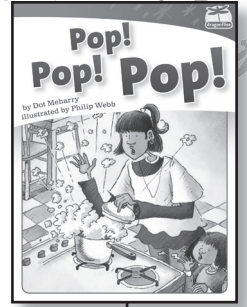


Pop! Pop! Pop!

by Dot Meharry

illustrated by Philip Webb



Overview

This is a humorous family narrative about a girl and her older sister who find out how not to make popcorn.

Suggested purposes

This text supports the comprehension strategies of making connections with real-life experiences, making and confirming predictions, and following the steps in a process. It lends itself to expressive reading and provides excellent models for writing.

Text features (Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the dramatic and lively nature of the text
- the strong narrative structure
- the humour in the text and the illustrations
- the characterisation of Jo
- the expressive dialogue
- the use of italics, repetition, onomatopoeia, and exclamation marks for effect
- the lively verbs – *jumping, pushing, popped, squealed*
- the many alternatives for “said” – *asked, called, cried, laughed, squealed*
- the indicators of time – *after a few minutes, after dinner, after a while, soon*
- the contractions – *couldn’t, I’m, it’s, won’t, wouldn’t*
- the variety of forms of some verbs – *laugh, laughed; make, making; popped, popping; tried, trying*
- the possessive apostrophe in “Toni’s”
- the “ur” sound – *burn, turned*

Possible challenges

- the words – *enough, spoonfuls, squealed*
- the idea of a gas stove
- the term “popping corn”

Setting the scene

Discuss the students’ experiences of making popcorn. *Who has made popcorn? Where did you buy the popping corn?* Briefly review the steps for making popcorn, drawing out the idea that the volume of the cooked popcorn is much greater than that of the uncooked popcorn.

Back cover – Read aloud the preview question. Help the students to make connections with the preview question and their own experiences.

The first reading

Ask the students to read the text silently, pausing at various points for discussion or to clarify any difficulties.

Page 3 – Talk about the possessive apostrophe in “Toni’s”.

What have you found out about Jo? Draw out the idea that Jo is confident about making popcorn.

Page 4 – If the students are unfamiliar with gas stoves, you may need to explain what “turned on the gas” means.

Page 5 – *How does the author want you to read “all”? Do you think Jo is right? What could happen?*

Pages 6 and 7 – *While you’re reading these pages, think about how the author makes the story sound exciting. What word does the author use on page 7 to show how the popcorn was jumping? Draw out the idea that the author is letting the reader know that something exciting is going to happen!*

Pages 8 and 9 – Encourage the students to focus on the illustrations and savour the drama before reading the text. After the reading, ask the students what is happening. Draw out the idea that there are a lot of things happening at once.

Pages 10 and 11 – Review what caused the problem and what Jo and Toni might do about it. *Is this how you make popcorn?*

Ideas for revisiting the text (Choose only one or two per session.)

- Listen while the students reread the text with a partner, noting their use of expression and phrasing.
- Discuss the characters of Toni and Jo. *What did you think of Jo at the beginning? What do you think of her now? How do you think Toni feels about her sister?*
- Focus on the narrative structure. Identify the problem, the complication, and the resolution.
- Talk about the ways the author made this story sound exciting. You could focus on the vocabulary, for example, the lively verbs and the dialogue, or on the print features, such as the italics and exclamation marks, or other language features, such as repetition and onomatopoeia.
- Look at the indicators of time. On page 3, *how do you know when they started to make the popcorn?* On page 6, *when did the corn begin to pop?* Ask the students to find other examples on pages 8 and 10. Draw out the idea that phrases like this make the text sound more interesting.
- Identify and list the alternative words for “said”. Discuss why the author might have used them. Display the list and encourage the students to add other examples as they discover them in other texts.
- Write the contractions “couldn’t”, “I’m”, “it’s”, “won’t”, and “wouldn’t” on the board. *What is the same in all these words? What would they sound like if they were written in full?* Ask the students to read the last two lines on page 5 using “will not” instead of “won’t”. Draw out the idea that contractions make language sound more natural.
- Focus on some of the verbs that occur in different forms (“laugh”, “laughed”; “make”, “making”; “popped”, “popping”; “tried”, “trying”). Create a chart with the word endings “s”, “ing”, and “ed” across the top and ask the students to fill in the other forms of these verbs. Discuss irregular forms, such as the need to delete the final “e” from “make” to form “making”; changing the “y” in “try” to “ie”; or doubling the final consonant in “pop” to make “popping”.
- Focus on the “ur” sound in “turned” and “burn”. List other examples on the board (“fur”, “hurt”, “turn”, “turtle”) and ask the students to underline the “ur” sound. You could investigate other ways of spelling this sound, such as “ir” (“bird”, “shirt”), “er” (“her”, “person”), and “or” (“word”, “work”), but don’t do this if you think it will confuse the students.

Suggestions for further activities

- Make popcorn.
- Write instructions for making popcorn.
- Think of another title for the story and write an alternative ending.
- During shared writing, model the use of some of the text features that make this story so dramatic.
- Explore where popcorn comes from and why it is called “popcorn”.
- BLM word activity: use contractions

The students can identify the contractions from the text. They can write the expanded form for each one. They can then write each contraction in a sentence to show its meaning.

- BLM comprehension activity: write and sequence instructions

The students can discuss how to make popcorn. They can write step-by-step instructions for Toni and Jo. Talk about the use of imperative words in instructions. The students can then illustrate each instruction.