

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL STORY SAMPLER

It Takes a Community

FOR CHILDREN IN
KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 3





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What Is a Story Sampler?

A Story Sampler makes books come alive for children. It is a book-based thematic approach to reading designed to engage children in the book experience. Each Story Sampler includes hands-on, cross-curricular activities for books that are linked by a common theme.

Why Use a Story Sampler?

Motivational activities are an important part of every Reading Is Fundamental program. And these motivational activities are an easy way to excite children's interest in reading and help them associate books and reading with positive experiences and fun! The ideas you will find in each Story Sampler show you how to build anticipation and excitement in your RIF programs.

Scores of studies show that students learn more and do better in school when their parents are involved in their education. Different types of hands-on activities enable all children to learn in different ways. Particular questions before, during and after read aloud activities can develop high-order thinking skills.

Family members can encourage children to become lifelong readers by reading aloud with them everyday. Reading aloud to children is one of the most effective ways

to support language and literacy development. Children who are read to from infancy associate reading with pleasant, warm feelings. When you invite children to participate in reading, ask open-ended questions that promote creative thinking and learning, and plan activities and experiences that allow children to expand their understanding of the story, you help them develop a love of reading.

What Are the Standard Elements of a Story Sampler?

Each section of the Story Sampler includes a featured book plus additional titles and resources.* The activities that accompany each section will help you develop a literacy-rich environment that contributes significantly to a child's enjoyment of reading. The standard elements in the Story Sampler include:

- Questions to ask
- Family involvement
- Things to do
- Community connections

**The ISBN listed indicates a specific edition of the book. However, other editions may also be available through the public library or other publishers.*

Who Should Use a Story Sampler and Where?

Some Story Samplers are age-specific, but most can be adapted to a broad range of ages. Teachers, families, and child-care providers can use them in classrooms, community centers, homes, and in Head Start sites. And most importantly, parents can extend the story beyond the classroom with home-based projects and field trips.

Story Samplers can forge relationships and shared experiences within the family and the community. Through the family, children can be introduced to many kinds of books. Books can explain and reinforce concepts; allow children to build positive self-images; stimulate discussions and thinking; increase children's understanding of various concepts; and expand their imagination.

The age range for a Story Sampler is indicated at the beginning of each set of activities.

When and How Should I Use a Story Sampler?

Story Samplers can be used within or as a supplement to a curriculum or an after-school program. They can be part of reading challenges, reading weeks, and family involvement events. Your imagination and the interests of the children who participate in the RIF program will help determine the best way to use the Story Sampler. Enjoy and have fun!

Tips for Reading Aloud

Before You Read a Story...

- Make sure everyone is comfortable
- Show the cover and read the title and author of the book
- Ask the children about the cover
- Suggest things the children can look or listen for during the story

During a Story...

- Change your voice to fit the mood or action
- Move your finger under the words as you read them
- Show the pictures and talk about the book as you read
- Add information or change words to help kids understand more words and explain the meaning of a new word
- Ask children to make predictions about the plot, the characters, and the setting
- Share your own thoughts about the story
- Follow the cues of the children

After You Read a Story...

- Ask questions about what happened in the story
- Encourage the group to relate the story to their own experiences
- Ask children how they might feel or act if they were one of the characters
- Encourage children to share their thoughts about the story and pictures
- Extend the story with an activity or another book

It Takes a Community

A STORY SAMPLER FOR CHILDREN IN KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 3

