

MINNESOTA STORYTIME

Title *Old Black Fly*

Author Jim Aylesworth

Illustrator Stephen Gammell

Publisher and Copyright Date Henry Holt and Company, 1992

Connection to Minnesota Minnesota illustrator

Summary This is an amusing story of an old black fly driving a family crazy on a hot summer day. It's also an alphabet book as the fly lands on items from A to Z.

Suggested Ages 4-6

Tips for Reading This Book

- Share this book with lots of energy, as it is a fun book to read aloud (the author likes to sing the story with kids).
- Point out each letter of the alphabet as it appears (in bold) while reading the story.
- Read the book in a poetic or sing-songy pace, as every two pages rhyme.
- Encourage the children to repeat the phrase "Shoo fly! Shoo fly! Shooo" which appears on every other page.

Storytime

Questions before reading:

- Do flies ever bother you?
- What other bugs bother you?

To introduce this story say:

We're going to read a book about a mean old black fly that causes a lot of trouble for a family by buzzin' around all over their house.

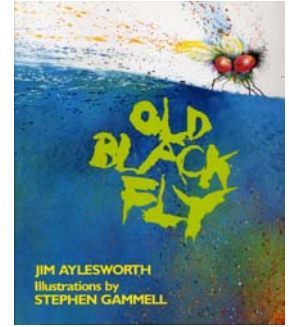
Questions after reading:

- How can a small fly bother an entire family, and their pets?
- What did the family do to try and get rid of the fly?
- Did you notice that the fly buzzed around things that began with every letter of the alphabet? (While turning each page of the book) Can you find the "A"? What's the word beginning with the "A"? (and continue for every letter of the alphabet)
- Would you like to read the book again, and you can sing the part that goes "Shoo fly! Shoo fly! Shooo"?

Related Activities

Language:

- Play an alphabet game, asking the children to find or think of an object that begins with each letter of the alphabet.



Music:

- Sing the alphabet song.

Suggestions for English Language Learners

- Have the children memorize and repeat the phrase “Shoo fly! Shoo fly! Shooo” that appears frequently in the book.
- Encourage the children to make sound effects, such as “buzz” and “zzzz”.
- Review the alphabet.

Related Books

Antler, Bear, Canoe: A Northwoods Alphabet Year by Betsy Bowen (Little, Brown and Company, 1991)

M is for Minnesota by Dori Hillestad Butler, illustrated by Janice Lee Porter (University of Minnesota Press, 1998)

Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears by Verna Aardema, illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon (Penguin Putnam, 1975)

Key Words