

Where Is Sam?

by Julie Ellis

illustrated by Christine Ross

Overview

In this humorous story, the reader follows Sam through the house, finding item after item of discarded clothing, until the answer to the question posed in the title is revealed. The keyhole illustration on the front cover of the book provides an intriguing clue, while the detailed illustrations provide many opportunities for discussion. This book is particularly useful for consolidating the high-frequency words “Here”, “Where”, “is”, and “are”, and for monitoring the children’s use of a return sweep. *Where is Miss Pool?* and *Where are my Socks?* are other books at the Red level that feature these high-frequency words. *Look at Me* (Magenta) is another Ready to Read text about clothes. There is an audio version of *Where Is Sam?* on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2001*.

Curriculum links: health and physical education

Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the high-frequency words “are”, “he”, “Here”, “is”, “where”
- the digraph “sh” in “shoes” and “T-shirt”
- the repetitive text structure
- the shift from one to two lines of text per page
- the question and answer format of the text
- the names for the items of clothing
- the colloquial term “undies”
- the exclamation mark and bold type for emphasis on page 8
- the possessive apostrophe in “Sam’s”
- the close picture-text match
- the small pictures of clothing items to the right of the text
- the way the illustrations heighten the fun of the story, showing Sam disappearing from view on each page.

Setting the scene

Use the cover of this book to set the scene. *This book is about a boy. His name is in the title. Can you find it? Some children may recognize “am” in “Sam”. What do you notice at the end of the title? What do you think the question is? Look through the keyhole. Can you guess where Sam is? Accept the children’s ideas and predictions during the discussion but don’t give away the answer.*

The first reading

Listen to the children read the title, then read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Title page – *What is Sam doing?* Listen to the children reread the title.

Page 2 – The word “Here” may be a challenge for some children. Draw their attention to the initial consonant, but be prepared to tell them the word to set the pattern of the text.

Listen to the children read the text themselves, offering support as necessary.

Note that, from page 4, there are two lines of text per page. As the children read, observe how well they are able to maintain one-to-one word matching and a return sweep.

Page 5 – The children may read “trousers” or “jeans” for “pants”. Prompt them to cross-check using the initial consonant. *Does that look right? What else could that word be? What letters in the word will help you? Where is Sam now?*

Page 7 – The children may have different names for “undies”. After they’ve giggled over the illustration, prompt them to cross-check.

Page 8 – Encourage the children to read this page expressively! Draw their attention to the exclamation mark, and the bold type. *How does the author want you to read this?* Let the children discover the singlet lying on the bathroom floor, which matches the undies.

Encourage the children to think critically. *Is that where you thought he would be? What will Mum or Dad say about all of those clothes? What else could Sam have done with his clothes?*

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text, observing which children are using visual and syntactic cues accurately. Observe, for example, the children’s fluency when reading the shifts from “is” to “are” that occur several times in the text.

Locate some of the high-frequency words in the text. *Can you find the word “Here”? Can you find another one? Now can you find the word “Where”? How are the words different?*

Find the word “shoes” in the text. *Can you think of other words that start the same way? Can you hear the “sh” sound in the word “T-shirt”? Show me the letters in the word that make that sound.*

Talk about the apostrophe in the word “Sam’s”. Explain that it is there because each item of clothing mentioned after Sam’s name belongs to him. Show the children the cover of *Sam’s Mask*, and ask them to find the apostrophe in the title.

Work through the illustrations, discussing the features of each room in the house in greater detail. *Which room of the house is Sam in now? How can you tell? Can you see Sam in the illustration?* Note that the boat in the bath on page 8 is also visible through the keyhole in the cover illustration.

Suggestions for further activities

Listen to the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2001* and read along with the book.

Reread the Ready to Read book *Look at Me*.

Read *Where is Miss Pool?* and *Where are my Socks?*

Innovate on the text, using the names of the children in the group.

Rewrite the story replacing the bath with the swimming pool or the beach.

Talk about what the children are wearing today. Ask the children to draw and label items of clothing.

Cut out clothes to go on an outline of Sam's body.

Draw a floor plan of Sam's house and label it.