

Sample Read-Aloud Strategy

Chrysanthemum



Say: Today I'm going to read a story called Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes. Let's look at the pictures and see if you can tell me what the story is going to be about.

Do: Encourage the children to respond as you turn the pages of the book from beginning to end. This activity is sometimes called a "picture walk." After the children have offered their ideas, say:

Say: This story is about a mouse named Chrysanthemum who had always loved her name – until she went to school and the other kids made fun of it. Her parents reassure her that her name is perfect but the kids at school don't think so. But, then Chrysanthemum meets the music teacher, Mrs. Twinkle – Mrs. Delphinium Twinkle and everything turns out perfect after all. While I'm reading, think about your own name and what you like or dislike about it. As I read, try to remember what Jo, Rita and Victoria said about Chrysanthemum's name.

Do: Ask questions that build additional background knowledge and set a purpose for listening. Do you know why you were given your name? Did your parents name you after someone else in the family? Do you use your full name or a shortened version of it? Once the children are familiar with this questioning technique, you can ask them to think of their own questions.

Say: Now that I've told you a little bit about the story, let's read it.

Do: Show the children the pictures as you read. Stop occasionally for reactions, comments, and questions. To engage the children, you can ask the following discussion questions: "Did Chrysanthemum like her name before she went to school? What made Chrysanthemum dislike her name? What kinds of things did her parents tell her to make her feel better about her name?" If the children don't respond, you can model a response by saying, "It's a good thing that Chrysanthemum has parents who listen to her and help her feel better when she has a problem."

Say: Now that we've read the story, why do you think Chrysanthemum's classmates teased her about her name? How do you think Chrysanthemum felt? What would you have done if you were Chrysanthemum?

Do: Let the children respond and ask them to retell the story using the pictures in the book to help them recall the story sequence. Finally focus on the second goal, making inferences and ask:

Say: How do you think Chrysanthemum felt when Mrs. Twinkle told the class how much she loved the name Chrysanthemum and was thinking of naming her own baby that? How do you think Jo, Rita, and Victoria felt when Mrs. Twinkle said she loved the name Chrysanthemum? What lesson can we learn from this story?