



Classroom Guide – *McDuff Moves In*

Guide written by Sandy De Lisle
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This classroom guide provides language arts activities that will involve other learning areas such as social studies. The purpose of this guide is to extend the themes of this story into learning activities that help to reinforce the main ideas of the book and to deepen understanding.

STORY SUMMARY

It's the 1930s and McDuff, a homeless West Highland white terrier, wanders through Lucy and Fred's neighborhood in search of a safe place to live. Although Lucy and Fred are not looking to adopt a pet, something about McDuff makes them change their minds.

LESSON ONE: Mastering McDuff

Grade 3

Objective: Improve reading skills while learning how caring for homeless animals has changed over time

Students will be able to:

1. Summarize the main points of a book
2. Appreciate the importance of illustrations in determining comprehension and setting the tone of a story
3. Understand the role animal shelters play and how they have changed over time

Common Core Standards Addressed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2

Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events

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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7

Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting)

National Curriculum Standard for Social Studies Themes Addressed:

Time, Continuity and Change: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

Materials Needed

- A copy of *McDuff Moves In* written by Rosemary Wells and illustrated by Susan Jeffers
- White board or marker/chart paper with the headings: McDuff, Lucy and Fred
- Internet connection and computer
- Online article [The Changing Status of Animals and Human-Animal Bonds](#)
- Optional: Enlarged images of select illustrations

Lesson Procedure

Opening

1. Tell students that you will be reading a picture book to them and you want them to pay close attention to the three main characters of the story as well as the illustrations in the book.
2. Read aloud the book *McDuff Moves In* to the class, making sure to pause long enough for all students to see the illustrations.

Body

1. Lead a class discussion that includes the following literal questions:
 - How did McDuff end up loose in Lucy and Fred's neighborhood?
 - How many homes did he try before Lucy and Fred let him in—and what happened at each home?
 - What happened that frightened McDuff?
 - How did Lucy and Fred come up with his name?
2. Lead a class discussion that includes the following inferential questions:
 - How would you describe Lucy?
 - How would you describe Fred?
 - Why do you think Lucy and Fred decided to take McDuff to the dog pound?
 - Why did they end up changing their minds and not bringing him to the dog pound?

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3. Explain to students that the term “dog pound” is not one that is currently in use. The term “animal shelter” is more accepted today. The term “pound” may have come from the word “impound,” which means to shut up in or confine something.
4. Lead a class discussion that includes the following critical question:
 - Why do you think that today we use the term “animal shelter” instead of “dog pound”? (Accept all answers but go over the basics from [The Changing Status of Animals and Human-Animal Bonds](#) by the Center to Study Human-Animal Relationships and Environments.)

Activity

1. Ask the students how the illustrations made them feel.
2. Review what an adjective is (a word that describes another word).
3. Ask students to share with you as many adjectives as they can to describe a few illustrations from the book (choose your favorites). If you made enlarged copies of illustrations, you could use them here.
4. Record their adjectives on the white board or chart paper for each of the following categories: McDuff, Lucy, Fred and Setting.
5. Are there any common themes in the adjectives selected?
6. Is it OK for illustrations to evoke different feelings or beliefs for different people? (Absolutely)

Closure

Ask students to share what they think might happen today if McDuff showed up on a stranger’s doorstep. (Accept all answers but be sure to cover the importance of microchips and the Internet for helping lost dogs find their homes—share the website [Lost Dogs of America](#) with students, which has loads of resources on what to do if you find a stray pet or are missing your own.)

Extension

1. Invite an animal control officer or animal sheltering professional to visit your classroom and share what they do.
2. Have students research the history of animal sheltering and how it has changed from the 1930s to today. Ask them to create a PowerPoint or Prezi highlighting what they learned.
3. Ask students to contact one of the organizations that helps to professionalize the animal sheltering field such as the [National Animal Care and Control Association](#) and ask about careers in animal welfare.