▶ THE PEOPLE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Officer Buckle and Gloria

by **Peggy Rathmann**, Putnam, 1995

ISBN: 0399226168

▶ LOCAL HEROES

Cuckoo/Cucu: A Mexican Folktale

by **Lois Ehlert**, Harcourt/Voyager, 1997

ISBN: 015202428X

▶ EARTH, THE BROADER COMMUNITY

Starry Messenger

by **Peter Sis**, Farrar/Sunburst, 1996

ISBN: 0374470278

▶ FEEDING THE SPIRIT

Baseball Saved Us

by **Ken Mochizuki**, illustrated by Dom Lee, Lee & Low, 1993

ISBN: 1880000199

▶ THE GIVE AND TAKE

Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type

by **Doreen Cronin**, illustrated by Betsy Lewin, Simon & Schuster, 2000

ISBN: 0689832133

The People in Our Neighborhood

Officer Buckle and Gloria

by Peggy Rathmann

Putnam, 1995

ISBN: 0399226168

Officer Buckle tours schools teaching children the rules of safety. However, the children in Napville have heard it all before, and they are beyond bored. Only when Officer Buckle brings his dog, Gloria, do the children sit up and pay attention. Rathmann's illustrations in this picture book complement her humorous story. Children will love to discover all of Gloria's antics, as they gain a new appreciation for what police officers do on a daily basis.

