

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Pourquoi Tale Page Count: 16 Word Count: 251

Book Summary

According to legend, all birds once walked the same way and left the same tracks. In this entertaining pourquoi tale, readers discover how birds came to have their own distinct footprints. Charming illustrations complement the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions


Objectives

- Ask and answer questions to understand the text
- Identify the problem and solution in the story
- Discriminate short vowel /o/ sound
- Identify open vowel y
- Identify and use exclamation marks
- Identify high-frequency words *other* and *they*

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Why Robins Hop* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Problem and solution, open vowel y, exclamation marks worksheets
- Discussion cards

 Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

- High-frequency words: *other*, *they*
- Content words:
 - Story critical: **beaks** (n.), **chase** (v.), **foxes** (n.), **protect** (v.), **robins** (n.), **tracks** (n.)
 - Enrichment: *chickens* (n.), *crow* (n.), *hummingbird* (n.), *problem* (n.), *sparrow* (n.), *woodpecker* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Tell students that *Why Robins Hop* is a kind of folktale called a *pourquoi* tale. Explain that *pourquoi* is a French word that means *why* and that stories like these explain why certain things in the world (usually in nature) are the way they are. The tales are passed down from generation to generation. Even though *pourquoi* tales are not factual, they provide a fun and different way of looking at the world around us.

Book Walk

Introduce the Book

- Show students the front and back covers of the book and read the title with them. Ask what they think they might read about in a book called *Why Robins Hop*. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name). Ask: *What do the pictures make you wonder about the book?*
- Write the following repetitive sentences on the board: *Let robins_____ (fly, eat, hop)*. Read the sentences aloud, pointing to the words as you read them to students. Have students read them aloud. Explain that these words repeat throughout the book.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Ask and answer questions**

- Explain to students that one way to understand a story is to ask questions about the book before and during reading, and then to read the book to answer the questions. Explain that good questions often begin with *I wonder*.
- Model how to ask an *I wonder* question.
Think-aloud: *I see footprints on the front cover of the book. I wonder what footprints have to do with why robins hop. I will have to read the book to find out. I will remember to use the pictures and the information in the book to ask myself questions as I read. Then I will see if I can find the answers in the book.*
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- As you preview the book, ask students to talk about what they see in the pictures. Use the vocabulary they will encounter in the text. Model how they can use prior knowledge and the illustrations to help them work out the meaning of words. For example, on page 4, you might say: *When I look at this page I notice two different animals. The animal hiding behind the tree looks like a fox so I will look at the text and see if I can find the word fox.* Have students locate the word *fox* in the first sentence. Ask a volunteer to read the sentence aloud and ask students if the word *fox* in the sentence makes sense. Say: *The other animal in the illustration is a bird and I can tell by its brown feathers and red breast that it is a robin. I will confirm that this bird is a robin by looking at the text and finding the word robin.* Have students locate the word *robin* in the third sentence. Ask a volunteer to read the sentence aloud and ask students if the word *robin* makes sense in the sentence.

Set the Purpose


- Have students read the book to answer their *I wonder* questions about *Why Robins Hop*.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their copy of the book. Ask them to place a finger on the page number in the bottom corner of page 3. Have them read to the end of page 6, using their finger to point to each word as they read. Encourage students who finish before others to reread the text.
- When they have finished reading, ask students what words were tricky for them. Discuss strategies they can use to help themselves work out difficult words.
- Model answering an *I wonder* question.
Think-aloud: *As I was reading and came to page 4, I read that the fox followed the tracks of what he thought was a chicken. Then I read that the fox started chasing and eating robins because the bird tracks all looked the same. I still don't know exactly what tracks have to do with why robins hop. I wonder if it has something to do with the fox eating the robins. I'll have to keep reading to find out.*

- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 12. Ask volunteers if they now know the answer to the question about what tracks have to do with foxes eating robins (their tracks looked exactly the same as chickens; the foxes couldn't tell the difference).
- Ask students to share any *I wonder* statements they may have for the remainder of the book.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to look for word and picture clues to find out why robins hop.

 Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in the discussion that follows.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Reinforce to students that asking questions in their mind as they read helps them understand and stay interested in the story.
- **Think-aloud:** *When I read page 3, I asked myself: I wonder what made foxes chase robins? Did the robins bother foxes? Did foxes want to eat the robins? Asking myself these questions made me pay closer attention to the pictures and word clues as I read to help me find the answers.*
- Discuss some of the *I wonder* questions that students shared during reading. Ask: *How did your questions help you?*

