

Prep

Topic: Exploration of funny characters

Sharing a funny book

Lesson concepts

- Expressing opinions — Needs, likes, dislikes
- Word groups — Words and groups of words that make meaning
- Spelling — Letters of the alphabet represent sounds in spoken words
- Letters of the alphabet — Lowercase letters, upper-case letters
- Personal opinions — Favourite stories, authors, illustrators
- Comprehension strategies — Understanding and discussing texts

Today students will:

- ▶ understand how to use speech appropriately to talk about a favourite story and express reasons for the preference
- ▶ understand how to comprehend a story, making links to text and own experiences
- ▶ understand how to identify parts of a sentence that are key units for expressing ideas.

Resources

Text

Allen, P 1998, *Mr McGee and the biting flea*, Puffin Books, Camberwell, Victoria.
(Or use an internet search engine to find a read-aloud version of the story.)

Digital

Audio — This old man (2:30)

Find and prepare

Sheet — My favourite book (save for future lessons)

Sheet — Alphabet chart

A3 or A4 paper

Scrapbook

Art materials (coloured pens or pencils, collage materials, paint)

Lesson

Identify characteristics of favourite books

- Have students view, listen to or sing along with and copy the actions to the **Audio — This old man**.
 - Talk about the rhyming words in the song (for example: two, shoe; three, knee; four, door).
 - Talk about the funny things the old man did.



Say to students

“ In these lessons, you will listen to and read some stories and think about the reasons people have favourite stories. The song ‘This old man’ tells a story about funny things the old man did. One reason you might like a song or story is because it’s funny. You will explore other reasons people enjoy or have favourite songs, stories or rhymes.

Think now about what your favourite story is and why you like it so much. ”

- Ask students to decide which books or stories are their favourites and think about what it is that makes them so special.

Focus questions

Q: *What is the name of your favourite storybook?*

Q: *What makes that book or story so special?*

- Give students a piece of paper.
- Model writing the title ‘My favourite book’ at the top of the paper. As you write, explain:
 - capital letters
 - spaces between words
 - letters and sounds.

Say to students

“ We use a capital at the start of sentences and the start of titles. So we will write a capital ‘M’ for ‘My’.

I have finished writing the word ‘My’ so I leave a space before I start the next word, ‘favourite’.

When I say ‘book’ I can hear a /b/ sound at the start and a /k/ sound at the end. The letter ‘b’ makes a /b/ sound and the letter ‘k’ makes a /k/ sound. ”

- Ask students to draw a picture of themselves with a speech bubble under the title 'My favourite book'.
- Model writing in the speech bubble the title of the book or story the student has chosen and the reason why they like it, for example: I like the book *Tallulah the tricky tortoise* because it has beautiful pictures.
- Share other reasons why we like books and stories by reading and viewing the **Sheet** — [My favourite book](#).
- Display the students' drawings and writing. They will be referred to and used in the following lessons.

My favourite book



Shared reading of a funny book

Note

Use an internet search engine to find a read-aloud version of the story. Using key terms, such as the book title, author's name, and read-aloud in your search should allow you to find these resources.

- Explore the book, *Mr McGee and the biting flea*, by Pamela Allen.
- Read the title and the author's/illustrator's name.
- Help students make connections between the main character (Mr McGee) and the illustrations on the front cover.
- Look for or talk about other books by the same author or with the same character.

Say to students

‘ This story is called *Mr McGee and the biting flea* and it is written by Pamela Allen. I know Pamela Allen also wrote *My cat Maisie* and *Who sank the boat?* She has also written other books about Mr McGee's adventures. ’

- Explore the illustrations on the front and back covers and look for clues about the story.
- Ask students to share their own experiences that are similar to Mr McGee's.

Focus questions

There are seagulls on the front cover.

Q: *Where do you think Mr McGee is?*

A: outside

Q: *What sort of day is it if Mr McGee is flying a kite?*

A: windy

Q: *Why are all those seagulls flying away?*

A: The dog may have frightened them.

Q: *Where do you think the flea might be?*

- Think aloud as you help students explore the illustrations inside the book.

