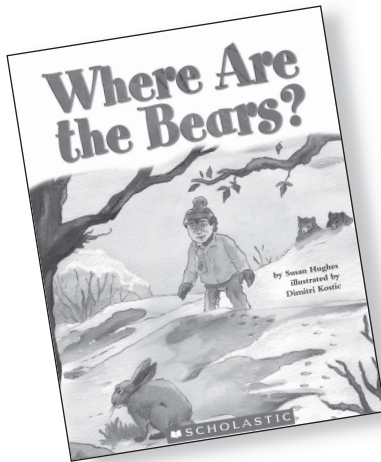


Where Are the Bears?

Written by Susan Hughes

Illustrated by Dimitri Kostic



Text Type: Fiction: Narrative — Fantasy Story

Summary: A young boy goes on a spring walk through the woods in search of bears. The sneaky bears go undetected, but the boy encounters several other animals that live in the woods. The text uses a repeated phrase, “So where are the bears?” to engage students and allow them to join in the reading.

Audio Available Online
www.lpey.ca

Text Features

Print Concepts

- ▶ consistent placement of text above pictures
- ▶ capitals
- ▶ question marks
- ▶ quotation marks

First Reading

Reading Strategies

Comprehension

- ▶ predicting
- ▶ analyzing
- ▶ self-monitoring

Working with Words

- ▶ using print concepts
- ▶ using picture cues to solve unfamiliar words

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student’s ability to:

- ▶ make predictions about content
- ▶ analyze information from the story
- ▶ express “I wonder” questions about the story
- ▶ check pictures for cues to support word solving/understanding
- ▶ identify print concepts (title, first word on a page)



BEFORE READING

Text features/ print concepts

Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

Read the title, author, and illustrator. Use prompts to point out concepts. *The title of this book is Where Are the Bears? Who can show me where the title is on the cover? Have a student come up and point out where the title is. Say, The author is Susan Hughes and the illustrator is Dimitri Kostic. What does the author do? What does the illustrator do? The title is written as a question. What mark on the page shows us it is a question? Have a student come up and point out the question mark.*

Predicting

Use the front and back covers to activate background knowledge. Ask, *What animals do you think you'll see in this book? Where do you think this story takes place? What do you think the boy might be doing in this story? What do you think the bears might be doing?*

Analyzing

Lead students back to the comprehension focus. Ask, *This question asks us where the bears are. Can you see where they are?*

Analyzing

Setting a Purpose

Do you think the boy finds the bears? Let's read the book together to discover what he finds.



DURING READING

Tracking print/ print concepts

Read through the book, tracking print. Draw students' attention to the print above the pictures. Ask, *Where do I start to read?* Have a student come up and indicate the beginning of the first sentence on the page.

Teaching Tip:

When tracking print, use a pointer instead of your finger. Students are able to see the print more clearly when using a pointer. When you use your finger, your arm covers the print as you track across the text.

Building confidence

Invite students to join in, especially for the repeated question: "So where are the bears?"

Self-monitoring

As you read through the book, pause on certain pages to model that readers often ask themselves questions about the text. For example, on page 7 say, *I wonder if the boy is going to turn around and look behind him?* On page 12 say, *I wonder why the deer doesn't run away?*

Language predictability

Pause at challenging vocabulary and use the illustrations to explore meanings with students, e.g., *dreamt, tracks.*

ESL Note:

When introducing challenging vocabulary, try to "act out" the word. Have students "act out" the word after you have modelled it. For example, if the season is appropriate, take the class outside and watch as you make tracks in the snow. Invite students to do likewise.



AFTER READING

Analyzing

Talk about the story. *Did the boy find the bears? What did he find?* Make a list of the animals that the boy saw in the woods. Ask, *Where were the bears?*

Teaching Tip:

Pictures of each animal would provide visual cues for students. Post the picture beside the name of each animal.

Self-monitoring

Instruct students to turn to a partner and tell one thing they are still wondering about. Encourage them to use the sentence starter “I wonder...” Afterwards, invite students to share their wonderings with the group.

Second Reading

Reading Strategies

Comprehension

- ▶ sequencing: retelling
- ▶ making connections: text to self

Working with Words

- ▶ attending to print
- ▶ using initial letters and picture cues to solve unfamiliar words

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student’s ability to:

- ▶ join in with predictable and familiar language patterns
- ▶ retell the story in sequence and identify the beginning, middle, and end of the story
- ▶ make connections between the story and their own experiences
- ▶ track print (words, spaces between words, tracking across lines and down pages)
- ▶ check initial letters and pictures for cues to support word solving/understanding



BEFORE READING

Analyzing

Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

Revisit the story with students by doing a picture walk. Start a discussion about each page by asking, *What do you notice on this page? Is there anyone new on this page?* Look for students to notice each animal the boy sees and any other observations that come to mind.

