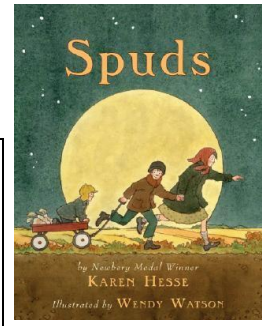


# Spuds

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This story is a heart-warming tale about Maybelle, Eddie and Jack who want to help their Ma, who works very hard all night long. They plan to steal potatoes that are left to rot at a nearby farm. They dig through the night and haul their loot home only to find out that it is mostly rocks and dirt. Their Ma is upset when she learns what they did and sends them to the farmer to confess. With heavy hearts they tell the farmer only to find out that they helped him out and can do so each year after the harvest.



## Possible strategies for instruction:

### *Comprehension:*

- **Retell the story:**
  - Use the text as a read aloud, modeling stopping to think about what you are reading. Model aloud using a think-aloud and stop and reread if you can't remember.
  - Stop reading and have students retell what is happening in the story using the words first, next, then, last, and finally.
  - Stop and ask questions to prompt students to think about the story they are listening to. For example:
    - Who are the main characters in the story?
    - What is the problem in the story?
    - How do the characters solve the problem?
    - What happened first, second, etc. in the story?
    - How did the story end?
  - Offer students many opportunities to retell throughout the day whether it is reading or another classroom activity or about things outside the classroom.
- **Recognize literary elements (genre, plot, character, setting, problem/resolution, theme):**
  - Show the cover of the book, before reading, and have students predict the genre of the story. Read the first few pages and then ask students to assess their predictions. Were they accurate or do they need to adjust?
  - Read the first three pages of the story and ask students whom the main characters in the story are.
  - Explain how stories have a problem and solution. Model your thinking about the problem and have students share ideas. Predict how the problem will be rectified in the end and self-assess the predictions upon completion of the read-aloud.
  - Explain to students what the setting of the story means and model for them when the setting changes using a think aloud.
  - Upon completion of the read-aloud, have students answer questions about the literary elements of the story: who, where, what, when, problem, and solution.

## *Accuracy:*

- **Trade a word/guess a word that makes sense:**
  - Take time to introduce students to names or hard to pronounce words. Explain to students that they can trade a word that has a similar meaning without stumbling. Using the story, stumble over a name or word that is repeated throughout the story making the story difficult to understand. Possible words to use are:
    - Maybelle
    - Harvest
  - Discuss and model how to substitute another word using a think-aloud.
  - Explain what the word means in context. Have students give a synonym or two to substitute in every time you come to the word.
  - Reread the text modeling the strategy.
  
- **Flip the sound:**
  - Explain to students that Flip the Sound is a strategy good readers use when they come to a word that doesn't sound right or make sense. Using knowledge of the sounds that letters and letter combinations make is an important skill for readers to develop.
  - Using the story as a read aloud, model using the strategy with words throughout the story.
  - Words choices include:
    - fine
    - wagon
    - like
    - picking

## *Fluency:*

- **Use punctuation to enhance phrasing and prosody (end marks, commas, etc.)**
  - Explain and model for students the skill of fluency.
  - Model voice control for intonation, emphasis, and discuss how this enhances what is being read.
  - Model this strategy using sentences from the story. For example:
    - Page 8-We left the road and stole into Kenney's field, creepin' over the clawed-up earth, our hands feelin' for night spuds.
    - Page 10- That car whizzed right passed us.
    - Page 17-These ain't potatoes, Maybelle. They're stones! We been harvestin' stones!
  - Explain to students, as you read, how the punctuation causes you to adjust your reading and change your voice.

- **Read text as the author would say it, conveying the meaning or feeling.**
  - Explain how the author uses a lot of dialogue with colloquialisms to bring life to the characters. Reader's interpretation of the dialogue helps students understand who is talking and when it changes.
  - Using sentences from the story, model reading with good dialogue, expression, and feeling. For instance, look at the following dialogue as examples:
    - Page 4-"Ma's been workin' so hard," Maybelle said. "Let's bring her in some extra. 'Less we gather them spuds off Kenney's field, they'll go to rot, sure thing, and that's just plain wasteful. Ain't that right, Eddie?"
    - Page 7-"She's gonna slice 'em thin as fingernails and fry 'em up crusty brown with lots of salt sparklin'."
    - Page 22-"Next year after harvest," he said, "you kids come on back and sack up as many rocks as you like. Any taters you happen to glean in the process, they're yours to keep. You tell your ma I said that, you hear?"

*Expand Vocabulary:*

- **Ask someone to define the word for you**
  - Explain to and model for students how to ask for a definition of a word. Teach them to ask one, two, or three of the following questions:
    - What is the word?
    - What is the word like?
    - What are some examples of this word being used in a sentence?
  - After gathering up the answer(s), students should go back to the text and do one or all of the following three things to assess their level of understanding:
    - Go back to the text and substitute the definition in place of the word.
    - Read the selection again, using the definition.
    - Ask, does the definition of the word make sense in the sentence?
  - Model this behavior for the students using a word or words from the story. Possible words to choose from are:
    - Page 22 – harvest
    - Page 3 – schemin'
    - Page 7 – rattle-bang
- **Voracious reading:**
  - Read the story as a whole group, shared story.
  - Create a reader's theater script from the text for students to use during Read to Someone, or other appropriate time.
  - Add the book to the class library for students to read.
  - Have students do partner readings of the text.

*This text can be used with nearly any strategy on the CAFE menu. The above strategies are a highlighted collection to use as a springboard for further instruction.*