

Emergent Reader Series Close Reading Guide

Emergent Reader 37: *I Sang a Song to Spring*



Day 1

Foundational Skills Instruction and Individual Reading

The *I Sang a Song to Spring* Foundational Skills Guide contains activities designed to help students read the words they will encounter in the book *I Sang a Song to Spring*. Learning to read words is central to reading development, so these activities are an essential part of our systematic and cumulative approach to teaching foundational reading and language skills. Since students vary widely in their word reading skills, these activities and their pacing can be adjusted to provide the right amount of practice for each student.

The Individual Reading with Teacher Feedback activities in this Close Reading Guide provide opportunities for teachers to give corrective feedback and to scaffold students in the use of flexible word reading strategies as they read the book. Applying foundational skills to meaningful decodable text allows students to develop accuracy and automaticity to support fluent reading.

Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Word Recognition

Complete the Day 1 activities in the *I Sang a Song to Spring* Foundational Skills Guide.

Explore Book Cover: Identify Title, Author, and Illustrator

Briefly identify the book's title, author, and illustrator. As necessary, review roles of author and illustrator with students.

Infer Topic and Text Type

Model how to look at the cover and infer the book's topic and text type. Say: *Let's look for clues on the book cover to help us infer what this book is about. When we infer, we use clues in the book and what we already know to figure something out. Say: The title is I Sang a Song to Spring. This title reminds me of some of the other books we have been reading about the seasons. I would expect the topic of this book to be things that have to do with spring. Let's inspect the cover illustration for clues that connect the illustration to the title. Invite students to talk with a partner about what they have found in their inspection. (There is a girl wearing a yellow raincoat standing under an umbrella because rain is coming down. She seems happy and is reaching out to touch the rain.) Say: It seems like the girl likes the rain. I expect to find some descriptions about what the girl might like about the spring season, as we found in the book Fun in Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall. In that book the character really liked the different seasons. I wonder if this is a book that gives us information or describes something about the seasons from the narrator's point of view. Let's do a text feature tour to see if there are any text features that might indicate that this is a book that gives information. (Since there are no text features, conclude that this is not a book that gives information but instead might be a descriptive book like Fun in Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall and Hints of Fall.) Say: There is another thing I notice about the title. There are lots of words in the title that begin with the letter s. Let's say the title again together thinking about all of the /s/ sounds. (I Sang a Song to Spring). Say: When an author uses words near each other that begin with the same sound, it is called alliteration. Alliteration is like rhyming in that it is a way that an author can make words in a book sound like a song or poem. I wonder if we are going to find more interesting language like alliteration or rhyming in this book since the title has the words "a song to spring." I also wonder what "I sang a song to spring" means. How can you sing a song to a season? It is almost like the season of spring is a person that the girl on the cover is singing to. Let's read and find out what happens in this book.*

Begin Individual Reading with Teacher Feedback

Before reading, you may choose to post "I can sound out words I don't know" as a purpose statement for students, since the main objective of this first individual reading is to allow students to apply their grapheme-phoneme knowledge to decode unfamiliar words. While the whole group reads softly to themselves, invite individual students to read several pages aloud to you so you can gauge their proficiency and provide feedback on pronunciation. Say: *I want each of you to read the book softly to yourself and find out why the girl on the cover is singing a song to spring. Remember to sound out the words you do not know. After you read the words, look closely at the illustrations. The words and the illustrations together help us understand the book. I will listen to one person at a time. You can start reading now.*

Day 2

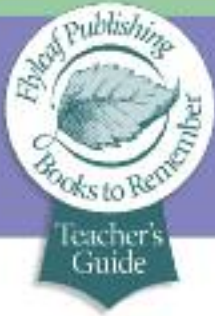
Foundational Skills Instruction and Individual Reading, *continued*

Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Word Recognition

Complete the Day 2 activities in the *I Sang a Song to Spring* Foundational Skills Guide.

Complete Individual Reading with Teacher Feedback

Continue to listen to individual students read aloud and offer scaffolded support as necessary.