Sequencing

Setting a Purpose

Say, *All stories are made up of three parts: a beginning, middle, and an end. We’re going to read the story again, and I want you to notice what happens at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end.*



DURING READING

Tracking print/ building confidence

Do an echo reading of the text. Read a line, and then have students be your echo by repeating each line after you. Track the print using the pointer as you read each line.

Language predictability

Pause before the name of each animal to see if students can read them independently. Encourage students to check initial letters and use the illustrations to figure out the words. Say, *Check the picture to see what word makes sense here.*



AFTER READING

Sequencing: retelling

Ask, *What happened at the beginning of the story? In the middle? At the end?* Make picture cards of each person or animal to represent students' responses, and organize the cards into three sections to represent the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Place, or ask a student volunteer to place, a label with the words beginning, middle, or end above the corresponding picture cards.

Teaching Tip:

Let students identify the beginning, middle, and end of the story intuitively. At this level, student learning should focus on the realization that every story consists of three parts (not the characteristics of each part). If students need assistance identifying the beginning, prompt their thinking with the following questions: *Who is the main character? Look at the pictures in the story. Where does the story take place? What is the problem in this story?* In the middle of a story, the character tries to solve the problem. To help students identify the middle, ask, *How does the boy try to solve the problem?* At the end of a story, the problem is solved. To help students identify the ending, ask, *How does the story end?*

Making connections: text to self

Invite students to share their experiences of walking in the woods. Ask, *What do you see when you walk in the woods? What time of year do you go walking in the woods? Which is your favourite time of year to go walking in the woods? Why? Is it a good idea to walk in the woods alone? Why?*

Print concepts

Use selected pages in the text to draw students' attention to capitals, sentences, and periods. Ask, *How many sentences do you see on this page? Show me the beginning of each sentence. Does the sentence begin with a big or little letter? Show me the end of this sentence. What do you see at the end of the sentence?*

Third Reading

Reading Strategies

Comprehension

- ▶ synthesizing
- ▶ evaluating

Working with Words

- ▶ attending to print
- ▶ recognizing high-frequency words

Assessment Opportunities

Note each student's ability to:

- ▶ join in with predictable and familiar language patterns
- ▶ synthesize: choose an important word to represent the gist of the story
- ▶ evaluate: express opinions about main character
- ▶ track print (words, spaces between words, tracking across lines and down pages)
- ▶ locate and identify high-frequency words



BEFORE READING

Sequencing

Activating and Building Prior Knowledge

Use the picture cards of the people and animals from the story that you made earlier to make a visual sequence of the story. Distribute the cards, one per student, to student volunteers. Name the person or animal as you hand a card to a student. Flip through the story, page by page. On each page ask, *Who is on this page?* Invite the student holding that picture to stand up in front of the class. Turn the page. Ask, *Is there anyone new on this page?* Invite the student that has that picture to come stand beside the first student. Continue on through the book. At the end of the book, ask, *Who did the boy see while walking through the woods? Who did the boy not see?*

Synthesizing

Setting a Purpose

Say, *As we read, I want you to think about the most important word for you that describes this story. It might be a word right in the story or it might be a word that the story makes you think of.*

Teaching Tip:

Some students might choose the word *bears*, since the story is about a boy looking for bears. Some may choose a word such as *scared*, because they would be scared if they were out in the woods.



DURING READING

Tracking print/building confidence

Divide the class into groups to do a choral reading of the text. Assign one or more pages to each group and invite all the groups to read the last page. Track print as you read along with each group.

Word solving and building

Clarify any words that puzzle students.



AFTER READING

Synthesizing

Ask students to turn to a partner and tell them their most important word and why they chose it. Afterwards, ask, *Would anyone like to change their most important word? Why?* You may wish to have students share their important words with the whole class as you record them on chart paper.

Evaluating

Discuss with students the difference between fact and fiction. *Is this story true or made up? Why is it considered fantasy?*

Evaluating/making connections: text to world

Ask, *Why do you think the boy didn't do what his mom told him to do? Did you think the boy was in any danger as he walked in the woods? Why? What would you do if you were the boy?* Talk to students about being safe around wild animals. *What does the boy do that is not safe?*

High-frequency words

Invite students, one at a time, to locate some of the high-frequency words in the text, e.g., *I, the*. Encourage students to use the pointer to locate the word. If students are ready, ask them to reread the entire sentence where the word was found. Keep a tally of how many times each word is found in the story. Use the tally to draw students' attention to the number of times each high-frequency word was found in the text.



