

SQUIRRELS WHO SQUABBLED

Resources for Reception

PHONICS

- Look at the different animals in the book. What noises do they make? Make an animal noise and ask the children to guess which animal it is. e.g. squeak (mouse); twitterwoo (owl); growl (bear); squawk (bird); ribbet (frog).
- Sing the song "If you're happy and you know it" but swap the actions for animal sounds and movements e.g. hop like a rabbit; scamper like a squirrel; fly like an owl; leap like a frog; gnaw like a beaver; sleep like a bear.
- Talk about the book's setting. Use instruments to help recreate the environment e.g. bells for sunshine, castanets for nuts falling, maracas for crunchy autumn leaves, drums for rocky boulders crashing, xylophones for the waterfall.
- Find and talk about the rhyming words in the story e.g. been/green; red/bed; needs/seeds; look/nook; reason/season; air/bear; fast/last; win/in; fall/all; land/hand; jiggle/giggle; pair/share; end/friend.
- Ask the children to imagine they are one of the squirrels from the book. Tell the children you are going to use sound talk to sound out some action words. They must listen carefully. When they have worked out what the word is, they must respond by doing the correct action e.g. sit, hop, nod, nip, chat, hush, run, nap.

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- Write simple words on the board or on cards using words and pictures from the book. Can the children read these words? e.g. had, red, bit, got, and, fed, that, nut, at, it, win, let, end, puff.
- For children working at Letters and Sounds Phase 3, this is a useful book to focus on the phoneme /qu/. Can children spot /qu/ in the book title "The Squirrels Who Squabbled"? Can they read the following words?: quit, quid, quiz, quiff, quill, quick, queen
- Focus on the phoneme /ee/. Can children hear the phoneme /ee/ in these words from the book as you say them: green, tree, teetered, greed, sweeping. Write the following words on labels, ask children to read the words and write on sound buttons to highlight the graphemes and underline the digraph "ee": been, need, seed, deep, see.

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COMPREHENSION

- Where do you think this story is set? What clues can you find in the book? We can see the following clues: mountains, boulders and rocks, lakes, spruce trees, indigenous animals, flowers and plants. (The setting is the Canadian Rocky Mountains or American Rockies.)
- What season is this story set in? What words and pictures can you find to help you?
 - It is the end of the summer and the beginning of autumn.
 - Words that help us: "where summer had been"; "as autumn edged in"; "through the frosting of winter that glittered ahead". Pictures that help us: colourful leaves on the trees and the ground, hibernating bear, mushrooms, toadstools, acorns, blackberries, conkers.
- Talk about how the squirrels feel at different points in the story e.g. happy, content, worried, sad, hungry, excited, overwhelmed, busy, panicked, competitive, frightened, anxious, angry, argumentative, scared, terrified, desperate, exhausted, brave, determined, hysterical, satisfied, friendly, liked, loved. Use the activity sheet for the children to write what they think the squirrels are saying to each other as they realise how foolish they have been. Let the children write or draw their ideas.
- Look at the last page of the story. Now the squirrels have learned how important and nice it feels to share, do you think they will ever be selfish or greedy again?

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VOCABULARY

- The author uses alliteration in the book title "The Squirrels Who Squabbled". What does squabble mean? Can you think of other words that mean squabble? Change the animals and create your own new alliterative book titles with your new words. e.g. The Squid Who Squabbled; The Aardvarks Who Argued; The Bears Who Battled; The Foxes Who Fell Out; The Flamingos Who Fought; The Rabbits Who Rowed; The Bats Who Bickered; The Dingos Who Disagreed.
- Ask children to look at the pages where the pine-cone is being chased by the squirrels at "the start of a wild nutty race...". Talk about the author's use of language to describe how the squirrels are speaking: "shouted Cyril"; "hollered Bruce"; "cried Cyril". Why does the author choose to use to these words when she could write 'said'? What other words could we use? e.g. called, yelled, screamed, bellowed, screeched, shrieked, howled, called, roared.
- Talk about all the animals and foods around the table on the penultimate pages of the story. Can you identify them? Animals: squirrel, hedgehog, owl, mouse, frog, crow, racoon, beaver, heron, northern cardinal bird, skunk, rabbit, weasel. Animals' Food: blackberries, jelly, cherry pie, honey, chestnuts (or conkers?), pine-nuts, mushrooms, acorns and oak leaves, pie, nettles.

