

Mum's New Job

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illustrated by Jennifer Cooper

Overview

This narrative is about a child coping with change when Mum gets a new job. The text provides opportunities for children to share their own experiences. There is an audio version on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2010*.

Suggested purposes

This book supports the comprehension strategies of making connections, inferring, and identifying the author's purpose and point of view.

Text features

(This information is intended as a prompt for teachers rather than a list of teaching points.)

- the first-person narrator
- the feelings of the characters, conveyed through the text and illustrations
- the clear narrative structure and the positive but understated ending
- the thoughtful nature of the boy in wanting to do something about the problem
- the natural dialogue, including contractions and the exclamation "Phew"
- the two different uses of the apostrophes in "Mum's" (on page 5, "Mum's" is short for "Mum is"; in all other instances, the apostrophe is possessive, to show that the job belongs to Mum)
- the regular past-tense verbs, "cleaned", "picked", "poured", "smiled"
- the irregular past-tense verbs, including "ate", "fell", "gave", "made", "thought", "told", "woke".

Introducing the text

Discuss the cover and read the title. Encourage the children to share their experiences of being looked after by someone while their parents or caregivers are at work. *As we read, I want you to look for clues that tell us how the boy felt about his Mum having a new job and what he did.* Have a chart divided into 3 columns for recording the children's ideas: How the boy felt, Evidence from the book, and What the boy did.

The first reading

Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Title page – Listen to the children reread the title. Use the illustration to prompt the children to make connections to their own after-school activities.

Listen to the children read the text themselves, providing support and feedback as necessary.

Page 2 – *How does Mum feel about her new job? How do you know?* Discuss why the job might be hard work. If some children say “had” for “hard” direct them to look again at the middle letters.

Page 3 – *How does the boy feel? How do you know?* Record the children’s ideas and the evidence for them on the chart.

Page 4 – Have the children think, pair, and share about the things Mum might have to do when she gets home. Add new ideas (and evidence) about how the boy is feeling to the chart.

Page 5 – Check that the children realise that the illustration shows Aunty Jane’s place. *What do you think “doing her best” means?* Draw out the idea that Mum is trying to manage going to work, looking after the boy, and doing the household chores. Have the children think, pair, and share their ideas about ways the boy could help.

Page 6 – *I wonder what his idea might be ...* If necessary, clarify that “this” refers to Aunty Jane’s question on page 5. Update the chart with how the boy is feeling now. Draw out the idea he is thinking less about his feelings and more about what he could do.

Page 7 – If necessary, remind the children of the “f” sound for “ph” to help them decode “Phew”. If some children say “couch” for “sofa”, prompt them to cross-check – *If it was “couch”, what letters would you expect to see? Why has Mum fallen asleep on the sofa?* Have the children talk with a partner about what will happen next.

Pages 8 and 9 – If necessary, reassure the children about the “or” sound for “our” in “poured” and explain that “woke” is the past-tense form of “wake”. *What do you think Mum is going to say? I wonder how it is going to make him feel ...*

Pages 10 to 12 – *Is that what you thought would happen?* If necessary, clarify that the word “this” on page 10 is referring to the lunch. *How are Mum and Jack feeling? What clues in the illustrations and text are helping your thinking?* Review what actions contributed to the way Jack and Mum felt at the end of the story. *What else could Jack do so he and Mum can have more time together? Why do you think the author wrote this story? Do you think she has a message for us?*

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text, observing the strategies they use to manage challenges in the text and their use of expression.

Discuss the narrative structure. Identify the introduction, the problem, Jack’s actions, and the resolution. Link this to the ideas on the chart to clarify the link between Jack’s feelings and his actions. Practise using the strategy of inferring by creating a similar chart for Mum.

Create a chart together to compare the past- and present-tense verb forms of some of the regular and irregular verbs from the text. Explain that the usual rule is to add “ed” but that this doesn’t work for all verbs. For ESOL students, who are less likely to be able to draw on their knowledge of what “sounds right” in English, provide many scaffolded opportunities to practise using irregular verbs, for example, in conversations and reading sessions.

| Regular Verbs | |
|---------------|------------|
| Present tense | Past tense |
| clean | cleaned |

| | |
|-------|--------|
| pick | picked |
| pour | poured |
| smile | smiled |

| Irregular Verbs | |
|-----------------|------------|
| Present tense | Past tense |
| eat | ate |
| fall | fell |
| give | gave |
| make | made |
| think | thought |
| tell | told |
| wake | woke |

Focus on the use of the possessive apostrophe in the title. Explain that it's there to show that the job **belongs to** Mum. The children will be familiar with other titles that include possessive apostrophes (*Hoiho's Chicks*, *Greedy Cat's Door*, *Skipper's Happy Tail*, *The Gardener's Maze*). Find the other example on page 3 ("Jane's") and prompt the children to work out that the apostrophe is there to show that the place **belongs to** Aunty Jane.

Discuss the contractions. Reread the sentences on pages 2 and 5, replacing the contractions with "It is", "Mum is" and "She is" to show that contractions make writing (and speech) sound more natural.

Suggestions for further tasks

Have the children listen to the audio version on the CD *Readalong 2010* and read along with the book, noticing the change in the boy's voice after he comes up with his idea.

Read or reread *I Want to be the Fox* (Green), which has a similar theme about feelings and taking responsibility for solving a problem.

Create thought bubbles for pages 4, 6, and 11 to plot the change in Jack's thinking.