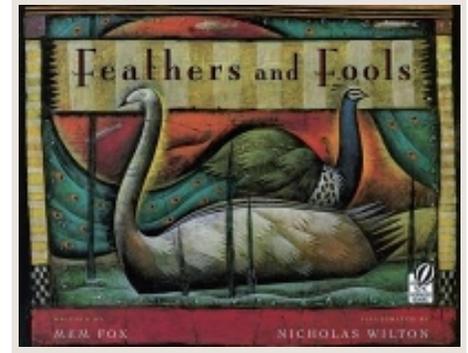




Title: Feathers and Fools
Author: Mem Fox
Genre: Fiction (picture book)
Cultural Connection: respect, inclusion
Classroom Connection: celebration of diversity



PLOT SUMMARY

This story is about a pride of magnificent peacocks and a flock of elegant swans. One of the peacocks watched the swans and thought it was strange that they should fly and swim when the peacocks did not. The pride became worried because the swans were so different. They made a plan. They sharpened a quantity of feathers and hid them in their garden. *“Now we can defend ourselves against the swans.” said the first-and-most-foolish peacock, raising his voice that the swans might hear: “We shall hurl these arrows at their throats and slaughter every one should they ever try to change our way of life.”*

The swans prepared their own arsenal of weapons. Both groups became terrified of their perceived enemy. One day a swan flew over the peacocks with some nesting material in her beak. The peacocks thought that she was carrying an arrow. They ran down to the lake with their weapons. *“Soon cries filled the air and blood darkened the earth. A cloud of feathers rose into the sky and haunted the sun.”* All of the birds were killed in the battle.

Some time later an egg hatched in the garden. Another hatched in the reeds beside the lake. *“They stumbled towards each other, alive with curiosity and trust.*

“You’re just like me,” said the first. “You have feathers and two legs.”

“You’re just like me,” said the second. “You have a head and two eyes.”

The story ends with the two friends facing the day together in peace and without fear.

LEARNING INTENTION

Focus Reading Connection: #2 Making Connections

Readers connect to a story or a piece of informational text when something about it evokes a memory. When talking to students about making connections it is important to emphasize that:

1. Readers connect to a story or piece of informational text when a memory surfaces.
2. Readers can make connections to many aspects of a book: the pictures, the characters, the events and even the emotions expressed in a story.
3. There are several types of connections that readers can make:
 - Connections between the text and the reader’s own life.
 - Connections between the text and other reading material the reader has encountered.
 - Connections between the text and events in the reader’s world.
4. Note: This lesson uses structured partner talk as a learning strategy. To learn more about partner talk please refer to the Educators page on our website.



MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1 copy of *Feathers and Fools*
- 1 copy of a venn diagram per student

Note: This lesson could be spread out over a number of days depending on the age and ability of the students.

BEFORE

1. Draw a Venn diagram on the chalkboard.
2. Print the word “different” under each circle.
3. Explain to the students that sometimes when we are reading information or a story, we make connections to what we already know about the topic. This is called connecting to prior knowledge. Tell them that a Venn diagram is one way to organize this information.
4. Show the cover of the book to the students. Read the title and check to see that the meaning of the words “feathers” and “fools” is understood.
5. Have the students identify the two birds on the cover. Label the circles in the Venn diagram “peacock” and “swan”. Explain that you are going to record how the two birds are different.
6. Have each student turn to a predetermined partner and share their background knowledge about the two types of birds.
7. Model sharing your own background knowledge and print the information on the Venn diagram.
8. Have some of the students share their background knowledge about the differences in the two birds with the larger group.
9. Record the information on the Venn diagram.
10. Explain that you will now read the story out loud to the class. Ask them to listen for ways that peacocks and swans are different. Explain that you will stop reading at the end of each page to record any new information that they have found.

DURING

1. Read the first page. Discuss the content and examine the picture. Record any new information on the Venn Diagram.
2. Continue reading and talking and recording information to the end of the book.

AFTER: PART 1

1. Review the information on the Venn diagram.
2. Ask the students to make a personal connection to the story by considering something that is different about themselves and their best friends.
3. Have each student turn to a predetermined partner and share their thoughts.
4. Model sharing your own thoughts and print the information underneath the diagram on the chalkboard:
“*Something that is different about me and my best friend is...*”
5. If the students are creating their own Venn diagrams they could complete the sentence frame on their papers.



