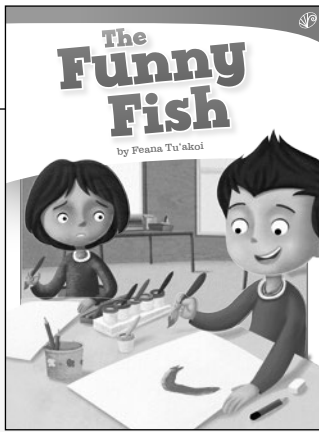


# The Funny Fish



Running words: 338

## Book Summary

This story is about a young girl who overcomes a personal obstacle and finds confidence in her artistic ability. Jess and her classmates are painting in class; they can choose any type of fish to paint. Jess doesn't feel confident at painting fish. As the other children work, she reluctantly starts to paint, but is dissatisfied with the result. When it's time to share her work, Jess is surprised to find that her teacher and classmates recognise that her painting is a fish and are supportive of her. In the end, the experience gives Jess confidence in her ability, and she wants to continue painting.

## Themes

Overcoming obstacles, The arts, School and community

## Features of the Book

- The information contained in the illustrations
- Content words for discussion: *colours, great, paint*
- Phonics and phonemic awareness: consonant blends
  - *sh, sp*; short vowel sounds
  - *and/any/asked/can/can't/classroom/had/sat*

## Strategies

*The Funny Fish* introduces and reinforces the following strategies:

- making connections;
- visualising;
- comparing and contrasting.

by Feana Tu'akoi

## Introducing the Text

Begin by asking the students to think of activities they enjoy and at which they do well, such as drawing, writing, maths, or sports. Write their answers in a list.

- *What activities are you good at?*
- *Were you always good at those activities?*
- *How did you become good at them?*

## Reading the Text

Hand one book to each student. Ensure that the content words (*colours, great, paint*) 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 them to use the information in the illustrations and text to make predictions, then to revise or confirm these as you work through the book.

## Cover

Together, read the title and the name of the author on the cover and the title page. Look at the illustrations.

- *Who is on these pages?* (students in a classroom)
- *What do you predict this story is about?* (painting an art project)

## Pages 2 to 3

- *What is happening on these pages?* (The students are painting.)
- *Are the students enjoying the activity?* (Some are smiling, but the girl in front looks worried.)

Read the text together. Confirm that the class is doing a painting project. Have the students point out the art supplies they see in the classroom. Have a student point out the speech marks on the page. Remind the students that these marks indicate who is speaking in the story.

- *Why do you think Jess looks unhappy?* (She is unsure of what to paint.)

## Pages 4 to 6

- *What pictures are the children painting?* (clown fish, stingray, shark, eel)

Read the text together. Discuss why Jess is still worried about the painting project even though she can paint her fish any way she wants.

- *What obstacle is in Jess's way?* (She is convinced she can't paint fish.)

## Page 7

- *How does Jess finally start her painting?* (by drawing a purple circle with eyes and fins)

Read the text together. Discuss Jess's opinion of her fish so far, and how she can't visualise a fish on the page and sees a "purple, spiky balloon" instead. What do the students see on Jess's page? Do they see what Jess sees?

# The Funny Fish

---

## Pages 8 to 9

- *What is happening on these pages?* (The students have finished their paintings and are displaying them.)
- *Is Jess happy with her result?* (no)
- *Why is there an empty space on the wall?* (Jess has not put up her painting yet.)

Read the text together. Confirm that the students have finished their artworks and are eagerly displaying them, except for Jess, who is dissatisfied with her work.

- *Can Jess visualise the fish in the other students' paintings?* (yes)

## Pages 10 to 11

- *What is happening on these pages?* (Jess is sharing her painting.)
- *What are Mr Li's and the other students' reactions to Jess's painting?* (They look positive and pleased.)

Read the text together. Confirm that Jess has shared her artwork and is relieved that her teacher and her classmates like it and recognise it as a fish.

## Page 12

Read the text together. Have the students compare and contrast how Jess felt about her ability to paint fish at the beginning of the story and at the end.

- *What made Jess feel more confident at painting fish?* (her teacher and her classmates' positive reactions)

## Revisiting the Text

- Revisit the list of activities the students feel confident about. Have them compare their experiences with Jess's experience in the story. Did they have to overcome any obstacles to become better at these activities?
- Find and list the "sh" and "sp" consonant blends in the story. With the students, add any other words they know that contain these blends.
- Write the words *and/any/asked/can/can't/classroom/had/sat* on the board, and, with the students, create a list of other words that contain the short "a" sound.

## Following Up

- Encourage the students to think of an activity at which they would like to become more skilled. Have them write a step-by-step plan for improving their confidence and ability. What obstacles do they face? How could they overcome those obstacles?
- Give the students copies of the BM for this story. They can follow the steps to draw the funny fish from the story.