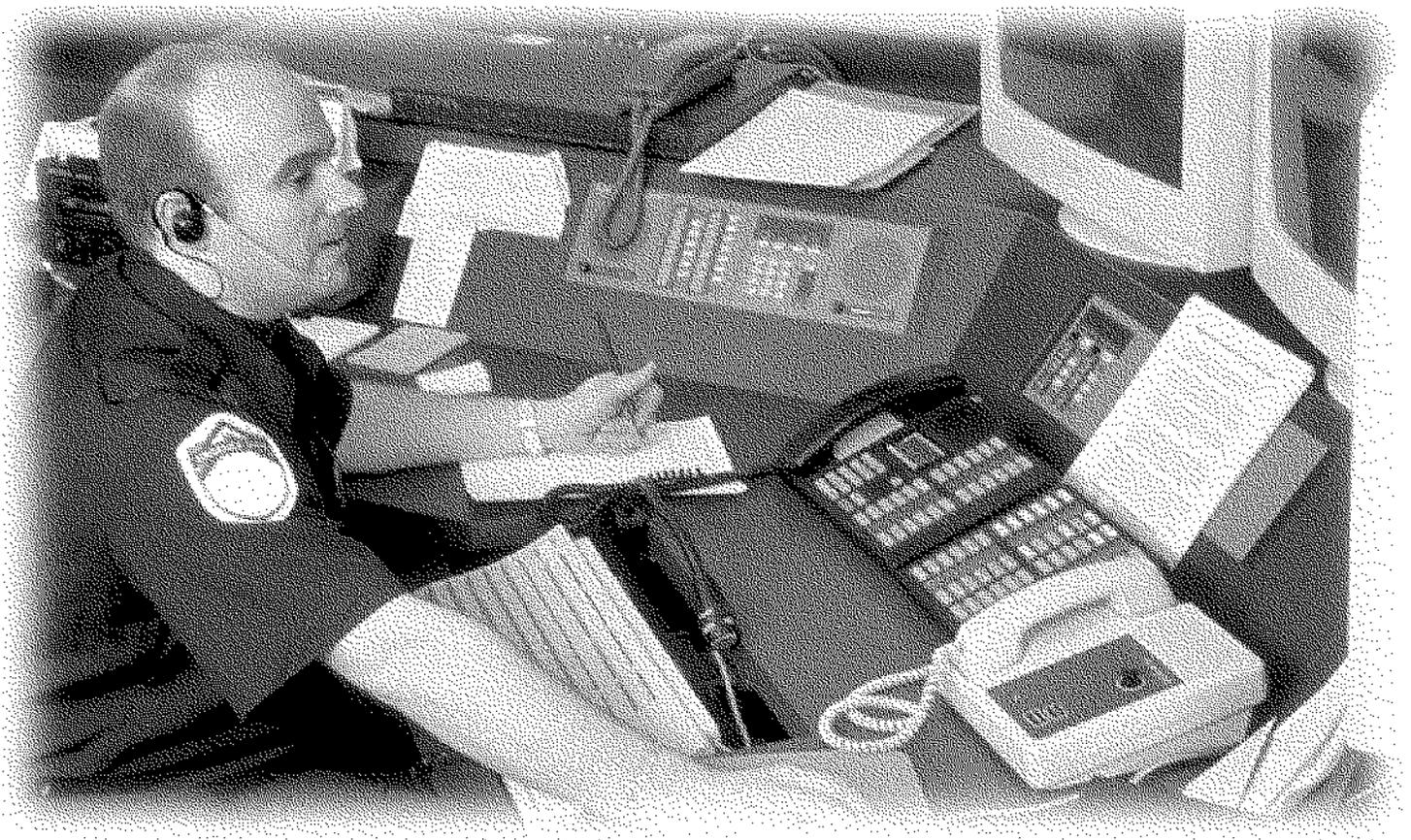
What To Do Before Reading the Story

- Look at the cover of the book, and ask the children who they think Gloria is.
- This book won a Caldecott Medal in 1996. Explain the significance of the Caldecott Award, and ask the children to look carefully at the illustrations as they listen to the story. Ask them why they think these pictures would win an award.

Things To Talk About During the Story

- Notice how the children in the audience look at the beginning of the book. Ask your children if they can guess what the children in the story are feeling as they listen to Officer Buckle. Have *they* ever felt this way?
- See if the children can identify exactly *what* is so funny about this book. Do they think Gloria is funny? Or, is it funny that Officer Buckle doesn't know what Gloria is doing?





What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- Introduce the phrase *straight man* and explain that Officer Buckle is the straight man to Gloria.
- Ask the children if they think the illustrations in this book should have won a medal. Ask them to explain their answers.
- Let the children brainstorm some safety tips for your classroom.

Family Involvement

- Send the children home with information about home safety. Perhaps families can develop their own safety tips.
- It's important for children to know who they can talk to or trust if they ever get in trouble. Suggest that the children have a conversation with their parents or guardians about people in their neighborhood that can help them (firefighters, police officers, etc.).

Community Connection

- Invite an "Officer Buckle" into your meeting place to talk about safety.
- Learn more about "canine officers" or police dogs. See if your group can meet one in person.

Additional Titles

Bark, George by Jules Feiffer, HarperCollins, 1999
ISBN: 0062051857

This extremely funny book for children of all ages will introduce the role of the veterinarian. But what a day at work this vet has!

Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes, Greenwillow/Mulberry, 1991
ISBN: 0688147321

In this book, a young girl is teased about her long and unusual name. Only when her teacher shares something special about herself does Chrysanthemum learn to accept who she is. Also see Henkes' *Lily's Purple Plastic Purse* for another example of teachers as positive role models.

The Philharmonic Gets Dressed by Karla Kuskin, illustrated by Marc Simont, HarperCollins, 1982
ISBN: 006443124X

The 105 members of a city orchestra get ready to go to work in this picture book that introduces essential members of the arts community.

Strong the Hoop by John Coy, Lee & Low, 1999
ISBN: 1880000806

Ten-year-old James plays basketball against a team of bigger neighborhood boys and helps win the game. This exciting picture book shows how children of all ages interact with and influence each other.

Cuckoo/Cucu: A Mexican Folktale

by **Lois Ehlert**

Harcourt/Voyager, 1997

ISBN: 015202428X

In a small community of animals, Cuckoo's beauty is discussed by the other animals as something superficial and unessential. But they all learn not to judge the bird by her appearance when she saves all the seeds for next year's planting from a devastating fire. Ehlert's bright artwork makes Cuckoo's heroism more impressive and her role in the community more vivid.

What To Do Before Reading the Story

- This book is written in two languages, Spanish and English. Explain why there is a need for bilingual books. Let the children know that bilingual books can be written in any two languages. If possible, show other examples of bilingual books.
- Talk about Mexican folk art, specifically the kinds used in this picture book: cut-paper fiesta banners, tin work, textiles, metal *milagros*, clay "tree of life" candelabra, and wooden toys and sculptures.

