

Rosie at the Zoo

by Joy Cowley

pictures by Christine Ross

Overview

A young boy visits the zoo with his father and little sister, Rosie. The text has an underlying theme of doing things together as a family. This book has a large amount of text, and not all the events mentioned in the text are shown in the illustrations. This means that children must pay close attention to the print details. This is a particularly suitable text to use for monitoring children's integration of reading strategies at the end of the Yellow level. An audiotape is available (item 91179).

Curriculum links: health and physical education, science

Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the repeated use of the initial letters "l", "u", "w"
- the initial consonant blends "cr" and "tr"
- the digraphs "ph" – "elephant"; "sh" – "she", "WOOOOSH", "shower"; and "th" – "That", "There", "bath", "baths"
- words that include the rimes "at", "et", "oo", "ook"
- the rhyming words "see", "she", "me"
- the variety of verbs ending in "ed", "ing", and "s"
- the plural nouns "monkeys" and "lions"
- the contractions "don't", "let's"
- the pronouns "its", "us", "she", "I", "me", "us", "we", "you"
- the use of direct speech
- the use of onomatopoeia – "WOOOOSH!"
- the unidentified narrator
- the humorous ending to the story.

Setting the scene

Talk about the children's experiences of visits to zoos, animal parks, or farms.

Who did you go the zoo/farm visit with? What animals did you see?

The first reading

Look at the cover of the text. Draw out the idea that this is a family visit to the zoo. Ask the children to read the title and the names of the author and the illustrator. If they need help with Rosie's name, write it on the whiteboard and support them in sounding it out. Look at the end of her name. *Are there children in the class who have names that end this way?*

Listen to the children as they read the text themselves, observing their integration of reading strategies.

Page 2 – *Who is Rosie with?* Notice that the monkeys are not shown in the illustration. Some children may notice that the illustration shows “Zoo” written in reverse.

Page 3 – *Which person in the picture do you think is Rosie? How do you know? What does this page tell you about Rosie?* Rosie’s refrain “Me too!” helps to establish that she is young. Show the children how they can put together their knowledge of “l”, “if”, “t”, and “ed” to work out the word “lifted”. Watch for any children in the group who manage this independently.

Page 4 – *What did the lion do?* Note the repetition of “up and down” for effect.

Page 5 – *What noise does a lion make? What do you think Rosie did?* Draw attention to the initial blend “cr” (for “cried”) so that the children can cross-check their predictions. Note how the perspective changes dramatically from the illustrations on pages 4 to 5.

Page 8 – If necessary, use the whiteboard to support the children in decoding “WOOOOSH!” Encourage them to clearly enunciate the “SH” at the end of the word. This should support them in their decoding of the word “shower”.

Think beyond the text. *Do you think Rosie will come back to the zoo? Who is telling the story?*

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text, observing their integration of reading strategies. Those children who are managing this well and show a good understanding of the story are probably ready to move on to the Blue level. A running record will help to confirm this.

Children who use meaning and structural information but who need to attend more closely to visual information can be helped by asking them to identify the words in the text that begin with “u” (“us” and “up”). Write the words on the whiteboard. By removing the words from their context, the children will need to focus on their visual features. *How are these words different? Write out all the words on page 3 (or page 4) that begin with “l”. Can you find the word in the list that says “lions”? How do you know it’s the right word?* Repeat with the other “l” words. Develop the idea that often the children will need to look at more features of words than just their initial letters. Listen to the children reread the book and observe whether they seem to be focusing more on visual information. You could follow this up with a running record.

Focus on any of the initial consonant blends or digraphs that the children may have been unsure of. Locate the words in context and make a list of other words that start the same way.

Focus on the “th” digraph at the end of the word “bath”. List other words that end this way.

Locate the rhyming words “at”, “that”, “get”, “wet”, “she”, “see”, “Me”; or “zoo”, “too” in the text and generate others by substituting the initial consonants. Note how the “ee” rime in “see” has the same sound as the “e” rime in “she” and “Me”.

Identify verbs in the text that end with “s”, “ed”, or “ing”. Build verb families together, for example, “look”, “looks”, “looked”, “looking”.

Discuss the contractions “don’t” or “let’s”.

Talk about how “WOOOOSH!” is an example of onomatopoeia. Look at the use of upper-case letters and the exclamation mark to add emphasis.

Suggestions for further activities

Listen to the audiotape.

The children could retell the story to a partner or onto a tape. This could be from Rosie or Dad’s perspective.

The children could research animals, using the school library or Internet.

Email a zoo or park to find out about a particular animal.

Use the close-up illustration on page 5 as a stimulus for a study of animals’ teeth.

There is a short article about the mako shark’s teeth in *Junior Journal 21* and a longer article about teeth in *Connected 1 2001*.

Read a range of other books about animals or the zoo, either fiction or non-fiction.

Construct zoo animals with collage materials at the making table or make “stuffed” zoo animals. Display them and add captions that introduce each animal.

Add “WOOOOSH” to a class list of onomatopoeic words. Look for other examples.