



Smarty Activity

Reading Strategies

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Tractor Mac Builds a Barn

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** – Chores are the everyday work that we do around our house or farm. Tractor Mac has chores that he does each day on the farm. What are some of his chores? How does this help Farmer Bill? Do you help your family by doing chores at home? What are your chores? How does your doing your chores help your family?

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- **Text-to-Text** – As Tractor Mac begins to help Farmer Bill build a barn, he doesn't enjoy his job because he has wheels and wants to use them. He then realizes that he can be helpful in another way; he can help Farmer Bill run the sawmill.
Can you think of a story or movie where...
 - ✓ a character is asked to do a job that is not enjoyable?
 - ✓ this character helps another character by doing this job?
 - ✓ this character realizes that sometimes we do jobs that we don't enjoy because it makes us feel good to help others?

- **Text-to-World** – Because the old shed is too small, Tractor Mac helps Farmer Bill build a barn. Do you think Farmer Bill appreciates the help? Can you think of a person who needs your help? What can you do to help this person?

- **Inference** – Pete and Paul the pigs say, "Farmer Bill could plant flowers around you!" What did they mean by this comment?

- **Cause/Effect** – To find the "CAUSE" of an event ask, "What action took place in the story?" To find the "EFFECT" ask, "What was the result?"

Example:

Cause: What was causing Farmer Bill a problem at the farm? The shed was too small.

Effect: What was the result of the shed being too small? Farmer Bill built a barn.

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Cause: At the beginning of the story, Tractor Mac is always busy working. What does Lucy, his tractor friend from next door, say to Tractor Mac?

Effect: What is Tractor Mac's reply?

Cause: Farmer Bill has Tractor Mac perform a new job; this job is to run the sawmill. How long did Tractor Mac have to sit still while he performed this new job?

Effect: When Tractor Mac's work was finished, he discovered that something very exciting was beginning to happen at the farm. What was it?

- **Visualizing** – A Barn Raising is when a community joins to help a farmer build a barn. The phrase Barn Raising is often used now when people of a community join to help a person. Helping others is selfless, which means that you care more about others than yourself. As you read each sentence below, close your eyes and visualize how you can be selfless and help others:
 - ✓ A family's home burns, your community could...
 - ✓ A neighbor is very sick. How could you help?
 - ✓ There is an elderly woman who lives in your neighborhood. She would be so happy if you...
- **Determining Importance** – What is more important: doing what you want to do or doing what helps others? How does your answer apply to *Tractor Mac Builds A Barn*?
- **Proverb** – A proverb is a sentence that gives us advice or tells us something that is true. An example of a proverb is "Don't count your chickens until they are

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hatched.” What is the meaning of this proverb? Is it good advice? Why?

In this story, Walter the Goat says, “A rolling tractor gathers no rust!” What does Walter mean when he says this?

Walter’s proverb is similar to another proverb that says, “A rolling stone gathers no moss.” Why does a rolling stone gather no moss? Is this a true proverb? What lesson does it teach us?

- **Repetition** – Repetition is when we repeat or say something more than once. When an author repeats words or sentences in the story, he is showing the reader that this is something important.

At the beginning of the story, Tractor Mac tells Carla the Chicken, “I have wheels! I’ve got to use them!”

When his tractor friend complains because Tractor Mac never sits still long enough to chat, Tractor Mac blushes and says, “I have wheels! I have to use them!”

When Tractor Mac wants his friend to sit and chat, Lucy tells Tractor Mac, “Sorry...I’ve got wheels! I have to use them!”

The author of *Tractor Mac Builds A Barn* repeats these sentences three times in the story. What important message do you think he is trying to teach the readers?

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- **Onomatopoeia** – Onomatopoeia is a sound word. When a sound word is in a story, it imitates an object or action. *Tic Toc* imitates a clock. *Meow* imitates a cat.

What do the following sound words imitate in *Tractor Mac Builds A Barn*?

- ✓ **CHUG CHUGGA POPPA**
 - ✓ **Flip, Flap, Fwip**
 - ✓ **BUZZ YAWW**
 - ✓ **BRAAAP**
 - ✓ **CHOP-CHAP-CHOP**
- **Prepositions** – To remember the words that are prepositions, think of a squirrel and a tree. What can a squirrel do with a tree? It can climb **UP** the tree, it can walk **DOWN** the tree, it can circle **AROUND** the tree, and if there is a hole in the tree, it can even walk **THROUGH** the tree! If the squirrel climbs to the top of the tree, it can walk **ACROSS** the tree, too!

In the story, we learn that Tractor Mac loves to chat with his friends as he does his chores on the farm. The story says that at the farm Tractor Mac travels...

“Through the farmyard, down the dirt lanes, across the fields.”

In the quotation above, there are three prepositions. They are words that a squirrel can do with a tree. Can you find them? What are they?

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- **Alliteration** – Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds. Each phrase below uses alliteration. Which consonant letter does his phrase repeat?
 - ✓ snapped the shingle splitter
 - ✓ clucked Carla the Chicken
 - ✓ dawn till dusk
 - ✓ Pete and Paul the pigs

Common Core Anchor Standards:

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

Bloom's Taxonomy:

- **Remembering:** tell, describe, relate, write, recall, and draw.
- **Understanding:** explain, discuss, predict, restate, compare, and visualize.
- **Applying:** 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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