

The Snail and the Whale

by Julia Donaldson

A tiny snail and a great big gray-blue humpback whale demonstrate that friendships come in all shapes and sizes.



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, *Have you ever been to the sea?* 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 the whale knows there is a snail on his tail?

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 Snail and the Whale*

- soot: black dust given off by fire
- flock: a group of animals
- slithered: to move along a slippery surface or make something slide
- gazed: to look for a long time with unwavering attention
- wiggle: make small movements
- silvery: like silver, especially in color
- tide: the rise and fall of the ocean
- immensely: to a huge degree
- coral: a deep pinkish orange marine organism
- enormous: huge or gigantic
- icebergs: a mass of floating ice
- fiery: glowing hot
- golden: colored like gold
- arched: curved
- frolicked: to play and move cheerfully
- caves: a large hollowed-out place in the ground or in a rock
- feathery: similar to a feather in lightness and softness
- hideous: horrible to see
- vast: very great in size or amount
- zigzag: a line going at an angle one way and turning sharply another way
- amazed: to be filled with wonder
- earsplitting: very loud
- shimmering: to shine softly with a wavering light
- frail: weak and easy to break
- tale: a story that is untrue
- enormous: huge

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Where did the sea snail want to go?
- What animal asked the sea snail to go sailing?
- On what part of the whale's body did the sea snail sit?
- How big do you think an iceberg is? Bigger than a bus?
- What is another name for a fiery mountain?
- What are some other animals that live in the sea?
- What makes a thunderstorm scary?
- What happened when the whale swam too close to the shore?
- Did this book have a happy ending?
- Did the other snails want to go sailing after they heard about the trip?



Do

Feed the Whale

Cut a whale shape from poster board and glue it to a box. Cut a hole for the mouth. Encourage the children to toss bean bags, tennis balls or quarters into the whale's mouth.