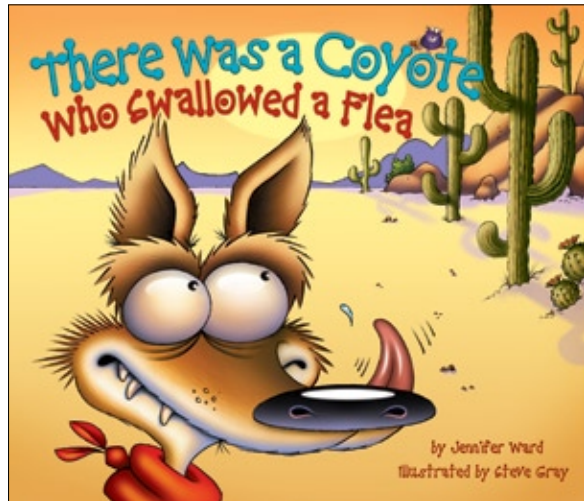


TOOLS FOR TEACHERS

TEACHING CURRICULUM FOR HOME AND THE CLASSROOM



By Jennifer Ward
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There Was A Coyote Who Swallowed A Flea

Skinny ol' Coyote delights readers of all ages as he swallows his way through this delicious southwestern-flavored retelling of a well-loved rhyme. As Coyote gets bigger, the story gets zanier as a bird, a bull, and even an entire cactus end up as dinner. Pure fun for everyone—even that little flea. Call him silly to swallow a chile! Yippee-o-Ki-Yee!

Curriculum Connections:

Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self Connections

Sequencing

Regional Cuisine

Cumulative Stories

Geography

Traits: Word Choice

Activity #1 Text-to-Text Connections: One Hungry Lady and One Hungry Coyote!

Book Connection: *There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea* is an adaptation of the traditional rhyme, *I Know an Old Lady*.

Share the traditional rhyme with students, and then share the southwestern version with students.

Use a Venn Diagram on chart paper to compare & contrast:

- Who the main characters are
- What the main characters do
- What the main characters eat
- Where the stories take place
- How the stories end
- Structure / Organization of each story
- Language used (rhyme, etc.)



Photocopy for classroom use
see back page for
further information.

Activity #2 Text-to-Self Connections: I Once Swallowed a...

Book Connection: The main character in the story, Coyote, gobbles his way through a southwestern desert. His diet is unusual!

Provide your students with an opportunity to make text-to-self connections. After reading the story aloud, ask your students the following questions:

- How does this story remind you of something that happened to you?
- Have you ever eaten something unusual?
- What was the most disgusting food you ever swallowed?
- What was the most delicious food you ever swallowed?

Encourage your students to write about their experience with something they ate.

First, use chart paper to brainstorm descriptive words for food flavors. Categorize them by taste and texture.

Discuss word choice, and how authors select words in their stories that create emotion and imagery.

Revisit sections from *There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea*.

Where did the author specifically use descriptive words to create imagery about Coyote's food choices?

Have students write an ending to the following prompt:

I once swallowed a _____. It tasted _____.



Activity #3 Sequencing: There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a...

Book Connection: *There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea* is a cumulative story. The text builds and repeats. Events occur in sequence, with Coyote swallowing one item after another.

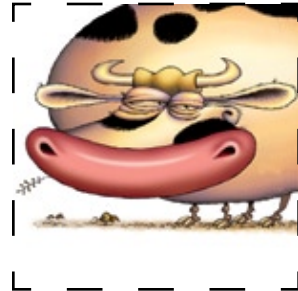
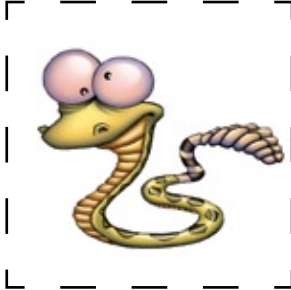
Use this book as a guide to facilitate the concept of sequence events and recalling details.

Books with rhythm, rhyme, and repetition are ideal as a foundation for lessons in sequencing and recalling details, because students become familiar with the text through its patterning.

Share the story as a read aloud with students.

After reading the story, allow students to practice recalling details as they use cut-outs from the worksheet and glue them on the grid in proper sequence.

Worksheet #1: Images (For cutting and pasting in sequence)



BURP!



Worksheet #2: Story Grid

1. There was a coyote...	2. Who swallowed a...	3. And then a...
4. And then a...	5. And then a...	6. And then a...
7. And then a...	8. And then a...	9. And then a...
10. And then a...	11. And then a...	The End

Activity #4 Measuring Up Some Southwestern Flavors

Book Connection: The story takes place in the Southwest. Certain foods are found in the Southwest, such as chiles, tortillas, rice, beans, and delicious Mexican food. Cowboys often ate beans and barbeque.

Provide your students with an opportunity to savor the flavor of the southwest. Set up several cooking and tasting centers as follows:

Masa Makes Tortillas

What you'll need:

- Electric skillet or hotplate
- Hand soap (to clean hands before and after food prep)
- Masa harina (found in your local grocery store)
- Salt
- Measuring cup
- Water
- Mixing bowl
- Mixing spoon
- Flour
- Spatula or tongs

Combine:

- 4 cups of masa harina (allow students to measure)
- 2 pinches of salt
- 2 cups of water

Mix:

With a mixing spoon, allow students to take turns mixing the ingredients.
Once the mixture becomes a dough, knead it on a solid surface sprinkled with flour.

