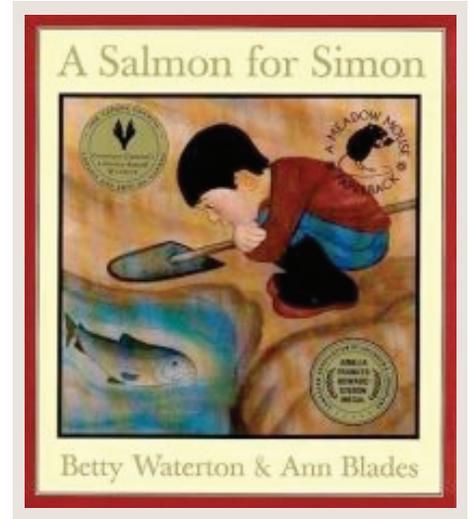




Title: A Salmon for Simon
Author: Betty Waterton
Genre: Picture Book (fiction)
Cultural Connection: Food, Respecting the Environment



PLOT SUMMARY

Simon had been fishing for salmon all summer and he hadn't caught a single one. Now it was September and many salmon were returning from the sea to spawn in the little creeks and rivers along the west coast. One day Simon and his sisters went clam digging. His sisters took the clams home to their mother but Simon decided to stay and fish. He sat on a rock and fished. *He sat on a dock and fished. But he didn't even see a salmon.* Simon went back to dig up a few more clams. He heard a flapping sound. When he looked up he saw a bald eagle flying overhead with a salmon in its talons. In the confusion of seagulls screeching and Simon hopping up and down the eagle dropped it. The salmon landed in the clam hole! *All summer Simon had been waiting to catch just such a fish, and here was one right in front of him. Yet he didn't feel happy. He watched the big handsome fish pushing its nose against the gravelly sides of the clam hole, trying to find a way out, and he felt sorry for it.* Simon took his clam shovel and began to dig a channel from the hole to the sea. Finally, as the sun was setting the channel was finished. *Cold sea water flowed into it. When the salmon felt the freshness of the sea, it began to move again. Its nose found the opening to the channel and slowly, slowly the salmon began to swim down it.* The salmon was free! As he walked home in the dark Simon decided he would go fishing tomorrow-but not for salmon.

LEARNING INTENTION

Focus Reading Connection: #3 Making Inferences

Readers infer when they take what they know about a story and then fill in the information that was not included. When talking to students about inferring it is important to emphasize that:

1. Inferring helps the reader to better understand the story.
2. Readers need to look for clues in the pictures and the text as well as relying on their own background knowledge to fill in what is not written on the page.
3. Some authors deliberately write very little but leave the reader lots of clues to think about.

This lesson uses structured partner talk as a learning strategy. To learn more about partner talk please refer to the Educator's page on our website.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1 copy of A Salmon for Simon



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BEFORE

- Print the following headings on the chalkboard or on chart paper:
what I see, a question I have, what I infer.
- Mark the following pictures in the book with sticky notes for easy reference:
Picture #1: the three children digging clams
Picture #2: Simon leaning on the rock looking at the sea life
Picture #3: Simon looking at the salmon in the clam hole
Picture #4: Simon saying goodbye to the salmon as it swims away
- Explain to the class what inferring is (something that good readers do to understand what the author is saying in the text and in the pictures).
- Explain that readers can also use their own background knowledge to help fill in the missing information.
- Inferring Practise: Use body language and your facial expressions to display an emotion. Have the class guess what the emotion is. Have them justify their answers: *"I think that....because...."*.
- Inferring Practise: Repeat the above activity using students to model an emotion.
- Inferring Practise: Discuss, as a class, what clues the models gave you that helped you make the inferences.

DURING

Show Picture #1 to the class (enlarged on an overhead of an Elmo would work well).

- Model inferring for the class:
 1. Describe some of the details that you see in the picture. Record them on the chart. For example:(there are 3 children in the picture) (they are digging a hole) (the white house is on stilts)
 2. Ask a question about each detail and record in on the chart. For example:
(I wonder if the kids are in the same family?) (Why are they digging?) (Why would you build a house up on stilts?)
 3. Make an inference for each detail and record it on the chart. For example:
(maybe they are neighbours because I see several houses in the picture)
(maybe they are building a sandcastle)
(sometimes houses are built up high to stay out of the water, maybe this house is near a creek that floods from time to time).

Show Picture #2 to the class.

- Model inferring with the class:
 1. Describe one of the details that you see in the picture. Record it on the chart. For example:
(The boy does not look very happy. His eyes look sad. His mouth is turned down.)

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2. Have some of the students help you with the modeling by volunteering to tell you what they can see in the picture. Record their details on the chart.
3. Ask a question about your detail and record it on the chart. For example:
(I wonder why he looks so unhappy?)
4. Have the students help you with the modeling by volunteering questions about their details on the chart.
5. Make an inference about your detail. For example:
(I think the boy is sad because the other kids had to go home and he has no one to play with).
6. Have the students help to finish filling in the chart by making inferences for the rest of their details.

Show Picture #3 to the class.

Model inferring with the class.

1. Describe one of the details in the picture.
2. Have each student talk to a partner. Have them discuss the detail and come up with a question and an inference for the detail.
3. Have the students report out to the larger group. Have them justify their thinking (I think...because....).

Show Picture #4 to the class.

Repeat the modeling and inferring lesson for Picture #3 with this last picture.

AFTER

- Have each student talk to a partner and generate a list of facts that they now have about the story. Have them report out their facts to the larger group. Record the list on the chalkboard.
- Have each student talk to a partner and generate a list of questions that they have about the story. Have each student report one question out to the larger group. Record the questions on the chalkboard.
- Read the story to the class.
- Go through the list of questions to see if they have been answered. Ask: *“Was the answer to this question on the page or did you infer it?”*

Suggested Supplemental Resources:

Click on the Kids tab of our website to find similar stories such as:

- Loon by Susan Vande Griek
- Loonies and Toonies by Mike Ulmer
- Mwakwa Talks to the Loon by Dale Auger
- Where Only the Elders Go: Moon Lake Loon Lake by Jan Waboose