Things To Talk About During the Story

- The title spread of Ehlert's book shows names of animals, plants, and shapes in Spanish and English. Practice these words in both languages. The translator is also named on this spread. Talk about what a translator does.
- Point out the different kinds of folk art as they appear in the story.
- Talk with the children about the vanity (and then, the bravery) of Cuckoo and the jealousy of the other birds. Are these feelings familiar to your children?
- Ask the children if they are surprised that Cuckoo did what she did. Is it their experience that someone they've judged to be one way acted in another way?





What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- If you chose to read this book in just one of the languages, read it again in the other. Or read it again in both languages.
- Talk about how Cuckoo has changed by the end of the story, physically and in the eyes of others.
- Give the children some time to write or draw how they feel about Cuckoo. Do they feel sad at the end of the book or happy?

Family Involvement

- Suggest that the children help their families find stories about local heroes. These can be stories in the newspaper or stories on television or radio news. When they find one, hang it up on the refrigerator door for inspiration. If the story isn't printed, suggest that the children draw a picture of the person featured in the news story.

Community Connection

- Invite a medical professional to come and talk about CPR. Many people have been saved from serious injury or death by citizens who were not medical professionals but were trained in CPR.
- Take a trip to the local public pool to meet a lifeguard.

Additional Titles

Frederick by Leo Lionni, Knopf, 1967
ISBN: 0394826140

Though the other mice work hard collecting food for the winter, Frederick spends all his time gathering his thoughts. But when the darkest days of winter arrive, he is there to inspire his community with songs and poems about the warm months to come.

Hooway for Wodney Wat by Helen Lester, illustrated by Lynn Munsinger, Houghton, 1999
ISBN: 0395923921

Standing up to the class bully has never been so sweet! Rodney, a small rat who can't pronounce his R's and is constantly ridiculed by his classmates, finally reveals his true strength and dignity as he saves his whole class from a bully.

Horton Hatches the Egg by Dr. Seuss, Random House, 1940
ISBN: 039480077X

Through an entire year of hardships and taunting, Horton sticks to his promise of hatching an egg. Dr. Seuss' classic nonsense book is a shining example of a kind and devoted friend who pulls through for someone in need (and is rewarded in the end, too).

Swamp Angel by Anne Isaacs, illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky, Puffin, 1994
ISBN: 0140559086

Angelica Longrider earns her place in history as the greatest woodswoman in Tennessee when she defeats Thundering Tarnation, a huge bear raiding the settlers' root cellars.

Earth, the Broader Community

Starry Messenger

by **Peter Sis**

Farrar/Sunburst, 1996

ISBN: 0374470278

This is a picture book biography of the astronomer Galileo Galilei, who changed our view of the world and the universe with his discovery that the Earth circles around the Sun. Sis' beautifully illustrated book looks at Galileo's life from childhood on. Though often ridiculed and eventually excommunicated from the Church, Galileo remained true to his science and fundamentally changed the world.



What To Do Before Reading the Story

- Ask the children if they know who Galileo is, and explain who he was if they are unclear.
- Ask the children to think about what the title of this book could mean. Encourage them to find the answer in the text.

Things To Talk About During the Story

- Sis incorporates many of Galileo's actual words into the illustrations. Point these out.
- Galileo lived a long time ago. How do Sis' illustrations convey the time in which he lived?

What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- Make an acrostic of the name GALILEO. Display these around the classroom.
- Demonstrate how the planets in our solar system orbit the Sun, and hence, why we say the Sun is the center of our universe.
- Get a magnifying glass, and let the children study the book through its lens.



Family Involvement

- The subjects of art and science interest many children. Suggest that the children make a simple telescope of their own invention with their parents or guardians.
- Suggest that the children ask their parents about an historical figure who changed the world and whom they admire. Then the children can paint or color a portrait of that person for inspiration.

Community Connection

- Visit a planetarium and refresh what you have just learned about Galileo and his discoveries.
- Sometimes, famous, proactive people come to cities or universities to give lectures, concerts, readings, or even book signings. Attend one of these events. For very young children, you might consider a children's author or illustrator or perhaps a musician.