Separate:

Separate the dough into 24 equal size balls. Have students compare sizes to assure they're close in size.

Pound, Press, and Flatten:

Distribute one ball to each student (small groups at a time will work best). Allow students to pound and press the masa ball into a flat tortilla, using their hands and a solid, flat surface.

Cook:

Designate an adult to place each tortilla onto the electric skillet, which should be on medium high heat. Cook the tortilla on each side for about one minute.

Serve:

Serve the tortillas plain, or with the following ingredients for a variety of flavor:

- Butter
- Beans
- Salsa
- Cheese



Activity #5 Word Choice: Rhymes, Verbs, and All Those Words

Book Connection: Because *There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea* takes place in the desert, the author had to be very selective with word choice when it came to selecting items the coyote swallowed. It is also a story written in rhyme. Often, stories written in rhyme help the reader predict what words might come next in the story.

Discuss rhyme. What are rhyming words? Share examples and encourage students to think of their own examples.

For this lesson, do not start out by reading the entire story *There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea*. Instead, start by sharing just the first few pages, taking time to discuss the rhyme used.

Read:

- 1) "There was a coyote who swallowed a flea, plucked from his knee, that tickly flea. Yippee-o-ki-yee!" Point out the rhyme used. (flea/knee)
- 2) "There was a coyote who swallowed a lizard. It slipped and it slithered right down to his gizzard." Point out the rhyme used. (lizard/gizzard)

For the next page, read:

- 3) "There was a coyote who swallowed a snake. It tasted like _____."
- (Encourage students to supply a rhyme for snake, predicting what the author may have used.)

Read the remainder of the story for enjoyment, allowing students to naturally predict how the plot might unfold based on the rhyme pattern and word choice used by the author.

At the end of the story, compare and discuss the predictions made by students to the word choice used by the author.

In addition to rhyme, word choice plays an important part to the story.

For further discussion after the story is shared, discuss these word choice elements:

- How would the story be different if set in a region other than the desert?
- If set in a different region, would the main character change?
- If set in a different region, would the main character's diet change?

On chart paper, select a specific region with your students as a setting for your own class version of *There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea*. Select a character to go with your setting.

Setting: _____

Main Character: _____

List items your character might swallow based on the regional setting you selected.

Be selective with your word choice, considering you might want the items you select for your character to swallow to rhyme with another word.

Swallowed a: _____

Swallowed a: _____

Swallowed a: _____

Swallowed a: _____

Swallowed a: _____

As an extension, turn your brainstorming and discussion about word choice into a class book. Divide students into groups, with each group being responsible for illustrating a page in the book.

As a follow-up, collect the number of rhymes used in *There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea*.

Count the number of nouns used in the story.

Count the number of adjectives used.

If you like *There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea* try other great Rising Moon books by Jennifer Ward:

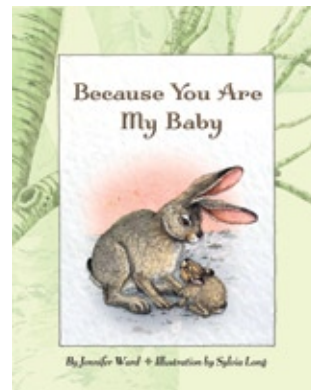
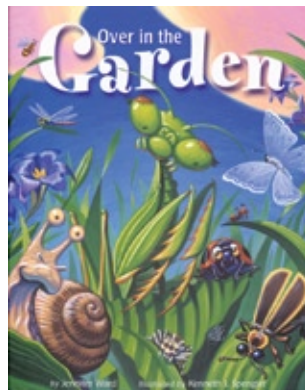
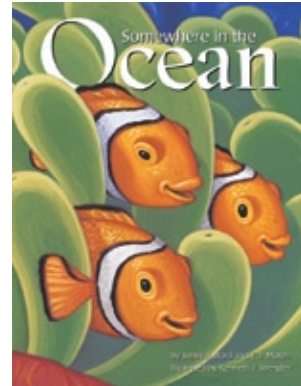
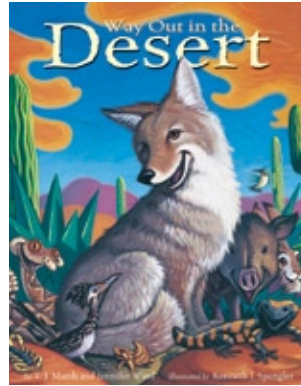
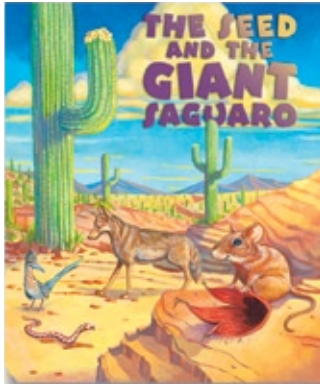
The Seed and the Giant Saguaro

Way Out in the Desert

Somewhere in the Ocean

Over in the Garden

Because You Are My Baby



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