

The
Early Years Count
Literacy
Connection



**Donut: The
Unicorn Who
Wants to Fly**

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Illustrated by Andrea Zuill

Preschool edition

Overview of Book

Donut the unicorn has a dream- he wants to fly! Donut tries and tries but he simply can't fly. Maybe through some serious problem solving, planning and teamwork his dream can come true.

Genre: Picture

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Donut: The Unicorn Who Wants to Fly* to introduce in your classroom:

unicorn slump sails
wails beams flail schemes

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

Approaches to Learning
Item A
(Initiative and planning)

Item B
(Problem solving with
materials)

Language, Literacy and
Communication Item N
(Phonological Awareness)

Science & Technology
Item EE
(Tools and technology)

Reading Tips

Ask the children if they have ever heard of a unicorn. Show the cover and ask them to describe the unicorn. Slowly show each page and read the minimal text. There's a lot on each page to look at and talk about. Take note of the "thought bubbles" and help interpret what Donut is thinking and saying. Ask questions like, "What happened?" or, "Now what will Donut do?" Take note of the rhymes. Prompt the children to look at the pictures to help make meaning of new words ("wails" for example).

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.

Begin a rhyme list at **Greeting Time**. Start with some words from the story. Add to these each day.

Move like Donut for **transitions**. Will you fly, run, jump or gallop to the next part of the day?

Provide animal figures for children to sort at **Small Group Time**. Include all types of animals with horns (even dinosaurs) to encourage sorting, including by the number of horns. A *unicorn* has one horn. Does anything else?

Around the Room

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

Add a broad range of materials to the **Art and Woodworking Areas** for children to experiment with that will support creativity and provide experiences with a variety of tools.

Add books to the **Book Area** that relate to flying. Examples include, "Violet The Pilot" by Steve Breen, "Fly!" by Mark Teague and "The Littlest Airplane" by Brooke Hartman.

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 *Donut: The Unicorn Who Wants to Fly*:

Why do you think the animals were so helpful?

Have you ever tried hard to do something and needed help?
Can you share about it?

If you could fly, what would you do?

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

website—
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 *Donut: The Unicorn Who Wants to Fly* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

While enjoying this story with your child, pause throughout to talk about Donut, his idea, how he tries and tries and how his friends help him problem solve until they figure out how Donut can succeed. Ask questions like, "Why is Donut wailing-crying here?" or, "What would Donut do if he didn't have so many friends?" Offer stories to your child about hard things you have done with the help of friends and family. Talk about why friends and family come help us. Have your child "read" the book to you based on the pictures and how they recall the story. Look out the window for flying unicorns!