Additional Titles

Amelia and Eleanor Go For a Ride: Based on a True Story by Pam Ryan, illustrated by Brian Selznick, Scholastic, 1999
ISBN: 059096075X

Two women known the world over meet at a dinner party. Amelia Earhart, the famous pilot, invites Eleanor Roosevelt, famed First Lady and humanitarian, for a ride in her plane.

Joan of Arc by J. Poole, illustrated by Angela Barrett, Knopf/Dragonfly, 1998
ISBN: 0375803556

Beautiful illustrations grace this picture book biography of the saint who still inspires people all over the world 500 years after her death.

A Picture Book of Martin Luther King, Jr. by David Adler, illustrated by Robert Casilla, Holiday House, 1989
ISBN: 0823408477

From a series of picture-book biographies for lower elementary children, this one introduces major figures from Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life, showing how he came to be a national and international figure.

William Shakespeare and the Globe by Aliki, HarperCollins, 1999
ISBN: 0064437221

Aliki has created a vibrant picture-book biography of William Shakespeare, arguably the most famous and influential writer in the world.

Feeding the Spirit

Baseball Saved Us

by **Ken Mochizuki**, illustrated by **Dom Lee**

Lee & Low, 1993

ISBN: 1880000199

Shorty is a young Japanese American living in an internment camp during WWII. He helps his father build a baseball diamond to lift the spirits of everyone in the camp. He then channels his frustration and anger into the game to become a better player. Back home, after the war, Shorty still deals with prejudice, but he uses his inner strength and resources to move on with his life.

What To Do Before Reading the Story

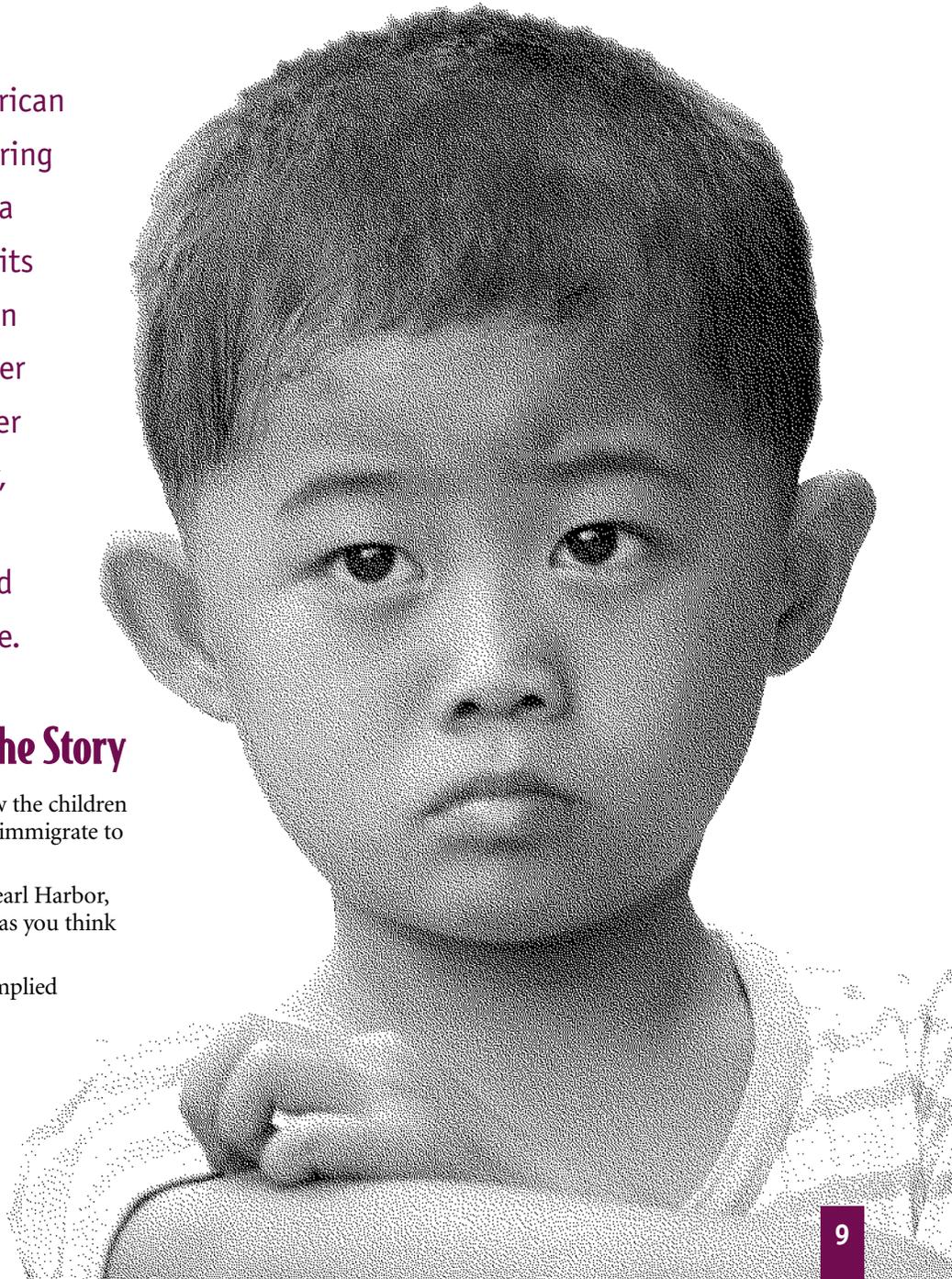
- Locate Japan and California on a globe. Show the children that geography compelled many Japanese to immigrate to the U.S. by way of California.
- Ask the children if they have ever heard of Pearl Harbor, and then introduce as much about the topic as you think your students can handle.
- Hold up the book and ask the children the implied question: “Baseball saved us from what?”