FURTHER READINGS

Many texts benefit from being reread with students. The three readings suggested in this plan can be expanded to include further readings. Participation will increase when a book becomes familiar, and students will become more comfortable taking turns and using a pointer to track.

For each rereading, we recommend that you select a balance of Print Concepts, Comprehension, and Working with Words strategies from the following suggestions. Make your selections based on the needs of students in your class.

Print Concepts, Book Handling, and Text Features

Text features

Review the title, author, and illustrator with students. Then ask them to find this information on the title page.

Tracking print

During rereadings, have students take turns tracking print using the pointer. Offer as much support as necessary, e.g., by guiding the pointer with students who need assistance.

Print concepts

If students are ready, point out the use of quotation marks on page 2. Say, *Writers use marks like these* (make quotation marks on chart paper or on the board) *to show when someone is talking. They are called quotation marks. Can you find these marks in the story? Who is talking?*

Focusing on Comprehension

Inferring

Using the illustrations in the text, have students tell the story from the bear cubs' perspective. Encourage students to include a beginning, middle, and end to the story. Have students begin the story on page 5 when the bears first notice the boy. To prompt students' thinking, ask, *Who is the big bear? Who are the two little bears? Where are the bears? What are they doing? Why do you think the bear cubs are following the boy?* For pages 6–13 ask, *Then what happens?* For pages 14–16 ask, *How does the story end?*

Sequencing: retelling

Invite one group of students to do a dramatized retelling of the story from the boy's perspective. Invite another group to do a dramatized retelling of the story from the perspective of the two bear cubs. Have each group present their dramatizations to each other.

Working with Words

Letter knowledge

Ask students to locate the words on pages 2 and 3 that begin with “b.” Say, *How is the “b” on page 2 different from the one on page 3? That’s right, one is a capital “b” and the other is a small “b.”* Invite students to find other capital letters and the corresponding small letter in the story.

Word solving and building

Challenge students to a Word Hunt using the text. Use challenges such as: *Find the number of words in the second sentence on page 7. How many letters are in the word wrong on page 15? Find the longest sentence on this page. Find the shortest sentence on this page. Find a sentence with two capital “I”s.*



RESOURCE LINKS

Writing

Model writing a fantasy story with the class about looking for a certain type of animal. As a class, decide on the setting, e.g., animals in a zoo, animals on the farm, or animals that live in the jungle or sea. Then decide on the type of animal. Alternatively, students could follow the theme in *Where Are the Bears?* and offer an expanded range of animals.

Write on chart paper or the board the question from the story “So where are the _____?” Ask individual students for a response. Have them use the sentence frame from the story “I didn’t find any _____. I found a _____.” Record each student’s response on a separate piece of chart paper. Use this opportunity to demonstrate how to stretch out the sounds in words and to discuss the use of capitals and periods in a sentence.

After students’ responses are recorded (this may take place over a few days), have them draw a picture to illustrate their sentences. Compile the finished pages into a class big book. The class book could be taken home and shared with family members. (For more ideas, refer to Narrative text-type study in the Writing Guide.)

Independent Reading

Make the six small versions of *Where Are the Bears?* and the online audio available for students. Invite students to use these materials to read the book independently.

Teaching Tip: The online audio for this book includes a cloze reading of this text. In this reading, selected words have been omitted. Students listening to the cloze reading have the opportunity to chime in with the missing words.



Home Links

Encourage students to take home books about animals from the school or class library. Recommend that parents or family members read these aloud to students and discuss the content in an open-ended way, e.g., *I didn’t know that. Did you? I wonder what you think about that? This reminds me of...*

Gather a selection of picture books on animals and/or spring activities for individual or partner reading.

Place the class big book in the book box for students to read.

Once the setting for the fantasy story is finalized (see Writing), collect a selection of picture books that match that setting, e.g., animals in the jungle, at the zoo, or under the sea. Encourage students to use the books to do research for their responses.

Working with Words

Once concepts have been introduced in context, see the focused lessons in the Working with Words Guide for more direct instruction for those students who need it.

See also the specific Building Words lesson (“Rabbit”) in the Working with Words Guide.

Read Aloud

Read to the class both fiction and non-fiction books about animals. Some suggested fiction titles are:

The Mitten by Jan Brett (GP Putnam & Son, 2002)

Stranger in the Woods by Carl Sams II & Jean Stoick (Scholastic Canada, Ltd., 2001)

Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury (ACT, 2003)