

Dirty Dog Boogie

written and illustrated by Loris Lesynski

genre: POETRY

themes: POETRY
LANGUAGE

suitable for: GRADES 1–5

This is a book of 28 poems which explores rhymes and sounds related to topics that appeal to kids: dirt, animals, things that bug you ...

The style is musical and silly, reminding us of the sheer fun of reading aloud words that rhyme.

Lois Lesynski bio: “Good rhyming captures children's attention right away. They wonder where it is going, what's the next word. Genuine humor, a good beat, and delectable sounds combine with an intriguing story to have them hanging on with both ears.” This is the philosophy that has shot Loris Lesynski to the forefront of Canadian children's literature.

The following activity ideas ...

... are only a start. There are many possibilities for helping students construct meaning from text.

Comprehension activities:

- help readers to extend their general knowledge from prior experience
- develop reading strategies for comprehension
- bring relevance to the act of reading
- foster discussion and reflection through response to the text and illustrations

Before

STARTING THE POEM “How I Lost My Appetite”, page 30

Activities to build the context and to introduce the topic of the book, establish prior knowledge and interest and develop predictions of what the text will be about.

- A 1. Lead a discussion about what an appetite is with questions such as:
 - When does your appetite tell you to eat?
 - What does your appetite tell you to eat?
 - Can you control when and what you eat?
- A 2. Post a list of everyone’s favorite food to eat and when they like to eat it. Review meanings of words used in the poem in a context of eating, such as: *munch, consuming, vanished, grub, chow.*

While

READING THE POEM

Activities to check on comprehension, stimulate interest, involve readers in reflection as they read, and encourage consideration of other readers’ reactions.

- B 1. Write out the poem on a large chart. Read aloud the first two verses to your students and then have students join in. Ask for volunteers in pairs to read the same two verses aloud until the rhythm and rhyme are familiar-sounding to all. Have all the students in pairs prepare on their own to read the same verses (or other verses) aloud in one of several different ways: with a loud voice, a quiet voice, a slow voice, a fast voice, a giant’s voice, a baby’s voice...
- B 2. Post a chart listing the favorite foods mentioned in the poem as students reread it through. Ask them to create a Venn diagram of the ten favorite foods of the class, favorite foods of “the appetite” in the poem, and favorite foods that feature on both lists.

After

READING THE POEM

Activities to inspire continued reflection and response to the text, bring conclusion to the experience of reading this particular text, and stimulate further extensions.

- C 1. Have students read the whole poem aloud by asking them to take turns simply reading alternate lines in chorus.
A more difficult task is to have students read the whole poem aloud by organizing themselves into three groups representing the mother's voice, the kid's voice and the voice of "the appetite". Give groups time to rehearse and practice making their group "voice" funny and interesting, without taking away from the natural rhythm and rhyme of the poem.
- C 2. Have a lot of fun with the sounds of the words by emphasizing the rhythm of the poem and having students clap or tap the pattern.
Demonstrate a simple clapping pattern while the poem is read aloud. Have students try saying the poem while doing the clapping pattern, then try reading two lines speaking and two lines just clapping, and keep alternating. Have students in groups make up their own combinations of clapping and speaking that follow the rhythm of the poem. Give them time to practice and perform.

Extensions

There are many other poems to enjoy in the book either on their own, as part of a set or as a whole. Be careful not to take away from the natural fun and silliness of the poetry by analyzing it too much or at all. (Students should not be asked to write their own poetry until they have heard a variety of poems read aloud many, many times.)

Remember to keep the poem charts posted or the book prominent in a way that invites children to revisit it in unstructured reading times or borrow it to take home and share with their family.

In the same funny and musical style, the author and illustrator, Loris Lesynski, herself suggests:

*Read them all alone
or
read them all aloud.*

*Read them to your Mumsy
or recite them to a crowd.*

*Change the words,
arrange the words,
or rearrange the beat.*

*Know a poem?
Show it off
to everyone you meet.*