Say to students

Mr McGee is running fast with the kite but then he lets it go. Over the next few pages he looks very uncomfortable. Something is biting him. Maybe it is something very small like an ant or a flea that is biting him.

Focus questions

Mr McGee has lots of red spots where the flea has bitten him.

Q: *How will he get rid of the flea?*

Q: *Where did Mr McGee go to get the flea off his body?*

Q: *At the end of the story, where is the flea?*

A: Back on the dog

- Predict some rhyming words that may be in the story.

Focus questions

Q: *What are some words that would rhyme with Mr McGee?*

A: see, sea, tea, bee, key, flea

Q: *We can see there is a dog in this story, what are some words that rhyme with dog?*

A: frog, log, fog, jog

- Review the story, pausing to answer questions or allow comment.
- Demonstrate:
 - where to start reading
 - turning pages appropriately
 - looking at illustrations as well as print
 - the direction of print and return sweep.

Focus questions

Q: *How do you think Mr McGee felt when the flea was biting him?*

Q: *How do you think the flea got onto the dog in the first place?*

Q: *What would you have done to get rid of the flea?*

- Pause while reading the rhyming text so students can predict/guess the rhyming words.
- After reading, talk about the story events.

Identify the actions and characteristics of the main character

- Ask students to think about what the character Mr McGee is like.
 - Look through the book, Mr McGee and the biting flea.
 - Talk about Mr McGee's characteristics and actions.

Focus questions

- Q: *What does Mr McGee look like?*
- Q: *What is he wearing?*
- Q: *What places does he like to visit?*
- Q: *What does Mr McGee do in the book?*
- Q: *What do other characters think of him?*

- Talk about words that describe Mr McGee.
- Explain to students that one of the reasons people might like this book is because Mr McGee does some funny things.

Focus questions

- Q: *Why are the Mr McGee stories funny?*
- Q: *What words has the author used to help make the story funny?*
- Q: *How has the illustrator used the pictures to help make the story funny?*

Identify and classify what types of words the author has used

- Ask questions to help students recall what they know about different types of words.

Focus questions

Listen to this sentence: 'The dog jumped over the fence.'

Q: *Which word tells us what is happening in that sentence?*

A: jumped

Jumped is the action word. It tells us what the dog did.

Q: *Which word tells us who or what jumped?*

A: dog

'Dog' is the 'who' or 'what' word. It tells us who or what jumped.

Q: *Which words tell 'where' the dog jumped?*

A: Over the fence

Sometimes sentences also explain 'when', 'where' or 'how' something happens. We could include a where or how word by adding 'quickly' or 'carefully' to the sentence. 'The dog jumped quickly over the fence.' This gives the reader more information about what is happening.

Q: *What could be another 'when', 'where' or 'how' word that could be added to this sentence?*

- Ask students to think of some sentences that describe Mr McGee using words from the story, for example: 'Mr McGee jumped into the sea.'
- Talk about the parts of the sentence, for example: 'Mr McGee ('who') jumped (the action) into the sea ('where').'

Review letters and sounds

Note

Provide opportunities for students to explore the letters 'w', 'c' (as in 'cent'), 'g' (as in 'get') and the short 'u' and short 'e' sounds.

Draw students' attention to the letters and the obvious sounds they make in words as you write and read texts, for example: stories, factual texts and everyday or environmental print.

- Have students look through the book, *Mr McGee and the biting flea* and find the letters 'w', 'c', 'g' and the short 'u' and short 'e' sounds.
- Ask students to select one of the letters to focus on.
 - Find the letter on the **Sheet** — [Alphabet chart](#).
 - Discuss the sound that the letter makes at the beginning of words.
 - Ask students to tell you some words that begin with this letter and write them down.
 - Write words from *Mr McGee and the biting flea* that start with the letter.



Develop, progress and consolidate English through the contexts for learning

- Prepare students for play.
- Explain to students that they will create a picture of a story character.
- Ask students to create a picture of Mr McGee.
- Tell students that they can use drawing, painting or collage materials to create their picture.
- Write 'Mr McGee picture and words' at the top of the page and today's date.

Note

Keep the picture of Mr McGee and the **Sheet** — **My favourite book** in a safe place to be used in future lessons.

