

I'm So Hungry and other plays



Book Summary

This collection of plays offers readers the choice of a range of situations and characters – from whodunit to fantasy to just plain gross! There are four plays in the book – “The Bus Kids,” “Fishy,” “The Magic Wand,” and “I’m So Hungry.”

Features of the Book

- The inclusion of characters, a plot, and a setting in the plays (as in narratives)
- Lists of characters
- The conventions of written drama – italics for stage directions
- The description of the “scene”
- Two plays by the same author
- The range of illustrative styles

Purpose

I'm So Hungry and other plays can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** learning the conventions and language of drama;
- S** practicing creative interpretation;
- S** rewriting text as narrative;
- S** reading with pace and expression.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Learning the conventions and language of drama
- S** Practicing creative interpretation

Introducing the text

Talk with the group about plays in general. Many of the students will have already experienced reading or acting in plays in other grades or going to the theater.

- *Have any of you been in a play? What part did you have?*
- *What was hard/enjoyable about it?*
- *What is special about seeing a play?*
- *How is it different from watching a movie?*

Explain that there are four plays in this book and that after they have read one of them together, they might like to perform one for the class or some other audience, such as a group of parents.

Look at the cover of the book together and then let the students read through the list of contents on page 3. Suggest that they skim through the book and decide as a group on the play they would like to read together in the session.



Reading and discussing the text

When the group has decided which play they would like to read, have them find the title page for that play by using the contents page. Discuss the title, the list of characters, and the way the text is laid out. Explain that, in this session, the students will be reading all the parts but that in a performance, each actor usually takes one part.

Look at the first page of text together and discuss the conventions of drama that may need some explanation.

- There are no quotation marks to show that someone is speaking.
- The names in bold type show characters when to speak.
- The text under the heading “scene” shows how the play begins, where characters are on the set, and what props may be needed.
- The words in italics are instructions for the actors. They are not to be read aloud.

When the students have a grasp of the conventions you have been discussing, ask them to read the first few pages of the play themselves while you observe and assist individual students where necessary.

Discuss the play so far. Clarify any questions the students may have about the conventions in the text.


- *What do you think of the play? Is it the same as reading a story to yourself?*
- *Do you think you would like to perform this play for the rest of the class?*

Ask the students to read to the end of the play. You may wish to give a purpose-setting question or simply let the students read on and become more familiar with the play’s layout and conventions.

Revisiting the Text

The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.

S Rewriting text as narrative

 Ask the students to choose a section of the play and rewrite it as narrative. This will involve translating the conventions of drama to those of narrative text.

- *How will you show that someone is speaking?*
- *What will you do with the directions in italics?*

The students can use the blackline master on page 69 to record the two text formats.

Choose several examples of the students’ work. First read the section from the play and then the rewritten narrative.

- *How are they different? How are they the same?*
- *Could you act the play just as easily from the story you have written? Why not?*

Discuss the importance of the play’s layout and how it helps the actors to follow the plot, find their lines, and know when to carry out an action.

S Reading with pace and expression

In presenting a play for an audience, the students should understand the concept of “getting into character.” Ask each student to choose a character from the play and to find an illustration of him/her if there is one.

- *How do you think this character would talk?*
- *Do you think they would move in a particular kind of way?*

Encourage the students to practice reading some of their characters’ lines with pace and expression.

- *Can you do the action in italics as well as speak the line that goes with it?*

The students can continue to read lines to each other in this way in preparation for doing a reading of the play together. They may wish to do a simple reading first and then combine this with movement and the use of basic props.

Encourage the students to think creatively about how they could present difficult parts of the play.

- *How would you show Joe turning into a kangaroo?*
- *How would you make this character look like a dog?*