

Skippyjon Jones Lost in Spice

by Judy Schachner

Skippyjon Jones travels where no kitty boy has traveled before, to his favorite red planet – Mars. An out of this world adventure, filled with Martians, familiar friends and vibrant, rich full-color illustrations



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *We live on the planet Earth. If you could imagine another planet, what would it look like?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder if those green animals are nice to Skippyjon Jones?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Ask the children to try and remember as you read which animal crawled in the mitten first, second, and so on. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *Skippyjon Jones Lost in Spice*:

- casserole: a dish that is slow-cooked and in one covered pot
- crooned: to talk or sing in a smooth, soft voice
- scolded: to speak harshly towards someone
- oblivious: to be unaware of or not paying attention to someone or something
- chatter: to talk rapidly
- politely: well-mannered and having good manners
- dust: very small particles that can float in the air
- space: the region that lies above the Earth's atmosphere and contains other planets
- tamales: a cornmeal dough Mexican meal wrapped in corn husks
- exclaimed: to speak or cry out loudly and suddenly
- reflection: the image of somebody or something that appears in a mirror or reflective surface
- accent: a way of pronouncing words that indicate the place of origin
- martian: a supposed inhabitant found on Mars
- features: a distinctive part of the something that makes it stand out
- liftoff: the moment when a rocket leaves the launch pad
- astronaut: a space traveler
- universe: the total matter and energy of everything in space
- orbit: to revolution of an object in space around a larger object
- comet: an astronomical object with a long tail that orbits around the Sun

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Rare Words in *Skippyjon Jones Lost in Spice* continued:

- cruised: to proceed or travel casually and at an easy rate
- hollered: to call out or shout something
- pipeline: a long pipe system for transporting something
- howled: to make a long, whining sound
- marvelous: amazingly impressive and extremely good
- wag: to move something rapidly to and fro
- panting: to take short fast shallow breaths
- collar: the band around the neck of an animal
- binoculars: a device for looking at distant objects that magnifies what is seen
- gulped: to swallow something fast
- pounced: to jump suddenly toward or onto something or someone
- unearthly: not from this world
- creature: a living person or animal
- prove: to establish truth of something and to present evidence
- mesmerized: to fascinate somebody or absorb all of somebody's attention
- image: a likeness of somebody or something that appears in a mirror
- tornado: an extremely destructive funnel-shaped rotating windstorm
- termite: a light-colored insect
- cooped: an enclosure or hut
- crater: a large hole in the ground
- declined: to refuse an invitation
- slurping: to drink something noisily
- piled: a large quantity of something stacked one on top of another
- bearing: to hold or wear something that belongs to someone else
- mossy: to be covered with moss
- emerging: starting to appear, arise or develop
- hurled: to throw something forcefully
- sound barrier: the audible effect of the speed of sound
- Mars: the planet 4th from the Sun, reddish in color
- Earth: the planet we live on, 3rd from the Sun
- starry: having many stars, covered or decorated with stars

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What was Skippyjon Jones nuts about? Why did he love the color red?
- What did Mama Junebug Jones and the girls make for lunch?
- What did Skippyjon Jones do with Mama's red spice?
- Describe all the things Skippyjon Jones wore and took with him into his closet.
- Who else was up in space?
- When Skippyjon Jones was rolling around, what did he meet?
- What made the green alien so special?
- Why were all the cuckoo-ritos afraid?
- How did Skippyjon Jones save the day?
- How did Skippyjon Jones return home?



Do

Martian Yourself

You will need: hand mirrors (one for each child), white paper, markers/crayons and pencils

After reading the story, have the children discuss the similarities and differences between Skippyjon Jones and the Martian. Next, have the children imagine what their Martian twin would look like. Hand each child a piece of paper, hand mirror, pencil and markers/crayons. Using the mirrors, the children will then draw a self portrait. Then add funny colors and elements to make themselves look like Martians.