



Smarty Activity

Reading Strategies

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Tractor Mac Arrives at the Farm

Activity Title: Reading Strategies
Approximate Grade Level: Pre School -
2nd Grade

Subject(s): Language Arts: Reading
Strategies

Discussion Questions with Deeper Thinking

- **Text-to-Self** – Tractor Mac is new at the farm. Have you ever been the new kid somewhere? Where was it? How did you feel at first? What advice would you give someone who is the new kid at your school or in your neighborhood?

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- **Text-to-Text** – When Tractor Mac becomes stuck in the mud, he needs Sibley’s help. In what story or movie does someone have a problem and needs another’s help? What was the problem? Who helps? Do they become friends as Tractor Mac and Sibley do?
- **Text-to-World** – How would the world be a better place if we all worked together and were friends? Can you think of one situation in the world where people need to work together and help each other? What is this situation? How could our working together and helping each other make a positive difference?
- **Main Idea** – One theme or lesson learned from this story is that when we work side by side, we not only can help each other, but we can become the best of friends. Can you remember a time when this worked for you? With whom did you work? What did the two of you do? How did you become friends?
- **Author’s Purpose** - The author has written a story about the importance of always remembering that you have talents and that you are important – even when you sometimes feel like you are not needed. Why does Sibley feel like he is no longer needed on the farm? How does he realize that he is needed? What are Sibley’s talents?
- **Inference** - When Tractor Mac arrives at the farm, he smiles and says, “Howdy Do!” What do you think “Howdy Do” means? “Howdy Do” is a shortened question. What do you think the original question is?

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- **Cause/Effect** - At the beginning of the story, we are told that Sibley is a strong horse; in fact, he can do the work of two strong horses! This makes Sibley feel very happy and proud of himself. Later in the story, Tractor Mac tells everyone that he can do the work of ten strong horses! What effect or result does this have on Sibley's happiness? Do you understand how Sibley feels? Why?

- **Questioning** – The four seasons are spring, summer, fall, and winter. There is an important job for each season at Stony Meadow Farm. What did Sibley do for the farm during each of these seasons?
 - ✓ In the spring, Sibley _____. Why was this important work for the farm?
 - ✓ In the summer, Sibley _____. Why was this important work for the farm?
 - ✓ In the fall, Sibley _____. Why was this important work for the farm?
 - ✓ In the winter, Sibley _____. Why was this important work for the farm?

- **Predicting** – As the story ends and Sibley helps Tractor Mac, Sibley feels needed again. Do you think Sibley and Tractor Mac will now be close friends? What are some other ways that they can work together?

- **Illustrating** – After Sibley mows the hay each summer, his favorite event is pulling the hayride at the summer picnic. What is a hayride? If you don't know, look closely at the picture for this part of the story. What do you see? Pretend you are at a summer picnic that has a hayride. Draw a picture of the cart with hay inside of it. Draw a picture of yourself sitting on the

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hay and draw pictures of your friends that you would like to be on this hayride, too. Now draw a picture of a beautiful horse to pull your hayride. What is the horse's name? Share this picture with your class or family and explain each detail.

- **Idiom** – Sometimes we say things that we don't really mean. For example, if you have eaten a big meal and ask for more food but cannot finish what is on your plate, you might say, "My eyes are bigger than my stomach!"

You don't really mean that our eyes are bigger than your stomach. This is an idiom: something that you say that you do not literally mean.

"Out to pasture" is an idiom that means that someone is too old and not useful for working. Margot the Cow says to Sibley, "Soon they'll be turning you out to pasture." What does Margot mean by saying this? How does it make Sibley feel?

Can you think of other idioms that you say but do not literally mean? What does each of these idioms mean?

- **Summarize** -
 - ✓ **At the beginning of the story, we see how hard Sibley works. What are Sibley's jobs? Does he enjoy working?**
 - ✓ **Then Farmer Bill brings a surprise to the farm: Tractor Mac. Is Tractor Mac happy to be at the farm? How do you know this?**

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- ✓ **We then learn that Sibley does not work for weeks because Tractor Mac now does Sibley's jobs. How does Sibley feel? Do you think Tractor Mac realizes that Sibley feels this way?**
- ✓ **At the end of the story, Tractor Mac needs Sibley's help. Why? What good thing happens when Sibley helps Tractor Mac? What does this teach us?**

Common Core Anchor Standards:

- **R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.6, R.7, R.9, SL.5, L.4, L.5**

Bloom's Taxonomy:

- **Remembering: tell, describe, relate, write, recall, and draw.**
- **Understanding: explain, discuss, predict, restate, compare, and visualize.**
- **Applying: illustrate, complete, change, and apply.**
- **Analyzing: examine and identify.**
- **Evaluating: choose, decide, recommend, critique, and defend.**
- **Creating: create, compose, predict, and imagine.**

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