

Sample Read-Aloud Strategy

Make Way for Ducklings



Say: Today I'm going to read a story called *Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey. Let's look at the pictures and see if you can tell me what the story is going to be about.

Do: Encourage the children to respond as you turn the pages of the book from beginning to end. This activity is sometimes called a "picture walk." After the children have offered their ideas, say:

Say: This story is about a pair of ducks who decide to raise their family in a park right in the middle of a big city. While I'm reading, try to decide if you think Mr. & Mrs. Mallard made a good decision on where to live. Also, try to remember the names of the baby ducklings.

Do: Ask questions that build additional background knowledge and set a purpose for listening. Where do ducks usually live? What do ducks eat? Is a city a good place for an animal like a duck? Once the children are familiar with this questioning technique, you can ask them to think of their own questions.

Say: Now that I've told you a little bit about the story, let's read it.

Do: Show the children the pictures as you read. Stop occasionally for reactions, comments, and questions. To engage the children, you can ask the following discussion questions: "Why didn't Mrs. Mallard want to live near any turtles or foxes? What did the people on the big swan boat throw into the water? What did Mrs. Mallard teach her baby ducks to do?" If the children don't respond, you can model a response by saying, "Mrs. Mallard wants her baby ducklings to be safe and have plenty of food to eat so they grow up big and strong."

Say: Now that we've read the story, let's see if we can remember the names of the eight ducklings. What is special about these names? If we remember Jack, we can guess the rest because the first letter changes to the next letter until you get to Q. What comes after J? K? And so on.

Do: Let the children respond and ask them to retell the story using the pictures in the book to help them recall the story sequence. Finally focus on the second goal, making inferences and ask:

Say: If you were Mr. & Mrs. Mallard, would you have chosen the park for a home? Do you think the little ducklings will be safe in the park? Why or why not? What lesson can we learn from this story?

Adapted from Mandel Morrow, Lesley & Gambrell, Linda B. (2004). *Using Children's Literature in Preschool. Supporting Reading Comprehension: Responding to Books*, 3, 37-47.

www.bookitprogram.com/redzone

Visit the R.E.D. Zone for more reading-readiness, printables, read-aloud tips, resources and more!