

# Swamp Hen

by Joy Cowley

photographs by Nic Bishop



## Book Summary

*Swamp Hen* describes the morning ritual of an unusual bird.

## Features of the Book

- The procedural nature of the text.
- The close-up photography that details the body structure and postures of the bird.
- The use of pronouns – “she” and “her.”
- The repeated “th” blend – “then,” “with,” “the,” and “feathers.”
- The blends – “ch,” “sw,” and “cl.”
- The high-frequency words – “the,” “with,” “She,” “her,” and “some.”

## Purpose

*Swamp Hen* can be used in a guided reading setting to introduce and reinforce the following skills and strategies:

- S** using visual cues to monitor that reading is making sense;
- S** blending sounds together to make a word;
- S** planning how to sequence the events of a piece of narrative writing;
- S** selecting information from the story for a specific purpose.

## Introducing the text

– *How do birds clean themselves?*

Talk about washing in water, dust baths, and using their beaks to preen. Discuss the word “preen” and introduce the word “combs.”

– *What do you have to do each day before school?*

Look at the cover and discuss the photograph.

– *Where do you think this bird lives?*

Read the title together, using the initial blend “sw” as a clue.

## Reading the text

- S** Using visual cues to monitor that reading is making sense.
- S** Blending sounds together to make a word.

Pages 2 and 3 – Ask the children to compare the two photographs to find out what the swamp hen is doing.

– *What time of day do you think it is?*

Pages 4 and 5

– *Why is the swamp hen in the water?*

Pages 6 to 9 – Continue to focus on the activities.

– *What is the swamp hen doing now? What is she using? Do people do this in the morning, too?*

– *Why are her wings spread out?*

– *Why does she have such long claws?*

Page 10

– *What kind of sentence is this?*

Discuss the function of the question mark.

– *What is the author asking?*

Page 12

– *What is the swamp hen doing here?*

Children now read the book independently.

## Revisiting the text

Look at each page again and identify the action, for example, “She splashes,” “She scratches,” and “She combs.”

Find and list examples of the “th” blend. Point out that this blend appears variously in the beginning, middle, and end of words. Ask the children for other examples of “th” in each position.

## Following Up

**S** Planning how to sequence the events of a piece of narrative writing.

**S** Selecting information from the story for a specific purpose.

 The children could make a numbered list of the swamp hen’s morning activities and compare it with a list of their own morning routines.

 Look at the adjective “pointy” in “pointy claw.” Consider the nouns “feathers,” “beak,” and “wings” and write adjectives to describe these features.

**B** Complete the blackline master opposite.