



Title: Memoirs of a Goldfish

Author: Devin Scillian

Illustrator: Tim Bowers

Themes: Sharing

Vocabulary: Memoirs, Disgusting, Ridiculous

See video of this book read aloud here: [Memoirs of a Goldfish](#)

★ 2nd Grade Common Core Reading Standard ★

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

I. INTRODUCTION (PREP QUESTIONS)

- Have students make observations using the cover illustration. Ask students to identify the feeling tone in the cover illustration, citing evidence.
- Ask students what kind of a word *goldfish* is (**compound word**). Remind students that they can understand the meaning of a **compound word** by thinking about what each of the little words means alone.

Point out each compound word in the following way: say **entire** compound word; then hold up your **right fist** while you say the **first little word of the compound**; then hold up your **left fist** widely separated from the other fist while saying the **second little word of the compound**; finally, bring your fists together while repeating the actual compound word. This is a visual scaffold to help students understand the composition of compound words.

- What word in the title is one you don't know (*memoirs*)? Have students guess its meaning but don't tell them the meaning. Instead, say that you're going to read the story and see if they can discover its meaning from the story line and text format.

II. INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

DURING READING

- Pp. 7-8: Before reading, ask students to observe additions to the illustration. Read; have students discuss the the purpose of the addition and how it is related to the bubbles, using picture clues.

Ask students what kind of word *anything* is (**compound word**), using previous fist technique.

- P. 11: Before reading, have students note new information observed in the illustration; read. Ask students what the goldfish thought to himself that is very funny (he has to water the plants). Tell students there is an example of **figurative language** on this page. Reread the first sentence and ask students to identify what kind of **figurative language (simile)** and how they know (when two things are compared using **like** or **as**). Ask what two things are being compared (*bowl/garden*).
- P. 12: Have students note new addition to the fishbowl; ask students how the different characters in the fishbowl seem to feel about the new addition, citing reasons; read.

Ask students for evidence of humor (watering the plants). Ask students what they might be wondering (how could the fish suddenly meet the large crab, where was the crab before, etc.).

- Pp. 15-16: Have students note new additions in the illustration to the fishbowl before reading.

Ask students to identify *angelfish* (**compound word**) using previous technique.

- Pp. 17-18: Read; discuss feeling tone of the illustration (very crowded). Have students identify *sunscreen* (**compound word**) using previous technique. Ask students what is funny about the sunscreen (on a fish; fishbowl is not in sun).
- P. 19: Read; have students identify *anymore* (**compound word**), using previous technique.
- P. 20: Before reading, have students note feeling tone and other observations in illustration; read. Have students cite humorous parts.
- P. 21: Read; discuss feeling tone in illustration (happy, content).
- P. 22: Before reading, have students note feeling tone change in the illustration from the one on the facing page; read. Ask students how the goldfish's feelings changed, and why.

Have students note **compound words** (*everyone, dogfish, sunburn*). Discuss humorous parts.

- Pp. 23-24: Before reading, have students note changes in the illustration; ask students to note feeling tone; read. Have students identify *speedboats* (**compound word**) and reread the phrase, "Rhonda and Clark raced by me like two speedboats" and ask students what kind of **figurative language** it is (**simile**); what is being compared using **like** or **as** (*Rhonda and Clark/speedboats*).
- Pp. 25-26: Before reading, have students use the illustration to identify how the goldfish is feeling (happy, content); ask students to observe the other creatures in the illustration (no one else is smiling); read.

Ask students to share humor (mirror).

- Pp 27-28: Before reading, have students note changes in illustration (new goldfish); ask students to make predictions about the new goldfish. Read until end.

III. INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

POST READING:

- What do you now think the word *memoirs* mean? Is there a part of the word *memoirs* that reminds you of another word that you know? (*memory*) Discuss meaning with students.
- How did Goldfish feel at the beginning of the story? How did he feel after the other animals and things were added to the bowl? How did he feel at the end?
- What did the Goldfish learn by the end of story? How did his feelings change? What parts started to show that his feelings were changing from the beginning of the story to the end of the story?

IV. SMALL GROUPS

- What do you think the author's purpose was for writing this story? (pure entertainment)
- What was your favorite part? Why? What was the funniest part for you? Why?

- Is the story fiction, a make-believe? Or, is the story non-fiction, true information that gives you facts to explain something? Why do you think so? What happened in the story that could not have happened in real life?
- What could have been a *different* problem for Goldfish to solve instead of crowding?
- Which character in the story would you want to be? Why?
- Students can revisit illustrations in the book, if time allows.