

The
Early Years Count
Literacy
Connection



**A Unicorn, a
Dinosaur, and a
Shark Were
Riding a Bicycle**

Written and illustrated by
Jonathan Fenske

Preschool edition

Overview of Book

The narrator of the story wants us to believe the story is about a unicorn, a dinosaur and a shark riding a bicycle. Problem is, the narrator never checked with the main characters who flatly refuse to ride a bicycle. What now?

Genre: Picture

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *A Unicorn, a Dinosaur and a Shark* to introduce in your classroom:

narrator	dreaming
prance, roar, lurk	characters

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

**Connecting with the
HighScope Curriculum**

COR Advantage

Language, Literacy and
Communication Item M
(*Listening and
comprehension*), Item Q
(*Book enjoyment and
knowledge*)

Science & Technology
Item DD
(*Natural and physical world*)

Reading Tips

Let the children know that this book is a story being told by a *narrator* who we do not see until the end of the story. Ask, "What do you think the narrator does?" Make a point to acknowledge the text elements and let the children know that "When the words are all capital letters, the book is telling me to read it loud!" Read with lots of feeling, and have a voice for each character. At the end, ask, "Why is the kitty-narrator nervous around the shark and dinosaur?"

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

Throughout the Routine

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

Describe lurking, roaring and prancing and have the children choose their favorite for **transitions**.

At **Rest Time**, have the children relax by pretending to be floating on their own flamingo floaty.

At **Greeting Time**, encourage the children to tell their own story about Unicorn, Dinosaur and Shark. Record or write these down for later re-telling.

Around the Room

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Use dinosaur manipulatives to paint with in the **Art Area**.

Encourage children in the **Block Area** to build houses for each character from the story. Ask them to explain why they built them the way they did.

Add informational books about dinosaurs and sharks to the **Book Area**. Add horse books, too. Be ready to discuss why there are no books about unicorns. Ask the children their opinion.

Open-ended Questions

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one "right" answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *A Unicorn, a Dinosaur and a Shark Were Riding a Bicycle*:

Why do you think the 3 characters are hanging out together?

What do you dream about?

If a unicorn, a dinosaur and a shark came into the classroom, what would you do?

For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact
The Family Connection:

website—
www.famconn.org

Facebook—
@famconnsjc

phone—
574-237-9740

@ Home

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *A Unicorn, a Dinosaur and a Shark Were Riding a Bicycle* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

Have fun reading this book with your child by creating voices for each character and reading the dialogue with lots of emotion. Ask your child questions like, "Why are they relaxing? What do you think they were doing before the story started?" After Unicorn tells their version of a story, ask your child to do that. "Would you like to tell your own story about Unicorn, Dinosaur and Shark?" Wonder put loud things like, 'I wonder how the narrator decided they should be on a bicycle?' Read this book several times. It will help your child understand what a story can be.