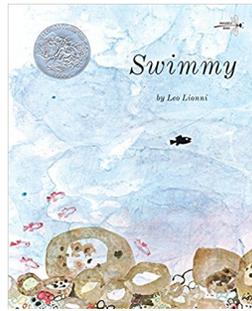


# Check for Understanding

## Swimmy

Written and Illustrated by Leo Lionni



### Description:

Swimmy is a black fish fascinated by all the amazing creatures that live in the sea. With Swimmy's help, the fish discover the importance of working together.

### Connections:

Swimmy is a beloved Caldecott Honor book written in 1963. The powerful story, told in few words, allows the focus to remain on the Check for Understanding strategy.

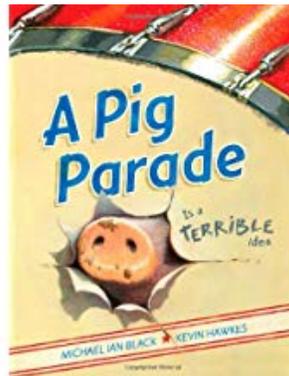
Begin the lesson by asking the children to do two things at the same time, "Touch your ear and point to your head." Explain that good readers do two things at once, listen and think. Next, we ask the children to make a "W" with their fingers. "Asking the questions 'Who?' and 'What?' can help us think while we read." Demonstrate by stopping every couple of pages while reading to ask the "w" questions. Afterwards, quickly review the process.

The goal is for children to independently stop and check for understanding as they read. It will take many repetitions of this lesson, using a variety of books, to make checking for understanding a habit.

# Check for Understanding

## A Pig Parade Is a Terrible Idea

Written by Michael Ian Black...Illustrated by Kevin Hawke



### Description:

A pig parade could be a joyous event...yet real pigs are not likely to cooperate.

### Connections:

Children will be delighted by this story and its lively illustrations. Through the pictures we see big comparisons between the exciting fictional pig parade and the reality of pig life. This will provide many opportunities to stop, check and discuss. Continue asking the two questions, “Who” and “What” after each point about marching, uniforms, instruments and also when the balloons are introduced. Discussions don’t have to be long, just a quick check-in works well for this book.

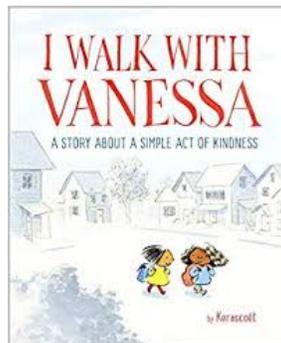
After reading the story it might be fun to discuss the possibilities of parades with other animals. Would the problems be the same or different? Which animal would work best to march in a parade? Have students “turn and talk” to share their thoughts.

# Check for Understanding

## I Walk With Vanessa

A Story About A Simple Act of Kindness

Written and Illustrated by Kerascoet



### Description:

Vanessa moves to a new house and finds her first day at school to be difficult. The next day is better as she discovers some very kind friends.

### Connections:

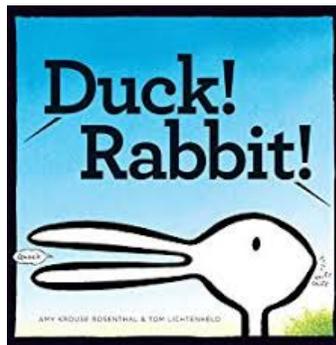
Because this is a wordless book, it is necessary to pore over the pictures. Continue to use the vocabulary, “I’m checking to make sure I understand what’s happening here.”

Encourage children to look at small details such as facial expressions and body postures. Also, be sure and look for the boy in the red striped shirt as the story continues.

# Check for Understanding

## Duck! Rabbit!

Written by Amy Krouse Rosenthal and Tom Lichtenheld



### Description:

It all depends on how you look at it. A drawing of an animal becomes the center of this story. Is it a bunny with ears or a duck with a big bill?

### Connections:

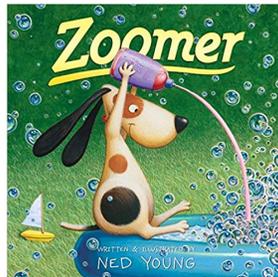
Before you begin, tell students that their brains need to be on high alert to understand and enjoy this book. Have the children pretend to turn a dial by their temple to simulate turning on their brain. Don't hurry as you read. Use the following words, "I'm checking for understanding and I think I do see ..." or "I'm still checking for understanding but now it looks like..."

After reading the book, talk about the role of a narrator within the story. Who is looking at and talking about the animals? In addition, give students a chance to share their opinions on whether it is a duck or a rabbit...form teams...the rabbit team and the duck team. Ask the children to verbalize their theories with elements from the story.

# Check for Understanding

## Zoomer

Written and Illustrated by Ned Young



### Description:

Zoomer is a busy pup who loves adventure and knows how to make it happen.

### Connections:

The elaborate illustrations in this book certainly add many additional details to the story. Stopping to “Check for Understanding” comes naturally, just to take everything in.

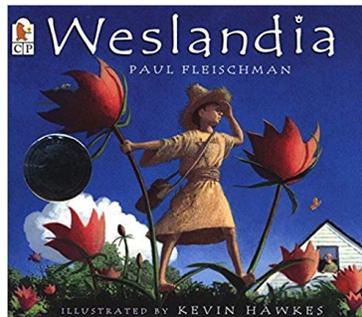
Begin checking for understanding with the “who” to determine the characters. Zoomer has a black spot on his legs while the twin brothers have brown spots. Dad has one black ear and one brown ear. This information will help students differentiate between the characters as they read.

Continue to check for understanding to determine the “what” as you read. Some information comes from the text and some will come from the illustrations. This provides an opportunity to say, “It’s important to check both the words and the pictures to know what’s happening in a story.”

# Check for Understanding

## Weslandia

Written by Paul Fleischman...Illustrated by Kevin Hawkes



### Description:

Wesley wasn't like all the other boys. He liked to be different. In fact, Wesley dreamed up a new world right in his own backyard and then made it happen. Now the other boys want to be different too.

### Connections:

While reading *Weslandia*, stopping and checking for understanding is essential. The book is filled with complex details that encourage teachers and students to “think hard” while discussing the story line. There are also many lovely words to “chew on” in the book...rustling, morale, constellations, complex, myriad, aromatic, innovations and more.

Since the story takes place in the summer, this is a wonderful book to save for the end of the year. It will be a good review and provide another opportunity to practice the strategy.