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Activity Sheet for Reception

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINK

Expressive Arts and Design: Explore and play with a wide range of media and materials

- Look at the different shapes of leaves in the book. Go on a nature walk and find big leaves. Trace around the leaves or cover them in paint and make leaf prints on paper.
- Look at all the colourful trees in the picture of the squirrels on their raft as the bird flies away with their pine-cone. Try to recreate the colourful leaves by drawing the shapes of trees using a white crayon on black paper. Have different coloured paints on plates/ trays and encourage children to use sponges to re-create the scene. Alternatively, encourage children to do one large tree each and use this page as the template for a large classroom display.

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Activity Sheet for Reception

1. PHONICS: SEGMENTING AND BLENDING

Match the words to the pictures. Use the book to help you.

run



box



rock



nut



fish



puff



moon

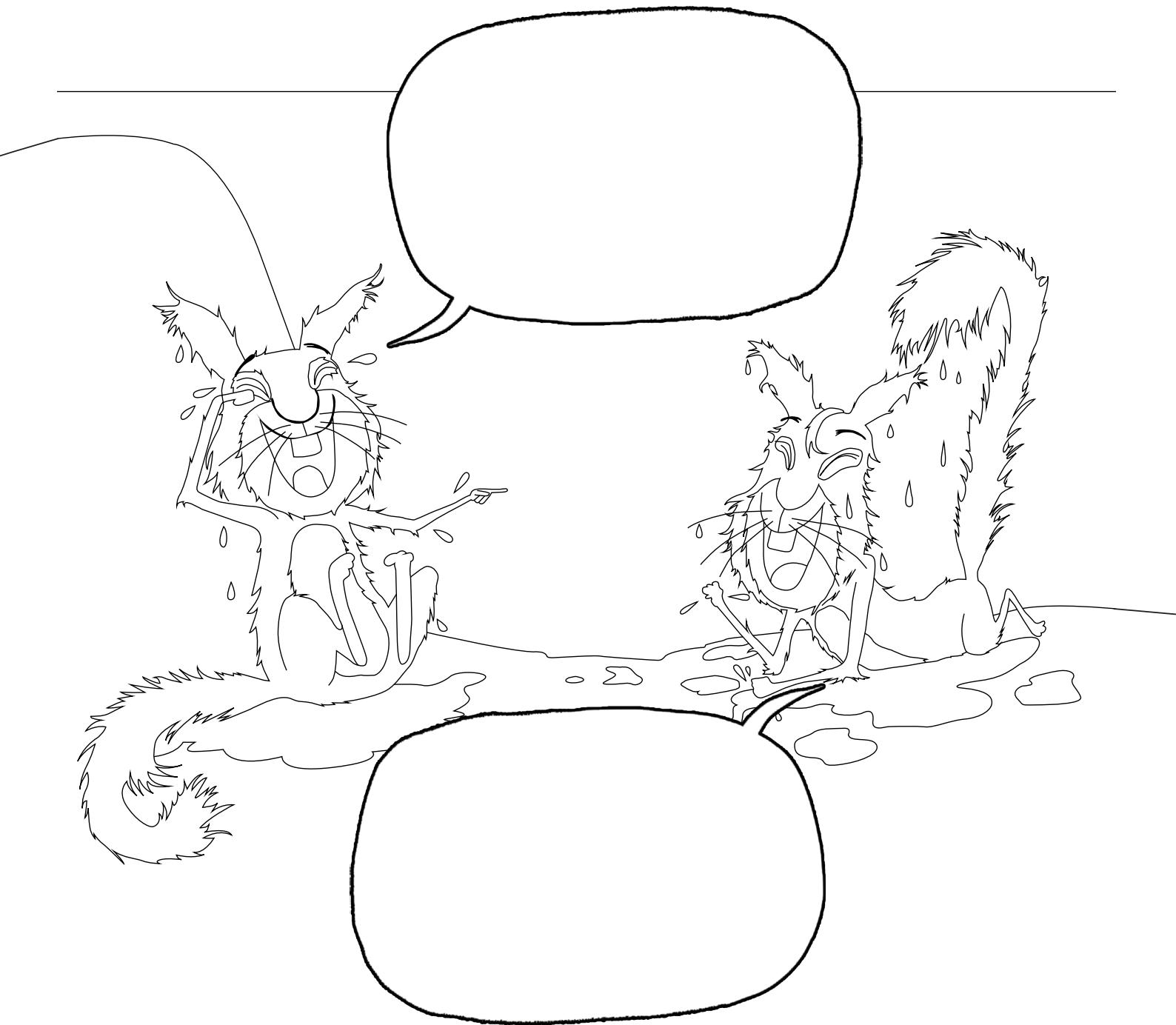


SQUIRRELS WHO SQUABBLED

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2. COMPREHENSION

What are the squirrels saying to one another? Use the book to help you.



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Resources for Key Stage 1

PHONICS

Phase 4: Long or short vowel sound?