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Day 3

Choral Read Followed by Close Reading with Text-Dependent Questions

Chorally read the book for fluency practice. Then, use the following activities to guide further rereading of specific parts of the text to deepen understanding and clarify meaning. In this type of text, illustrations carry a large portion of the meaning. It is important that readers learn to integrate the text and the illustrations to gain a deeper understanding of the story. Encourage students to state their responses to the activities' text-dependent questions in complete sentences and to ask questions about any unfamiliar words or concepts they may encounter while reading.

Pages 1–9

Focus on Language: Repetition, Alliteration, Personification

Have students chorally read pages 1–7. Ask: *Did anyone notice anything about the language as we read this book?* (repeating words; repeating sounds [alliteration]).

Repetition. Say: *There is an idea that repeats, or comes up over and over again, in the book. On page 1, the narrator, or the girl who is the "I" in the book, says, "I sang a song to spring." Then on page 3, she says, "Spring sang a song back to me."* Continue reading and notice how the idea of singing a song repeats and that there is an alternating pattern between the girl singing to the season and the season singing to the girl.

Alliteration. Say: *We noticed that the author used alliteration in the title *I Sang a Song to Spring* by repeating the /s/ sound in the words sang, song, and spring. Remember, alliteration is using words near each other that start with the same sound. Almost every page in the book has an example of alliteration. Can you find them?* (page 1: sang a song to spring; page 2: spring sang a song; page 5: sang a song to summer; page 6: summer sang a song; page 9: sang a song to me; page 11: I sang a song to fall; My song was sung; page 13: sang a strong song; page 15: sang a soft song).

Personification. Invite students to read page 9. Ask: *Who is singing on this page?* (the wind). *And who said something?* (the wind). *What did the wind say?* (puff, puff, puff). Say: *The author has made the wind sound like a person who can sing and talk. When an author makes a thing that is not a person act like a person, that is called personification. Do you hear the word person inside the word personification?* Invite students to find another example of personification. (spring said, "tap, tap, tap"; flip-flops said, "flip-flop"; summer sang in trickling drips and drops). Say: *Personification is a way an author uses descriptive language that makes the text interesting. Personification helps us use our imagination, like thinking about the summer talking to us in the sounds of a trickling fountain, or thinking about the wind having a mouth for blowing, the way we do when we blow out a candle. That is a very interesting way to use language!*

Pages 1–4

Print Concept: Quotation Marks

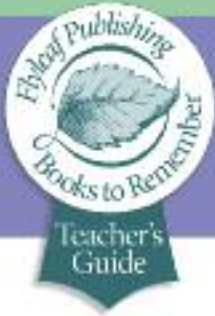
Ask students to point to the quotation marks on page 1. Remind them that quotation marks let us know that a character is speaking or making sounds. Ask: *What are the character's words on this page?* (Grow, daffodils. Grow!) Ask: *What are the names of the punctuation marks that let us know that the character is speaking or making sounds?* (quotation marks). Look for quotation marks throughout the text and remind students of their function.

Next, ask students to point to the quotation marks on page 3, and if necessary remind students that quotation marks let us know that a character is speaking or making sounds. Say: *Let's look at how the author uses quotation marks on this page.* Ask: *What are the words in quotation marks?* (tap, tap, tap). Say: *Spring said "tap, tap, tap" by dripping rain onto the girl's umbrella. "Tap, tap, tap" is the sound the spring rain made.* Ask: *Why do you think the author put the words tap, tap, tap in quotation marks?* Say: *I think this helps the author with the personification because having the quotation marks makes it seem like the seasons and other objects are talking.*

Pages 15–16

Comprehension Monitoring: Personification

Invite students to turn to page 15. Ask: *Was anyone confused by what the author wrote on page 15: "Winter was resting under a blanket of snow?"* Say: *First, I was confused about how winter could rest. I know people can rest. Then I realized that this is an example of personification, because winter, which is not a person, is being written about like it is resting the way a person would. Why would the author use the word rest when talking about the snow? Maybe because when it snows a lot, everything stops, and when you rest, you stop what you are doing. Now let's think about what under a blanket of snow means. When someone says something is "under a blanket of snow," they are saying that something is covered with a layer of snow but saying it in an interesting way. In the book, when the girl says that "winter is resting under a blanket of snow," she means that the land outside has been covered by winter snow. The snow is covering the land like a blanket.*



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Day 4

Identification of Descriptive Text Structure

Say: *When we inspected the text we decided that this is not a book that gives information, so now I wonder if this book tells a story or if it describes something. Ask: How can we figure out if this is a book that describes something?* (From the special words the author uses to make us understand how things in each season look, smell, taste, feel, and sound. We could read the pages out of order and still understand the author's message.)

