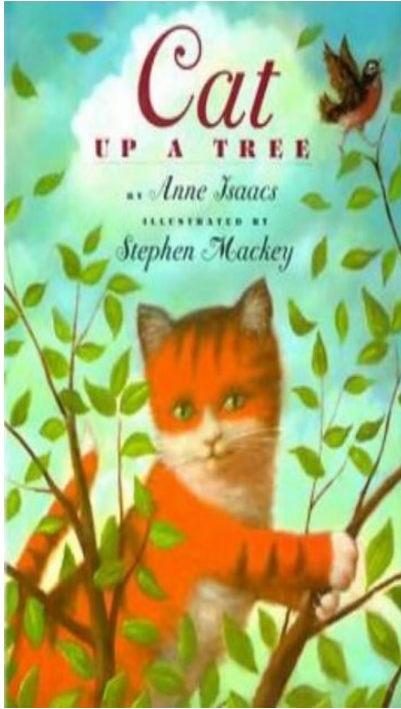


Cat Up A Tree - Teacher Activities



1. Point of view

Study three or more poems from *Cat up a Tree* to examine the point of view of the 'narrator' or 'voice' of that poem. Who is 'telling the story' in each poem, and why does that character see things as he/she does?

Assign the students to write a story that is 'told' three times in a row by three of the characters in the story. Younger students should use a familiar story from, for example, *Mother Goose*; older students can invent their own story, but it should be simple. For example, the story of 'Jack and Jill' can be told from the standpoint of the children, the hill, the well, or the unseen parent who sent the children for water (but never got any).

2. Rhythm

Use different poems in *Cat up a Tree* to teach students about the different forms of rhythm or rhyme. For example, *The Tree's complaint* is written in iambic feet, or two-syllable units with an accent usually on the second syllable. There are four of these feet, or units, per line.

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Here is one stanza from the poem as an example, with accented syllables shown in **bold**:

Is **it** a **cat** who **hangs** the **leaves**

In **scarlet banners from** the **sky**,

Charms blossoms out of **sticks**,

Then floats them down as **you walk by**?

Have the students read the lines aloud while they beat out the rhythm on their desks, or clap hands on every accented (emphasized) syllable. Note that the first two lines have a regular beat; every second syllable is accented. But the final two lines are irregular. Discuss with students why a poet might sometimes choose to make a line irregular? What would a poem sound like if every line had an identical beat?