Gingerbread Man. Show children the cover of the book and ask, ‘*What can you see in the cover illustration?*’ Say, ‘*The book is called The Story of the Gingerbread Man. What do you think it will be about? What do you think is going to happen? Who else do you think might be in this book?*’

Note that when a book is being shared it is not necessary to talk through it before reading.

During reading

When a book is being introduced to a group of children, it is helpful to read the book once and sometimes several times to give children an overview.

Reading 1: Enjoy sharing the book together. It is best not to interrupt the flow of reading at this stage so that children gain an appreciation of the whole book.

Reading 2: Read the book again and discuss the characters: Old Woman, Old Man, Cow, Dog, etc.

Reading 3: Read the book again and focus on specific teaching opportunities to do with phonics, vocabulary and comprehension.

After reading

Some children may read through a small version of the book again, while listening to an audio version.

Lesson 2 Revisiting the book: using the book to teach comprehension

Select from the following questions to help develop children’s comprehension strategies. These questions focus on using the text and the illustrations to understand the book. Some questions call for literal interpretations and others require children to infer meaning. Some questions engage the reader as a text critic. Questions may be asked about selected pages.

‘What happened to the Gingerbread Man?’

‘Why did he run away?’

‘Which other characters chased him?’

‘Why do you think they chased him?’

‘What do you think the Gingerbread Man is made out of?’

‘What makes you think that?’

‘Was it fair to chase the Gingerbread Man?’

Lesson 3 Revisiting the book: using the book to teach phonics

The focus of this lesson is learning that the letter 'g' can have a hard /g/ sound, as in the word *get*, and a soft /j/ sound, as in the word *ginger*. Point to the word *ginger* in the big book. Write the upper- and lower-case 'G' and 'g' on the whiteboard. Explain that the letter 'G' and 'g' can make the sound /j/ when it is followed by the letter 'i' and 'y'. Make a list of words that have a soft /j/ sound.

ginger	giraffe	gypsy	page
giant	gym	cage	stage

Explain that there are always exceptions, like in the word *give*. Encourage the idea of exploring how the English language works, rather than being right or wrong.

Lesson 4 Revisiting the book: using the book to teach vocabulary

Focus again on the type of text—narrative (story). Discuss how different text types require different reading. The words *seize* and *meticulous* occur in the big book. This is a chance to explore vocabulary with children.

Point to the word *seize* in the book.

'This word is seize.'

'The Gingerbread Man says, "You can't seize me!" Seize means to grab or catch. Can you put the word seize in a sentence? Do you know another meaning for seize?'

Talk about the word meanings as children may have different understandings of the word meaning.

Work the same way with the word *meticulous*.

'The woman rolled out the dough and was meticulous when she cut out the perfect gingerbread man.'

Lesson 5 Revisiting the book: using the book to improve fluency

Revisit the book, focusing on reading in a phrased and fluent manner.

Lesson 6 Revisiting the book: using the book to teach writing

Select from the following written language conventions to help develop the children's understandings of these concepts.

Ask the children to find the quotation marks.

'Who is talking?'

Discuss the apostrophes and what they mean (possession and contraction).

Point out the question mark in the text.

'What is this? Why do we use it? How do we read questions?'

Point out the commas in the first verse.

'Why do we need commas? What do they do?'

Point out the ellipsis (...).

'Why did they use an ellipsis here?'