

Just a Snowman

by Mercer Mayer

When school is cancelled after a heavy snowfall, Little Critter wants to build a snowman, but finds that his friends and family have other ideas on how to spend a snow day.



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, *What kinds of fun activities do you like to do on snow days?* 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 Little Critter and his sister had any help building the snowman?

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 *Just a Snowman*:

- shoveled: took up and removed with a shovel
- accident: any event that happens unexpectedly, without a deliberate plan or cause
- ice-skating: skating on ice
- backwards: in reverse of the usual or right way
- tie: to make or be the same score; to be equal in a contest
- sledding: the act of riding on a sled
- steered: to guide the course of
- fort: a strong or fortified place occupied by troops and usually surrounded by walls, ditches and other defensive works
- prunes: a dried plum
- ingredients: something that enters as an element into a mixture
- mugs: a drinking cup, usually having a handle

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What all did Little Critter have to put on to get ready for the snow day?
- What did Little Critter help his dad do?
- What did Little Critter and Little Sister do next?
- Why did Little Sister cry? What did Little Critter do to make it better?
- What did Tiger and Bun Bun want to do after that?
- Who won when Tiger and Little Critter raced?
- What did Little Critter do with Maurice and Molly after that?
- How about Gator and Gabby?
- What did Little Critter and Little Sister use to build the snowman?
- Why did Little Critter and Little Sister make hot chocolate?
- Who all did Little Critter make hot chocolate for?



Do

Snow Day Sequence

Using their imaginations, have the kids act out each of the snow day activities and have the children put the activities in the order that Little Critter did them. The activities include putting on snow clothes, digging with a snow shovel, throwing snowballs, ice skating, sledding on snow, making snow angels, building a snowman and drinking hot chocolate. When everyone has it down pat, play Simon Says using the actions if time permits.