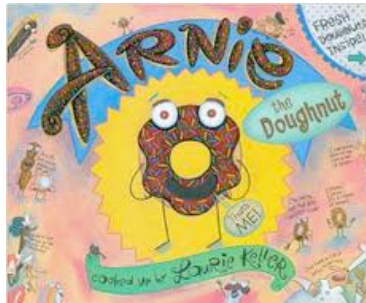


Identify Author's Purpose

Arnie the Doughnut

Written and Illustrated by Laurie Keller



Description:

Arnie, the doughnut, loves life and is surprised to find out that his purpose is actually to be eaten. Surprised and horrified, Arnie confronts Mr. Bing, the man who purchased him from the bakery. Together they try to figure out another direction for Arnie's life.

Connections:

This book is a popular choice among students, spending more time in reading suitcases than on the shelf. The detailed drawings and side comments add to the hilarity of the story.

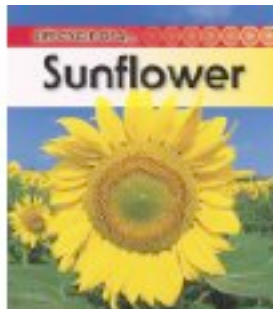
What a perfect example of an author writing to “entertain.” Get the children thinking and talking to clarify exactly what tickled their funny bone. Make a list of the different ways the author chose to provide the fun. Was it the characters, the jokes, the illustrations, the story itself? Keep the list for future reference to compare with other books.

Read this book for some occasion...say, World Read Aloud Day, and then pull out a box of sprinkled doughnuts to eat afterwards. It makes a memorable, “entertaining” event!

Identify Author's Purpose

Life Cycle of a Sunflower

Written and Illustrated by Angela Royston



Description:

Fabulous close-up photography of sunflowers combined with just the right amount of facts for young children makes this a good selection for studying Author's Purpose in non-fiction.

Connections:

Many non-fiction books demonstrate the idea that an author's purpose can be to "teach" or "inform."

Call attention to the many elements within this book that help organize the facts. There is a contents page, a glossary, more-books-to-read page and an index page.

Some helpful questions to ask after reading the book might be:

Why did the author write this book?

Why is it important for us to learn about sunflowers?

What does the author want us to remember?

How did the author share the information?

What important parts of the book do you remember?

Is there something more you would like to learn about sunflowers?

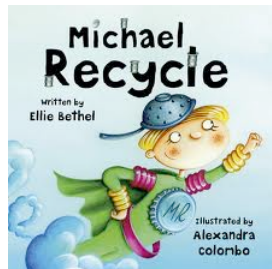
What's something else you might want to learn about?

Other books written by this author are Life Cycle of...Apple, Bean, Butterfly, Chicken, Frog, Guinea Pig and Kangaroo.

Identify Author's Purpose

Michael Recycle

Written by Ellie Bethel...Illustrated by Alexandra Colombo



Description:

Michael Recycle, a green super hero, moves from town to town spreading his cleanup message in rhyme.

Connections:

This book can be used as an example of an author trying to “persuade” us to believe as she does and then move us to action. The cartoon like illustrations will especially appeal to some children and the text in rhyme is delightful to the ear. At the book’s end are lists of suggestions for recycling which will provide students with clear examples to share while discussing author’s purpose.

To introduce this lesson, show a card with the word “persuade” on it. Explain that words have power. Authors write words that can help us think new and different thoughts. They also use words to convince us to do things. Share the example below from the Lego website.

“Be inspired by the LEGO® Creative Tower. Brimming with 1,600 LEGO® bricks in an array of bright colors, including LEGO bricks with face decals, this great set has everything you need to create an endless world of fun and creative models. Build houses, trees, farmyard animals, giant dinosaurs and almost anything else you can imagine. The play possibilities are endless!”

Discuss how the words make you want to buy some Legos right now. Next, share that the book Michael Recycle also has a purpose. Challenge the students to listen and see if they can figure out what it is.

Here are some questions that might help with the discussion after the story:

What does the author believe is important?

What does she want us to do?

