

Going to the Beach

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Overview

This is a humorous, highly visual text about an eventful family outing to the beach. Children will find a great deal to talk about in the bright, dynamic illustrations. Teachers have found the visual detail in this book to be useful in encouraging discussion and drawing out vocabulary with ESOL students. The simple, repetitive text structure supports the development of one-to-one word-matching skills. *The Picnic* is another emergent text on the theme of a family outing.

Curriculum links: mathematics (positional vocabulary)

Text features

- the high-frequency vocabulary "up", "in", "go"
- the use of upper-case and lower-case initial letters of repeated words
- the text being in a variety of positions on the page
- the repetition of a single word on most pages
- the change in the pattern of written text on page 11
- the title, which supplies the context for the book
- the use of commas, an ellipsis, and an exclamation mark
- the use of bold, enlarged print for emphasis on page 12
- the cartoon style of the illustrations

Setting the scene

Discuss family outings with the children. Focus on the preparation required. Be aware of cultural differences regarding roles and activities and of children's differing expectations or experiences of family outings.

Introduce the notion of things sometimes not going to plan. Share a mishap, for example, coming to school without your lunch or getting a flat tyre on your bike.

The first reading

Read the title of the book with the children. *Have you ever been to the beach? What kinds of things do you need to take with you?*

Use the illustrations as a basis for discussion and for predicting what might happen in the story.

Page 2 – *What is the family doing?* As the children respond to the questions, focus on their use of the words used in the text, for example, *Yes, they're getting up, and that's just what the words say.*

Listen to the children read the text themselves, taking time to discuss the rich detail of the illustrations.

Focus on the sense of excitement and anticipation that a day out involves. Work through the text, inviting and confirming children's predictions and links between the visual and written text.

Page 6 – Look at the seagull and the smoke coming from the car. (Note that this type of car has the engine at the back.) *What has happened? What do you think will happen next? What could the family do? Who could help them?*

Encourage the children to note the characters' changing facial expressions as things begin to go wrong. Discuss how the characters might be feeling.

Note that page 12 shows the beach in sight.

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Discuss the predictions that the children made when first looking at the book. Note how aspects of the visual images enhanced, confirmed, or cast doubts on these predictions.

Listen to the children reread the text. Encourage the use of one-to-one word-matching skills. Note whether the children adapt to the change to two words on page 11.

Focus on the use of upper-case and lower-case letters used as the initial letter of each word. Encourage the children to notice that even when the shape of the first letter changes, it's still the same word.

Draw attention to the ellipsis on page 11, which signals that there is more to come and anticipates the change in the sentence pattern.

Discuss how the reader might respond to the use of larger print and the exclamation mark when reading the text on page 12 aloud.

Examine features of the visual language in the text:

- The idea of movement is conveyed through the use of speed lines, the car exhaust, and the towel waving out of the car's window.
- On pages 6 and 7, the speed lines, the seagull's head movement and its positioning on the page, and the facial expressions of the characters are clues about the reducing speed of the car.
- The idea of the car overheating is reinforced by the pink background on page 7.

Suggestions for further activities

Dramatise the story, creating a car by using four chairs. Encourage the children to role-play what characters could say or do in this situation.

Ask the children to choose an aspect of the story to illustrate. Write captions to go with each picture and place them in sequence. Display these for independent reading.

Draw a group picture of an outing. Add labels or captions.

Explore upper-case and lower-case forms of letters, noting the similarities and differences between them.

Practise making some upper-case and lower-case letters using play dough, glitter pens, or chalk on concrete.