

# Boots for Toots

by Miriam Macdonald

## Overview

This book introduces mathematics concepts in a humorous context as Toots tries to find a pair of shoes that will fit. Her experiences create opportunities for discussion of growing, shopping, and making choices. The one-line captions and clear picture-text matches encourage the use of one-to-one word-matching and prediction skills. The book also offers many opportunities to focus on alphabet and word knowledge. This text is a companion text to *Fun with Mo and Toots*.

**Curriculum links:** Mathematics

## Text features

- the use of both upper-case and lower-case "B" ("Boots", "boots", "big") and "T" ("Toots", "too", "tight")
- the rhyming words "Boots", "Toots" and "tight", "right"
- the repetitive text structure on pages 2–7
- the use of "too" as an adverb
- the use of mathematical language: "big", "small", "long", "tall", "wide"
- the exaggeration and humour in the illustrations
- the text inside the illustrations, including the speech bubble on page 9
- the comma on page 9
- the question and question mark on page 9

## Setting the scene

The children could discuss their experiences of growing out of clothes and shoes or of passing on their own clothing to a younger sibling.

The discussion could focus on going shopping and trying on a range of garments or shoes to find the correct size and fit.

Bring some different-sized boots and shoes to the classroom. Discuss the different sizes and shapes, building in the language used in the text.

Introduce the notion of one pair of shoes being "just right" for a particular person.

## The first reading

The cover offers an opportunity to introduce the characters, Mo and Toots. Draw attention to the characters' initials being incorporated into their clothing. *How do we know which character is which?*

Discuss the characters' relationship and what they could be doing. Note the signpost in this discussion.

Look at the title page. *Is there anything wrong here?*

Give the children an opportunity to look through the book and focus on the illustrations. *What do you think Mo and Toots are shopping for?* Some children may need the storyline firmly established before reading. More confident children may enjoy predicting the story as they read.

Return to the cover and read the title of the text. Listen to the children read the text themselves, encouraging the use of the exaggerated boot sizes in the illustrations as cues to support the decoding of the written text.

Page 8 – *What has happened to Toots? How do you think she feels? How can you tell?*

Page 9 – *What do you think Toots is saying? What do you think Mo will say?*

Encourage cross-checking. For example, the children could read "little" for "small" on page 3. Substituting "little" would make sense, but encourage the children to check and tell you why the word used is not "little".

## Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Ask the children to locate words that start with an upper-case or lower-case "t", "m", or "b". (Focus on just one of these letters per session in order to avoid confusion.) Ask the children to tell you other words that start with the same letter. Record the words on the whiteboard.

Write the word "Toots" on the whiteboard and erase one letter at a time from the end of the word. Help the children to read the new words that are created ("Toot", "Too", "To").

Discuss the use of rhyme in the title.

The children could locate words with "oo" ("boots", "Toots", "too") or "all" ("tall", "small").

Draw the children's attention to the signs on the walls of the shoe shop. Use these as a starting point for a discussion about different types of footwear and who would be likely to wear them.

Encourage the children to identify any familiar words.

See whether the children notice that the text in the speech balloon on page 9 is the same as the text at the bottom of the page.

Consider the use of the comma and question mark.

## Suggestions for further activities

Design a shoe or boot and add a descriptive label. This could be extended to designing footwear for characters from well-known stories.

Have a magazine hunt to find different kinds of footwear. Paste pictures onto a large chart and help the children to write a caption for each pair, describing each shoe or explaining who they are for.

Look closely at the other boots and shoes on the shelves. *Which shoes or boots would you like to try on?* Encourage the use of descriptive oral language.

Role-play shopping for shoes.