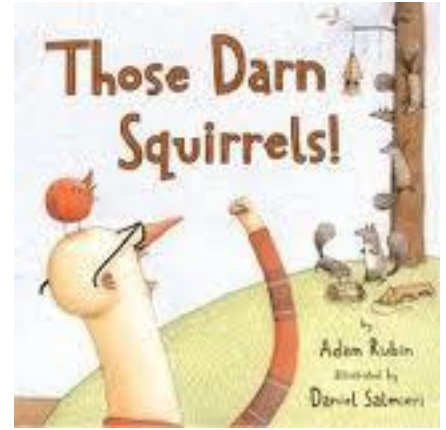


Those Darn Squirrels!

Written by: Adam Rubin



Old Man Forkwire loves painting the birds in his backyard. Find out what happens when the squirrels move in and start taking over. Will Old Man Fookwire ever get to enjoy the view out his window or see the birds again?

Possible strategies for instruction:

Comprehension:

- **Use prior knowledge to connect with text:**
 - Ask students to think of what they already know about squirrels. Record thoughts in a KWL chart to revisit during or after reading.
 - Have students share any squirrel connections they have when shown this book. Do squirrels ever cause trouble for people with bird feeders or birdhouses?
- **Make and adjust predictions, use text to confirm:**
 - Before reading, take students on a picture walk through the book. Make predictions about the cover and on the inside illustrations. Discuss why the man is shaking his fist at the squirrels, or what students think might happen in the book.
 - Before reading page 6, have students predict why the man is so grumpy. Use story to confirm predictions.
 - When reading page 24, ask students to predict what the squirrels will do or could do to cheer up Old Man Fookwire.
 - At the end of the book, ask students to explain if the Old Man likes or dislikes the squirrels and how they know (he still shakes his fist, but he is smiling).
- **Make a picture or mental image:**
 - Have students visualize what is happening in the story as you read the story without showing the pictures (could also not reveal one or two pages as story is read aloud for an introduction this strategy).

Accuracy:

- **Use pictures; do the words and pictures match?**
 - On page 5, have students explain what the “outskirts of town” means by connecting with the illustration. The Old Man’s little old house is away from the edge of town. By using the illustrations, students could find this meaning.
 - Using this strategy helps students to use all means available to build accuracy and comprehension. Reading the pictures is one of the three ways to read a book. On page 20, have students look at the illustrations to determine the squirrels “plan of

- attack” to get into the birdfeeders since the Old Man has set them up in a way to block squirrels.
- On page 6, using the illustrations to figure out what Old Man Fookwire dislikes and what makes him grumpy.
 - **Skip the word, then come back:**
 - On page 18, the author has chosen the phrase “veritable fortress” to describe how the man fortified his birdfeeder area to protect it from the squirrels. Cover the word “veritable” and model skipping the word and coming back to make sense of it. This helps demonstrate the resiliency needed in reading.

Fluency:

- **Use punctuation to enhance phrasing and prosody:**
 - As the story is read, model correct phrasing and incorrect phrasing. Use this as a starting point for a discussion on why phrasing is a big part of reading fluently and how it is a continuation of what it would sound like when people have a conversation. Students could continue to practice with good-fit books during read to self or read to someone.

Expand Vocabulary:

- **Tune into interesting words and use new vocabulary in speaking and writing:**
 - As students are listening to the story, have them record on mini whiteboards any interesting words that they hear. Then, share students can share with the class when the story is complete. Remind them to notice the picture of the page their word is on so during discussion the class can revisit it. Possible words could be: squirrel, outskirts, geniuses, excellent, veritable, fortress, and overjoyed.
- **Use pictures, illustrations, and diagrams:**
 - On page 18, the author uses the phrase “veritable fortress”. This is a great page to use the pictures to help determine meaning as the illustrations show the various ways the Old Man has set up squirrel defense mechanisms for his birdfeeders.

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.

Rubin, A. (2008) *Those Darn Squirrels!* New York, NY: Clarion Books (available at http://www.amazon.com/Those-Darn-Squirrels-Adam-Rubin/dp/0547576811/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1354157186&sr=8-1&keywords=those+darn+squirrels).