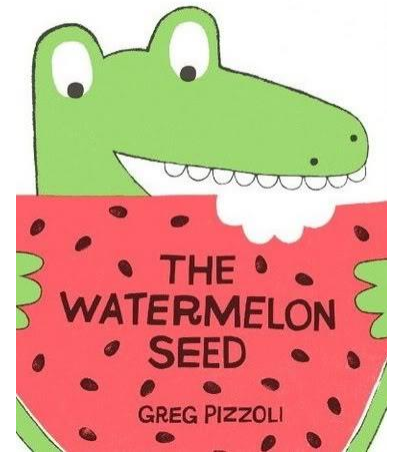


The Watermelon Seed

Written and Illustrated by: Greg Pizzoli

The crocodile in this story loves watermelon – a lot! He likes to eat it all the time. That is, until he swallows a seed. Now he is worried the seed is going to grow inside him and cause all kinds of problems. Will this seed ruin his love for watermelon?



Possible strategy instruction:

Comprehension:

- **Check for understanding:**
 - Since there are not many words on each page, this book lends itself to emergent readers who need to check every few pages for understanding. After every 3-4 pages, stop and model how to check for understanding. Do a think aloud by saying, “I just read _____. I know I can keep going because I understand what I’m reading.” Model what to do if you don’t understand as well. Stop after he swallows the seed, and say, “Wait. I don’t understand why he is so upset. I need to go back and reread before I keep reading.”
- **Use prior knowledge to connect with text:**
 - Asking questions to access prior knowledge helps students relate to the books. Model how to use prior knowledge to make connections with the book. Look at the cover and say, “I can tell this book is about watermelon. It’s called *The Watermelon Seed* and there is a picture of watermelon on the cover. Before I read, I like to ask myself some questions about what the book might be about. Here are some questions I would ask myself. You can answer them!”
 - Have you ever eaten watermelon?
 - What do you do with the black seeds in your watermelon?
 - What would happen if you swallowed one of those black seeds?

Accuracy:

- **Cross-checking:**
 - Choose 2-3 sentences as examples. When you read these sentences choose one word to read incorrectly. Model how to stop at the end of the sentence and discuss how the words did not make sense. Talk about how to go back to the word that didn’t make sense. Show, with kinesthetic motions, how to cross-check. Put your right hand on your left shoulder and ask, “Does the word I am reading match the letters written or the picture?” Discuss your example with the students. Put your left hand on your right shoulder and ask, “Does it sound right?” Discuss your example with the students. Finally, bring both arms down by your side and ask, “Does it make

sense?" Discuss your example with the students. Talk about how these answers can help you determine the correct word.

- Examples: Page 4: Read, "I like a big salty slab for dinner and I love it for desert." Does the word match the letters? Yes. Does it match the pictures? No. There is no desert in the picture. Does it sound right? No. We don't eat anything for desert. We do eat food for dessert. Do we eat watermelon for dessert? Yes. I bet the word is dessert. Does it make sense? Desert doesn't, but dessert does.
- Page 14: Read, "Soon vins will come out of my ears?" Does the word match the letters? Almost. There is an "e" before the "s." I wonder if that will change the sound the "i" makes. I bet it is a magic "e." Let's try the long i sound. Vines. Does the word match the picture? "Vines" matches the picture! All of these green loopy lines are probably vines. Does it sound right? Yes! Does it make sense? Yes!

- **Blend sounds; stretch and reread**

- Choose 2-3 words to be tricky words as you read aloud. When you come to these words, model how to stretch the sounds and blend them back together. Show kids how to use their hands to stretch the sounds (pull hands apart slowly) and then blend them together (clap them together) to read the word.
 - Example words: best, slab, gulp, just, guts, chomp

Fluency:

- **Read appropriate-level texts that are a good fit**

- This book is perfect to demonstrate how to choose a good fit book! Go through the I-PICK strategies one at a time to model how to decide if it fits.
 - Purpose: Talk about a desire to read a funny book and how a friend recommended this book because it made her laugh.
 - Interest: Talk about how you are very interested in reptiles and amphibians. This book is about a crocodile, so your interest fits.
 - Comprehension: After reading through the first couple of pages, model how to check for understanding. Do a think aloud and talk about the "who" and the "what." Explain that this book is a good fit because you could understand what you read and tell about what the book is about.
 - Know the words: Read through the first couple of pages. Read most of the words correctly. Choose one or two words as words you don't know. Talk about how this book is a good fit because you knew all but one or two words.

Expand Vocabulary:

- **Tune in to interesting words and use new vocabulary in speaking and writing:**
 - Choose 2-3 new or interesting words to focus on. When you come to these words in the story, stop and talk about them. Ask the students if anyone knows what those words mean. Give a definition for the word and add it to the word collector. Refer to them again and again after adding them to the word collector.
 - Example words: chomp, slurp, slab, gulp, guts, vines, grumble

- **Use pictures, illustrations, and diagrams:**
 - Choose 2-3 words to focus on and model how to use the pictures to find and determine the words' meanings. When you come to a chosen word, reread the word, and ask the students to help you determine what the word means by looking at the picture. Discuss how helpful it is to look at the pictures to find out what the words mean.
 - Example words: slab, guts, vines, stretch

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.