LESSON TWO: On the Air

Grade: 3

Objectives: To comprehend the historical importance of radio as a communication tool and create an engaging audio recording of a story

Students will be able to:

1. Explain the significance of radio as a medium of communication in the U.S. before TV and the internet
2. Dramatize a story by using only sound

Common Core Standards Addressed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.5

Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.4

Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.

National Curriculum Standard for Social Studies Themes Addressed:

Time, Continuity and Change: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

Materials Needed

- 10-12 copies of [McDuff Moves In](#) written by Rosemary Wells and illustrated by Susan Jeffers (enough to give groups of 2-3 students a copy to share)
- History of Radio [video clip](#)
- Free audio recording from a popular 1930s radio program streamed or downloaded from [Old Radio World](#)
- Optional: Musical instruments and random items to create sound effects

Lesson Procedure

Opening

Tell the students they are going to read a story about a lost dog that takes place in the United States in the 1930s. Ask them what forms of mass communication were popular at that time.

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Take all responses but establish that newspaper and radio were the main forms of mass communication. Radio especially was the way millions of people got their news and entertainment.

Body

Share the [History of Radio video clip](#) with students.

Ask students to share what they found the most interesting or surprising from the video.

Consider touching on the following:

- The price and size of radios
- Popular radio programs
- The importance of advertising on the radio and the origin of the name soap opera
- How family life has changed (both parents working, dominance of Internet, etc.)
- How radio was used to convey news

Play a recording of the 1930s radio program of your choice. [Flash Gordon](#) is a good one for this grade level.

Activity

1. Have a class discussion about the following:
 - How is hearing a story without visuals different than either hearing or reading a story and having accompanying pictures or illustrations?
 - Do you prefer one over the other? Why?
 - When you read a story to someone, what are some things you can do to make it entertaining? (speak clearly and slowly so they can understand, use different voices and sound effects, etc.)
2. Have students read *McDuff* in small groups of two to three.
3. Have students dramatize the story in their groups by reading it aloud and recording it. Allow them to use items you have brought in for sound effects or let them bring in or create their own. Alternatively, they can use [sound effect apps](#).
4. Share all the audio versions of the story.

Closure

Invite students to post their audio stories online and share with others.

Extension

1. Challenge students to create an original radio broadcast.
2. Have students complete a Venn diagram, write a paper or create a PowerPoint or Prezi on how radio was similar and different from today's Internet.

LESSON THREE: A Woman on a Mission

Grade 3

Objective: Improve reading and writing skills and gain an appreciation of the history of the animal welfare movement

Students will be able to:

1. Use context clues to figure out the meaning of words
2. Recount the role of one key figure in the animal protection movement
3. Take notes from sources and write a related brief research project

Common Core Standards Addressed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4.A

Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.7

Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.8

Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies Themes Addressed:

Culture: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Time, Continuity and Change: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

Materials Needed

- A copy of McDuff Moves In written by Rosemary Wells and illustrated by Susan Jeffers
- White board or chart paper and marker
- Internet connection and computer

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Lesson Procedure

Opening

3. Tell students that you will be reading a picture book to them and you want them to pay close attention to the setting of the story.
4. Read aloud the book [McDuff Moves In](#) to the class, making sure to pause long enough for all students to see the illustrations.

Body

Lead a classroom discussion by asking the following questions:

- In what time period do you think this story takes place and why? (allow all answers—but make sure to discuss the illustrations and how they give clues, including the car, clothing, hair styles, items in the house, etc., and confirm that it is the 1930s.)
- What does the word wafted mean? Ask students to write down a definition and ask for volunteers to share their definition. How did they figure out what this uncommon word means?

Activity

1. Show the video clip of [History of Orphans of the Storm](#).
2. Ask students if they see similarities between Irene Castle and Lucy? Ask them to share their ideas.
3. Have students read and take notes from online articles about Irene Castle and her husband Vernon: [Encyclopedia of World Biography](#) and [Wikipedia](#).
4. Have students write a brief research report on Irene Castle.

Closure

Have students share their articles with others.

Extension

1. Choose a different figure in the animal welfare world who is making a difference for animals and write a report about the person.