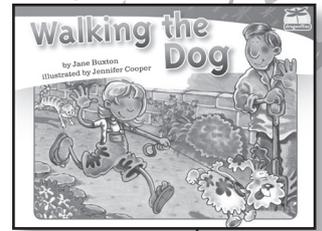


Walking the Dog

by Jane Buxton

illustrated by Jennifer Cooper



Overview

This is a fun text about taking a dog for a walk in the park. The lively illustrations convey what is “really” happening in the story.

Suggested purposes

This book supports the comprehension strategies of noting details in illustrations, making connections with real-life experiences, and using illustrations to understand text. The sentences are structured so that the content words from the last half of each sentence are repeated in the beginning of the next sentence. This provides strong support for the students who lack confidence in their reading.

Text features (Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the high-frequency words – *and, the, we*
- the initial consonant blends – *br, fl, thr, tr*
- the word ending -er – *under, over, flower(s)*
- the compound word – *into*
- the plural nouns – *ducks, flowers*
- the prepositions – *after, along, into, over, round, through, under*
- the consistent sentence structure
- the use of an ellipsis to heighten anticipation on page 7
- the use of an exclamation mark for emphasis on page 8
- the significant development of the story line that occurs in the illustrations

Setting the scene

Discuss what is involved in caring for a dog. *If you have a dog or if you know someone who does, who looks after it? Who takes it for walks?*

Visit or talk about a local park. *What do you do at the park? Are dogs allowed at the park?* If you feel that the students need support with the prepositions, organise an activity trail in the school grounds, drawing out the language used in the book.

The first reading

Look at the cover illustration. *Who can you see in the picture? How is the dog feeling?* The illustration clearly conveys the dog’s enthusiasm and energy! *What is the girl doing?* Ask the students to read the title. Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Title page – Listen to the students read the title again.

Page 2 – Look closely at the illustration. Note that the child has now left her garden (as Dad is now on the other side of the fence) and is almost at the park. Ask the students to read the “Park” sign.

How did they get to the park? If necessary, use the board to help the students decode “along”. Some students may say “path” for “road”. Ask them to take another look. *How does the word start? What other letters will help you?* Listen to the students as they read the text for themselves, supporting them as necessary.

Page 4 – *Where is the dog going now? What is it doing?* If necessary, write “after” on the board and sound it out with the students.

Page 6 – The students may need support with “through”. Draw attention to the initial sound and question the students to encourage them to use meaning and structural information. *Where did they go next? That’s right. Thr ...* (the flowers). Pause so that the students have time to come in with the appropriate word.

Page 7 – Draw the students’ attention to the ellipsis. *Why do you think that’s there? Where will they go next?*

Page 8 – Encourage the students to read this page with expression. *How do you think the girl feels now? If the dog could talk, what do you think it’d be saying?*

Ideas for revisiting the text (Choose only one or two per session.)

- Listen to the students reread the text, monitoring their fluency and their ability to follow the text without pointing.
- Focus on the initial consonant blends that the students are unsure of. Locate the words in context and make a list of other words that start the same way.
- Look at the words ending in “er”. List other words that end in “er”.
- Focus on the structure of the sentences – two ideas joined by the conjunction “and”. Make up some more sentences using this structure.
- List the nouns in the story and talk about the difference between their singular and plural forms.
- Discuss the use of the ellipsis on page 7 to build anticipation.
- Using the words and punctuation cards for this book, reassemble the sentences with the students.
- Develop the students’ oral language by discussing the illustrations. The students could track and talk about the progress of the cat and the bird that appear on most pages. They could discuss the way the illustrator has conveyed how the girl is rushing – she loses her shoe on page 6 and she is sweating on page 7.
- Share the humour in the cover illustration. The text is called *Walking the Dog*, yet the picture shows the characters running. *Who is walking whom?*

Suggestions for further activities

- After discussing the illustrations, the students could retell the story, adding more details. This could be recorded on tape for them to enjoy on the listening post.
- Add speech or thought bubbles to the illustrations.
- The students could draw a map of the park. They could label the features such as the fountain, the bridge, and the pond.
- In pairs, the children could plan a walk around the school grounds. They could draw a map to record their walk and give it to another pair of children to follow.

- Create a story together using the same text structure, in which the noun at the end of the first sentence is used at the beginning of the next sentence, for example, “We walked along the path and into the playground. We walked into the playground and up the steps.” This could be a written or oral activity and would be particularly useful for the students for whom English is a second language.
- Reread familiar books that feature the use of prepositions.
- BLM word activity: identify the onset and rime of words
The students can link the onset with the rime by drawing a line between the two.
- BLM comprehension activity: read and complete the sentences
The students can write the correct preposition in the spaces. They can then read the sentences to a partner.