

# The Great Bean Race

by Diana Noonan

illustrated by Christine Ross



## Book Summary

Mr. Moffat's purple racing beans cause instant excitement in the class as each child tries to coax their bean to reach the finish line first.

## Features of the Book

- The use of dialogue and the question-and-answer format.
- Innovative uses of print to convey emphasis and increasing excitement.
- The development of the children's characters through direct speech.
- Effective use of punctuation to build momentum – ellipses, exclamation points, and question marks.
- The use of storybook language – “In went the stones” and “Up, up, up they grew.”
- Detailed information about growing beans conveyed through an exciting narrative.
- Alliteration in the names – “Mr. Moffat” and “Hester Hewitt.”
- The concept of time passing.

## Purpose

*The Great Bean Race* can be used in a guided reading setting to introduce and reinforce the following skills and strategies:

- S** discussing new vocabulary and extending understanding;
- S** identifying the plot and characters within the story;
- S** recognizing and reading a range of different word patterns, including word endings;
- S** writing about the steps in a procedure.

## Introducing the text

Ask the children to share their experiences of growing plants from seeds. Have some “purple racing beans” ready to go! Let the children explore them visually, and discuss what kinds of seeds they might be. Introduce the title of the book. Read the names of the author and the illustrator to the group.

## Reading the text

- S** Discussing new vocabulary and extending understanding.
- S** Identifying the plot and characters within the story.
- S** Recognizing and reading a range of different word patterns, including word endings.

Pages 2 and 3 – Encourage the group to predict what the children might think is in the bag.

Pages 4 and 5 – Discuss the ellipsis leading onto this page and the increasing size of the text.

– *How would these words be said aloud?*

Let's try together.

Pages 6 and 7

– *What is happening here?*

Pages 8 and 9

– *What ideas do the children have for making their beans grow?*

– *What will really help the plants to grow?* (music, plant food, stories, light)

– *What will happen after the holidays?*

Pages 10 and 11 – Discuss what is happening and what the illustration shows.

Pages 12 to 15 – Look at Mr. Moffat's face.

– *What kind of expression is that?*

Discuss the meaning of the words “draw” and “tie” in this context.

Page 16 – Discuss the expressions on the characters' faces.

– *Why are they looking happy if nobody is the winner?*


Children now read the book independently.

## Revisiting the text

Study the range of word endings, for example, “something” and “tangle,” and the irregular pronunciation in “enough” and “through.”

## Following Up

- S** Writing about the steps in a procedure.

 Write the story as a set of instructions for growing beans successfully.

- B** Complete the blackline master opposite.