Say: *That's right. The author is describing sensory experiences during different seasons through the eyes of a character, the narrator. This is just like the text structure of the book Fun in Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall.*

Literate Language Close Read

This activity is designed to be completed using the Literate Language Close Read Chart, which you'll find on page 5 of this guide. It can be removed from the binder for easy reference while you deliver the following instructions. Also, you will need to provide students with a copy of the poem version of the text, which can be found in the Emergent Reader Teacher's Guide Blackline Masters.

The purpose of this exercise is to model another element of close reading: recognizing how authors play with language to engage the reader's senses. Have fun reading the stanzas and stressing the interesting language that is printed in bold type on the chart. (For example, mimic the rhythmic tapping of the rain on the umbrella in stanza two.) Use the chart on page 5 as you guide students through each stanza.

Say: *Because this book uses descriptive language, we are going to look closely at the words the author uses while reading the text like it is a poem written in stanzas. Remember, a stanza is a group of lines in a poem separated from the other groups of lines by a space. We are going to look for descriptive language and poetic devices while we are reading. Poetic devices are the ways in which authors use special words to make their writing sound more interesting.* As students follow along on their copies of the poem, help them to identify descriptive words and interesting language used by the author. The goal of work with each stanza is to identify what it is the author wants the reader to see, feel, or hear (noted in column 3).

Descriptive Language/Poetic Device Review with Annotation

After several readings of the poem, use some or all of the following questions to see how well students can find the descriptive and poetic language you've talked about. As students identify the answers to each question, have them circle or underline them.

What phrase can you find that is repeated in many stanzas in the poem? (*sang a song*)

Give examples of sounds repeated at the beginnings of words. (*/s/ in sang, song, said; /d/ in drips and drops, etc.*)

In stanza 2, who or what sings a song? (*spring*). Which words sound like rain on an umbrella? (*Tap, tap, tap*)

In stanza 4, what sang a song? (*summer*). Which word sounds like water dripping down? (*trickling*)

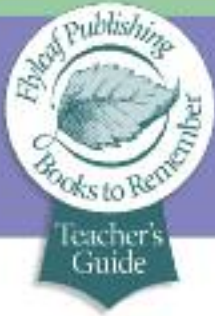
In stanza 7, how do we know that the wind is a strong wind? (It said "puff" and lifted up the girl's hat.)

In stanza 8, what is resting under a blanket of snow? (*winter*)

Summer sang a song to me.
It was a song of trickling
drips and drops.

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Exploring a Theme Across Texts

Note. Have the books *Fun in Winter, Spring, Summer Fall; Hints of Fall*; and this book, *I Sang a Song to Spring*, available. Also, have the Exploring a Theme Across Texts chart that was started in the ER 35 Hints of Fall Teacher's Guide on hand.

Say: *The books Fun in Winter, Spring, Summer Fall; Hints of Fall; and this book, I Sang a Song to Spring, seem to have similar themes. Let's finish filling in this Exploring a Theme Across Texts chart to help us think about how the themes of these three books are the same. Model how to fill in the chart exploring both themes. Then say: I think we can learn something from reading all of these books. What can we learn? (There are many special things to notice and enjoy about the different seasons. The seasons go in the same order, round and round in a cycle.) Once the chart is complete, post this chart in the classroom next to other Exploring a Theme Across Text charts.*

Exploring a Theme Across Texts

Theme 1: There are many fun things to do in the different seasons. There are special things about each season to notice and do.

Theme 2: The seasons progress in the same order, and continue in a cycle offering the chance to do favorite activities for that season over and over again.