Things To Talk About During the Story

- Why is this boy called Shorty? Is this nice? How does the name make him feel?
- While reading, point out examples of courage and perseverance.
- Let the children keep a tally of baseball terms found in the text.

What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- In 1988, the U.S. government admitted to Japanese Americans and the world that what it did was wrong. Stress the importance of admitting a wrong, and then righting it. Also stress that everyone makes mistakes, even governments.





Family Involvement

- Suggest that the children attend a baseball game with their families. A major league game is always an event, but don't forget the minor leagues. These games are often much more family-friendly, especially for young children.
- Send the children home with an assignment: Practice hitting, throwing, and catching a ball with someone in their family (They don't have to use a baseball).

Community Connection

- Visit a Japanese restaurant and learn more about Japanese food and culture.
- Many communities now have multicultural festivals during the year. Plan to visit one, or organize one yourself.

Additional Titles

Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra by Andrea Davis Pinkney, illustrated by Brian Pinkney, Disney, 1998
ISBN: 0786801786

The Pinkneys' biography for early readers follows Duke Ellington's life from his rich, musical roots in Washington, D.C., all the way to Carnegie Hall and beyond.

Linnea in Monet's Garden by Christina Bjork, illustrated by Lena Anderson, Farrar/R & S Books, 1987
ISBN: 9129583144

Linnea and her neighbor, Mr. Bloom, travel to Paris and Giverny to see Monet's artwork and visit his home. The combination of illustrations and actual photographs of Monet's work, home, and family makes this a highly informative and interesting book. It also shows how one artist has brought people together.

Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man by David Adler, illustrated by Terry Widener, Harcourt/Voyager, 1997
ISBN: 0152024832

A straightforward telling of the life of New York Yankee great Lou Gehrig reveals the sadness in his life, but also the dignity with which he faced it. Gehrig lifted people up, as a sportsman and as a human being.

Mysterious Thelonious by Chris Raschka, Orchard, 1997
ISBN: 0531330575

In a groundbreaking book, Raschka shows the spirit of the master jazz pianist Thelonious Monk, by celebrating his composition entitled *Misterioso*.

Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type

by **Doreen Cronin**, illustrated by **Betsy Lewin**
Simon & Schuster, 2000
ISBN: 0689832133

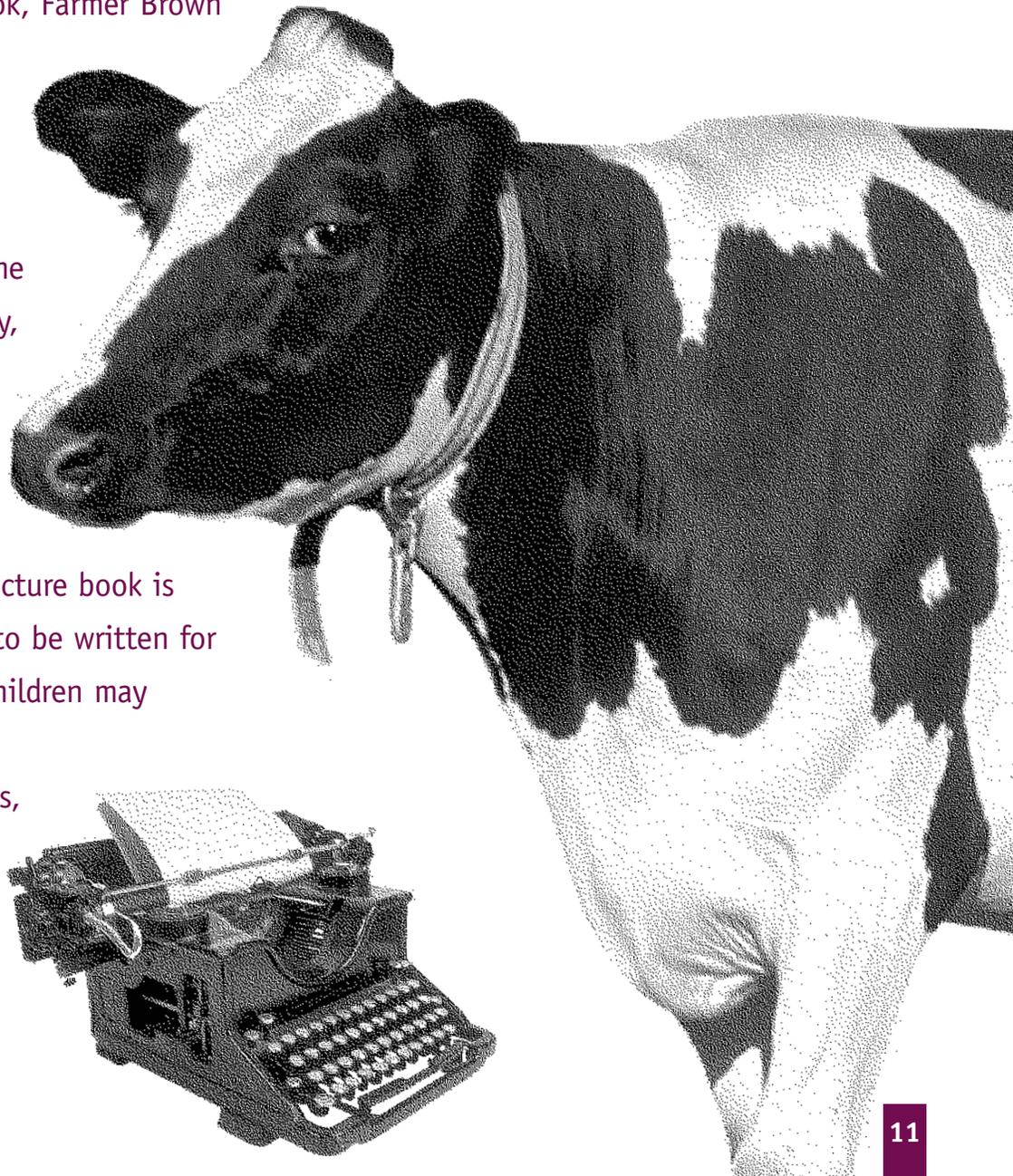
In this Caldecott Honor Book, Farmer Brown becomes outraged when he refuses the cows' demand for electric blankets and then they go on strike. He writes his own letter and the dialog continues. Ultimately, the cows and Farmer Brown settle their differences to each other's satisfaction But then the ducks start typing. Though this picture book is humorous and might seem to be written for very young readers, older children may enjoy and benefit from a conversation about demands, strikes, and negotiating-tactics used for years to move society to a better place for more people.

