



Guided Reading with THE BEST THING
written and photographed by Laura E. Williams

Nonfiction/Personal Narrative

Guided Reading™ : G
16 pages, 117 words

DRA: 12

Reading Recovery® : 11

Focus:

- reading about a real person

Supportive Text Features:

- familiar words and concepts
- strong photo-text match

High-frequency Words: my, is, I, was, from, when, now, and, go, to, in, this, on, his, look, way, up, for, she, being, the, that, her

Getting Ready to Read

1. Introduce the concept and vocabulary by asking open-ended questions:
 - What does it mean to be adopted?
 - If you were to write a story about yourself, what would you say?
 - What kinds of things do you think people should tell about themselves when you want to get to know them?
2. Connect children's past experiences with the book vocabulary:
 - Call children's attention to the title. Read: "The Best Thing."
 - Tell children that the book is about a little girl who was adopted. Have children predict what they might find out about the girl.

- Show the back cover and read the copy. Ask children what the girl might think is the best thing about her family.
- Have children suggest some words they might read in the story.
- Give children the book and have them look at the pictures.
- Ask them to tell what the children in the book are doing.

3. Remind children of the strategies they know and can use with unfamiliar words:

- Ask them, “What will you do if you come to a word you don’t know?”
- Encourage children to say the beginning sound of an unknown word and read on, returning to the word after completing the sentence.

4. Be aware of the following book and text features:

- The book contains numerous high-frequency words.
- The story is told in narrative form from a child’s point of view.
- The ideas in the story are common to the way young children describe themselves.
- There are many different sentences, but they are simple constructions with natural speech patterns.
- Text on several pages requires a return sweep.
- The photographs strongly support the text.
- There is a hyphenated word on page 13.

Reading the Book

1. Set a purpose by telling children to find out about the girl and her family.

2. Have children read the first few pages quietly, but out loud. Each child should be reading at his or her own pace. Children should not read in chorus. Listen to children as they read by leaning close or bending down beside each child. When you hear them reading fluently, tell them to begin reading silently.

3. Look for these reading behaviors during children’s first reading:

- Have they begun to cross-check, using a variety of strategies, and self correct?
- Do they rely less on pictures and more on print when reading?
- Do they have a growing sight vocabulary?
- Are they monitoring meaning and rereading when they lose meaning?
- Do they use beginning, middle, and ending sounds to read unknown words?
- Have they started to use punctuation to gain meaning?
- Do they make more accurate predictions?
- Can they connect the text to past experiences?

4. As children read, suggest reading strategies if they are struggling: “Try saying the beginning of the word. Try looking at the picture for help.” Encourage children to take a guess or read past the unknown word.

5. Possible teaching points to address based on your observations:
- Review how to find a known part in an unknown word.
 - Show children how to use analogies to move from the known to the unknown when encountering new words.
 - Work with suffixes and prefixes.
 - Review using grammar (syntax) to unlock words by considering the sentence structure or parts of speech in the sentence.
 - Explore the story grammar—characters, setting, problem, and so on.
 - Review how to determine what is important in a picture or sentence.
 - Model asking questions or making “I wonder . . .” statements to extend comprehension.
 - Review using punctuation marks to guide the meaning-making process. Point out the hyphenated word “baby-sits” on page 13 and talk about why the word is written this way.
 - Model how to revisit the text to find specific examples or ideas in the story.

After the First Reading

1. Have children tell what they learned about Madison and confirm their predictions about what they would learn about her in the story.
2. Discuss how Madison’s family is similar to and different from children’s own families.
3. Talk about how Madison and her family share and have fun together.
4. Brainstorm a list of questions children might like to ask Madison.

Second Reading

1. Have children reread the book silently or to a partner.
2. This is a time for assessment. While they are reading, watch what children do and what they use from the teaching time. Alternatively, you might take a running record on one child as an assessment of the child’s reading behavior.

Cross-Curricular Activities

Art: Have children draw family portraits. Encourage children to share their pictures with the group and name the people shown.

Music: Talk about the kinds of music children and their families enjoy. Have children sing a song that their families sing together. Write the songs on chart paper and have children teach each other the songs.

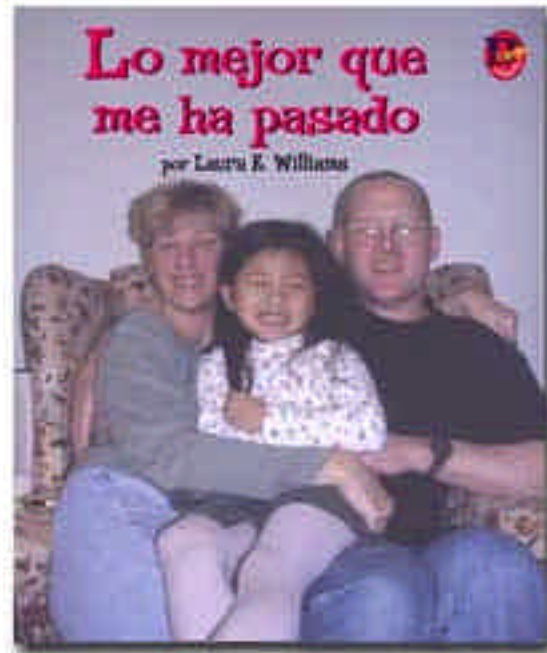
Math: Make a graph that shows how many people are in each child’s family. Use the graph to make comparisons using the greater than (>) and less than (<) signs.

Social Studies: Help children learn more about China. Locate the country on a world map and help children draw up a list of questions they would like to

answer. For example: What does the country look like? What kinds of foods do the people eat? What is school like? and so on. Enlist the help of the school librarian to help children find the answers to their questions.

Social Studies: If there are any adopted children in your class who would be comfortable talking about their families, they may wish to tell their classmates about their particular experiences.

Writing: Encourage children to write about the things they enjoy doing with their siblings and/or family members.



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LO MEJOR QUE ME HA PASADO

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The directions given for the introduction, first reading, and second reading of the English edition can be used with the Spanish edition of the book. To read the book successfully, children need the same kinds of support as their English-speaking classmates. Second language learners often benefit from acting out new words, seeing pictures, and talking about them using concrete examples.

The Spanish edition has many familiar words. The story contains familiar ideas children can relate to easily and connect to their own families. Pages 10 and 16 contain exclamation points. Exclamation points are used at both the beginning and end of a sentence. The marks appear upside down at the beginning of the sentence and right side up at the end.

The book language used may differ from children's oral language. Comparing any differences will help children read and understand the story. Also help children understand that we often speak differently than we write, and that both ways of using language are important.

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