Fun in Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall

Evidence of Theme:

Theme 1: The narrator has fun in all of the seasons. He gives examples of different activities he enjoys and the way the activities he enjoys in different seasons make him feel.
Theme 2: The book repeats the first and last pages, showing that the cycle of the seasons continues.

Fun in Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall

What I learned from this theme:

Theme 1: There are fun things to notice and do in every season.
Theme 2: The seasons go in order and repeat over and over again.

Hints of Fall

Evidence of Theme:

Theme 1: The author gives examples of different things to see and do in all the seasons.
Theme 2: The seasons repeat in the book, showing that the seasons go in order in a cycle. Repeating seasons give us the chance to do favorite activities for that season over and over again.

Hints of Fall

What I learned from this theme:

Theme 1: Different things remind you of different seasons. For example, mud makes you think of spring.
Theme 2: The seasons go in order in a cycle.

I Sang a Song to Spring

Evidence of Theme:

Theme 1: The narrator notices different sounds in each season. She seems to enjoy all of the seasons and the way they make her feel.
Theme 2: The seasons go in order through the book. Since the book ends with winter, we can infer that the next season will be spring again.

I Sang a Song to Spring

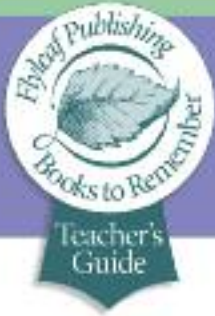
What I learned from this theme:

Theme 1: There are sounds that you hear in different seasons, like raindrops making a "tap, tap, tap" sound. You can enjoy all of these different sounds and the way they make you feel.
Theme 2: The seasons go in order.

What I learned from reading these texts:

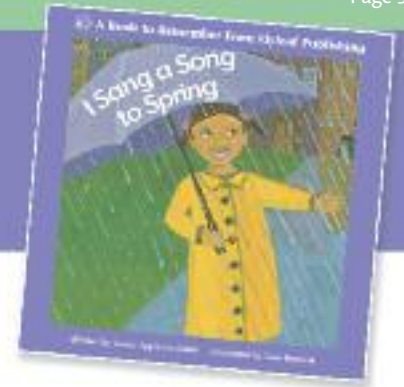
Theme 1: There are many special things to notice and enjoy about the different seasons.

Theme 2: The seasons go in the same order, and they go round and round in a cycle. I will get to do special things every year in the same season.



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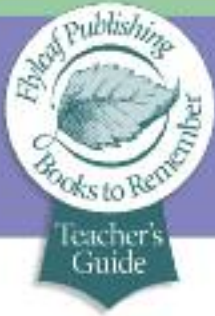
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Literate Language Close Read Chart

Note: To be used in conjunction with the Literate Language Close Read Activity on page 3.

