

Shark vs. Train

by Chris Barton

Watercolor cartoons and snappy side conversations combine to tell the story about an epic battle between two powerhouse competitors and the struggle to decide who would win in various situations.



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, *Who do you think would win, the shark or the train? Why?* 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 why the train and the shark are so mad?

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 *Shark vs. Train*

- roasting: to heat something until it is brown
- carnival: a traveling outdoor event with rides, games and prizes
- shushed: a sound made to silence somebody
- recital: a musical or dance performance given by a soloist or small group
- galaxies: an assembly of stars, gas and dust in outer space
- tightrope: a rope used in an balancing act
- ridiculous: completely unreasonable and completely silly

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Who would win if the shark and train were in the ocean? On a railroad track?
- Who can describe what happened to the shark and to the train on the seesaw, in a hot-air balloon, while roasting marshmallows and while eating pies?
- Who won the burping contest? The bowling game? Shooting baskets?
- What were some other competitions that the shark and the train competed in? Who was better?
- How did the deck of cards and ping-pong paddle get chewed up?
- Why was it hard for the shark and train to play hide-n-seek? To be in the library? To play video games?
- What was really happening to the shark and train? How were they able to do all of those different things?

Do

Obstacle Course

In either the classroom or on the playground, set up a small obstacle course that is developmentally appropriate for your children. Demonstrate each obstacle and have the children practice completing the tasks before starting the contest. Demonstrate appropriate reactions and comments that encourage the students to complete the contest. For example, "Keep it up, you are doing a great job." "I love how you tried so hard and finished all the obstacles." "I love how you all had fun and clapped for each other." Below are some ideas for an obstacle course.

Possible Obstacle Course Ideas

Jump in hula hoops (the hula hoops are on the ground and the children jump in the middle of the hoops)

Swings

Slides

Make a basket (use a smaller basketball goal)

Throw a bean bag in a trash can

Eat two small pieces of a banana (or any other fruit)

Write your name two times

Tricycle around cones

Run a small distance (mark by using cones or flags)

Put a five or six piece puzzle together

Draw a circle, square or rectangle on a white board