Betsy Who Cried Wolf!

Student Objectives

Vocabulary
- Use a dictionary
- Recognize shades of meaning

Comprehension
- Understand cause and effect
- Identify themes and morals in fables
- Compare and contrast texts

Materials

Betsy Who Cried Wolf
by Gail Carson Levine
Book Talk Journal for
Betsy Who Cried Wolf
Practice Pages 11–15

About the Book

Genre: Fable

Gail Carson Levine’s story is a spin on the old and familiar fable by Aesop. Betsy Who Cried Wolf has a girl named Betsy encountering not a killer wolf, but a hungry, sneaky, somewhat pathetic wolf looking for a good meal—and a friend. Scott Nash’s quirky illustrations perfectly mesh with Ms. Levine’s fresh take on this tale.

About the author: As the daughter of an artist and a teacher who wrote plays for her students to perform, Gail Carson Levine always loved words and pictures. Her love of stories encouraged her to take a class on writing for children. After nine years of rejections, her first published book, Ella Enchanted, won the Newbery Honor Award. Betsy Who Cried Wolf is her first picture book. Ms. Levine’s advice to aspiring young writers is to save everything you write. Unlike many writers, Ms. Levine’s favorite part of writing is revising, which she says is the “name of the game.”

About the illustrator: Scott Nash has taught art and design, owned his own design firm, and has worked for clients such as MTV, PBS, and the Boston Children’s Museum. In addition to illustrating Betsy Who Cried Wolf, Mr. Nash has illustrated well-known children’s favorites such as Flat Stanley, Saturday Night at the Dinosaur Stomp, and Tuff Love. He lives on an island off the coast of Maine with his artist wife and his dog named Bear.
Ask them what they think will happen to the girl and the sheep. (Answers will vary.) Have children predict what other things will happen to the sheep in the story. (Answers may vary. Children will likely mention a wolf and danger.)

Have children preview the title page illustrations and make predictions. Remind children that looking at illustrations before they read can help them predict who a story will be about and what might happen. Have children flip through the first few pages of the book and look at the illustrations at the beginning, on the title page, and through page 9. Ask them to make new predictions about the story or revise the predictions they previously made. (Answers will vary.)

Discuss fables. Explain that *Betsy Who Cried Wolf* is based on a fable by Aesop. Ask children if they have ever heard of the story, *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*. Tell children there are many versions of this fable, and that these versions get passed down from generation to generation, often by word of mouth. Explain that as stories are passed down, they are told in different ways. This causes details to change as they get retold.

Point out that in fables, animals talk and might trick others so they can get what they want. Tell children that many fables also teach a lesson, including this version, just as Aesop’s original version does. Explain that *Betsy Who Cried Wolf* is a new version of Aesop’s *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*. Tell children they will read Aesop’s original fable in order to compare the two versions of the story.

Use *Betsy Who Cried Wolf* pages 6–9

**Vocabulary:** sheep, shepherd, oath, merrily

Set a purpose for reading. Have children turn to page 5 in their books. Ask how the illustration is different than the one on the cover. (Answers will vary. Children might notice that the sheep on page 5 are calm and seem happy.) Explain that they can read the story to find out if Betsy can keep her sheep happy and safe.

Introduce new vocabulary words. Write the vocabulary words on the board and read them aloud. Discuss each word’s definition and connection to this story. For each word, supply a context sentence and call on a child to use it in a new sentence.

- **shepherd** (shepherds’, page 7): a person who takes care of sheep. *The shepherd took the sheep into the pasture.*
- **oath** (page 7): a promise often taken in front of other people. *Betsy took an oath in which she promised to care for the sheep.*
- **merrily** (page 8): happily. *After the party, she walked home merrily.*
Guide children as they read aloud and discuss the front pages and pages 6–9. Listen to each child read while other children in the group follow along. Help children sound out decodable words. Use the comprehension questions to prompt discussion of the text and its vocabulary. Encourage children to ask questions, too.

**Front pages**

**Understand text features**
Read what the sheep are saying on the front pages. Why are the words written in bubbles? to show what the sheep are saying
Do you think the story will be serious? no Why? because the sheep are talking and saying silly things

**Page 6**

**Use pictures**
Who are the characters in the picture? Betsy, people in the town Where is Betsy? in front of a pie shop

**Understand puns and word play**
A ewe is a female sheep. Why is “Pies for Ewe” funny? It is a play on words with “you” and “ewe.” Mutton is meat from sheep. Why is “mutton pot pie” funny? because Betsy is a shepherd, and the pie shop sells pie made from sheep.

**Page 7**

**Understand vocabulary**
What do you think the Shepherd’s Oath is? a promise that Betsy makes to take care of the sheep and protect them from wolves

**Page 8**

**Draw conclusions**
Why is Zimmo the last wolf on the mountain? The sheep are all guarded well, so the wolves have to look for food somewhere else. Zimmo is hungry and lonely, but why does he start howling merrily? He is happy he has a plan to eat the sheep.

**Recall key details**
Why does Zimmo start howling? He thinks of a plan. What do you think Zimmo’s plan is? to trick the shepherd and farmers

**Understand onomatopoeia**
Why do you think “Ooo hooo hoooooo” and “Boo! Hoo! Hoo!” are written in italic, or slanted letters? The wolf is making these sounds. These words that mimic the sound they represent are called onomatopoeia. What other examples of onomatopoeia are there on this page? Umm, Hmm, Aii, yii, Tralee traloo

**Page 9**

**Use pictures**
Where is Zimmo? on the mountain Point to “Bo Peep Gas Station.” Who is Bo Peep? a character in a nursery rhyme who loses all of her sheep Why is the “Bo Peep Gas Station” funny? Answers may vary. Children will likely say that the illustrator is having fun including details about sheep.

**Describe setting**
Where does the story take place? in a town and on a mountain near the town What time of day is it? night

Introduce the Book Talk Journal questions. Read the journal questions with children. Tell them to write about a promise they made and Zimmo the wolf’s problems.
Betsy who cried wolf is a book about the sheep herder who is trying to protect her sheep and the farmer's from the wolf who has been all over the forest, etc. This book isn't one of my favorites, just because of the fact that I have not been able to really relate to this book. I say that because not the fact that it is boring, but because of the fact that it didn't really intrigue me. Where is the wolf? Why did you cry out for help? asked one of villagers humbly. The villagers were very angry and left the place cursing the shepherd boy. This is so much fun, laughed the shepherd boy. The boy who cried wolf summary. Image Source -> www.234.cn. Next day, the shepherd boy was back again to the routine of taking the sheep for grazing. Here is a short visual depiction of the most amazing short stories for kids. See the video story below, The Boy Who Cried Wolf Summary Video. Tagged with: boy who cried wolf, the boy that cried wolf, the boy who cried wolf, the boy who cried wolf story, the boy who cried wolf summary. About the author Shreya Sharma. Wolf! just to have some fun. The villagers ran to help him, but when they arrived they couldn't see a wolf. The boy laughed at them and they left in anger. A couple of days passed and the boy decided to have some fun again and so he thought he'd try again. He shouted Wolf! Help! Please!* This time fewer people from the village came to see if there was a wolf. And once again they found no wolf and left angry at the shepherd boy. The next day, as the boy was watching the sheep, a real wolf came. Now the boy started screaming and shouting, terrified of the wolf: Help, help! Plea