

Best Friends for Frances

by Russell Hoban

The fun songs and witty banter among a group of friends, makes this book easy to read and comprehend. Children will love the colored pencil illustrations.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *What kinds of things do you like to do with your best friend?* 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 where the three friends are headed to?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. 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 *Best Friends for Frances*

- wandering: travel without destination
- ruin: to destroy or complete failure
- hamper: large food basket
- burlap: cloth woven from hemp or jute (rough thread)
- outing: a short pleasure trip usually lasting no more than a day
- clambake: seafood picnic

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What game did Gloria want Frances to play?
- Who did Frances go visit, instead of playing with Gloria?
- What kind of food did Albert pack for his wandering day?
- What are some activities that Albert likes to do on his wandering day?
- Who does Frances ask to play with her?
- What are some things that Frances and Gloria played?
- What did Frances and Gloria pack for their picnic?
- Why is Frances carrying a sign? What is written on it?
- Why does Frances not want Albert to join them?
- What are some things the three friends like to do together?
- What games did they play?
- What animals were listed in the song?
- Why did Albert bring Frances flowers?
- Why was Gloria crying?

Do

Poetry Time

Re-read the songs that are written throughout the story. Identify some of the characteristics of poetry, such as, rhyming words and rhythm. Create a starter sentence and write it on the board. Have the children brainstorm ideas that could fit and complete the poem.

Extra Activates (complete if desired)

As a group, decide the content of the poem and write out each word, phrase or sentence. Discuss beginning sounds, word families (cat/hat/mat, top/hop/crop, bin/din/chin), ending sounds, blends and names of letters.