

Books for Young Learners Teacher Resource

Book Notes



Pigeon Feathers

Author Sherry H. Bowen
 Illustrator Kathleen Kuchera
 16 pages ■ 477 words
 Fountas and Pinnell Level M
 Intervention Level 20



Pigeon Feathers

SYNOPSIS

Legend of the American Indian people telling why the pigeon has gray feathers and why we should not try to change the way we are.

WHAT THE BOOK OFFERS

- Retelling of a legend of the American Indian people
- Third person
- Past tense
- Several incidents
- Repetition of longer-than-usual pattern
- Anthropomorphic
- Concept of “beautiful inside,” moral
- Text above and below illustrations
- Offers several layers of meaning

POSSIBLE SKILLS EMPHASIS

- Understanding structure of a legend
- Using pattern to predict text and increase fluency and expression
- Comparing and contrasting with *Raven's Gift*, another American Indian legend in the **Books for Young Learners Collection** suggested for use at this level

INTRODUCING THE BOOK

- There is nothing on the cover to indicate that this is a retelling or a legend, so either use the note on the inside back cover and/or use the first sentence (Once upon a time, boast of something superior) to recall what the group already knows about the form. Discuss how this will help them predict the storyline and how the author will present it.



Pigeon Feathers (continued)

FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION

- Developing fluency and expression through repetition of pattern.

Page 5: *What comments do you have about the way this legend is structured? How will that help you as you read on?*

When do you expect the pattern to change? What will that indicate?

- Identifying elements of legend and using these to predict forthcoming incidents and how they will be told.

How do you think this legend will end? What do most legends have on the final page? Do you expect the same from this one?

FOLLOWING THE READING

- Add to list of features of legends.
- Compare this list with that made for *Raven's Gift*
- Discuss the concept of "beautiful inside."
- Retell a legend from another point of view.



Pigeon Feathers (continued)

Additional Comprehension Prompts For Oral or Written Use Before, During, and After Reading	
FINISH THIS THOUGHT	<i>If the terrible wind in this story had NOT come along, the pigeon might not have learned that . . . I am really good at . . . and I am not really good at . . .</i>
USE YOUR MEMORY	<i>The pigeon changed her feathers in order to look different. Name 3 birds the pigeon looked like. What did the animals say each time the pigeon passed by? Who were all the characters in this story? How do you know?</i>
WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?	<i>Why is this story a legend? If you need to learn more about legends, reread the information in the Nonfiction Note box on the inside back cover. On page 13, why do you think the pigeon walked past the animals in "embarrassment"? Have you ever been embarrassed? Describe how you felt and why.</i>
BE CREATIVE	<i>Fold a large piece of white construction paper so that you have 8 boxes. Number the boxes 1 – 8. In box #1, draw a picture of how the pigeon looked at the beginning of the story. In box #2, draw a picture of how the pigeon looked when she tried to look like a flamingo. Do the same for each of the birds that the pigeon tried to look like until you get to the way she looked at the end of the story. That picture will be in box #8. Don't forget to label each of the boxes with the name of the bird that best describes your picture. Then tell the story of Pigeon Feathers using just your pictures, in order.</i>
VOCABULARY AGENT	<i>Start on page 2 and make a list of all the words you see on that page that have TWO syllables (parts). Do the same on page 3 and on every page after that. How many two-syllable words does this story have in it?</i>