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ISBN: 9780805059830

Before Reading

What do we know about ponds? What kind of water is in a pond? What kinds of animals live in a pond and around a pond? What kinds of plants do you find there?

After Reading

Now we know more about ponds and the kinds of plants and animals that live there. Have children talk about going to a pond. Have they been to one? What did they see? Have they looked at pond water under a microscope? If you have a microscope take time to look at pond water, it's fascinating and children love it.

Caldecott

In the Small, Small Pond was a 1994 Caldecott Honor book. Caldecott honor books are the runners up to the Caldecott Medal. The Caldecott is awarded by the ALSC, part of the American Library Association, to "the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children published by an American publisher in the United States in English during the preceding year" (ALSC Caldecott terms). Caldecott Medal, Honor, and Notable books (in the running for the Caldecott) are an excellent starting place to share quality books with children. This article (<https://goo.gl/do6GK5>) from Library Sparks has some great ideas for using the Caldecott in teaching. You can

find more information on the Caldecott Medal, including all of the recipients from 1938 to present, at <https://goo.gl/gfsuTC>.



Rhyming Words

- Wade – parade
- Shiver – quiver
- Doze – close
- Lunge – plunge
- Splatter – scatter
- Swirl – twirl
- Swoop – scoop
- Clack – crack
- Dip – flip
- Splash – flash
- Pack – stack
- Breeze – freeze
- Night – tight
- Wiggle – jiggle – wriggle

On a piece of paper that has room for writing and drawing, pick your favorite rhyming pair of words. Now draw a picture to go with those words and write a short story about those animals and how they act.





Talk Read Sing Write Play

Talk – When reading the story together ask “What” questions or open-ended questions like, “What wriggles in *In the Small, Small Pond*?” and, “Whose wings quiver?” These kind of questions are looking for an answer but they are also keeping the dialog open. It keeps it even more open when you ask, “What happened next?” or “What’s happening?” Children will add their own ideas.

Read – Pick a nonfiction book about one of the animals in the story. For example, *The Wild Life of Frogs* by Camilla de la Bédoyère has a glossary

and an index. It also has lots of real information like the frog life cycle interspersed with jokes and activity pages.

Sing – To the tune of “Down by the Bay”:

In the small, small pond, where the tadpoles wriggle, I see the frog go jiggle, wiggle. The geese will wade down on parade, and the dragonflies will shiver ‘n quiver, In the small, small pond. In the small, small pond, the turtles doze with their eyes closed. The herons plunge with a great big lunge, while the minnows scatter at a splatter, down in the small, small pond. In the small, small pond, the whirligigs twirl with circling swirls. The swallows scoop, sweep and swoop, and the crawdads click, clack and crack their claws, down in the small, small pond. In the small, small pond, the ducks flip their tails. The raccoon splash their paws, and muskrats pack and stack their homes. Getting ready for the wintry freeze, in the small, small pond.

Write – Show the children how to play with the action words from the story in Word Art. Kids will love to make the words change shape and move like they sound. Then print out the word on a piece of paper and have the children draw an animal moving like that word to create an example.

Play – A water table would be ideal for playing or pretending to be in a pond, but you could also create a paper pond by using blue tinted cellophane. Have each student make a different animal or plant to make your pond lush with wildlife.



Common Core Standards Used

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.1 - With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.2 - With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.4 - With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.5 - Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.6 - Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.7 - With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.8 - With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.9 - With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

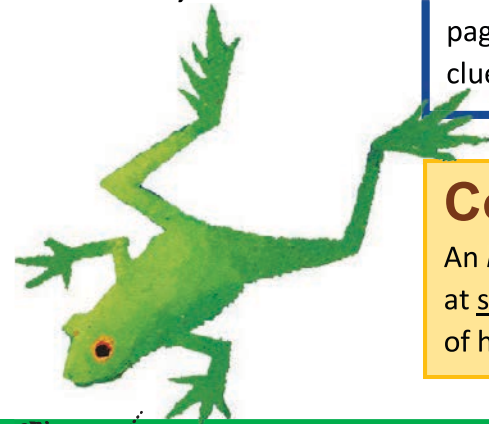
RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.10 - Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

Make a Bookmark



Snip off the corner of an envelope to make a triangle. Now color the triangle green. Make two nice big eyes and a long red tongue. Glue the eyes on top of the triangle and the tongue to the underside. With this corner you can use it as a bookmark to mark the page where you stopped reading. It looks like a frog and can follow you through your book like the frog followed along in *In the Small, Small Pond*.



