

Make Way for Ducklings

by Robert McCloskey

Caldecott Medal Winner (1942). A favorite for more than fifty years, children have been entertained by this warm and wonderful story of the mallard family and their search for a home.



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, *Did you know that a ducks' feathers are waterproof? And, that their feet can't feel the cold because they don't have any nerves or blood vessels in them? That's why they can swim in icy water!* 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 that big duck is the mama?

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 *Make Way for Ducklings*

- Boston: a large city in the state of Massachusetts
- island: an area of land completely surrounded by water
- enormous: very large
- dither: to behave in a nervous way
- horrid: unkind or nasty
- molt: the process during which a bird sheds all its feathers
- responsibility: to be accountable to someone or for something
- waded: to walk against the pressure of water or mud
- beckoned: to signal to somebody to approach with the hand or head
- headquarters: a central office where orders are issued

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Where do ducks usually live?
- Is the city a good place for ducks to live? Why or why not?
- Why didn't Mrs. Mallard want to live near any turtles or foxes?
- What do ducks eat?
- How many baby ducks did Mrs. Mallard have?
- All of the babies have "ack" as the last part of their name. Just the first letter is different. Let's say the names together. Do the names rhyme?
- What did Mrs. Mallard teach her baby ducks to do?
- What would have happened if Michael hadn't stopped the cars?
- Do you think the ducklings will be safe living on the little island?

Do

Egg Carton Ducklings

Cut an egg carton into two-cup sections keeping the sections attached. Bend the egg carton cups toward each other, rim to rim, to make an oval shape. Glue the cups together to form the duck's body. Cut out a bill and feet from construction paper and glue to the ducks' body. Add feathers and beads for eyes to complete your duckling.