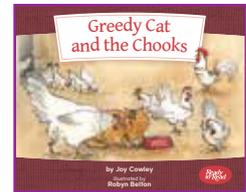


Greedy Cat and the Chooks

by Joy Cowley
illustrated by Robyn Belton

This text is levelled at Purple 1.



Overview

When Katie visits Aunty, she is dismayed to find that Aunty won't let Greedy Cat inside. Instead he has to stay outside with the chooks. This proves to be a big problem for Greedy Cat and one that he is determined to solve ...

This book requires students to “confidently use a range of processing and comprehension strategies to make meaning from and think critically about” text (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 14). It provides a lively reading experience and gives many opportunities to enjoy and explore language.

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at www.readytoread.tki.org.nz

Related texts

Previous stories about Greedy Cat

Other humorous stories about differences in opinion: *Dragons! Dragons! Dragons!*, *Haere Atu!*, *Number One* (shared); *A Very Clever Possum*, *Mum's Octopus* (Orange 2); *Giant Soup*, *Two Tiger Tales* (Purple 1); “Kele's Car” (a play) and “Ring! Ring!” (JJ 49); “Helpful” (JJ 50); “Staying Afloat” (JJ 54); “Stop, Thief!” (a play, JJ 55)

Stories and poems about cats: “Bedtime Cat” (poem card); “Catsways” (in *Splish Splash!*); “The Builder's Pet” (JJ 39); “One Black Cat” (a poem, JJ 40); “The Stowaway” (JJ 45)

Cross-curriculum links

English (levels 1 and 2): Selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment.

Text characteristics

Greedy Cat and the Chooks has the following text characteristics that help develop the reading behaviours expected of students reading at Purple.

A mix of explicit and implicit content within the text and illustrations that requires students to make connections between ideas in the story and their prior knowledge to make predictions and inferences

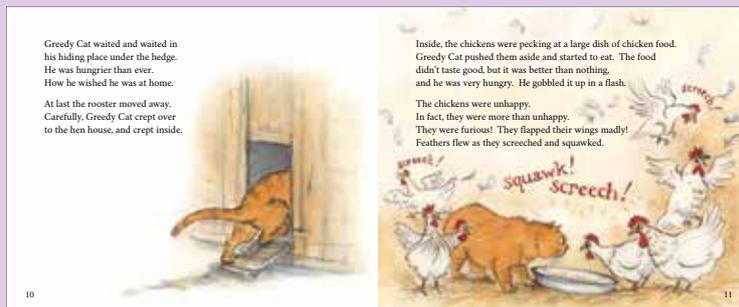
Two overlapping storylines (about Greedy Cat and the chooks and about Katie and Aunty) involving characters who have strong differences of opinion

A variety of sentence structures requiring students to attend to punctuation and linking words and phrases (such as “too”, “but”, “If”, “then”, “In fact”, “more than”, “as”, and indicators of time and place) to clarify the connections between ideas

Some content (about chooks) that may be unfamiliar to students

Language features that provide opportunities for students to apply and extend their vocabulary knowledge, for example:

- the adverbs (“firmly”, “Suddenly”, “Carefully”, “madly”)
- the comparative adjective “hungrier”
- the prefix “un” in “unhappy”
- the use of alliteration (such as “fur on the furniture”, “fuss of feathers”) and onomatopoeia (such as “screeching” and “squawking”)



Several shifts in time

Ideas and information organised in paragraphs

Some vocabulary that may be unfamiliar, including descriptive vocabulary (for example, “chooks”, “sharp, pecking beaks”, “fuss of feathers”, “screeching and squawking”, “flapping and fluttering”, “a whiff of sausage”, “a rush of angry feathers”, “upsetting”, “pesky”, “strutted”, “crowing”, “in a flash”, “Feathers flew”, “furious flapping birds”), the meaning of which is supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations

Reading standard: After three years at school

The Literacy Learning Progressions

Suggested reading purposes

(What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?)

To find out what happens when Greedy Cat and Katie go to Aunty's house

Possible learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

The behaviours listed below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. **Select from and adapt** them to set your specific learning goal. Be guided by your students' particular needs and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1–8*, Knowledge of the learner, page 6).

This text provides opportunities, over several readings, for students to:

- **make connections** between their prior knowledge and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- track events and ideas and the connections between them (**summarise**)
- use key words and phrases to **visualise** events
- identify and discuss (**analyse**) what makes this story exciting and satisfying to read
- **evaluate** (form and justify an opinion about) the actions of the characters
- **monitor** their reading, and when something is unclear, take action to solve the problem, for example, by checking further sources of information, rereading, reading on, or looking for clues close by.

Introducing the story

- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the text activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. A short video on the importance of introducing the text is available at <https://vimeo.com/142446572>

For English language learners, you could talk through the illustrations on the cover, title page, and the first few pages before the whole-group session, to build confidence and provide support with vocabulary and text features that may be unfamiliar. You can find useful information about features of texts that may need support at [ELLP](#).

