



Running words: 296

Book Summary

This book looks at how we can overcome obstacles and solve problems with the help of friends. Farmer Dan sets off for the market to sell his cabbages. The road he travels along is bumpy and littered with rocks and stones. Along the way, his cart runs over a big stone and one of the wheels comes off. This causes many of his cabbages to roll onto the ground. He asks a man to help him, but the man is late. He asks a girl to help him, but she is in a hurry. Then along comes an old woman with a walking stick. She kindly asks Farmer Dan if he needs help. He feels that the woman is too old to help him. However, the woman is kind and clever. She uses her walking stick to lift the cart off the ground. Farmer Dan is able to put the wheel back on his cart. In return for her kindness, Farmer Dan gives the old woman a lift to the market and also cooks her a delicious meal of cabbage soup!

Themes

Problem solving, Overcoming obstacles, Friends

Features of the Book

- The information contained in illustrations
- Content words for discussion: *farmer, cart, help, wheel*
- Phonics and phonemic awareness: words with the *ee* digraph and long /e/ sound (*wheel, need/needed*)

Can You Help Me?

by Bill Nagelkerke

Strategies

Can You Help Me? introduces and reinforces the following strategies:

- recognising cause and effect
- making predictions

Materials

- copies of the Sentence Strips reproducible for this book, cut and ready for use
- copies of the BM, pencils

Introducing the Text

Begin by asking the students about a time when they asked for help.

- *Why did you need to ask for help?*
- *Who did you ask for help? Why did you ask that person?*

Reading the Text

Ensure each student has a copy of the text. Ensure that the content words (*farmer, cart, help, wheel*) are integrated naturally into the discussion. An understanding of these terms will help the students appreciate the author's purpose and the decisions the characters make in the story. Encourage the students to use the information in the illustrations and text to determine the strategy of cause and effect as you work through the book.

Cover

Together, read the book's title and the name of the author. Point out the illustration.

- *Who is on the cover?* (a man standing beside a cart and a girl riding a bicycle)
- *What has happened to the man's cart?* (A wheel has come off.)
- *What do you predict this story is about?* (The man needs help to fix his broken cart.)
- *Do you think this girl is going to help the man?* (Answers may vary.)

Title Page

Read the title aloud. Discuss the illustration and how the man's cart is still broken. Ask the students if

they think the man walking past is going to help. Write the students' responses on the board or chart paper.

Page 2

- *What is the man doing in this illustration?* (He is loading cabbages onto his cart.)
- *How can you tell the man is a farmer?* (He lives in the countryside and grows crops – cabbages.)
- *Where do you think the man is going?* (He is going to the market to sell his cabbages.)

Read the text together. Confirm that Farmer Dan is loading cabbages onto his wooden cart so that he can drive them to the market to sell them. Talk about the word "cart". Tell the students a cart is often pulled by an animal. Ask them if they know another word that the author could have used to describe this wooden vehicle (wagon).

Page 3

Discuss the illustration. *What do you notice about the road?* (There are lots of rocks and stones lying on it.) *What kind of road is it with all the rocks and stones?* (It is a bumpy road).

Read the text together. Ask the students what happened to the cart (It shook and rattled.) Why did that happen? (The road was very bumpy.) Discuss how this is an example of cause and effect. Cause is why something happens (cause: road is very bumpy). Effect is what happens (effect: cart shook and rattled). Have the students think about the cabbages bouncing up and down on the cart. Ask them if this is an example of cause and effect. (Yes, it is.) Have them say what is the cause and what is the effect (cause: cart shook and rattled; effect: cabbages bounced up and down).

Page 4

- *What is happening in the illustration?* (The wheel came off the cart.)

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- *What noises might the cart have made when the wheel came off?* (Answers will vary.)

Read the text together. Confirm the noises that the author described when the wheel came off. (Creak! Crunch!) Talk about the examples of cause and effect in the text. (Effect: The wheel fell off.) What was the cause? (Cause: Farmer Dan's cart ran over a big stone.) Tell the students that there is one more example of cause and effect in the text. Effect: The cabbages rolled onto the ground. *What was the cause?* (The wheel fell off.)

Page 5

- *Why is Farmer Dan scratching his head in the illustration?* (He is thinking about how to solve his problem.)
- *What problems does Farmer Dan have?* (He needs to put the wheel back on and he needs to put all his cabbages back onto the cart.)

Read the text together. Ask the students what they would do next. Write down their responses on chart paper or on the board.

Page 6

- *Look at the illustration. How is Farmer Dan's expression now?* (He looks worried still.)
- *Do you think the man will stop and help Farmer Dan?* (No, he looks as if he is walking quickly past.)

Read the text together. Talk about how the man was running late and would not stop to help Farmer Dan.

Page 7

- *Look at Farmer Dan. What does his expression tell you now?* (He still looks worried.)
- *Do you think the girl is going to help Farmer Dan?* (No, she looks as if she is in a hurry.)

Read the text together. Discuss how Farmer Dan might be feeling right now. (Answers will vary.)

Page 8

- *Look at Farmer Dan sitting on the ground. What does that tell us?* (He is tired and has given up trying to fix the cart on his own.)
- *What might he be thinking when he sees the old woman walking towards him?* (He would probably think that she is too old and too weak to help him lift the cart.)

Read the text with the students. Discuss how Farmer Dan's situation has not changed, but that maybe the old woman might be able to think of a solution to his problem even if she might not have the strength to lift the cart off the ground.

Page 9

- *What is the old woman doing in the illustration?* (She is using her stick and a big stone to lift up the cart.)
- *How does Farmer Dan look now?* (He looks shocked and surprised.)

Read the text together. Tell the students that there is another example of cause and effect in the text. *What is the effect?* Remind the students that an effect is what happens. (Effect: The cart lifted off the ground.) *What is the cause?* Remind them that the cause is why something happens (Cause: The old woman put her walking stick on a big stone under the cart and then pushed down on the stick.)

Pages 10 to 11

- *What is Farmer Dan's expression in the illustrations on pages 10 and 11 now?* (He looks happy and relaxed.) Talk about how even though the woman was old, she was still able to help Farmer Dan put the cabbages in the cart.

Together, read the text on page 10. Point to the sentence with the question mark. Ask the students which word is polite to use when asking for help (please). Then read the text on page 11. *How do you think the story will end?* (Answers will vary.)

Page 12

- *Farmer Dan looks happy now. What do you think he learnt from his experience?* (It is easier to overcome obstacles and solve problems with the help of friends, rather than trying to do it alone.)

Read the text together and enjoy the ending.

Revisiting the Text

- Revisit the students' responses that you wrote on the board or chart paper during the title page discussion. Have the students compare the ideas they had with the author's ideas. *What was the author trying to convey when he wrote this story?* (With the help and support of friends, we can overcome obstacles and solve problems.) Revisit the list of student responses from page 5. Compare the students' responses with how Farmer Dan solved his problem.
- Write the letters "ee" on the board or on chart paper. Explain that the letters -ee make the long vowel /e/ sound like in the word wheel. Say the sound and word aloud together. Ask the students to find any other words in the text with -ee (need/needed). Have the students brainstorm a list of other -ee words (*bee, knee, see, tree, sleep, three, feet, week, etc.*).

Following Up

- Encourage the students to re-read page 3 and think up different cause and effect situations. For instance, the horse might stand on a stone and hurt its hoof, or the cart could bounce up and down and Farmer Dan might drop the reins or slide off the cart.
- Give the students copies of the BM for this title. They can complete and label their invention for lifting the cart.