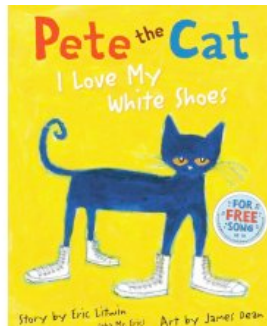
Are you convinced? Why?

Will you do what she suggests? Why?

Identify Author's Purpose

Pete the Cat

Written by Eric Litwin...Illustrated by James Dean



Description:

Pete the Cat loves walking in his white shoes. But as he walks, his shoes get dirty. Yet Pete doesn't get upset, he just keeps walking and singing.

Connections:

There's something about this book, especially if you watch the author sing the text on YouTube. It certainly sticks in your brain and children LOVE it. But there's even more. When discussing the author's purpose, I like to pose two questions. First, "Why" did the author write this book? Is it for fun, to teach, or talk us into something? The next question is "What does the author want us to remember? Explain that many times, authors have a message that they want us to think about. The message is often something important we can use in our own lives. Help children root out the message in this story is, it's important to be "flexible."

These are some questions to ask:

What makes Pete happy?

What were the problems in the story?

How did Pete handle his problems?

What's the important thing to remember?

Has something like this happened to you before?

How were you able to handle it?

One of the wonderful things about spending time discussing the author's message is helping children discover many of life's lessons. These lessons can be called upon at other times when needed as gentle reminders. So next time a child is upset about not getting their way, ask, "What would Pete the Cat do?"

Identify Author's Purpose

The Dot

Written and Illustrated by Peter Reynolds



Description:

Vashti thinks she can't draw but her teacher thinks differently. She knows just what to do to encourage Vashti's creativity.

Connections:

What a perfect story to read at the beginning of the year when so many children have doubts about their abilities. The message that even a tiny dot can turn into something big and important is empowering. Compare how creating art with one dot is similar to learning to read with one letter. We begin small and build upon our skills to become competent artists, readers and writers.

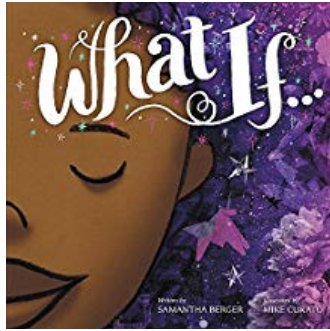
Celebrate International Dot Day on September 15. Join the movement and register your class at thedotclub.org/dotday. You will find a treasure trove of information and ideas on the website so be sure and look around.

“Make your mark...see where it takes you.” Now that's an author's message to live by.

Identify Author's Purpose

What If...

Written by Samantha Berger...Illustrated by Mike Curato



Description:

What happens when you combine imagination and perseverance?

Connections:

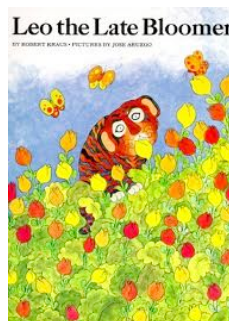
This story actually came to life when the author's home flooded and all her supplies she used to create with were lost. Despite the hardship, she found other ways to express her thoughts and feelings. This is not only the perfect book for your students with artistic flair, but it provides an opportunity to discuss all the many ways people can share their interests and talents.

If the author's message is that we can always create, put out a box of recyclables, paper, a stapler and some tape. Turn the children loose and see what happens.

Identify Author's Purpose

Leo the Late Bloomer

By Robert Kraus...Illustrated by Jose Aruego



Description:

Little Leo Lion can't read, write or draw. He's a messy eater and doesn't say a word. Leo's Dad is worried but mom says he's fine. Finally, after much watching and waiting, things begin to change and Leo finally blooms.

Connections:

Many children will see a connection between themselves and Leo. They aren't always good at things they try either. Because this thought hits so close to home, students are motivated to listen and interested in the discussion on author's purpose and message. Together, through questioning, many children will begin to see the author's intent. Just like Leo, sometimes you have to be patient and things will get easier.

Questions:

How has Leo changed?

What made the difference?

Has this ever happened to you?

Why do you suppose the author wrote a story like this?

What would the author want us to remember from this story?

Do you agree with the author?