

Freezing

by Maria Hansen
illustrated by Philip Webb

Overview

In this narrative, Dylan has been helping his dad collect firewood and is feeling very cold. He and Dad come up with a number of ways to help Dylan get warm. There is an audio version of the text on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2010*.

Suggested purposes

This book has strong links to health and supports the comprehension strategies of making connections, forming and testing hypotheses, and inferring. It provides opportunities to practise a range of decoding strategies.

Text features

(This information is intended as a prompt for teachers rather than a list of teaching points.)

- the warm relationship between the boy and his father, which culminates in a shared joke
- the change in tone from serious to playful on page 9, which requires the reader to infer it
- the adjectives “boiling”, “freezing”, “hot”, “muddy”, “small”, “woolly”
- the opposites “freezing” and “boiling”
- the dialogue including the use of contractions (“I’m”, “Don’t”, “Let’s”, “You’re”) and the colloquial phrase “How about ...”
- the use of the pronoun “He” to refer to the characters
- the initial consonant blends in “freezing”, “small”, “sticks”, “still”
- the regular past-tense verbs “asked”, “helped”, “pushed”, “sipped”
- the irregular past-tense verbs “got”, “put”, “said”, “took”, “went”
- the compound words – “bedroom”, “inside”, “newspaper”
- the information about the author on the inside back cover.

Introducing the text

Open out the cover to show the full illustration. Discuss what the boy and his father are doing. *What clues in the illustration tell us what the weather is like? Why are they collecting firewood?* Have the children read the title. Read the names of the author and the illustrator. Encourage the children to share their experiences of being freezing and what they do to get warm. Record their ideas about keeping warm on a chart or in a group reading book. *Let’s read this story to find out what these characters are going to do.*

The first reading

Title page – Listen to the children reread the title. *I wonder why the illustration shows a mug and a hat ...*

Remind the children of the strategies you want them to focus on during the reading. For example, *We are learning to use what we know about keeping warm to help us predict what might happen in this story*, or *We are practising ways of working out new words*.

Listen to the children read the text themselves, providing support and feedback as necessary.

Pages 2 and 3 – Tell them the name “Dylan” if it’s unfamiliar. Depending on your teaching purpose, you could ask the children to explain some of the strategies they used for decoding, for example, using the familiar word “in” to work out “inside”, recognising “mud” in “muddy”, reading on (to check that the word “boots” makes sense with the word “muddy”), and/or using the illustrations to cross-check. Review what Dylan’s problem is and ask the children to predict what the characters will do next.

Pages 4 and 5 – Use the illustrations to review the children’s predictions. Discuss the steps involved in lighting a fire. *What could Dylan do to help Dad?* Have the children read the text. If necessary, clarify that the pronoun “He” on page 5 (and again on page 7) refers to Dylan. For ESOL students, you may need to explain the use of the word “still” to indicate that time has passed (Dylan was cold when he was outside and is cold now that he’s inside). Take this opportunity to model a “wrong” prediction – *I expect the fire will warm Dylan up ...*

Pages 6 and 7 – Model that it’s all right to be “wrong” and change predictions in the light of new information – *That’s a surprise. He still looks cold. The illustrations are showing me what he’s going to try next. I’m sure that will warm him up ... What do you think?* Have them read the text. If they say “jumper” for “jersey”, prompt them to check, using visual information. Review what Dad and Dylan have done so far to help Dylan get warm and compare their actions with the children’s ideas in the group reading book. Have the children review their previous predictions and (perhaps) repredict what they think will happen next.

Page 8 – For ESOL students, you may need to explain that when Dad says “How about a hot chocolate?” he means “Would you like ...?” Enjoy observing the children’s discovery of the “D” on Dylan’s mug.

Page 9 – *I’m wondering why Dylan is smiling and looking at Dad like that ... Do you think he really is “still freezing”?*

Page 10 – If the children read “pulled” for “pushed”, prompt them to check – *If it was “pulled”, what letter or letters would you expect to see in the middle? Why has Dad pushed the hat right down to Dylan’s nose?* Draw out the idea that he’s responding to Dylan’s joke. If necessary, check the children realise that here, the pronoun “He” refers to Dad.

Page 11– Enjoy the humour in the hat talking. Draw out the idea that Dad is making a light-hearted prediction here. Have the children predict Dylan’s response.

Page 12 – Have the children review their predictions. Clarify that Dylan and his father were joking with each other. *When did you start to realise they were joking? What helped you work it out?* Look back through the book for clues (the exclamation mark on page 9 and Dylan’s mischievous eyes and big grin compared with his facial expressions and body language on pages 2, 4, 6, and 7.)

Refer to the group reading book and compare the children’s ideas about keeping warm with those in the text.

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text, observing the strategies they use to manage the decoding challenges.

Have the children talk with a partner about a word or phrase they found difficult and the strategies they used to work it out. Listen in to see if there are any aspects you may need to follow up on. For example, reviewing a particular initial consonant blend or providing a mini-lesson on using strategies

such as looking for familiar chunks within words (“in-side”, “mud-dy”); identifying the component words in a compound word; rereading or reading on to confirm or self-correct (checking one-to-one word matching and initial letters to work out “small sticks” rather than “wood”); or using knowledge of root words and endings (“sip” and “ed” to work out “sipped”).

Use the note about the author on the inside back cover to speculate about why she might have written this text.

Discuss the narrative structure. Identify the beginning (introducing Dylan’s problem), the middle (the repeated attempts at warming up), and the humorous ending.

Focus on the use of adjectives, for example, in the noun phrases “muddy boots”, “small sticks”, or “woolly hat”. Read the sentences with and without the adjectives. Draw out the idea that the adjectives provide clarity and add interest.

Create a chart, (see the examples below), to compare the past- and present-tense verb forms of the regular and irregular verbs in the text. Explain that the usual rule is to add “ed” but that this doesn’t work for all verbs, including some very common words. For ESOL students, who are less likely to be able to draw on their knowledge of what “sounds right” in English, provide many opportunities to practise.

Regular Verbs	
Present tense	Past tense
help	helped
ask	asked
sip	sipped
push	pushed

Irregular Verbs	
Present tense	Past tense
take	took
Go	wet
Say	said
light	lit
Get	got
put	put

Have the children choose examples of past- and present-tense verbs from the chart and practise using them in sentences. This could be an oral or written activity.

Reread the pages that include pronouns (on pages 5, 7, and 10). Explain that writers can choose to use pronouns instead of referring to characters by name. Draw out the idea that readers can (usually) track who the pronoun refers to by referring to the sentence before or after.

Reread the dialogue together and discuss how the contractions make speech sound more natural.

Suggestions for further tasks

Have the children listen to the audio version on the CD *Readalong 2010* and read along with the book.

Create thought bubbles for pages 9 and 10.

Have the children work together to generate other words that describe temperature and place them on a cline (or continuum) that shows the shades of meaning from “freezing” to “boiling”.