

The Expression Trio Practice Activities

Night Time Visitors

There were trees behind Jamie's house. Jamie's dad helped Jamie, Marcus and Kate build and paint a treefort.

"It's perfect," said Jamie. "All we need are snacks."

Marcus brought cookies. Kate and Jamie brought apples. They stored them on a shelf in the fort.

The next morning, the snacks had disappeared! Instead of apples and cookies, they found only apple seeds and cookie crumbs.

"Who ate our snacks?" asked Jamie.

"We've got to find out," said Kate.

They put peanut butter crackers and three peaches on the shelf.

"Maybe they'll come back," said Jamie. "Let's spy from my kitchen window, once it gets dark."

That night, Jamie, Marcus and Kate watched from the window. They shined their flashlights at the tree fort.

Then they saw it. Something climbed up the tree. Another something followed it.

"Raccoons!" said Marcus.

"That's who ate our snacks!"

Before You Read:

Think about what you may already know about nocturnal animals and raccoons. Think about the idea from the video: reading with expression.

While You Read:

Read the story, "Night Time Visitors." While you read, record your voice with a tape recorder, computer, iPad, etc.

When you have finished reading, play back your recording. Listen to the expression of your voice. Did you sound enthusiastic with a variety of tones in your voice? Or did you sound monotone (only one tone)?

Practice reading the passage a few more times. Remember to read with EXPRESSION. As you read concentrate on:

Reading with **Stress**.

- The emphasis placed on specific words or word parts by the reader's voice.

Reading with **Pitch**.

- The rising and falling tone of the reader's voice.

Reading with **Juncture**.

- The vocal pauses or breaks within reading, signaled by commas, or ending punctuation.

Read, record, and compare your reading voice one more time. Did your expression improve?

After You Read:

Now it's time to try Thinking Aloud. Reread the story one more time with a friend or family member. After you finish reading, ask your partner if:

- You read with expression?
- What portions of the text need additional practice?
- You need to consider any other key fluency elements as you read?

Ask yourself if:

- There were any words you didn't know how to say?
- There were any words that you didn't know the definition of?
- Concentrating on punctuation and text features helped you to read more fluently?

Fluency means the ability to read, speak, and write smoothly and easily. To improve your **Fluency Skills** practice reading by concentrating on the following areas:

- Accuracy
- Rate
- Expression
- Phrasing
- Volume

Fluency is an important part of being a good reader, because fluent readers are better able to comprehend what they're reading. Are you fluent?