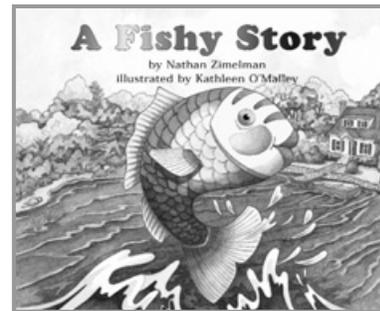


A Fishy Story

Author Nathan Zimelman
 Illustrator Kathleen O'Malley
 16 pages ■ 174 words



A Fishy Story

Em	Early				Fluent			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
	S		G	I				

S = Shared G = Guided I = Independent

SYNOPSIS

A humorous story about a man and wife who are granted a wish, but as in similar wish stories, find that things do not go as expected.

WHAT THE BOOK OFFERS

- Fantasy “wish” folktale structure set in current day
- Third person
- Past tense
- Humor
- Surprise ending
- “Nod nod, wink wink”—reader is in on the joke with the author
- Nonfiction note on inside back cover
- Dialogue
- Contrast between realism and fantasy in text and illustrations
- Ellipses to heighten anticipation

POSSIBLE SKILLS EMPHASIS

- Considering author’s purpose
- Inferential reading
- Using structure of genre to assist reading a new text in a similar form
- Connecting to and comparing experiences with similar text structure
- Understanding words with multiple meanings
- Use of descriptive phrasing—“licking his lips,” “with hungry eyes”
- Action verbs—“gasped,” “gulped”

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	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
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A Fishy Story (continued)

INTRODUCING THE BOOK

What do you think the word “fishy” means?

What kind of story are you expecting this to be? (realistic, fantasy) Why?

FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION

Page 5: Does this story remind you of any other stories you’ve read? What are they? (traditional tales about wishes being granted) What do you think will happen?

Page 10: What do you notice about “except...”? Why did the author put three periods there?

Pages 12, 13: What does the writer want the reader to do on these pages? Why? How does he do that?

Page 16: Go back to the title. Why do you think the author used the word “fishy” in the title? Now what do you think “fishy” means?

■ Explore words with multiple meanings.

Look at the nonfiction note. Do you think the man and woman in this story learned a lesson? What might the lesson have been?

What features in this story are usually found in folktales?

FOLLOWING THE READING

- Discuss other folktales that the students have read in which wishes are given. Compare one to this story.
- Find other stories from other cultures about wishes.
- Discuss how the author used dialogue in the story. The students might take a story they have written or want to write and consider how they could use dialogue.
- Discuss the structure of folktales with students. Students could use that structure to write their own stories.