

# My Dad

by Shane Haua

illustrated by Shane McGrath

## Overview

In this text, a young boy describes how big his dad seems to him. There is an audio version on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2007*.

## Suggested purposes

This book supports the comprehension strategies of making connections, visualising, inferring, and summarising. It provides opportunities to practise recognising high-frequency words, decoding, and cross-checking and to practise making meaning of sentences that have more than one idea. It supports expressive reading and provides a great model for personal writing.

## Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the ideas about size
- the comparative phrase “bigger than”
- the first-person narrator
- the use of images from a child’s perspective to describe Dad
- the adverb “really”
- the implied information about the relationship between the boy and his dad in the text and illustrations
- the complex sentences with more than one idea on pages 3 to 5 and the use of commas to separate the ideas
- the opening sentence repeated on page 8 with an exclamation mark added
- the large amount of decodable text
- the initial consonant blends or digraphs in “brother”, “ground”, “shoulder”, “stand”, “than”, “the”
- the “ound” rime in “ground” and “round”
- the contractions “it’s”, “won’t”
- the possessive apostrophe in “dad’s”.

## Introducing the text

Show the children the cover and read the title together. Model your thinking – *The word “My” in the title makes me think that the boy in the picture is going to tell us about his dad.* Encourage the children to share any further inferences, for example, about the boy’s age, soccer, or why he’s sitting on Dad’s shoulders. *Have you ever sat on someone’s shoulders? What did it feel like?*

## The first reading

Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Tell the children you want them to read the text to find out about the boy and his dad. During this first reading, try to focus the discussion on the information about Dad’s size. Listen to the children read the text themselves, offering support as necessary.

Page 2 – If the children have difficulty with “really”, have them read to the full stop so they get the idea of “big”. *So how big is Dad? Look at the first letter.* Support the children in sounding out the rest of the word. Use your arms to demonstrate the difference between “big” and “really big”.

Page 3 – Provide support for the sentence structure on pages 3 to 5. *The boy is telling us how he knows his dad is big.* If necessary, support the children with decoding “st-and” (or “s-t-an-d”). If they say “next to” for “by”, direct them to cross-check. Remind them of the familiar word “my”.

Page 4 – If necessary, support the children with decoding “ar-m-s” and prompt them to cross-check with the illustration. *Does that make sense?* If they read “around” for “round”, have them cross-check with the initial letter. *So how does this page show that Dad is big?* Have the children visualise Dad’s size by spreading out their arms.

Page 5 – Recall the earlier discussion of the cover illustration. *When you’re up on a big person’s shoulders, how does it feel to look down?* If necessary, write “round” (from the previous page) and “ground” to draw attention to the shared rime.

Check that the children have worked out who is telling this story. *How do you know?* Review (summarise) the information in the text so far. *What are the three ways that the boy has used to show you that his dad is really big?*

Pages 6 and 7 – Discuss the illustration and clarify that the boy looks big because he’s in the foreground. Have the children identify the family members. *What do you notice about the sizes of the people on page 6?* If the children read “then” for “than”, highlight the “an” in “than” and articulate it clearly so that the children can both see and hear the difference.

Page 8 – *What do you notice about the words on this page? Why has the author added an exclamation mark?*

Summarise the information about Dad in the text. Look for information in the illustrations about the things this boy and his dad like to do together. *How do you think they feel about spending time together?* Encourage the children to make connections with their own experiences.

## Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text, observing their use of cross-checking, their fluency with the two-line sentences, their use of expression, and their articulation of “than”.

Discuss how the comma separates the two ideas in each sentence on pages 3 to 5 and provides a guide to phrasing. Lead a shared rereading of these pages so that the children can practise fluent reading.

Write “big”, “bigger”, and “biggest” in the group reading book and use the illustration of Mum, Dad, and the brother on page 6, or sets of three appropriate objects, to clarify their meanings.

Use pictures or objects to provide a context for practising using “bigger than” in oral sentences. You could extend this to other comparative adjectives, such as “faster”, “longer”, or “wider”.

Focus on any of the initial consonant blends or digraphs that the children had difficulty with. List other examples and read them together, carefully articulating the common sound.

Reread page 5 and show how the apostrophe replaces the “i” in “is” to form “it’s”. Reread the sentence, replacing “it’s” with “it is” to draw out the idea that contractions make writing sound more natural. Repeat the activity with page 4, replacing the contraction with “will not”.

Briefly explain the different use of the possessive apostrophe in the word “dad’s” on page 5. Clarify that the apostrophe is there because the shoulders belong to Dad. Don’t expect the children to totally understand this – the main thing is to alert them to the different uses for apostrophes.

### Suggestions for further tasks

Listen to the audio version on the CD *Readalong 2007*.

Read or reread other stories about dads, for example, *Let’s Go* (Magenta), *Going Fishing* (Red), and *Keep Trying* (Yellow) or about families, for example, *Lāvalava* (Red), *My Sister*, or *My Brother* (both Blue).

During shared writing, innovate on the ideas and structure, creating a new text about someone familiar to the group, for example, the principal, a book or television character, or a local identity. Have the children write personal descriptions of someone in their family.

Together, create examples of sentences that have more than one idea, such as “When I get ready for school, I ...”, “When I see my dad, I ...”

Have the children bring photos or draw pictures of themselves doing things with their dads or another family member or friend and add captions.