

All by myself by mercercr mayer

Education



All By Myself by Mercer Mayer

Interactive Reading

The name of the first book I have selected for the Interactive Reading assignment is All By Myself by Mercer Mayer (2001). As Mayer points out on his web page, “ Most of my books are about things that happened to me when I was a little kid.” His well-known character, Little Critter, demonstrates the things he can do by himself. He ties his shoes, pours his juice, puts away his toys, cares for his little sister, and colors a picture among other things. His results aren’t perfect but he tries hard to be independent. At the end, after being so independent all day, he becomes the little fellow he is and can’t go to sleep without a story.

I chose All by Myself because children who are at the developmental stage to enjoy such a book are learning to or doing these things themselves. They are impatient to try new things and to master their world. That Little Critter does not do things perfectly should appeal to them, knowing the results of their efforts are not always perfect. While the text describes the various tasks Little Critter attempts, it is the illustrations which show the imperfections. This is a subtle way of suggesting it’s okay to try and not succeed, something that happens often in the world of the young child. The tasks and items in the book are common to a child at this stage of learning, enabling them to recognize the words for items and tasks in their world. The repetitive nature of the text leaves the items and tasks highlighted in a sense for the child to recognize. The illustrations enable the child to identify and guess the words that are not repeated thus enabling the use of prompts in dialogic reading.

Prompts are part of dialogic reading, “ an interactive shared picture-book
<https://assignbuster.com/all-by-myself-by-mercere-mayer/>

reading practice designed to enhance young children’s language and literacy skills.” As they read, the adult and child both take active parts so the child learns not just from hearing but from seeing, asking questions, making deductions, and applying the learning to his or her own life experiences.

Completion Prompt – the text reads, “ I can put on my ().” The illustration is clearly about putting on socks so the small reader is able to identify the word sock. Not only that but it is an easy word to sound out. Recall Prompt – What did Little Critter pour for his sister? This sentence has a particularly funny illustration because Little Critter spills a lot of juice. In addition, this emphasizes the word juice which is not easily sounded out. Open Ended Prompt – the text says, “ I can get into my pajamas.” Little Critter’s eyes look sleepy and it is bedtime so by asking what Little Critter is feeling, the child can describe how he or she feels at bedtime, even projecting their feelings on Little Critter. The child may share thoughts or feelings not in the illustration but some that are personal, such as not wanting to go to bed.

Distancing Question – with few exceptions the child can be asked to relate to all of the tasks and events in the book. Each child could be asked to illustrate and describe a similar event and show it to the class, explaining it. A question to pose at this time might be how well did you do that the first time and are you better at it now that you have practiced? Other questions could be how do you feel when asked to do something. Some may have younger siblings and resent having to help take care of them while others might enjoy this, others might or might not like helping around the house. Therein lies a lesson in having differing opinions.

In the second book, Sid the Seed (2009), Sid is comfortable living in his snug hole with his two friends, a spider and a caterpillar, both of whom want

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change and adventure. Both friends transform and depart, leaving Sid and making this book an account of tolerance and acceptance, both concepts new to small readers.

Completion Prompt – The text reads, “ Sid sat with his friends playing cards and eating ().” The illustration shows the friends eating snacks, a popular subject with the small reader. Not only that but it is an easy word to sound out. Recall Prompt – Where did Sid want to stay? The text emphasized the point that Sid wants to stay in his comfy hole. Open Ended Prompt – once Sid has decided to make a change and go on an adventure, the question can be posed, how did he feel? Change in a small child’s life can be frightening and exciting at the same time, this question enables the child to look at his or her own feelings. Distancing Question – most children have experience a great change in their lives, moving, starting school, or the birth of a sibling. The children may be asked to describe this change and their feelings.

The third book is Just a Secret (2001) by Gina and Mercer Mayer in which the well-loved Little Critter has a secret. What fun for a child to know something nobody else does. The story follows the problems Little Critter has in keeping his secret and the fun of finally revealing it, an adventure any small reader can love and relate to.

Completion Prompt – The text reads, “ I even ().” The illustration shows Little Critter cried, a common reaction to childhood disappointment. Recall Prompt – Who did Little Critter want to keep his secret from? The text lists his sister, his pets, and his friends. Open Ended Prompt – Little Critter goes through a range of emotions from excitement about his secret, frustration at having it discovered, disappointment when he loses it, then the thrill of surprising his mother. Asking about this lets children demonstrate to each other various

emotions and how they change. Distancing Question – The young readers may be asked to describe a secret they once had to keep, relating their feelings and the events to those experienced by Little Critter, demonstrating the fun but also frustration of having a secret.

According to the U. S. Dept. of Education Institute of Education Sciences the conclusion to be drawn is “ Children learn most from books when they are actively involved” (2010).

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