

## **The Pigeon HAS to Go to School!**

by Mo Willems

Ages: 4-6; Grades PreK-1

Themes: Back to School, Humor

### **Common Core Connections:**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3** Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

### **SUMMARY**

The spirited pigeon from *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog!*, and *Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late!* is back, and now it's time for him to start school..... Whazza-Whazza-WHAA?!? The Pigeon is adamant, The Pigeon is convinced, The Pigeon is clear, he does NOT need to go to school. Students will relate to the pigeon's first day jitters and wide-ranging emotions. Sometimes all it takes to change a stubborn pigeon's mind is a little incentive... like a school bus.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will make text-to-self and text-to-text connections.

Students will identify how the pigeon changed from the beginning to the end of the story, including making inferences about his feelings.

Students will write a personal narrative about their first day of school.

### **BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES**

Activate or build students' prior knowledge about The Pigeon character from previous books or movies (*Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog!*, and *Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late!*). Guiding questions:

What kind of personality does the pigeon have?

How does the pigeon speak and act?

What words could you use to describe the pigeon?

Tell students that they will watch another movie about the pigeon going to school for the first time. Ask students to predict ways that the pigeon might react to this news and encourage them to watch and listen to find out if their predictions were correct.

### **Discuss being nervous with students.**

#### **Guiding questions:**

What does it mean to be nervous?

What are some situations that might make a person nervous?

How do people act when they're nervous?

When was a time when you were nervous? What helped you feel better?

Tell students that one of The Pigeon's emotions in the movie is nervous about his first day of school. Encourage them to watch and listen for how he acts and what he says that reveals that he is nervous. Ask them to think about how they might feel if they were in the pigeon's situation.

### **AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES**

Revisit the Before Viewing discussions. Guide students to make text-to-self connections using a

graphic organizer. Set up a T-chart labeled, "Same as Pigeon/Different from Pigeon."

#### **Guiding questions:**

How did you feel before going to school for the first time?

How did you act?

What did you know about school before you went?

How do you get to school?

Culminate the discussion by having students illustrate something that happened on their first day of school and write a sentence describing the picture. (CCRA.R.1; CCRA.SL.1; CCRA.SL.2)

Ask students to think back to their first day of school. How did they feel? Was there anything in particular that they were nervous about? Invite them to bring in a photograph of their first day of school if they have one. Give them time to share their photographs and describe how they were feeling when the picture was taken. Then, guide students through the writing process. Use the ideas that they gave to make a simple web that describes how they felt on the first day of school. Then provide students with various sentence starters and model using ideas from the web to write a story of a few sentences describing their first day of school. Students who are in a pre-writing phase can dictate to an adult or draw pictures to show their story. After students have finished their stories, give them time to illustrate them and share them with the class. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3)

Lead a discussion about how The Pigeon's feelings changed from the beginning to the end of the movie. Begin by brainstorming feeling words with students. List the words that they come up with, along with a visual that shows the feeling. For more support, consider using a pre-made feelings chart. Then, replay, or read the beginning of the story. **Ask:**

How does the pigeon feel?

What in the movie/book shows you or tells you how he feels?

Why does he feel that way?

After discussing, write on chart paper: In the beginning of the story, the pigeon feels \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

Then replay, or read, the middle of the story. Ask the same questions and write: In the middle of the story, The Pigeon feels \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

Repeat the activity for the end of the story. Summarize with a statement: Pigeon's feelings change from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_. (CCRA.R.1; CCRA.R.3; CCRA.SL.1; CCRA.SL.2)

### **Other titles from Mo Willems:**

*Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*

*Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late!*

*Edwina: The Dinosaur Who Didn't Know She Was Extinct*

*Hooray for Amanda and Her Alligator*

*Knuffle Bunny Trilogy*

*Leonardo, the Terrible Monster*

*Nanette's Baguette*

*The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog!*

*That is NOT a Good Idea!*

### **More Titles for the First Day of School:**

*How Do Dinosaurs Go to School?*  
by Jane Yolen; illust. by Mark Teague

*Knuffle Bunny Too* by Mo Willems

*School's First Day of School*  
by Adam Rex; illust. by Christian Robinson

*Splat the Cat* by Rob Scotton

*Timothy Goes to School* by Rosemary Wells

*Will I Have a Friend?*  
by Miriam Cohen; illust. by Lillian Hoban

*The Teacher From the Black Lagoon*  
by Mike Thaler; illust. By Jared Lee