

It's My Bread

by Diana Noonan

illustrated by Fifi Colston

Overview

A group of animals argue over who owns a piece of bread. While they argue, ants busily carry the bread away, piece by piece. Children enjoy the humorous climax to this story, and there is a lot happening in the illustrations for them to discover when they revisit the text. The emergent text *The Picnic* links well with this story. *It's My Bread* is also available as a big book (item 20386).

Curriculum link: health and physical education, science

Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the high-frequency words “my”, “said”, “the”
- the repeated initial consonants “d” – “dog”, “donkey”; and “g” – “goose”, “goat”
- the initial consonant blend “br”
- the contraction “It’s”
- the speech marks indicating that the animals are talking
- the names of the animals
- the exclamation mark on page 8
- the high degree of repetition in the text
- the changing perspective in the illustrations
- the body language and facial expressions of the animals in the illustrations
- the visual sub-plot – the mouse is active on every page.

Setting the scene

Use the cover of this book to set the scene. You may find the enlarged version more suitable for this activity. *Where do you think this story takes place?* The grass and the checked tablecloth help to establish the idea of a picnic. *What is the mouse eating? What do you like eating at a picnic (or a barbecue)?*

The first reading

(For a shared reading, it may be more convenient to use the enlarged version.)

Look at the title on the cover. *What would you say if someone tried to take away some food that you were eating?* Give the children time to work out the title and then read it expressively together. *Who is saying “It’s my bread”?* Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Title page – Reread the title and discuss the illustrations. The strip at the bottom of the page gives more clues that this is a picnic.

Page 2 – The title of the story is a strong support for reading the first page. Listen to the children read the text themselves, noting which children are cross-checking the pictures with initial consonants and other visual information when naming the animals. Draw the children’s attention to the expressions on the animals’ faces.

Pages 3 to 7 – Some children may say “chicken” for “hen”, “duck” for “goose”, or “horse” for “donkey”. Use this as an opportunity to reinforce cross-checking strategies. *Is this word “chicken” or “hen”? How can you tell?*

Could this word be “duck”? How does it start? What else could it be? You may need to explain what a goose or a donkey is.

Note that the illustrations show the bread being taken by the ants. Don't point this out or discuss it unless one of the children notices.

Page 8 – *What are the ants doing? What will they say?* Observe which children notice the change in text pattern and can read it themselves. Draw their attention to the exclamation mark after the word “No”. *How does the author want you to read this word?*

If the children didn't notice what the ants were doing earlier in the story, look back through the pictures to see the bread slowly disappearing.

Help the children to think beyond the text. *Why did the ants get the bread? Who is the picnic for?*

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text, observing which children are independently cross-checking and self-monitoring. Encourage lively and expressive reading.

Locate the animals in the text that start with “g” and make a list of other words that start the same way. Do the same with “d”.

Locate the word “bread” in the text and make a list of words that start with “br”.

Use the whiteboard to examine the contraction “It's”. Write “It is” on the whiteboard and rub out the letter the apostrophe replaces. Repeat this with “it is”. Draw out the idea that contractions make writing sound more natural.

Locate the speech marks and discuss why they appear on each page in the story.

Look closely at the illustrations, focusing on the animals' body language and facial expressions. *How are they feeling?* Reread the text together, encouraging the use of expression.

Look at the visual sub-plot about the mouse and tell her story. *What is she doing? What is she thinking?*

Discuss whether this could be a true story.

Suggestions for further activities

Make the big book available to the children.

Dramatise the text, giving each group member an animal part. Encourage the children to think about an appropriate voice for their animal. For example, the mouse might use a squeaky voice and the dog a gruff voice. Reread the book with each child speaking their own part and the group saying the refrain “said the _____” together.

Innovate on the text, for example, “It's my sausage,’ said the cat.” Add illustrations.

Create speech bubbles or thought bubbles for the characters.

Create a comic strip by combining the children's speech bubbles with illustrations.

Focus on the mouse's story by adding speech bubbles or thought bubbles on each page, just for her. Make the story available afterwards for independent rereading.

Reread *The Picnic*. Make a list of good food to take on a picnic.

Take the class to a nearby park for a simple picnic lunch or morning tea. Have the children prepare the food themselves with parent help. Take a tablecloth and set the food out on it before eating. This could be an especially valuable experience for NESB children.