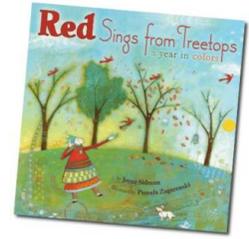


Red Sings from Treetops: A Year in Colors



Reader's Guide

These suggestions are for grades 1-4.

PREDICTIONS

1. Red Sings from Treetops is a book about colors. Look at the front cover: What colors can you see?
2. There are four trees pictured on the cover. How are they different? What do they suggest about the book?
3. What do you think the person on the front cover doing? What animals can you find?

SUGGESTIONS FOR READING ALOUD

The text in Red Sings from Treetops uses personification to point out different colors in a season and make them come alive. In a sense it is a guessing game for readers; each time a color is mentioned, the color word refers to a certain object. After reading through each season, go back to each page and ask students:

- What object does the each color word refer to? (In the line "RED sings from treetops", RED refers to the cardinal on the tree, etc.)
- Try to find the named object on the page.
- Have students think of other objects of that color ("What else is red in springtime?").
- Find the dog on each page and figure out what he is doing.
- Find the red bird on most pages. Look for other animals as well.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

Children love to write about color! Here are a few ways to help them:

"List Poem"

1. After reading the entire book to students, focus on one color—say, white. Have students brainstorm things that are white, and write them on the board.
2. As a class, write a list poem, beginning each sentence with "White is . . ."Encourage them to be as specific and descriptive a possible—not just, "White is a cloud," but "White is a cloud, high in the sky on a bright summer day."
3. Have each student choose a color and write an individual list poem about his or her color.

"Personification Poem"

1. After reading the entire book to students, go back to p. 11 ("Green is queen in summer"). Expand on this concept with your students. If green is a queen, what would she look like? What clothes would she wear? What kind of person would she be? What would she like to do?
2. Using these ideas, write a group poem on the board about Queen Green.

3. Ask each student to choose a color to “personify.” Have them picture the color as a person, and ask themselves all the same questions as above—what kind of person would that color be?
4. Have each student write a color person poem.

“Synesthesia Poem”

Don’t let this odd word scare you— “synesthesia” just means a mixing of the senses. This poem is a lot of fun! Start like this:

1. After reading the entire book to students, go to p. 6 (“Green is new in spring’), and ask students: How can rain taste green? Then try some experiments with them:
 - Clap your hands. Ask your students what **color** that sounds like.
 - Ask them, What **color** does pizza taste like?
 - What **color** do autumn leaves smell like?
 - What **color** do you feel like when you’re happy? Excited? Mad?
2. Brainstorm a list of colors on the board, including some fun ones like magenta and indigo.
3. From the list, choose a color for a group poem. Review each of the five senses with your students: sight, smell, touch, hearing, taste. Using each of the five senses, write about the chosen color: “Yellow looks like the sun beaming through a window. / It smells like toast with honey on it . . .” etc.
4. Have students write individually about a chosen color. Encourage them to be as descriptive as possible. End with a line about their own emotions: “When I feel yellow, I am warm and cozy, snuggling with my cat.”

© Joyce Sidman 2012 *May be copied for classroom use but may not be reprinted or resold for commercial purposes.*