

Hello Parents!

Here are some fun activities and discussion points to help extend the fun and lessons from the story! Grown-ups can find the age range or school level most suited to your child and choose a few points that interest them. Remember that all children develop in their own time and that these are loose guidelines! As a general rule, engagement with and enjoyment of a text is the most important part of developing lifelong readers so we'll start with pictures and plot. Older children can move beyond basic recall of facts from the story and begin to make connections to their own experiences and draw deeper inferences about character feelings, motivation and make predictions about what they might do in Fred or Fran's shoes. Many of the activities overlap so that children of different ages can enjoy the same concepts at their own level of understanding. Keep the activities fun, short and light to help your child embrace reading as a fun and relevant part of their life!

Activities

Very young children (0-2 years): Note that our youngest readers may simply enjoy sitting on your lap while you, the adult, pose and answer the questions for them. This is a fantastic exercise because you are modeling good reading behaviours! Repeating the same questions and answers will encourage them to begin to repeat the answers when you re-read the story.

Things to think about

- Can you find the yellow duck? Can you find the blue duck? Point to them! (grown-ups can name the characters)
- What does a duck say? (Quack!)
- Can you find the page with the rainbow?
- What other animals are in the story? (Encourage your child to turn the pages and point; older children can name the cats, horses, etc.)

Things to do

- Go to Spittal Pond and look for the ducks and other animals from the story
- Find some other books about ducks in the house or at the bookstore
- Draw or paint a picture of Fred and Fran
- Using a kitchen sponge, yellow and blue paint, a black magic marker and an orange marker, help your child to paint their own fluffy Fred and Frans! Adults can add their eyes, feet and beaks.

Pre-School-aged children (3-4 years):

Things to think about

- What does a duck say? (Quack!) Help your child to find the page where Fran says QUACK and falls in the bucket. Point out the word and encourage them to say it, loudly!
- Can you find the yellow duck? Can you find the blue duck? Challenge your child to name the characters.
- What color were Fred and Fran in the beginning?
- What color did Fran turn?
- Can you find the page where Fran turns blue?
- Hunt for the pages with other animals in the story.
- What happened in the beginning of the story? The middle? The end? Encourage your child to flip through the pages to help them with recall.
- Do you have a best friend like Fred and Fran?
- Find the page where Fran is stuck in the blue paint. How do you think Fran is feeling? Why do you think so?
- Find the page with the rainbow. How do you think Fran is feeling? Why do you think so?
- Fran's mummy gave her some nice advice and hugs. Can you think of a time when you were sad and your mummy or daddy made you feel better?
- Do you think Fred did the right thing when Fran fell into the pot? What would you do if you were Fred?

Things to do

- Go to Spittal Pond and look for the ducks and other animals from the story
- Find some other books about friendship in the house or at the bookstore
- Draw or paint a picture of Fred and Fran. Challenge your child to label their names (for pre-writers, a fun trick is to print the words in big letters with highlighter for your child to trace. Encourage ALL efforts!).
- Using a kitchen sponge, yellow and blue paint, a black magic marker and an orange marker, help your child to paint their own fluffy Fred and Frans!
- If your child is learning their sight words, go on a word hunt for words like 'the', 'and' or 'so' on different pages. You can narrow it down to support their success by choosing one or two pages at a time.

Primary School-Aged Children (4-7 years):

Things to think about

- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What is the setting of the story?
- What happened in the beginning of the story? The middle? The end? Encourage your child to flip through the pages to help them with recall.
- What happened to turn Fran blue? What did Fred do when this happened?
- Why did Fred leave Fran?
- How do you think Fran was feeling when she fell into the pot?
- Why didn't Fred like Fran when she turned blue?
- Fran's mummy gave her some nice advice and hugs. Can you think of a time when you were sad and your mummy or daddy made you feel better?
- Do you think Fred did the right thing when Fran fell into the pot? What would you do if you were Fred?
- Were Fred and Fran friends at the end of the story?
- What did Fred and Fran learn in the story?
- Can you think of a time when a friend hurt your feelings and you forgave them?
- Would you have kept on being friends with Fred if you were Fran?
- Do you think that friends have to look or be exactly the same to get along? Why or why not?

Things to do

- Go to Spittal Pond and bring the book and some friends with you: Look for places where the different parts of the story might have taken place. Extend the activity by encouraging the children act out different scenes, pretending to be the different characters!
- Find some other books about friendship in the house or at the bookstore
- Draw or paint a picture of Fred and Fran. Challenge your child to write a sentence to describe what is happening in the picture.
- 'Junk Modeling': using recycled materials like cardboard tubes, plastic containers, tape, glue and cotton balls, help your child to build their own model ducks to be painted blue and yellow.
- If your child is learning their sight words, go on a word hunt for words like 'the', 'and' or 'so' on different pages. You can narrow it down to support their success by choosing one or two pages at a time.
- Forgiveness and acceptance are two big themes in this story. Have a family discussion about the meaning of these words and how we can show those actions in our own families and communities. Take the idea a step further by writing each word on construction paper and jotting down family members' ideas about what they mean and suggestions of ways they can show forgiveness and acceptance of each other. Older children could write ideas on post its to stick on the construction paper.
- Diversity is a big word with a meaning made very accessible by this story. Introduce it to your child and explain how important it is in our own society. Recall or keep an eye out for opportunities to point out and discuss examples of people getting along and enhancing each other's lives at school, at work or in our community, even when we don't look exactly the same.