

Fun with Mo and Toots

by Miriam Macdonald

Overview

This is a story about friends having fun and doing things together, such as riding bikes and drawing pictures. It links in closely with children's own experiences and will lead naturally to personal writing activities. This text features the characters Mo and Toots, who also feature in *>Boots for Toots*.

Curriculum links: health and physical education, social studies

Text features

- the high-frequency vocabulary "I", "like", "to", "We", "up", "my", "in"
- the initials "M" or "T" on the characters' clothing
- the repeated use of the initial letter "m" – "Mo", "make music"
- the use of "s" to denote plurals
- the repetitive sentence structure (pages 2–5) with a subtle change on page 6, when "I" is replaced with "We"
- the question on page 9, which directly addresses the reader
- the use of italics for emphasis on page 9
- the text within the illustrations
- the illustration on page 7, which features a speech bubble
- Mo's mouse "hiding" on every page

Setting the scene

Encourage the children to talk about what they like to do for fun. Ask them to share with a partner what they like to do at home after school. List their ideas (or do this after the reading).

Ask the children to consider what they like doing by themselves, with a friend, or with an adult.

The first reading

Introduce the text by discussing the cover and reading the title. The cover offers an opportunity to introduce the characters, Mo and Toots. Draw attention to the initial on Mo's pants. This can be followed up by looking at Toot's T-shirt on the title page. *How do we know which character is which?*

In this book, Mo and Toots tell us what they like doing. What do you think they might do to have fun?

Listen to the children read the text themselves, drawing their attention to the picture cues and any of the vocabulary in the written text that the children may be familiar with.

Page 2 – *Is it Mo or Toots in this picture? How do you know? What is Mo doing?*

Page 3 – *Who is it this time? How do you know? What does Toots like to do?*

Page 4 – *Who does the bike belong to?*

Focus on the change of participants from page 6 and how this is reflected in the written text with a change to the word "We". Note which children notice the word change independently.

Page 7 – *What card game do you think they are playing?*

Page 8 – Draw the children's attention to the repeated initial letter "m" for "make music".

Encourage the children to answer the question on page 9!

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

As the children become familiar with the book, they will delight in discovering Mo's mouse on every page.

Note the children's ability to use one-to-one matching skills when focusing on the written text.

Encourage the children to identify high-frequency words.

Focus on the use of "s" to denote a plural. *Are there any other words in the book that mean more than one?* ("cards", "monsters"). *What do you notice about the endings of these words?*

The illustrations contain written messages that support the storyline. Read these with the children.

Discuss the use of italics on page 9 and practise reading the question with the emphasis on "you".

Identify and list the words starting with "m" or "M" - "Mo", "Mighty", "monsters", "my", "make", "music".

Draw attention to the upper-case and lower-case versions of "m", "t", or "w".

Encourage the children to share their opinions of the activities that Mo and Toots enjoy.

Suggestions for further activities

Make a mural or book of what the children in the group like to do. Use the text as a model, for example, "I like to " or "We like to ". An extension of this could be to add in "said" and speech marks.

Construct a graph of favourite activities.

Cut out magazine pictures of people having fun and add captions.

Take photographs of the children having fun at school and add captions or use a digital camera and make them into a slide show.

Make a comparison chart of "Things I like to do" and "Things my dog/my mum/my teacher likes to do."