Stanza	Descriptive Language and Poetic Devices	Sensory Experience
1 <i>I sang a song to spring. My song said, "Grow, daffodils. Grow!"</i>	sang, song, spring, song, said (alliteration)	The repeated sounds at the beginning of words make the text sound like a pretty song that celebrates the seasons.
2 <i>Spring sang a song back to me. It said, "Tap, tap, tap," on my umbrella.</i>	Spring sang a song (personification, alliteration, and repetition) tap, tap, tap (onomatopoeia)	The fact that spring sang a song back to the girl means there is more than one song being sung, and the repeated sounds at the beginning of words and the repeated words between stanzas ("sang a song") make the text sound like a song. The "tap, tap, tap" helps us imagine hearing the sound the rain makes on an umbrella. It is also a rhythmic drumming sound, like part of a song.
3 <i>My flip-flops sang a song to summer. They said, "Flip-flop, flip-flop."</i>	sang a song, summer, said (repetition, alliteration) They said, "Flip-flop, flip-flop." (personification, onomatopoeia)	The repeated sounds at the beginning of words and the repeated words between stanzas make the text sound like a song. The words "flip-flop" help us to imagine hearing the sound that summer sandals can make when you walk in them. The author making sandals sing a song like a person reminds readers to pay special attention to and to enjoy the sounds of the seasons.
4 <i>Summer sang a song to me. It was a song of trickling drips and drops.</i>	Summer sang a song, song (personification, repetition, alliteration) trickling drips and drops (onomatopoeia, alliteration)	Making summer sing a song makes the text interesting. The repeated sounds at the beginning of words and repeated words between stanzas sound like a song, and the word <i>trickling</i> and the repeated sounds in the words <i>drips</i> and <i>drops</i> help us to imagine hearing the gentle sound made by a fountain.
5 <i>In the fall, the wind sang a song to me. It said, "Puff, puff, puff."</i>	sang a song (repetition) It said, "Puff, puff, puff." (personification, onomatopoeia)	The repeated words between stanzas make the text sound like a song. By having the wind say the words <i>puff, puff, puff</i> , the author helps us to imagine feeling and hearing a puff of air made by the fall wind.
6 <i>I sang a song to fall. My song was sung by kicking leaves along.</i>	Sang a song, song, sung (repetition, alliteration)	The repeated sounds at the beginning of words sound like a song.
7 <i>A winter wind sang a strong song. It said, "Puff," and it lifted my hat up.</i>	sang a strong song (repetition, alliteration) It said, "Puff" (personification)	The repeated sounds and words sound like a song, and the fact that the winter's song was strong and it puffed the girl's hat up helps us imagine the feeling of a hat coming off because the winter wind was blowing hard.
8 <i>I sang a soft song to winter. Winter was resting under a blanket of snow.</i>	sang a soft song (repetition, alliteration) winter was resting under a blanket of snow (personification and idiomatic expression)	The repeated sounds and words make the text sound like a song. We can imagine the ground outside covered with snow like a blanket covers us in bed and imagine the feeling of resting, tucked under a blanket. It feels peaceful and calm.



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Day 5

Integrated Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening Activities

Draw and Write

Have students choose their favorite example of personification from the book and make an illustration of it. For example, they might draw the wind puffing. Then they can create a speech bubble and write what the season said in the bubble. Encourage students to use proper capitalization and punctuation when writing. *(Use drawing paper for this exercise.)*

Rereading for Fluency

The poem form of the book printed from the Emergent Reader Teacher's Guide Blackline Masters can be sent home for fluency practice. Students can read the poem to friends and family members.

Text-Dependent Questions for Differentiated Instruction

Use the following questions to think about the text more deeply. These questions can be used to differentiate instruction during the rereads on Days 3 and 4 or on additional rereads, depending on individual student needs. Remember, always return to the text and illustrations to verify, clarify, or remember.

General Understandings	<p>What happens in every season in the book? (the girl sings a song, the season sings a song).</p> <p>What does this book make you think about? (the sounds of seasons; different things that happen in the different seasons).</p>
Key Details	<p>Give an example of the sounds of summer. (flip-flop; trickling drops of a fountain).</p> <p>Give an example of the sounds of spring. (the tap, tap, tap of raindrops).</p> <p>What does the girl want to happen in the spring? (for the daffodils to grow).</p> <p>What song does the fall wind sing? (puff, puff, puff). How does the girl sing back to fall? (by kicking leaves to make sounds).</p>
Academic Vocabulary	<p>Give some examples of personification from the book. Remember that personification is when something that is not a person does or says something the way a person would. (the wind puffed; the winter rested; summer sang a song; etc.).</p> <p>Give some examples of alliteration from the book. Remember that alliteration is when the author uses words near each other that begin with the same sound. (sang a song; drips and drops; etc.).</p> <p>Give an example of onomatopoeia from the book. Remember that onomatopoeia is a word that when you say it out loud with feeling, sounds like what it means. (flip-flop; puff, puff; etc.).</p>
Text Structure	<p>What phrase is repeated in the book? (sang a song).</p> <p>What does the author describe? (things that you hear in different seasons).</p>
Author's Purpose	<p>What does the author want you to pay attention to? (the sounds of the seasons).</p>
Inferences	<p>What sound do you think the girl makes when she sings a song to fall on page 11? (crunch, crunch, crunch).</p> <p>How does the narrator feel about seasons? What is your evidence? (Answers will vary.)</p>
Opinions, Arguments, and Intertextual Connections	<p>In your opinion, which poetic device (or special kind of language) do you like the best? Explain using examples from the book to tell why you like it. (Answers will vary.)</p>

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