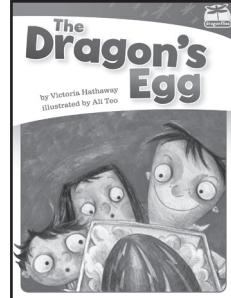


The Dragon's Egg

by Victoria Hathaway
illustrated by Ali Teo



Overview

Nick shows his brother and sister a “dragon’s” egg and tells them that if they want to see it hatch, they’ll have to do his chores. When Mum finds out, Nick discovers what it’s like to have a trick played on him.

Suggested purposes

This text supports the comprehension strategies of setting a purpose for reading, identifying the main ideas, and forming and supporting opinions.

Text features (Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the theme of honesty and fairness
- the way Nick tricked his brother and sister and the way Mum solved the problem in a clever way
- the complex narrative structure
- the dialogue to show the characters’ thoughts, feelings, and actions
- the indicators of time – *one day, every afternoon, after a few days*
- the word endings – *y, ing, ly*
- the commas for phrasing
- the colourful and lively illustrations
- the compound words – *shoebox, eyelashes, eyebrows*
- the hyperbole – *it's not fair!*
- the exclamation marks for emphasis
- the similes for description
- the lively vocabulary – *fiery, nestled, chomping*
- the contractions – *weren't, there's, they'd, it'll, wouldn't, it's, we'd, he's, won't, there's, let's, he'll, I'll, couldn't, wasn't, I'm, egg's*
- the possessive apostrophe – *Nick's, Sam's*

Setting the scene

Think about a time when you were tricked by someone. *How did you feel?* You may need to give a personal example to stimulate the discussion. *This is a story about a boy who tricks his brother and sister to avoid doing his chores.*

The first reading

Look at the front cover. Ask the students to read the title. Read the names of the author and illustrator. *Do you think this is really a dragon's egg? Who do you think might be playing a trick in this story?*

Back cover – Read aloud the preview question. Lead a discussion to build the students’ background knowledge.

Title page – Read the names of the author and illustrator.

Pages 2 and 3 – *What did the dragon's egg look like?* Discuss the author's use of descriptive language and identify the simile.

Why are the children not allowed to touch the egg? Where is Nick keeping the egg?

Look at the word “nestled”. *Why has the author used this word? What does it tell us?*

Pages 4 and 5 – *Why do you think Nick doesn't want his brother and sister to tell Mum and Dad about the egg? Is the dragon's egg real?* Draw the student's attention to the word “make-believe”. Discuss its meaning and what the children are thinking. *How are they feeling about the dragon's egg? How has it brought them together?*

Pages 6 and 7 – *What kind of dragon do they hope it will be? How is Nick keeping his brother and sister quiet? What made Mum suspicious? Why do you think they “had” to tell Mum?*

Focus on the contraction “it'll”. Remind the students that a contraction is a shortened form of two words. *Why do you think the author has used “it'll”?* Discuss this usage, and draw out the idea that contractions make language sound more natural.

Can you find any other examples on these two pages?

Pages 8 and 9 – *What is Mum's reaction to the dragon's egg? How does she feel about Nick's trick? What do you think her plan might be? How did the children feel when they touched the egg?* Make predictions about the rest of the text.

Pages 10 and 11 – *What “trick” did they play on Nick? Did it work? What was Nick's reaction to the news that the dragon had hatched? What did Mum think was unfair about Nick's trick?*

Page 12 – *Do you think Nick really knew it was a trick? What clues did the author give you?* Discuss whether the text has a satisfying ending.

Ideas for revisiting the text (Choose only one or two per session.)

- Listen as the students reread the text, observing their ability to read expressively and fluently and their confidence with the content words. If necessary, review the use of dialogue, repetition, and other features. Practice reading the text together or in pairs.
- Ask the students to think critically about the story. *What is the moral or message? Was it a good way to solve the problem?* Ask the students to suggest alternatives ways of solving the problem.
- Discuss the narrative structure. Identify the introduction, the problem, the anticlimax, and the ending.
- Focus on the use of adjectives. Draw out the idea that the adjectives add clarity and interest and help the reader interpret the text.
- Look at the clauses in the text. Discuss the use of the comma and what it tells us as readers. Practise reading the clauses on page 2. Ask the students to look through the text to see if they can identify any other clauses.
- Discuss similes. Ask the students to find an example of one on page 2. Discuss why the author has used this simile. As a group, practise writing similes for sentences with a similar structure, such as, “It was as large as ...”
- Write “scary” and “scare” on the board. Discuss the way these words are written and their meanings. Look at the replacement of the “e” with a “y” and how this makes the word sound. Discuss the “ly” ending in “lately” and “quietly” and the change in the meaning. Brainstorm other examples.

Suggestions for further activities

- Use the text for readers' theatre using the dialogue as a guide.
- The students can design their own dragon and dragon's egg. They need to keep in mind the dragon's personality, its special powers, and how the egg should be kept so it hatches successfully.
- During shared writing, the students can write about their experiences of being tricked by someone. *How did it make them feel and how was it resolved?*
- BLM word activity: use contractions
The students can choose eight contractions from the story and write the expanded form of each one. They can then choose five contractions and write each one in a sentence.
- BLM comprehension activity: form opinions
With a partner, the students can discuss what they think about the events in the story. They can then write an alternative ending.