

Guided reading

SECTION

2

Introducing the book

Show the front cover to the children and read the title of the book. Ask the children if any of them already know this story and who wrote it. Invite them to find and read the name of the author. Ask the children if they have read any other books written by Anne Fine. Discuss the type of stories they are and encourage them to compare any similarities or differences in the style and themes of the stories. If any of the children have already read the book, explain that reading it again in a group will help them explore the story in greater detail, but tell them not to spoil the plot for other readers.

Turn to the back cover and read the blurb. Ask them to suggest what sort of things Bill discovers are different for girls. Invite them to say what sort of story they expect this to be. Do they think it will be exciting, frightening, serious or funny? Encourage the children to give reasons for their opinions based on their knowledge of other Anne Fine books or on the wording of the title.

A really awful start

Identify any vocabulary that might be challenging before the children begin to read – for example, ‘haphazardly’ on page 13. Remind the children to use their knowledge of phonics and syllables to segment and blend any words they are unsure about. Read the opening sentence to the group. Encourage the children to say what they would think and feel if this happened to them. Ask them if they think this is an effective way to begin the story. Does it make them want to find out why and how Bill has become a girl, or do they think it might be a joke?

Tell them to read to the end of the chapter and then describe what happens to Bill. Ask them to say how Bill reacts to being dressed in a frock and find the words in the text (“‘This can’t be true,” Bill Simpson said to himself.’ on

page 3). Invite the children to find three things that make Bill feel embarrassed and three things that make him feel resentful or angry about how he is treated, and ask them to show you the evidence in the text. Encourage the children to say what sort of person they think Bill is.

Discuss the tone of the story with the children. Do they think it is a realistic, serious story or light-hearted and humorous? Encourage them to support their opinion with evidence from the text – for example, it is humorous because no one thinks it is strange that Bill is a girl.

Invite the children to find and read the last sentence in the chapter. Do they think this is a good way to end a chapter? Does it make them want to find out what happens next? Ask them to predict what Bill might do at playtime.

The wumpy choo

Turn to page 27 and ask the children to look at the illustration. Invite them to say what they think is happening. You might like to take a few minutes to talk about games they play at break times and whether the boys and girls play together or separately and why.

Invite the class to read to the end of the chapter and then explain why Bill doesn’t join in with the boys’ football game. Ask them if they think the boys would have allowed Bill to play had he tried to join in and to give a reason for their opinion. Invite them to explain the bet and why Bill decides to take the bet. Ask: *How do the boys react at first? What does Bill think is different about their reaction and why? What do the boys tell Bill to do? Does Bill think the boys are fair or unfair to the girls in the playground?* Encourage the children to show you the evidence for their answers in the text. Ask the class to turn back to page 21 and to tell you if they knew what a ‘wumpy choo’ was. Were they surprised to find out what it was? Do they think Bill is disappointed to find out it is a 1p chew? Ensure they support their reasons using evidence from the text.

PAGE

4