Early Literacy Skills

Phonological Awareness is rhyming and playing with the smaller sounds in words. *In the Small, Small Pond* abounds with fun rhyming play. Pick one of the pages and make up as many rhyming words to go with them as you can. You can make a list of real words and made up words. Rhyming with nonsense words is silly and gets the point across.

Letter Knowledge is identifying the name of the letter and the sounds it makes. Having fun with those sounds can be done with using the letters in the children's names or picking a page that you like and thinking of all the words you can that begin with that letter or sound. Alliteration is using the same letter or sound many times, for example, "Sally sold seashells down by the seashore."

Narrative Skills is letting the children be the teller of the story, but sometimes they need help. We can help them by having a story starter. When using *In the Small, Small Pond* you can simply ask the children what happened after winter, when the frog wakes up? Let them retell the story in their own words. It's a seasonal cycle story, so as long as they start with spring it's all good.

Print Motivation is following the children's interests. See what questions they have about the book and follow up with nonfiction books about those animals. Continue with an art project or make a puppet.

Vocabulary is learning the names of things, so as the children learn something new be ready to extend their knowledge with more information. Do research on YouTube to hear how an animal makes a sound.

Print Awareness is discovering how books work and that pictures and words have their own job. Throughout the book you and the children will notice that words and letters are out of alignment and move around the page according to what is being said in the story. So in this way we find clues in the pictures as what the words may say.

Connect with Denise

An *In the Small, Small Pond* match up and a finish-the-picture are available at smallsmallpond.denisefleming.com. There are also activities for the rest of her books, free posters, book information, a travel schedule, and more!

Conservation



In the Small, Small Pond is all about observing life on the pond. Talk to your students about living and nonliving things. What kind of nonliving things do you find around a pond? What other living things do you find at the pond besides animals? Think along the lines of tossed away items that someone might leave.

This discussion of living and nonliving items to then turn into a conservation conversation about taking care of our living environment and what living things need.



The Seasons

Have each child fold an 8 ½ x 11 piece of paper (or 11 x 17) in half vertically, open it up and fold it in half horizontally. Now label each corner with a season: **Spring**, **Summer**, **Fall**, and **Winter**.

Next have the students draw the animals and activities that are going on in *In the Small, Small Pond* during each of those seasons. For example the tadpoles swimming in the **spring**, the swallows swooping in **summer**, muskrats packing for the **fall**, and frog digging in the mud to hibernate for **winter**. This activity could be taken to the next level – HUGE - and make a wall mural out of it. Have 4 group of students make the 4 seasons and make the animals out of construction paper so the animals can be moved around on the mural. The students will have so much fun making the animals dive, swoop, leap, quiver, scatter, and more as they retell the story using the mural. They love to see their art up on the wall and to play with their art and others.

Life Cycle of a Frog



This book is perfect for studying the life cycle of the frog. At your local library there will be several more books about this subject. I like *Tale of a Tadpole* by Karen Wallace and *Tadpoles and Frogs* by Thea Feldman. Both of these titles are meant for early readers, so the information is concise and complete. They each have photos and are visually appealing to young children. There are also some excellent videos online explaining the lifecycle of a frog, such as <https://youtu.be/rJOOxIFs9Is>.

Classify the Animals

Mammals	Birds	Insects	Reptiles/Amphibians	Fish	Invertebrates
Muskrat	Geese	Dragonfly	Tadpoles	Minnows	Crawdads
Raccoon	Heron	Whirligig	Frog		
	Swallow		Turtles		
	Duck				