

Skippyjon Jones in the Doghouse

by Judy Schachner

Follow the adventures of Skippyjon Jones, a Siamese cat who thinks he's a Chihuahua, in this colorfully illustrated book full of rhymes with a Spanish twist.



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, *Skippyjon Jones travels to new places through his closet. If you could go anywhere, where would you go?* 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 Skippyjon got in trouble for coloring on the wall?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Ask the children to try and remember as you read which animal crawled in the mitten first, second, and so on. 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 *Skippyjon Jones in the Doghouse*:

- finest: very well or satisfactory
- rubbed: to press and move hand on something
- fur: animal hair
- scolded: to speak harshly
- budge: to move or move something, especially with difficulty or effort
- careening: to sway or swerve while moving
- fled: to flee and run away
- serious: thoughtful or thought-provoking
- boulder: a large rock
- chugged: to make a repetitive thudding sound like that of a small engine
- shack: a small flimsy building
- perched: a temporary resting place for a person or thing
- bloomed: to appear suddenly
- wrapped: to cover something up
- cavorting: to leap around
- chilling: causing a feeling of dread or horror
- mayhem: chaos or severe disruption
- sciatica: pain in the hip and leg
- loco: the Spanish word for "crazy"

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Rare Words in *Skippyjon Jones the Doghouse* continued:

- nervously: having a feeling of dread or apprehension
- valley: the low-lying area of land with a river or stream running through it
- jitters: to behave in a nervous or restless way
- flourish: to be healthy, grow well or do well
- hulking: large, bulky and often clumsy
- shadow: a darkened shape that falls behind somebody or something blocking the light
- lunged: a sudden strong forward movement

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Between what times did Skippyjon Jones create his art?
- Did Mama Junebug Jones like his artwork?
- What does Skippyjon Jones think he is?
- Where does Mama Junebug put Skippyjon?
- What did Skippyjon pull from his ear?
- What did Skippyjon take with him to the doghouse?
- What show did Jilly Boo want to watch with Skippyjon Jones?
- What title did Skippyjon Jones give himself?
- When he went into the doghouse, what did he find?
- What does the word "amigos" mean in English? Frijoles? Cinco?
- What kind of burrito did the Chihuahuas roll Skippyjon into?
- Where did the perritos toss Skippyjon Jones to defeat the bobble-ito?
- How did Skippyjon get out of the house?
- What was Skippyjon doing when his sisters and mom found him?



Do

Lights, Camera, Action!

Before: add new clothes, shoes, hats, accessories and props to the "dress-up/imagination" center.

After reading the story, discuss with the children all the different characters that Skippyjon pretends to be in his books. Allow the children enough time to "design" a character they would like to be. If desired, allow the children to make up an adventure that they and Skippyjon could take together. The children can then act out their skits.

Additional Activity: if desired, invite other classrooms or parents to come and watch the adventures.