

T-shirts

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Overview

This lively, rhythmic, rhyming text describes T-shirts belonging to various family members. It's an old favourite, which has been updated with new illustrations. This text is available as a big book, and there are two audio versions, one spoken and one sung, on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2006*.

Suggested purposes

This book supports the comprehension strategies of making connections and forming hypotheses. The predictable text structure, rhythm, and rhyme provide support for less confident readers and encourage independent rereading. This book also provides opportunities to work on a wide range of text-level features and to reinforce the correct use of pronouns.

Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the lively nature of the text and illustrations
- the rhythm and repetition
- the punctuation to support phrasing
- the rhyming words "ME", "HE", "SHE", "THREE", "see", "we"
- the high-frequency vocabulary
- the personal pronouns "ME", "HE", "SHE", "They", "we"
- the possessive adjectives "my", "his", "her", "their"
- the contractions "I've", "we've", "Dad's", "Mum's", "There's"
- the colour words and number words
- the words starting with "w" on page 10
- the digraph "sh" in "shirts", "SHE"
- the opposites "big" and "little"
- the use of upper-case letters for the words featured on the T-shirts
- the poetic form, with each line beginning with a capital letter.

Setting the scene

Show the children a favourite T-shirt and discuss what makes it special. *Do you have a favourite T-shirt? What makes it special?* Tell them you have a book about T-shirts for them to read.

The first reading

These notes are suggestions for using this book for guided reading. If you're using the big book for shared reading, encourage the children to read along with you, and increase the level of support.

Ask the children to read the title. Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Title page – *What do you notice about these people?* Clarify that this is a family and that everyone is wearing a T-shirt. Encourage the children to predict what's on the fronts of the T-shirts.

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

Pages 2 and 3 – Read the word on the T-shirt. *What do you think the girl might be saying?* If necessary, write “I have” on the whiteboard and show how the apostrophe replaces the “ha”. Model the reading to set the rhythmic pattern. Encourage the children to predict who will be on the next page.

Pages 4 to 7 – Listen to the children read, supporting them as necessary to maintain the rhythm and pace. Encourage them to predict which family member will feature next and what their T-shirt might have on it. Review their predictions and the information they used to form them. Draw out the idea that the text has a pattern and that the illustration of the whole family provides a big clue.

Pages 8 and 9 – Discuss the words on the brothers' T-shirts. *Is there a reason why this boy is number “ONE”?* Note how the children attempt the word “little”, encouraging them to cross-check meaning with visual information. If they draw attention to the word “their” and the similarity in sound to “There's”, briefly explain the difference in meaning.

Page 10 – *What have they done with the T-shirts?* If necessary, write “we've” on the whiteboard and relate it to the earlier discussion about “I've”. Encourage the children to sound out “hanging” and then to cross-check. *Does that make sense?* If “wind” is a challenge, ask *What helps to get the washing dry?* Point out the ellipsis and model how to pause for effect and anticipation.

Page 11 – *Why are the words so big?* Enjoy reading this page together, savouring the rhythm and the rhyme.

Page 12 – *Can you read the words on the T-shirts?* Monitor the children's processing strategies.

Invite the children to share their responses. *Which T-shirt (or character) did you like best? Why?*

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text by themselves, observing their use of visual information, rhyme, rhythm, and punctuation.

If you're using the big book, invite emergent readers to identify pairs of upper-and lower-case letters and/or words, to locate the words that start with “w” or with “sh”, or to discover the opposites “big” and “little”.

Discuss the features of the poetic form. Identify the rhyming words and talk about the use of capital letters at the beginning of each line. Extend the children's thinking about rhythm: *Why does the text say “yellow, yellow T-shirt”? Try saying it with one “yellow”. Does that feel right?*

Have the children write the last word of each page on the whiteboard and read the list together. *What do you notice about all of these words?* You could talk about the fact that some have just one “e” and some have two but that they all rhyme. *Can you find a word on page 10 that rhymes with “see”?*

Discuss the pronouns in the text and their relationship with the possessive

adjectives “my”, “his”, “her”, and “their”. Focus on the illustrations to clarify, for example, that “her” and “she” refer to one female and that “they” and “their” refer to a group of people. Explore the use of “her” and “she” with “Mum” but “his” and “he” with “Dad”. Create new sentences as a group.

Recap what the contractions “I’ve” and “we’ve” are short for. You could have cards with , , and on them and show how the apostrophe “covers” the “ha” in “have”. Practise using these contractions in oral sentences.

Look at the contractions “There’s” or “Mum’s” and “Dad’s”. Note that “There’s” is short for “There is” but “Mum’s” and “Dad’s” are short for “Mum has” and “Dad has”. Teach these two different contractions separately to avoid confusion.

Focus on the illustrations. You could talk about the cartoon style, the clues that reveal where the family are and what they’re doing, and the interplay between the brothers on page 8. *Does this family enjoy doing things together? How do you know?*

Suggestions for further tasks

Listen to the audio versions on the CD *Readalong 2006*. Explain that the singer has repeated the word “a” to create a catchy rhythm.

Innovate on the text in a variety of ways, such as substituting the names of class members, changing the colours, using alternative adjectives, or substituting other clothing items.

Make a cardboard T-shirt template for the children to draw around, design, colour, and cut out. Add captions to the T-shirts and hang them “on the line” for display.

Create another message that the T-shirts could say when they are all lined up.