

BENJI, THE BAD DAY, AND ME

Listening and Understanding

Preschool

This story is about two brothers, Samuel and Benji, and how they find a way to cheer Samuel up after a hard day. This book lends itself to pointing out the structure and parts within a story.

CORE SKILL OBJECTIVES

INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

COMMUNICATE



Children will:

- ◆ With support, answer basic questions to specific details about a story or inferential questions

Teachers will:

- ◆ Draw explicit attention to the structure of stories
- ◆ Ask children to summarize or retell information

TEACHING TIP

Telling stories and reading to young children is one of the best ways to build listening and understanding skills. And, being able to understand the ideas, language, and order of events in a story is foundational for later reading comprehension. Drawing children's attention to the specific structure or parts of stories helps them make connections between the events in a story. Over time, this will encourage more complex skills, such as predicting what comes next, retelling parts of the story, and understanding metaphorical language. Guide children's thinking as you encourage active listening and considerations of story structure.

1. INTRODUCE

- ◆ "Today we're going to see what happens to a boy named Samuel during a bad day. We're going to think about what happens in the beginning, middle, and end of this story, called *Benji, the Bad Day, and Me.*"

2. READ THE BOOK

- ◆ Pause occasionally to label the structures of the story.
- ◆ Include the sequence of events and the narrative plot as you label the story structures.

Draw Explicit Attention to the Structure of Stories

Read: "Now I'm hungry, cold, and wet. Grrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr!"

Label: "Uh oh! He's upset. This book will show more about what happens during a hard day for this character. During the book, some things will go wrong and some will go right. Let's listen to see what happens during his day."

Read: "I cry mad-sad shivery tears. No one notices."

Label: "In the beginning of the story, Samuel came home wet from a bad day at school. In the middle, he tried a few things to cheer himself up, but they didn't work. Let's see what will happen at the end."

Read: "Side by side is where we are, and how we'll always be!"

Label: "Samuel's feelings changed during this story. He started feeling sad, then he felt mad, and then at the end he felt better."

3. REVIEW

- ◆ "Stories have different parts that tell us what happens. In this story, we saw how Samuel's feelings changed during a bad day. We thought about what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the story."

4. KEEP IT GOING

- ◆ Call out the structure of information in other parts of your day beyond book sharing. For example, during a conversation, let the children know the order of who will share, or the order of the information they will share (e.g., "First (Child) will share, then we'll hear what (Child) has to say."). You can also incorporate the structure of information during games, like Simon Says or I-Spy. Draw attention to the order and different parts of information involved in these games, or in the answers children provide (e.g., "We touched our knees first, then we patted our shoulders next! I wonder what we'll do last!").