- A few days before introducing this book, make the previous stories about Greedy Cat (including *Lunch for Greedy Cat*, which features Aunty) available for students to reread and enjoy.
- Tell the students you have another story about Greedy Cat for them to read, and briefly recap what they know about him from previous stories.
- Read the title and encourage the students to share any knowledge they have of chooks. Clarify that “chooks” is another name for hens or chickens. Draw attention to the rooster and explain its role as “boss”. (If this is new to them, you could show a YouTube clip to build their understanding and to demonstrate the difference in appearance between roosters and hens.)
- Encourage the students to speculate about what's happening in the cover illustration and what Greedy Cat might be thinking (and what might happen in the story).
- Model your thinking about the title page. *I wonder why the rooster is the main character in this picture ...* You could have the students talk with a partner about a question or a prediction they have about the story.
- Enjoy the students' recognition of Aunty in the page 3 illustration and prompt them to recall her conflict with Greedy Cat in *Lunch for Greedy Cat*. Encourage them to predict (taking into account the title and illustrations) what Katie and Aunty might be talking about.
- Set a reading purpose together. The students could start reading from this point. Provide them with sticky notes to mark words or questions they might want to come back to or to jot down questions or ideas.

Reading the story

Observe the students as they read the story by themselves. During the first reading, the focus is on students experiencing and enjoying the story rather than on totally accurate word solving. At this level, much of the processing that they do is “inside their heads” and may not be obvious until the discussion after the reading. Intervene only if it's clear a student needs help. There will be many opportunities to provide support with word solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.

Student behaviours

Examples of the sorts of behaviours (developed over several readings) that will help students achieve their learning goal(s)

The students make connections between their prior knowledge and information in the story to make predictions and inferences.

- On pages 2 and 3, they make connections between their knowledge of Aunty and clues in the dialogue and illustration to infer Aunty's point of view and to predict there will be trouble.

- At the end of page 6, the students predict from the illustration on the facing page and their knowledge of Greedy Cat that he has not given up and is going to try something else.

They track events and ideas in the story and the connections between them.

- They use indicators of time and place to clarify the sequence of events and where the characters are in relation to one another, for example, on page 9, which ends up with Greedy Cat under the hedge and the rooster strutting about in front.
- They clarify the connections between ideas within sentences, for example:
 - they use the comma in line 1, page 6 to clarify that Aunty is shaking her broom (not that she is shaking)
 - they attend to linking words to clarify meaning, for example, on page 7 – “If the chickens could eat cat food, then he could eat chicken food”, or on page 11 – “The food didn’t taste good, but it was better than nothing, and he was very hungry.”

They use key words and phrases to visualise events.

- On page 4, they use the illustrations and descriptive phrases such as “claws scratching”, “yellow eyes staring”, and “sharp, pecking beaks” to visualise what the chooks look like and feel like to Greedy Cat.
- They use descriptive phrases (for example, “What a fuss of feathers! What a screeching and squawking! What a flapping and fluttering!”) to visualise and enjoy the commotion among the chooks.

They demonstrate monitoring and problem solving.

- On page 4, they reread the sentence to clarify the meaning of the extended phrase “with their claws scratching the dirt and their yellow eyes staring”.
- They use a variety of word-solving strategies. For example, they use the page 8 illustration and page 9 description of the rooster and the reference to him “crowing and squawking” to infer that “strutted” means to walk about showing who is boss. On page 11, they use the previous references to “very hungry” and “gobbled it up” to infer the meaning of “in a flash”.
- They mark aspects they are not sure of or want to come back to.

Deliberate acts of teaching

Examples of how you can support individual students (if needed).

- Prompt the students to draw on what they already know about Greedy Cat.

- Remind them of strategies they can use to solve words and clarify meaning (for example, looking for the biggest known word “chunk”, rereading and/or reading on, checking punctuation, thinking about the unfolding meaning of the story, and looking for other clues close by in the text and illustrations). If necessary, provide specific support, for example, by modelling the phrasing of an extended sentence.

Discussing and rereading the story

You can reread this story several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for the students to build comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. **Select from and adapt** the suggestions below. Some of the discussion points overlap, and several can be explored further as after-reading activities.

- Enjoy the students’ responses to the story. Ask them to review their earlier predictions. *Was there anything that surprised you? Why was the rooster important in the story?*
- Remind them of the reading purpose and have them summarise the story (identifying the main things that happened and why). Prompt the students to refer to the text for clarification.
- Encourage the students to think critically and to form (and justify) their own opinions, for example:
 - *Do you agree with the comment on page 7 that “There was only one thing to do”? Is there something else that Greedy Cat could have done?*
 - *Was Aunty fair to Greedy Cat? Did Greedy Cat cause the problem?*
 - *Why does Katie think it’s a good idea for Greedy Cat to go home?*
- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest. Encourage them to share any aspects they have marked with sticky notes. You could also explore such aspects as:
 - predictions the students made as they were reading. *What clues did you notice? How did knowing what Greedy Cat was like, help your thinking? Explain that making and checking predictions helps them think more deeply about what they are reading.*
 - the clues to the characters’ feelings in both text and illustrations. Use questions to support the students’ thinking. For example, (on page 2) – *What tells you how Aunty and Katie are feeling? or* (on page 5) – *What tells you that Greedy Cat is upset about the chooks? What tells you that the chooks are upset?*

