

Look at Me

by Miriam Macdonald
illustrated by Ali Teo

Overview

A pig dresses himself and then discovers that his colourful outfit has turned him into a rainbow!

Suggested purposes

This book supports the comprehension strategies of making connections, forming hypotheses, and inferring. The high proportion of single-syllable words supports the development of one-to-one word matching. This text also provides opportunities for students to practise cross-checking and recognition of high-frequency words. Visual sub-plots provide extra opportunities to stimulate children's oral language.

Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the high-frequency words “a”, “am”, “at”, “I”, “Look”, “me”, “my”, “on”
- the variety of initial consonants
- the single line of text on pages 2 to 7 and the change to two lines on page 8
- the two text changes per page, strongly supported by the central illustration and the colour strip at the bottom of each page
- the title as a support for the change of text on page 8
- the metaphor of the rainbow on page 8
- the enlarged font and exclamation mark that convey the pig's delight on page 8
- the colour names
- the rainbows or rainbow colours on every page
- the visual sub-plots.

Introducing the text

Start a discussion about getting ready in the morning, planning your prompts and questions so they scaffold the vocabulary and sentence structures that the children will meet in the text. *Think about what happens in the morning when you first wake up.*

What clothes do you like to put on? Talk about the names for various garments. Be aware that for children from some cultures, particular styles or items of clothing may have special significance. One or two children could mime getting dressed while the group calls out the names of the garments they're “putting on”.

Tell the children you have a book to read that is about a pig getting dressed. Discuss the cover illustration. The children may notice that the pig is already dressed. *How is the pig feeling?* Ask the children to read the title, offering support if necessary. *I'm wondering why the pig wants us to look at him ...*

The first reading

Compare the title page illustration with the cover. *Why isn't the pig wearing any clothes?* Draw out the idea that the cover shows the end of the story and the title page shows the beginning.

Remind the children of the strategies you'd like them to focus on during the reading. To keep the flow of the story, focus on the main character in the first reading. Save any discussion about the little pigs and mice in the visual sub-plots for subsequent readings.

Page 2 – You may need to spend time supporting the children's use of the focus strategy and establishing the pattern of the text. *What is the pig telling us?* Listen carefully as the children read, observing their use of the visual (print) information and encouraging them to cross-check if necessary. For example, if some children say "I put my green pants on", direct them to reread the sentence, pointing to each word and looking carefully. *Is that word "my"? Why not? What does it start with? Start again from the beginning of the sentence.*

Pages 3 to 7 – Listen as the children read, providing support and feedback as necessary. Observe their one-to-one word matching, word-level strategies, and any instances of cross-checking. At the end of pages 3 and 5, encourage them to predict what the pig will put on next.

Page 8 – Savour the triumphant ending together. Refer the children to the cover of the book if necessary to support them in recognising "Look at me." Draw their attention to the bold type and exclamation mark. *How does the author want us to say that? Is the pig really a rainbow? Why do you think he says that?*

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text, observing their attempts to maintain accurate one-to-one word matching, their use of the visual information, and how they manage the change in the text pattern and the return sweep on the last page.

Locate some of the high-frequency words in the text. *Find the word "on" on page 2. Can you find "on" on the next page too? Tell me the letters in the word.*

Ask the children to use their word and letter knowledge to locate some of the interest words. Discuss their initial letters, word length, shape, or similarities to other known words.

Focus on the colour words. Encourage the children to use the colour strip at the bottom of each page as a support. *How will you find the word "green"? What will you look for in the word?* Note that the children could choose between different sources of information, for example, using the initial consonant or consonant blend or rereading and using the pattern of the text to get to the colour word. Discuss their use of strategies and explore the features of the colour words. Encourage any children who speak more than one language to share the colour names in their other language(s).

Follow one of the visual sub-plots together. Encourage the children to describe what they can see. Note that the pigs are following a morning routine that the children can predict. The mice, on the other hand, are mischievous and comical, and they will take some careful spotting on some pages!

Explore and discuss the quirky characteristics of the pig's house. Use your discretion as to how much to point out to the children and how much to let them discover for themselves or with their family when reading the book at home.

Suggestions for further tasks

Have the children cut out magazine pictures of clothing and write descriptive labels. Use this as an opportunity to reinforce the use of pronouns, especially for ESOL students – “He is wearing black shoes.” “She has a black hat.”

Compare the colours in the “real” rainbow with the colours in the book. (Six of the seven rainbow colours are mentioned. “Indigo” has been omitted, and “violet” has been renamed “purple”.) Draw and label a diagram of a rainbow.

Create a colour chart with names representing the languages of the children in the class.

Read or reread *Lunch Boxes* (Magenta), which also includes colour words.

As a group, compile a set of instructions for getting ready in the morning.

Make an individual or class book, innovating on the text pattern: “Look at me. I can ...” or “I am ...”.

Enjoy discovering examples of metaphors in other books or poems.