

In this book, a child and their abuela find and help an injured bird. The simple storyline provides chances to pause and point out words that may be unfamiliar to young children.

**Useful Words:** injured, fantastic, melt

### CORE SKILL OBJECTIVES

### INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

#### COMMUNICATE



#### Children will:

- ◆ Comprehend an increasing number of words in simple sentences
- ◆ Imitate or say new words

#### Teachers will:

- ◆ Provide child-friendly definitions

### TEACHING TIP

While intentionally teaching words is a great way to introduce vocabulary to toddlers, for younger toddlers and infants, simply being exposed to a variety of new and interesting words helps build their own vocabulary. For all young children, hearing novel words used in different contexts, and having them carefully explained, is an important step in building language. As you read books repeatedly and infuse your conversations with unfamiliar words, children will begin to grow their understanding over time. This will lead to their own ability to use new words later on.

### 1. INTRODUCE

- ◆ “In this story, a child and their abuela find a bird. *Abuela* means grandma in Spanish. We’re going to read some other words and find out what they mean in this book, called *Bird House*.”

### 2. READ THE BOOK

- ◆ Pause occasionally to provide child-friendly definitions for some of the unfamiliar words in the story.
- ◆ Use the word in additional contexts, to give younger toddlers and infants more exposure to the word.

### Provide Child-Friendly Definitions

**Read:** “On a snowy day, my abuela and I found an injured bird.”

**Label:** “When something is injured, that means that it’s hurt. The bird got injured – maybe its wing is hurt.”

**Say:** “I injured my knee when I fell down last week. Sometimes when we trip or bump something, we get injured.”

**Read:** “It was fantastic.”

**Label:** “Fantastic is when something is really good! The bird flying around was so exciting and fun, that it was fantastic.”

**Say:** “It was fantastic when we all danced together earlier today. I think it’s fantastic when we get to play and have fun together.”

**Read:** “Snow melted into spring.”

**Label:** “When something melts, that means it became watery. When snow gets warm, it melts and turns into water.”

**Say:** “I remember when I was eating a popsicle once; it was a hot day and it made my popsicle melt. Ice cream melts too when it gets drippy.”

### 3. REVIEW

- ◆ “We heard some new words in this story today. We read about the bird getting injured, then flying around which was fantastic, and then we heard that the snow melted.”

### 4. KEEP IT GOING

- ◆ Look carefully through books that you read often, or in new books in your learning environment, before you read them aloud – there are often a few words in every book that are helpful to explain to children. Remember that after you define the word, you can reinforce its meaning by modeling its use in sentences throughout the day. Also consider keeping your definitions simple and grounded in experiences all children can relate to (e.g., things that take place at school).