AFTER: PART 2

1. Print the word “same” under the mid section of the Venn diagram on the chalkboard. Explain that you are now going to record things that are the same about peacocks and swans in this section.
2. Ask the students to listen for the ways that the two newly hatched birds are the same as you reread the last three pages of the book.
3. Have each student turn to a predetermined partner and share their thoughts.
4. Model sharing your own findings and print the information on the diagram. For example: “*both have feathers*”.
5. Have some of the students share their ideas with the larger group and record their responses.
6. Ask the students to make another personal connection to the story by considering something that is the same about themselves and their best friends.
7. Have them complete the sentence frame: “*Something that is the same about me and my best friend is...*”

Suggested Supplemental Resources:

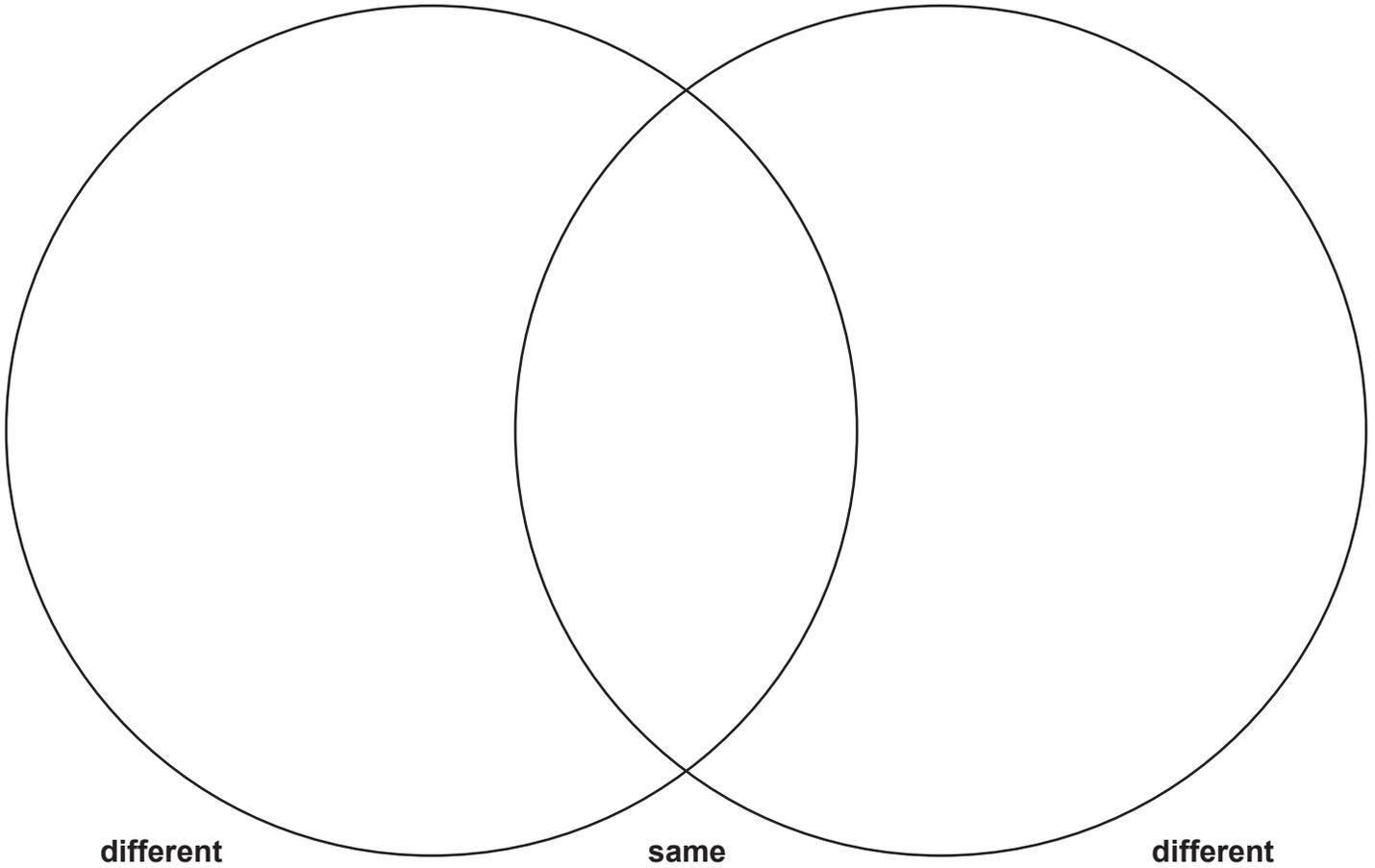
- *Reading Power* by Adrienne Gear
- *One Peace: True Stories of Young Artists* by Janet Wilson
- *We Want You to Know: Kids Talk About Bullying* by Deborah Ellis



Date: _____

Name: _____

Feathers and Fools



Something that is different about me and my best friend is

Something that is the same about me and my best friend is
