

# No, Skipper!

by Sharon Holt

illustrated by Marjorie Scott

## Overview

This humorous story features a boisterous family pet who would love to be allowed inside. When rain sets in, Skipper gets his opportunity. This text requires children to pay close attention to visual information. The lively nature of the narrative provides opportunities for expressive reading. This text is a companion text to *Skipper's Happy Tail* and is also available as a big book. There is an audio version on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2002*

Curriculum links: science

## Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the variety of initial consonant blends
- the digraphs “ch” – “chase”, “chased”, “chair”; and “ph” – Sophie
- the words ending in “er” – “corner”, “dinner”, “Skipper”
- the verbs ending in “ed” – “chased”, “flooded”, “opened”, “pointed”, “rained”, “stopped”, “wanted”; and in “ing” – “floating”, “looking”, “wagging”
- the irregular past-tense verbs – “ate”, “came”, “said”, “sat”, “slept”
- the compound words – “beside”, “inside”, “outside”, “sometimes”
- the possessive apostrophe – “Dad’s”, “Greg’s”, “Sophie’s”
- the use of direct speech
- the exclamation marks for emphasis
- the use of commas for phrasing
- the strong narrative structure
- the characterisation of Skipper in the text and the illustrations
- the expressive illustrations.

## Setting the scene

Talk about pet dogs. *Do you have a dog at home? Does your dog come inside your house?*

*Is there anything that your dog is not allowed to do at home? How do you know how your dog is feeling?*

## The first reading

Look at the cover of the book and ask the children to work out the dog’s name in the title drawing on their letter-sound knowledge. Talk about the reason for the title.

*Where is Skipper? What does he want to do?* Read the name of the author and the illustrator.

Turn to the title page. *What is Skipper doing?* Ask a child to mime the action, to draw out the idea that Skipper is trying to sneak past unnoticed. Listen to the children read the title again.

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

Page 2 – *What does this page tell you about Skipper?* Observe the children’s attempt to work out “outside”. If necessary, write “out” on the whiteboard and refer back to the earlier discussion.

Page 3 – *What did Skipper do outside?* Encourage the children to sound out the interest words on this page. Note whether they can apply their knowledge of “outside” to help them work out “beside” (and “inside” on page 4). *Does he like being an outside dog?*

Page 4 – *Why do you think he wants to come inside?*

Page 5 – Encourage the children to sound out “scraps”. Draw attention to the “ph” in “Sophie”. *What sort of scraps might Skipper get from Sophie? Does Sophie like Skipper being inside? What about Mum? How do you know?* Encourage the children to read Mum’s speech with expression, pointing to the door as they do so!

Page 6 – Note Skipper’s wicked expression and the claw marks on the tables. Encourage the children to decode “Greg”. You could prompt them with the word “leg”. *If we changed the beginning sound to “Gr”, what would his name be?*

Page 7 – You may need to support the children in working out the word “special”. Draw attention to the initial consonant blend and short “e”.

Page 9 – The words “flooded” and “floating” are visually similar, so the children will need to attend closely to visual information. *What happens when there’s too much rain? How did you know that word was “flooded”? Will the family leave him outside?*

Page 10 – Focus on the expressions on the characters’ faces. *What are they thinking?*

Page 11 – Listen carefully to the children’s phrasing. Are they attending to the comma? *Do you think this is a good idea?*

Pages 15 – *Why has the writer chosen to use the words “At last”?*

Page 16 – *How would Dad say this?*

Encourage the children to think critically. *Should Skipper be allowed inside? What are some ways that the family could stop Skipper from being such a nuisance inside the house?*

## Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text to themselves, observing their attention to visual information and their ability to read fluently and expressively.

Focus on any of the digraphs or consonant blends that the children may have been unsure of. List other words that start the same way.

Find the verbs in the text that end with “ed”. Compare these with the irregular verbs. *Would “eated” sound right?* Draw out the idea that there are some words that are exceptions to the normal rules about adding “ed”. Make a list of other common irregular verbs, such as, “went”, “made”, or “ran”.

Find the words in the text that end with “er” and list other examples on the whiteboard. Read the list together, emphasising the final sound.

Locate the possessive apostrophes in the text and talk about why they are there.

Make a list of the compound words in the text and split them. Remind the children that when they are trying to work out new words, it’s helpful to use the strategy of looking for a familiar part within the word. Link this back to their efforts to work out “beside” and “inside”.

Talk about the narrative structure of the story. Identify the introduction, problem, and resolution.

Discuss the characterisation of Skipper. *What does the story tell you about Skipper? What do the illustrations tell you?* Record the children’s descriptive language on a chart and display it so they can refer to it when they are writing.

Discuss their opinions as to whether dogs should be kept inside or outside.

### Suggestions for further activities

Enjoy the book and the CD at the listening post.

Reread *Skipper’s Happy Tail*. Compare the narrative structure of these two stories.

Have children take on the roles of Mum, Dad, Greg, and Sophie. Interview them about how they felt about having a dog inside.

Add speech or thought bubbles to pages 10, 12, 13, 14, or 15.

Ask the children to write about whether dogs should or should not be allowed inside. (Model this in shared writing first).

Encourage the children to write about their own pets. Encourage the use of descriptive language.