- how the text and illustrations make the story exciting and help readers to visualise. Encourage the students to share (and perhaps read aloud) their favourite parts of the story. You could explore:
 - the dramatic, descriptive verbs, such as “hissed”, “chased”, “growled”, “stomped”, “scratching”, “screeching”, “squawking”, “crowing”, “gobbled”, “sneaked”, “staring”, “raced”, “flapped”, “dived”, “strutted”, “crept”, “fluttering”, “pecking”). The students could act out their meanings.
 - the examples of alliteration and onomatopoeia
 - the repetition of phrases or sentence structures (“No dirty paws ... No fur ...”; “with their claws scratching ...”; “with their sharp, pecking beaks”; “What a fuss of feathers! What a screeching and squawking! What a flapping and fluttering!”; “... nothing left! Not a crumb! Not even a whiff of sausage!”) to add meaning and impact and feel satisfying to read aloud
- how the students worked out (or tried to work out) unfamiliar words or phrases. You could draw attention to interesting features of words, such as:
 - the impact on meaning of the prefix “un” (unhappy)
 - the use of adverbs (“firmly”, “Suddenly”, “Carefully”, “madly”) to describe *how* things happened
 - the comparative adjective “hungrier” (building on “hungry”). You could also introduce the superlative form “hungriest”. (See also After reading.)
- sentences with multiple phrases. Practise reading some examples together, attending to punctuation, especially commas, and linking words to clarify meaning. For example, “They crowded round him, with their claws scratching the dirt and their yellow eyes staring”, “The rooster strutted about in front of the hedge, crowing and squawking.”

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from your monitoring of the students’ needs during the lesson and provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. Where possible, make links to other texts, including texts generated from language experience and shared writing, and to the wider literacy programme (oral language, writing, handwriting, word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

For English language learners, **SELLIPS** also has ideas for purposeful and relevant tasks.

Select from and adapt these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

- Provide many opportunities for the students to reread this story and to read other stories with similar themes (see Related texts), or other stories written by Joy Cowley or illustrated by Robyn Belton.
- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the story while listening to the audio version. Audio versions are particularly supportive for English language learners because, as well as clarifying pronunciation, they provide good models of the prosodic features of English, such as intonation and phrasing.
- The students could record themselves reading the story, perhaps with different students taking the parts of Katie, Aunty, the narrator, and the screeching, squawking chooks (similar to Readers’ Theatre).
- To support summarising, the students could:
 - work individually or in pairs to identify five or six key events and then create a comic strip that includes a sentence, speech bubble, or thought bubble (containing the key idea) and a quick drawing for each event.
 - draw and write about a different solution to Greedy Cat’s problem than the one he tried.
- The students could draw Greedy Cat, Katie, or Aunty and write words and phrases that describe them, including vocabulary not in the story (for example, “grumpy”, “sneaky”, “annoyed”, “frustrated”). Alternatively, the students could add a speech bubble and/or a thought bubble for Katie and Aunty on copies of the illustrations from pages 3, 6, and 12.
- Explore the character of Greedy Cat. (This could be a whole-class activity.) Provide opportunities for the students to reread and gather ideas from other Greedy Cat books. Create a wall display of the students’ ideas about what would be good or bad about having a pet like Greedy Cat. Alternatively, the students could draw and write about examples of misbehaving animals in other favourite stories.
- Build vocabulary and make links to writing by having the students use the descriptive language in the story. For example, they could:
 - illustrate a favourite scene and add descriptive words, phrases, or sentences from the story as well as ideas of their own.
 - write favourite words and phrases from the story on a display chart. Use examples from the chart during shared writing and encourage students to use them in their own writing.

- explore verbs. Give pairs of students cards with examples from the story (see Discussing and rereading the story) and ask them to sort them according to whether they describe noises or movements (or both). Have spare blank cards available so students can make cards that belong in both categories. Alternatively, the students could sort the words by whether they describe Greedy Cat or the chooks. This is an open-ended activity where the discoveries about language and the discussion and negotiation of choices help students learn about degrees of meaning. This activity is particularly supportive for English language learners.
- explore comparative adjectives. Have the students generate examples based on words from the story (for example, hungry, hungrier, hungriest; big, bigger, biggest; angry, angrier, angriest) and use them to create sentences that convey the differences in meaning.
- Build the students’ confidence in reading and writing sentences with multiple phrases. Choose an example from the story to use as a model. Substitute words and phrases to create new sentences together, for example, “Aunty came out of the house, shaking her broom” could become “Katie turned away, shaking her head” or “Sam got out of the pool, holding up his togs”. Encourage creativity and humour.