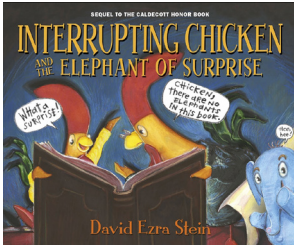




Walker Books Classroom Ideas



Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise

David Ezra Stein
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

SURPRISE! The little red chicken is back in David Ezra Stein's follow-up to the Caldecott Honor Book *Interrupting Chicken*.

It's homework time for the little red chicken, who has just learned what every good story should have: an elephant of surprise. Or is it, as her papa suggests, an element of surprise? As they dive into some stories – looking for the parts that make you go “Whoa! I didn't know that was going to happen!” – Papa is sure he can convince Chicken he's right. After all, there are no elephants in *The Ugly Duckling*, *Rapunzel* or *The Little Mermaid* ... Or are there?

Author/Illustrator Information:

David Ezra Stein is the creator of many award-winning picture books, including *Interrupting Chicken*, which was awarded a Caldecott Honor, *Dinosaur Kisses*, *I'm My Own Dog* and *Ice Boy*. He lives with his family in New York, USA. Find him online at daveezra.com.

How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Primary
- F-1
- Ages 3+

Key Learning Areas:

- English

Example of:

- Picture Book

Themes/Ideas:

- Surprise
- Humour
- Animals



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Discussion Questions and Activities:

Before Reading

What do you think this book might be about just from hearing the title? How do your ideas change when you see the cover? After reading the book, compare your initial thoughts to what the book is actually about. Discuss the phrase “you can’t judge a book by its cover.”

Exploring the Book

Is *Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise* an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?

Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?

How can the reader tell when a character is speaking? (e.g. punctuation)

Write a book review on *Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise*. Include what you liked about the book, who you think would enjoy it the most and mention any other books you think are similar.

On the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper, place an image of the *Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise* cover and surround it with words that describe the book. Include words that describe what you liked and what you disliked about the book.

Examine several of the spreads and have a class discussion about the following:

- What is the main colour or colours used? What mood/feeling do these colours create?
- What objects are in the foreground (front), the midground and background of the picture? Why do you think the illustrator chose to do that?
- What are the characters on this page doing and where are they looking? Why are they doing this? What effect does this have?

What is your favorite part of *Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise*? Why?

In *Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise* Papa uses fairytales to try to show Chicken the element (elephant) of surprise. Can you list the fairytales?

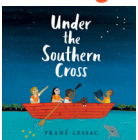
Are there any fairytales not used that you think should have been? Why?

Write your own *Interrupting Chicken* story with an elephant surprise.

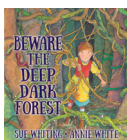
What is your favorite story to read? Why?

Create a play based on *Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise*. Assign actors to play Chicken, Papa, the Elephant and characters in the fairytales with others to manage. Perform your play at a school assembly.

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