

Quackenstein Hatches a Family

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Teacher's Guide created by Cassandra Reigel Whetstone

Story Summary

Quackenstein is single, lonely duck living in the zoo. He adopts an orphaned egg and nurtures it carefully until a platypus hatches. Quackenstein runs from the newly hatched baby until he finally embraces the role of being a dad.

Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen writes from her home in New Jersey, where she lives with her three kids and an imaginary pony named Penny. Learn more about her at www.sudipta.com.

Brian T. Jones lives in Southern California. See more of his artwork at www.briantjones.com.

Pre-Reading



Grades K-2: Give each student a half sheet of paper. Ask them to draw a picture of their family. Encourage students to label the members of their family. Discuss the importance of having a family.

Grades 3-5: Give students a sheet of paper. Have older students write a paragraph about who is in their family. Discuss how having a family or how the absence of a family impacts people's lives.

Controlled Vocabulary for Pre-Reading Sheltered Instruction: gloomy, orphaned, adopt, neglected, spurs, platypus.

Discussion Questions

- *Show picture of front cover. Identify author and illustrator. Look at title and artwork.* What do you think this book will be about? (*prediction*)
- *For older students* Have you heard of Frankenstein? What is similar between that character and Quackenstein? (*inferential*)
- What is gloomy about Quackenstein's home? (*literal*)
- What does "orphaned egg" mean? (*literal*)
- What do you notice about the assortment of eggs? Are they all from the same type of animal? (*evaluative*)
- Quackenstein decides to adopt the egg to make his family. Have you ever known someone who was adopted or who was part of an adopted family? (*connections*)



- Quackenstein says, “You’ll never be neglected!” What do you think he imagines he will do with the baby when it hatches? (*inferential and evaluative*)
- Why did Quackenstein go pale? What does that description tell you about his feelings? (*literal and evaluative*)
- Why do you think Quackenstein is scared at first? Have you ever been scared of spending time with someone who is different from you? (*inferential and connections*)
- Why did the baby chase Quackenstein? (*literal and inferential*)
- When the egg first hatched, Quackenstein said, “You’re no duck!” Why do you think he assumed the baby would be a duck? Did it turn out to be important that the baby wasn’t a duck? (*evaluative*)
- How is Quackenstein’s home different at the end of the story? (*literal*)



Response to Story: What’s in An Egg? (Life Science, Art, Writing)

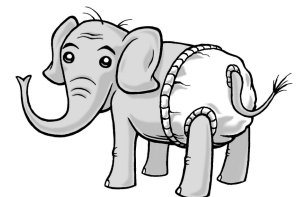
Materials: strips of paper, one plastic egg per student, drawing paper, crayons, scissors, tape or stapler, images of oviparous animals, tag board (optional for younger students)

Preparation:

1. Write the name of an oviparous (egg-laying) animal on a strip of paper, one per student (animals may be used more than once.) Younger students should be given a variety of animals including: *bird, duck, goose, turkey, chicken, octopus, platypus, caterpillar, ant, snail, worm, alligator, lizard, fish, crab, sea star, turtle, spider, dinosaur, frog*, etc. Older students may use the same list or be challenged to use less familiar animals or more specific species, such as: *woodpecker, hummingbird, penguin, parrot, ostrich, echidna, squid, cuttlefish, salmon, lobster, crocodile, caiman, tortoise, salamander, toad, triceratops, python, praying mantis, tarantula*, etc.
2. Fill each egg with one animal type.
3. Create egg-shaped models out of tag board for students to trace, if needed.

Directions:

1. Tell students that animals, which lay eggs outside of their bodies, are called “oviparous.” Brainstorm different types of oviparous animals.
2. Revisit the page with “Orphaned Eggs/Homes needed.” Discuss the possible types of eggs that are in the group.
3. Tell students that they will each be given an egg to hatch. Tell them not to open their eggs until everyone has theirs. Pass out eggs, count to three, and let the students hatch their eggs. (Younger students may enjoy pretending to hatch their eggs and can be lead through the tap-tapping and crack-cracking of familiar egg hatching before opening their egg.)
4. Give students two pieces of drawing paper. Have them cut out two identical egg shapes to go with their eggs. Older students may want to research the shape of their animal’s eggs before drawing, cutting, and coloring.
5. Direct students to draw a picture of their animal on one egg, and to tape or glue the top part of the second egg on top, to create a peek-a-boo egg. Provide images of animals or opportunities to research animals if needed.