What To Do Before Reading the Story

- Ask the children some questions to get them in the mood for this story: Do cows type? Why would they be typing? What would they be typing? How did they get a typewriter? Is this fantasy or reality?
- Make sure that the children know what a typewriter is. Today, many children are more familiar with computers than typewriters.

Things To Talk About During the Story

- Point out such words as *demand*, *strike*, and *neutral* to make sure that the children understand their meaning.
- Discuss the feelings of the cows and Farmer Brown. How do the cows feel when Farmer Brown first rejects their request? How does Farmer Brown feel when the cows make demands?
- See if the children can predict what Farmer Brown will do.



What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- Have a conversation about why Farmer Brown eventually gives the cows electric blankets. Then discuss why the ducks end up with a diving board in their pond.
- From first glimpse, of this book, a person can sense that this book is going to be funny. Talk about how humor works. Why is this book funny?
- Ask the children to identify other funny stories they like to read.

Family Involvement

- Do some research together on unions to find out the kinds of gains they've made in society. A good way to begin is to find out if any family members belong to a union.
- Write a family letter to a business, school, or museum with a suggestion for making things run better.

Community Connection

- Most trade workers have unions that they can join. Ask a union representative to come talk to your group.
- Attend a community meeting or a school board meeting to see how issues are discussed and dealt with.

Additional Titles

Dear Mr. Blueberry by Simon James, Aladdin, 1991
ISBN: 0689807686

After Emily discovers a whale living in her backyard pond, she writes to her teacher for advice. In a summer-long exchange of letters, Emily learns a great deal about whales and the importance of expressing thoughts and ideas clearly when writing letters.

Dear Mr. Henshaw by Beverly Cleary, Avon/Camelot, 1983
ISBN: 0380709589

Leigh Botts writes to his favorite author, who responds with a letter. Feeling invigorated by the response, he continues writing a journal that helps him cope with the changes going on in his life.

Miss Alaineus: A Vocabulary Disaster by Debra Frasier, Harcourt, 2000
ISBN: 0152021639

A young girl named Sage embarrasses herself in front of her classmates when she makes a mistake on her homework assignment. She learns a lesson about careful work in this clever picture book featuring some of the tricks the English language can play on all of us.

Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears: A West African Tale by Verna Aardema, illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon, Puffin, 1984
ISBN: 0140549056

In this classic Caldecott Medal-winning picture book, a group of jungle animals learn how important it is to get the facts straight before causing a commotion.



RIF'S MISSION

Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. (RIF) develops and delivers children's and family literacy programs that help prepare young children for reading and motivate older children to read. Through a national network of teachers, parents, and community volunteers, RIF programs provide books and other essential literacy resources to children at no cost to them or their families. RIF's highest priority is the nation's neediest children, from infancy to age 11.

ABOUT RIF

Founded in 1966 in Washington, D.C., RIF is the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit children's literacy organization, with programs operating nationwide in 20,000 schools, child-care centers, libraries, hospitals, clinics, migrant worker camps, Head Start and Even Start programs, homeless shelters, and detention centers.

RIF serves more than 5 million children through a network of more than 400,000 volunteers. Two-thirds of the children served by RIF have economic or learning needs that put them at risk of failing to achieve basic educational goals.

Through a contract with the U.S. Department of Education, RIF provides federal matching funds to thousands of school and community-based organizations that sponsor RIF programs. RIF also receives private support from hundreds of corporations and foundations, thousands of local organizations and businesses, and countless individuals.

RIF distributes about 15 million books a year. In 2001, RIF celebrated its 35th anniversary and the milestone of placing more than 200 million books in the hands and homes of America's children.



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