

# The Early Years Count Literacy Connection



## Milo's Hat Trick

Written and illustrated by  
Jon Agee

*Preschool edition*

### Overview of Book

Milo is a terrible magician and needs a rabbit for his hat trick. Instead, he meets a bear—a very special bear with a magic trick of his own. Will Milo and the bear be able to save his career in magic? A big mix-up keeps things in suspense until the very end.

Genre: Picture book

### Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Milo's Hat Trick* to introduce in your classroom:

magnificent	botched
tangled	slouched
furious	rubber
daze	familiar

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight. Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

### Connecting with the HighScope Curriculum

*COR Advantage 1.5*

Social and Emotional  
Development  
Item D (*Emotions*)

Language, Literacy and  
Communication  
Item M (*Listening and  
comprehension*)

Creative Arts  
Item AA (*Pretend play*)

Science & Technology  
Item DD  
(*Natural and physical world*)

### Reading Tips

Read this with all the emotions Milo is experiencing. As you read, imitate *furious*, *slouch* and *daze* to help define these words in the context of the story. Ask questions during the read aloud like, "What would you do if a bear suddenly appeared?" As Milo returns to the stage ask, "What's going to happen?" At the end, the bear "settles down for a long nap." Ask, "Who knows why the bear has to sleep? What do bears do?"

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

### **Throughout the Routine**

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

As part of **Large Group Time**, encourage the children to move as if their bones are made of rubber.

Walk on all 4's like a bear for **transitions**.

For **Planning Time**, have objects from interest areas in a hat. Ask children to select one, share their plan, and then say with enthusiasm, "Ta-da!"

During **Small Group Time**, sort with counting bears.

### **Around the Room**

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Add hats, capes and magic wands to the **House Area** and encourage the children to pretend being a magician.

Add *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* by William Steig, *A Fish Out Of Water* by Helen Palmer and *Caps For Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina to the **Book Area** for comparison.

Use the large gathering area to set up a "stage" for a show. Children can play the roles of the audience, performer, usher, and announcer.

### **Open-ended Questions**

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one "right" answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *Milo's Hat Trick*:

How do magicians do their magic tricks?

Why is a rabbit always the animal being pulled out of a hat? How do you think a rabbit become the choice?

What would you do if you saw a bear on the bus?

What other surprises could happen after someone said "ta da"?

For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact  
***The Family Connection:***

website—  
[www.famconn.org](http://www.famconn.org)

Facebook—  
@famconnsjc

phone—  
574-237-9740

### **@ Home**

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Milo's Hat Trick* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

While reading *Milo's Hat Trick* with your child, take time to notice and talk about how Milo might feel in different parts of the story. You might ask, "Look how the manager is yelling at Milo. How do you think Milo feels? Look how he's sitting—he's slouching." Later, when Milo's act is a success because of the bear's help, point out the theater marquee that says "sold out" and ask your child, "What does that tell you about Milo's act? How do you think Milo feels now that the bear helped?" This could be a chance to talk about how you and your child help others and how that makes others feel. Ask about the bear, too. "What do you think the bear will do when he wakes up in the Spring?"