

Literacy

Literacy consists of four things:

Reading

Speaking

Writing

Listening

When you read to/with your child, you are encouraging growth in literacy. Your child listens to you reading, looks at the illustrations, and notices the text.

There are five emergent literacy skills to practice using this book¹:

1. Vocabulary
2. Book and print rules
3. Phonological awareness
4. Alphabetic knowledge.
5. Background knowledge

When you talk with your child about the characters in the book, what is happening with the illustrations, and the different clues to literacy, you are helping them to acquire literacy skills.

“The seeds of literacy are planted before children enter school. Important literacy skills do not develop spontaneously, instruction shapes them.”

(Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998)

This book uses some literacy enhancing strategies to help tell the story. These are things you can point out to your child as you read the story together. Talk with your child about why the author used these specific words and what you might substitute for them.

Rhyming words: notice the various rhyming word pairs throughout the book: fine / time, eyes / flies, tap / sat, / at, wide / inside, two / you, toe / go, this / bliss, one / done. Noticing the words that rhyme and their specific sounds helps children pay attention to the individual sounds of phonemes (single sounds) and of specific word pairs.

Personification: The goats and the troll in this story talk in English. How do goats really sound? Do they really eat grass and sweet clover? Do trolls live under bridges? Are trolls real or imaginary? Do they brush their teeth or brush their hair like we do?

¹ Taken from: *CEED Early Literacy resource Handbook* by Lucy arias, Nydia De Alba-Johnson and Carrie Johnson, Uof M, 2002

This story provides you with an opportunity to learn about real goats.

Phonemic awareness: Notice that the title has three “G” words. Both the author and illustrator have last names that begin with the letter “G”. Can you find other connections to the letter “G”? What sounds do the letter “G” make? Noticing single letters aids in Alphabet Knowledge, which encourages children to pay attention to the written word and to learn the letter names and sounds.

Alliteration: (Def. Alliteration is the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of words in the same sentence or in words that are closely connected.) Notice these phrases: green grass, swishin’ and a swayin’, tappity - tap - tapping, tippy toe, tippy toe, and bramble bush.

These are words that children find fun to say and read.

A cloze activity: (*Where you read the sentence and leave out a word for your child to fill in – usually the rhyming word or the last word in the sentence.*) After you have read the story a few times, it is fun for your child to help you read. Do a cloze activity to allow your child to fill in words they know are coming up. This anticipation aids in recall and memory skills.

Conversation: Look at the illustrations in the book without reading the story. Talk about the insects, the bramble bush, the green grass and sweet clover meadow, and the river. Talk about what goats really look like, what they eat and where they live. Many goats are domesticated, but some still live in the wild. (*Goats, such as mountain goats*) Talk about trolls and whom a troll might represent in our society. Is the troll homeless? Why does he think the bridge is his? Perhaps it is!

Enjoy discussions with your children on many topics, including this book. Conversation and discourse skills advance children’s ability to think and use the words they have to communicate what they know, feel or want. Asking questions helps increase your child’s capacity to communicate.²

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² Paraphrased from: *CEED Early Literacy resource Handbook* by Lucy arias, Nydia De Alba-Johnson and Carrie Johnson, Uof M, 2002