

Johann and the Birds

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Level 22

Getting ready for reading

You may like to talk about friendship with the students. *What do friends do for each other? How do they show that they care?*

You may like to discuss times when students have helped a friend out. *What did you do? How did your friend feel about it? How did you feel while you were helping? How did you feel after?*

Talking through the book

Give each student a copy of the book. Ask the students to look at the front cover and to predict what they think the book will be about. You might ask: *What type of book is this? How do you know? What will happen in it?*

Ask the students to read to the end of page 5. Discuss the students' predictions. *Which things have happened? Which have not? What will happen next?*

Ask the students to read to the end of page 11. *What has happened? What might happen next?*

Reading the book

Students read the book individually while the teacher observes each student's reading behaviours and prompts students to use cues to read unfamiliar words. The teacher may select an additional teaching focus based on these observations.

Returning to the text

Select the most appropriate teaching focus for the learning needs of the group. Choose one or more of the following.

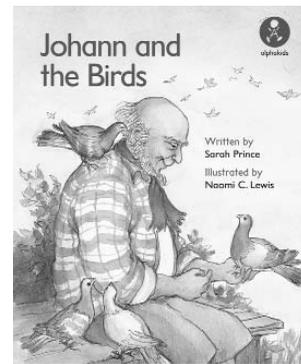
Being a meaning maker

Encourage the students to support their answers with evidence from the book as they discuss these questions.

What did the pigeons usually do when they were let out each morning?

What happened when Johann became ill?

Why was Mr Edgar worried?



TEXT FEATURES

- **This book is a narrative about an elderly man, Johann, who keeps pigeons. When Johann becomes ill and is hospitalised, his friend looks after the pigeons. He lets them out for their daily flight and they fly to visit Johann in hospital.**
- **The theme of the book is an exploration of love and friendship.**
- **Colour illustrations extend and enhance the text.**
- **The text features direct speech.**

*How did the birds know where Johann was?
What does Johann mean when he says, 'My heart may not be strong but it's big enough to love all my friends'?*

Being a code breaker

Students could explore the letters used to represent the /er/ sound throughout the book: *birds, circles, return, later, colours, remembered.*

Being a text user

Discuss:

Did you like this story?

Would you read it again? Why?

Who would you recommend it to?

Being a text critic

Discuss:

Are all elderly people like Johann and Mr Edgar?

Was Mr Edgar a good friend to Johann? Why?

Literacy learning centres – follow-up activities

WRITING CENTRE 1

Students could write the next episode in the story of 'Johann and the Birds', for example, how they got the birds back home. 

WRITING CENTRE 2

Students could use the story to create a rap or poem about an elderly person the students know, such as grandparents or friends of their family. 

T TEXT CENTRE

Students could complete a cloze activity.

INTERACTIVE LITERACY CENTRE

Students could work in cooperative groups to make a roll movie that retells the story.

A roll movie is a shortened version of the book, retold in the students' own words. It includes the important details, plot episodes and illustrations. (See Blackline Master 8, page 119, for instructions on making a roll movie.)

WORD CENTRE

Students could write words that could be used to describe birds on cardboard cut-outs of birds. The cut-outs could be hung up in the classroom.



Keeping track

Quick informal records of reading behaviours can be taken as students read the book individually. This enables teachers to keep track of students' development and to be aware of times when more in-depth assessments are needed.