

Guided reading

SECTION

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Introducing the book

Guided reading sessions will reinforce and develop the children's key reading skills. Help them to use phonological and grammatical knowledge to decode words. Encourage appropriate pace and emphasis on rhyme. Invite children to predict key moments and ask questions to develop their understanding of the text.

As well as exploring the story in readable chunks, it is essential that the children have opportunities to listen to and enjoy it without interruption. This will allow them to appreciate the sing-song rhythm and humour of the story and revel in the expressive illustrations.

Cover and title page

Display the cover and invite the children to describe what they see. Draw attention to the title, which is designed in a stick font. Point out that the title is framed within the trees with Stick Man below.

Encourage the children to make judgements about Stick Man. Ask questions such as: *Is he happy, mischievous or scared? Does the cover hint at any problems Stick Man may encounter?* Invite the children to offer predictions about the story content from the cover or title.

Now look at the title page. Again, both the font and the characters embed the idea that this story brings sticks to life. Ask the children: *What does this picture tell us about Stick Man? What do we think about Stick Man now we see him with his family?*

Who is Stick Man?

Read the first two sentences together. Point out the play on words of *the family tree*. Ask the children: *What is a family tree?*

The characters are known only as Stick Man, Stick Lady Love and stick children. Invite the children to suggest suitable names for the characters that begin with a 'st' blend.

Continue to read the text. What do the children notice about the font of the last line? Why do

they think it might be written in italics? (This could indicate that we, as readers, are warning Stick Man of the danger ahead.)

Danger!

Turn to the next spread. Read the text and look at the pictures. Talk about other tricks a dog could do without needing a stick. Work together with the children to come up with a phrase about any of these tricks following a similar format to *I'll fetch it and drop it*.

Look closely at the illustration on the right-hand page of the spread. Point out how much movement is conveyed in the detail. Ask the children for examples of words that describe the ways in which the people, animals and objects are moving.

Into the river

Turn to the next spread, about Pooh-sticks. Look at the first page, pointing out the different spellings of the 'ea/ee' digraph in *lead* and *freed*.

Ask the children to identify which sentence conveys Stick Man's happiness at being freed (*with a hop and a twirl*). What other expressions can they think of that are similar to this phrase (for example *hop and skip; hop and a jump; hop, skip and jump*)?

Find out if the children have ever played Pooh-sticks. Ask: *Could the girl use anything else instead of a stick?*

A swan's life

Turn to the page beginning "*I'm not a Pooh-stick!*" Look at the different ways in which the words *I'm Stick Man* are presented in Stick Man's repeated refrain. Ask the children: *What effect do the different font styles have on the way the reader reads the phrase?*

Notice how the story on the left-hand page is about Stick Man and the right-hand page about the swan.

On the next page, look at the three swan illustrations and read the text. Ask: *Do the*

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