Teach the Comprehension Skill: Problem and solution

- **Introduce and model:** Write *problem* and *solution* on the board. Explain that a *problem* is something that is difficult to deal with or hard to understand, and a *solution* is the answer to the problem. For example, if I were to get wet every time I went outside in the rain, I would have a problem. If I were to decide to put on my raincoat before I went outside, I would have a solution to my problem.
- Explain that most stories contain a problem and a solution. After the problem in the story is revealed, a series of events usually takes place. These events all lead up to the solution of the story. Stories would be very boring if there were no problem and solution because nothing much would happen.
- **Check for understanding:** Ask students to name a common problem (forgetting lunch money, missing the bus). Then have them provide a solution (putting their lunch money in their backpack the night before, getting to the bus stop five minutes earlier).
- Ask a student to identify the problem in *Why Robins Hop* (the fox was eating the robins because he couldn't tell the bird tracks apart).
- **Discussion:** Ask students what they thought about Owl's solution to the birds' problem.
- **Independent practice:** For additional practice identifying the problem and solution in the story, have students complete the [problem-and-solution worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about how the birds got together to solve a problem and help their friends, the robins. The next time you have a problem that you are having trouble solving, what will you do?

Build Skills

Phonological Awareness: Short vowel /o/ sound

- Review with students the sound of short /o/ with words from the book: *fox*, *not*, *hop*. Have students listen for the short /o/ sound as you say the words. Have them repeat the sound and the words.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Why Robins Hop

- **Check for understanding:** Tell students you are going to say a list of words. Have them give the thumbs-up sign when they hear the short /o/ sound in a word. Have them give the thumbs-down sign if a word does not contain the short /o/ sound. Say: *problem, birds, fox, robin, tracks, thought, belong, fast, done, proper, hop, not, search.*

Phonics: Open vowel y

- Explain that the letter y is sometimes used as a vowel. Write *why* and *fly* on the board and have students listen as you say the words aloud. Ask what vowel sound they hear in the words (long /i/). Ask what letter stands for the long /i/ sound in these words (y). Explain to students that English words (besides names) don't end in i, so we use a y.
- Write the words *many, normally, easily, finally, and only* on the board. Ask students to read the words and tell you the vowel sound the letter y stands for in these words (long /e/).
- Have students look through the book to find examples of words that contain a final y used as a vowel. Create a T-chart on the board. Label one side *y sounds like long /i/* and the other side *y sounds like long /e/*. Have students tell what sound the y makes in each word and then tell in which category the word belongs.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *my, hardly, shy, fly, lonely.* Say each word, one at a time. Select volunteers to circle the words in which the y has the long /i/ sound and underline the words in which the y has the long /e/ sound.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [open vowel y worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Grammar and Mechanics: Exclamation marks

- Explain that writers use *exclamation marks* to show that something is being said with a lot of energy, emotion, excitement, or power. Explain to students that when an exclamation mark is used in a sentence, the sentence is called an *exclamatory sentence*. Explain that an exclamation mark may also be called an *exclamation point*.
- Have students turn to page 4. Reread the page aloud. Emphasize how the voice shows excitement, enthusiasm, and energy at the end of an exclamatory sentence. Ask: *What do you think is the purpose of this exclamation mark?* (to show importance) Then turn to page 13. Read the page aloud. Ask: *Why do you think the author uses an exclamation mark on this page?*
- Ask volunteers to each create a sentence that needs an exclamation mark. The sentence should show power, energy, and excitement. Write each exclamatory sentence on the board, leaving off the exclamation mark. Read the sentences aloud to students without stopping. Then have volunteers come to the board and add an exclamation mark to each sentence. Reread the sentences, stopping at the exclamation mark at the end of each sentence and adding the proper vocal emphasis.



Check for understanding: Have students locate and circle all the sentences in the book that end with exclamation marks. Have them read the exclamatory sentences to a partner. Listen for expression, enthusiasm, emotion, and energy.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [exclamation marks worksheet](#).

Word Work: High-frequency words *other* and *they*

- Review the high-frequency words *other* and *they*. Explain to students that by knowing words that appear often in the text, it will make reading the story easier.



Check for understanding: Have students locate and highlight each of the high-frequency words in the book. Then have them work with a partner and use each word in an oral sentence.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, allow partners to take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have them discuss the problem and solution in the story to someone at home.

Extend the Reading

Writing Connection

Provide examples of *pourquoi* tales and/or read some aloud (for example, Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories*). Review the major elements of *pourquoi* tales (they explain why something exists, they are usually about nature, they have animal and human characters, they are not true). Have students write a *pourquoi* tale of their own, including these elements in their story. Allow time for students to complete their tale. Give them an opportunity to read and/or share their story with the class.

Science Connection

Provide print and Internet resources for students to explore birds and ornithology. Have students choose one type of bird to research, finding out information on habitat, diet, size and color, how it moves (in the air and on land), and type of footprint. If time allows, have them share their findings with the group.

Skill Review

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- ask and answer questions about the text before and during reading to aid in understanding
- identify the problem and solution in the story in discussion and on a worksheet
- identify short vowel /o/ sound in words said orally
- recognize words that contain open vowel y in the text and on a worksheet
- identify, understand, and use exclamation marks
- identify high-frequency words in text and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- **Book Quiz**
- **Retelling Rubric**