

Skunk's Spring Surprise

by Leslea Newman

A charming story proving that good friendships can survive the longest of winters.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *This book is about a skunk and his friends. What animals do you suppose a skunk would be friends with?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder if this little skunk is going to sleep while the other animals go play?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *Skunk's Spring Surprise*

- scurries: to move quickly
- rant: to speak loudly
- rave: to speak wildly
- trudges: to walk with slow heavy steps

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Was Skunk happy to wake up from her winter nap? Why?
- How would you feel if you woke up from your nap and couldn't find anybody?
- What did Turtle mean when he said "don't scare her or she'll make a stink?"
- Who can remember some of Skunk's friends? Let's try to list them all.
- What did Turtle do for his talent?
- Which animal did the juggling? What did he juggle?
- Do you think Skunk's friends were surprised that Skunk had written a poem for them?

Do

Spring Talent Show

Have a talent show and ask each child to perform. Invite parents or another class. Don't forget the popcorn!

Ideas:

Sing a song, whistle a song, perform a dance, demonstrate animal sounds (owl calling, hog calling, etc.), play an instrument, do a magic trick, do gymnastics (somersaults, cartwheels, etc.), rap a rhyme, recite a rhyme, juggle objects, toss coins and catch them, tell jokes, impersonate cartoon characters, balance a book or plate on head, jump rope, hula hoop.

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