

The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck

by Beatrix Potter

A classic tale of how a barnyard collie and pups rescued Jemima Puddle-Duck from the fox's cooking pot.



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, *Who can tell me something about how a duck hatches her eggs?* 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 is a duck or a goose?

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 *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck*

- brood: young birds that are born and reared together
- duckling: a duck that has not reached maturity
- annoyed: to make somebody feel impatient or mildly angry
- patience: the ability to endure waiting or delay without becoming annoyed or upset
- flapping: to move wings up and down
- skimmed: to pass quickly across and just above the surface of something
- brushwood: twigs and branches
- convenient: useful or suitable, because it makes things easier, and is close by
- fancied: a liking for somebody or desire for something
- startled: to frighten a person or animal into making an involuntary movement
- prick: to cause an animal's ears to stick up straight on hearing something
- civil: polite, but in a way that is cold and formal
- handsome: with good-looking facial features or a pleasing general appearance
- whiskers: hair near animal's mouth
- fowl: a bird kept for its meat and eggs
- dismal: very poor or inadequate
- faggots: a bundle of sticks or twigs
- hospitable: pleasant, agreeable, and providing what somebody needs to live comfortably
- suffocating: to deprive somebody of air
- vast: very great in number, size, or amount
- newspaper: a publication containing news and comment on current events
- admired: to look at somebody or something beautiful or attractive with enjoyment
- savoury: having an appetizing taste or smell
- simpleton: an offensive term for somebody regarded as lacking common sense
- nibbling: to take a series of small quick bites at something
- snippets: a small piece of something
- awe: a feeling of amazement mixed with fear
- opposite: to face somebody or something from the other side
- pattering: to make a quick light tapping sound on something
- escorted: one or more persons accompanying somebody or something as a guard or guide

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Why was Jemima Puddle-duck annoyed at the farmer's wife?
- How many days does a duck sit on her eggs before they hatch?
- Why can't they leave the nest after laying their eggs?
- Who was the gentleman reading the newspaper?
- Where did Jemima Puddle-duck meet the fox?
- Why did the fox offer to help Jemima find a place for her nest?
- What was the shed filled with? Why were there so many feathers?
- What happened when Jemima left her nest?
- What was Jemima going to bring back to her nest before sitting? A bag of corn? Oats?
- Why did the fox request that Jemima bring back herbs and onions? What was he really planning?
- Who questioned Jemima when she was leaving the kitchen with the onions? Why?
- Who helped Kep, the barnyard collie, scare off the fox?
- What happened to the fox?
- Who ate Jemima's eggs and then escorted her home?
- How many eggs did Jemima eventually hatch?



Do

Collect Feathers for Show and Tell

Have the children bring various types of feathers they have collected to the classroom for show and tell. Examine them with a magnifying glass. Discuss their purposes such as keeping animals warm and helping ducks to float on water. Add the feathers to the water table to see if they float. Discuss why they float.