

TEACHING GUIDE FOR CAN YOU MAKE A PIGGY GIGGLE?

1. Story Sequence

What happens in the story? Who is introduced along the way? Make a list of the animals. How do they try to make the pig laugh?

The story is “cumulative,” with each new character and silly action building on the last. How does the repetition affect your expectations? As you read it, do you expect the pig will finally giggle in the end?

2. Class Discussion/Writing From Experience

Think about a time you were in a bad mood. Did people try to cheer you up? Did they try to make you laugh? Did it work? What helps the most when you're in a bad mood? Discuss these feelings with the class. (To the teacher: you might want to read William Steig's Pete's a Pizza aloud to the class for another funny approach to cheering someone up.)

Write a story about a bad mood—yours or someone else's. What did it feel like? How long did it last? What made it go away?

3. Repetition of Sounds and Phrases

The story has two refrains, phrases that are repeated throughout the book. What are they? (“Can you make a piggy giggle?” and “But a pig won't giggle.”) Say these phrases out loud. What makes them sound funny? What sounds stand out?

Repeating sounds makes for fun-to-say phrases and, sometimes, tongue-twisters (as in, for example, “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers”). When the same sounds are at the beginning of words, it's called alliteration—examples from the book include “**polka with a poodle**” and “**flap and fiddle**.”

When interior vowel sounds are repeated, it's called assonance—examples include “piggy giggle,” “**owl/howl**” and “**horse/snort**.”

Can you find more examples of sound repetition and assonance in the book? As a class, come up with a list of your own silly phrases using sound repetition, alliteration and assonance. Start a “funny phrases” wall. Do they give you ideas for poems?

4. Studying the Art

The artist has created a gallery of animals trying their hardest to make the pig laugh. Which animals are the funniest? Which do you like the best? How would you describe the pig? What does he look like on the last page?

Look at the pictures closely. How does the artist convey motion? How does he show that the animals are happy, or grumpy, or expectant?

Draw your own animal gallery. How might *your* animals try to make a grumpy pig laugh? Do they succeed?

5. Poetry

The story is written in verse, with the refrain repeated between rhyming phrases. In addition, many of the animal names rhyme with the sounds they make. As a class, make a list of the rhyming words. There also are a few examples of “slant rhyme” (also called “off-rhyme” or “imperfect rhyme”), in which two words almost rhyme, but not quite. Can you find them? (Answer: puddle/yodel; turtle/chortle.)

The story also has a particular rhythm. Read a few pages aloud and listen for it:

Can you **make** a **piggy giggle** if you **tell** a **silly riddle**?
A **chick** might **snicker**, but a **pig** won't **giggle**.

Can you **make** a **piggy giggle** if you **play** a **little fiddle**?
A **calf** might **laugh**, but a **pig** won't **giggle**.

What happens if you change “piggy” to “hippopotamus?” How does that affect the rhythm? What happens to the rhythm if you change “fiddle” to “guitar?” Even though both words have two syllables, they have different beats when you say them: **fiddle** and **guitar**.

Every word and phrase has its own rhythm—something poets pay a lot of attention to. Say your full name out loud. Do you hear the rhythm?

6. Classroom Theatre

Ask for volunteers to play the boy, the pig, and the other animal characters. Have the children act out their parts while the story is read; challenge the child playing the pig to remain serious. The rest of the class can help by repeating the refrain “But a pig won't giggle!” If desired, the children can wear masks, or use puppets or stuffed animals.

CAN YOU MAKE A PIGGY GIGGLE?

Written by Linda Ashman; illustrated by Henry Cole
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PIGGY WORD SEARCH/VOCABULARY BUILDER

Circle the words listed below

(words can go up, down, across, backward or diagonal)

K E L E I F U E L R
P L W L G K L A O I
I D O K Q I U A E D
G D H C E G G L C D
G U C U H L T G L L
Y P K H D R Q W L E
V G L C O K O A R E
L R H H E L D D A W
U R C W R I G G L E
T U M B L E D O Y T

CALF

CHORTLE

CHUCKLE

GIGGLE

HOWL

LAUGH

OWL

PIGGY

PUDDLE

RIDDLE

TUMBLE

WADDLE

WRIGGLE

YODEL

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