Closure: Display peek-a-boo eggs on bulletin board or in a class book.

Extension: Students may use this project as the basis for a life-science research paper and write sentences, paragraphs, or reports as appropriate.

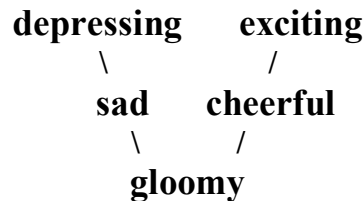


Quackenstein's Not Gloomy Anymore! (Synonyms and Antonyms)

Materials: Board or Butcher Paper, Chalk or pen

Directions:

1. Show students the first page in the book and read the first two lines. Discuss the meaning of the word “gloomy.” Write “gloomy” on the board.
2. Tell students that a synonym is a word that has the same or nearly the same meaning as another word. Give the examples yell/shout, quick/fast. Ask students for synonyms for the word gloomy. Create a word web by drawing a line from the left side of “gloomy” and write the synonym. If there is more than one synonym draw a line from the first synonym and record the next synonym and so on.
3. Tell students that an antonym is a word that has the opposite meaning as another word. Give the examples of hot/cold, high/low. Ask students for antonyms for the word gloomy. Write the antonym on the right side of the word and create a web of antonyms.



4. Repeat with other words from the story: *bitter, small, gently, pale, gleamed.*



People Who Care About Me Tree (Families, Art)

Materials: Brown construction paper, precut leaves or construction paper for leaves, crayons

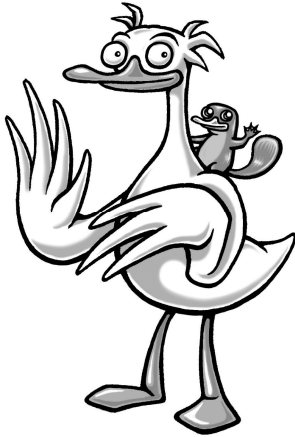
Directions:

1. Ask students if they have heard of the term “A Family Tree.” Discuss ideas about family trees.
2. Tell students that since family trees often focus on biological connections, the people who love and support us may be outside of our family. Ask students to share how family and friends can help their well-being. Tell students they are going to create a “People Who Care About Me” tree.
3. Pass out materials and instruct students draw and cut out trunks from the brown paper. Have students draw themselves and write their names on the trunk.
4. Pass out leaves, or materials for leaves, and have students write the names or draw the faces of the people in their lives who care about or love them. Encourage them to include family, friends, neighbors, and other community members. Glue leaves on to tree trunk.

5. Display finished trees. Celebrate how full the trees look because they include so many different types of people who affect their lives.

Extension: Discuss how the leaves can include not only parents and grandparents, but also community institutions like schools, churches, support groups, etc.

California State Standards Targeted by
Quackenstein Hatches a Family Teacher's Guide



Kindergarten

Reading Comprehension 2.1, 2.3
Literary Response and Analysis 3.3
Writing Strategies 1.1
Life Science 2b
Mental, Emotional and Social Health 2.1M

First Grade

Reading Comprehension 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 3.3
Writing Strategies 1.1, 1.2
Mental, Emotional and Social Health 1.2M, 2.1M

Second Grade

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development 1.7
Reading Comprehension 2.4
Writing Strategies 1.1
Life Science 2b
Mental, Emotional and Social Health 1.11M, 1.12M, 3.2M

Third Grade

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development 1.4
Reading Comprehension 2.3
Writing Strategies 1.1
Mental, Emotional and Social Health 1.3M

Fourth Grade

Literary Response and Analysis 3.3
Writing Strategies 1.2

Fifth Grade

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development 1.3
Writing Strategies 1.2

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