- Say the words: frost, short, fresh, teeter, sweep, drift.
- Ask the children to listen carefully and decide if the word has a long or short vowel sound.
- After you have said each word ask the children to call out *long* or *short*!

Phase 5: Reading multi-syllabic words

- Write these words on cards: squirrel, flighty, adventure, hungry, shouted, exclaimed – do not show the words to the children yet.
- Ask the children to say the words with their hand under their chins. Each time their jaw lowers it is the end of a syllable. Ask the children to work out how many syllables in each word. Take feedback.
- Use this method to work out where each syllable ends and mark each syllable on the cards with a line e.g. ad/ven/ture.
- Mark the sound buttons and underline the digraphs where appropriate.
- Read each syllable in order and then blend the whole word. Repeat for all the words.
- Ensure the children understand the meaning of each word.

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Resources for Key Stage 1

COMPREHENSION

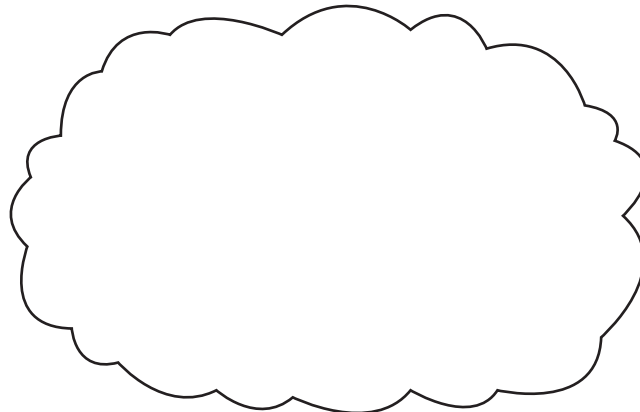
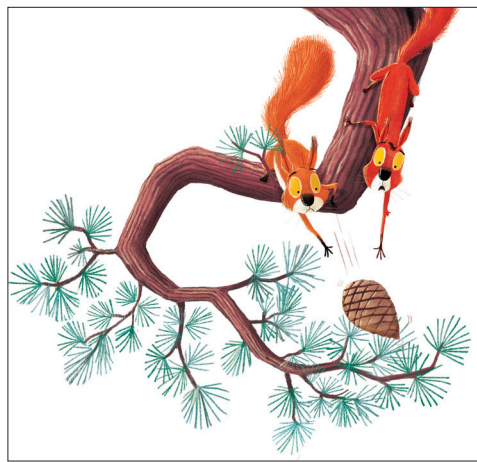
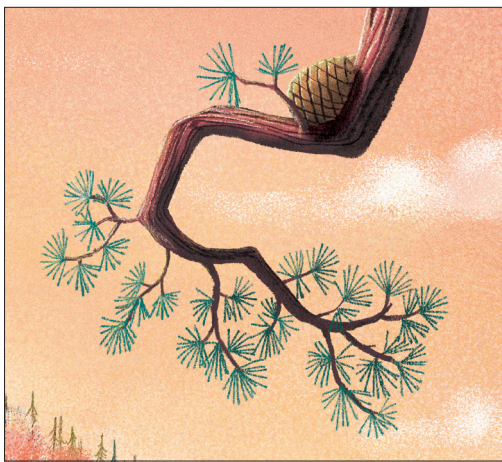
- After you have read the book, ask the children to tell their partner why they think the two squirrels were chasing the pine-cone. Take feedback and establish that the two squirrels had different reasons to want the pine-cone.
- Show the children the sequencing activity sheet. Ask the children to look at the pictures and see if they can remember the order of the events. Use the picture book and guide the children to get the correct order.
- Ask the children to cut up the pictures and put them into the correct order.
- Ask the children what happens next. Take feedback and ask the children to draw the next picture in the story.
- You can use the pictures as 'retelling cards'. Put the cards in the correct order. Place each card down and ask the children to tell their partner what is happening in that part of the story.
- Children can have fun matching the pictures to the pictures within the book.

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Activity Sheet for Key Stage 1

1. SEQUENCING

Cut up the pictures and put them in order. Draw what happens next in the thought bubble.



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Resources for Key Stage 1

VOCABULARY FEELING CROSS TO FEELING HAPPY

The two squirrels really want to get the last pine-cone! They get really cross with each other! Later on, they realise how silly they have been and together they are happy.

- Read these words and phrases to the children. Model what the words mean by acting them out using gesture and facial expressions to show the feeling: squeal with delight, shaking with rage, laughing, squabbling, giggling, in despair, in dismay, fighting each other.
- Help the children order the words and phrases from full of delight to cross as can be.