

Dear Deer

by Gene Barretta

An introduction to the concept of homophones through playful pictures and rich language.



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, *Sometimes words sound the same but have different meanings – like Dear and Deer. These words are called homophones.* 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 the letter that the deer is reading is the same one that the ant is writing?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations and ask questions. Spend time talking about the homophones and their different meanings. 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 *Dear Deer*

- mousse: a light, sweet dessert made from eggs and whipped cream
- ewe: a female sheep
- daze: unable to think clearly; confused
- hoarse: having a rough-sounding voice
- hymn: a religious song
- feat: a remarkable achievement involving skill or courage
- tale: a story
- doe: a female deer
- kneaded: to press and squeeze dough or clay
- dough: a mixture of flour and water
- towed: pulled along by a rope or chain
- wail: a mournful cry
- aloud: using your voice
- pause: stop briefly
- bare: not covered by clothing
- flee: to run away
- gnus: a large antelope with a head like an ox, a short mane, a beard, downward curving horns and a fuzzy tail
- hare: a rabbit-like animal with large hind legs

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What are words called that sound alike but have different meanings?
- If two words sound the same, would they be spelled the same?
- When you hear a word that is a homophone, how do you know which one it is? For example, if I say "I read the best book yesterday" – you know from what I said that I mean I "read" as in the act of reading vs. the color red.
- Who can tell me the meaning of the word flower/flour?



Do

Same Sound!

Homophones are words that sound alike but have different meanings. Review the list of homophones found in *Dear Deer* and ask the children to remember the different meanings. Next, write both words on a large piece of paper so the children can see the spelling for each word.

Dear/Deer

Aunt/Ant

Ate/Eight

Daze/Days

Horse/Hoarse

Tale/Tail

Kneaded/Needed

See/Sea

Allowed/Aloud

Pause/Paws

Threw/Through

Blew/Blue

Herd/Heard

Flew/Flu

Flea/Flee

Know/No

Hear/Here

Moose/Mousse

You/Ewe

Him/Hymn

Feat/Feet

Doe/Dough

Toad/Towed

Whale/Wail

Bear/Bare

Hey/Hay

Read/Red

Choose/Chews

Mood/Mooed

Bee/Be

News/Gnus

Hare/Hair