

The Ugly Duckling

by Hans Christian Andersen

Caldecott Honor book (2000). A beautiful adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's timeless fairy tale. Appearances are not everything and patience is sometimes necessary to discover one's own true beauty.



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 would happen if all of us in this classroom looked exactly alike? Same hair, same eyes, same height, same noses?* 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 anyone would think this duck is ugly?

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 *The Ugly Duckling*:

- harmony: together in a friendly way
- rustled: to make a swishing or soft crackling sound
- secluded: private and away from other places
- puzzled: confusing or difficult to understand
- awkward: to walk or perform in an odd way
- monstrous: extremely large
- taunted: to tease someone in a hurtful way
- disgrace: a cause of shame
- brood: a young family of birds
- moor: a large area of land covered with grass and moss
- rushes: plants that grow in shallow water
- wickedly: very bad
- terror: great fear
- chasm: a deep gap
- blessing: good wishes
- exhausted: very tired and weak
- dwelt: lived
- bewilderment: confusion
- companion: somebody who shares time with another
- bitter: unpleasantly cold
- fortune: good luck
- cruelty: causing pain
- suffering: to experience pain or sadness
- boughs: branches

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- How is the ugly duckling different from the other ducklings?
- Why do the other birds make fun of the ugly duckling?
- How do you think the ugly duckling felt when the dog came up on him?
- Did the old woman and her cat and hen make fun of the ugly duckling?
- Have you ever been made fun of? How did that make you feel?
- What would have happened to the ugly duckling if the man hadn't come by and broken the ice to free him?
- Was the ugly duckling really a duck? What was he?
- What makes a swan beautiful?
- What are the differences between a duck and a swan?
- What lesson can we learn from this story?



Do

Self Portraits

Let the children examine their reflections in small hand mirrors noting such things as hair color and style, eye and eyebrow color, skin color, special markings, and nose and mouth shapes. Using paper plates, crayons, markers, scraps of construction paper, yarn pieces or other craft items of your choice, let/assist the children cut and glue to create self portraits.