

CLICK, CLACK, MOO COWS THAT TYPE

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by Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Betsy Lewin

(Simon & Schuster)

Themes: Animals, Humor, Labor Strikes

Grade Level: PreK–3

Running Time: 10 minutes

SUMMARY

Farmer Brown's cows have found an old typewriter in the barn, and now they are typing notes demanding electric blankets. The hens support the cows. The farmer types notes back. The ducks mediate the dispute, carrying typed notes between house and barn. This highly amusing tale combines several styles of writing: straight prose, letter-writing and sounds. Children will especially enjoy the repetitions of the sound effects: click, clack, moo! The pictures, with their bold, black lines and gentle cartoon humor, add to the comedy.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a story about imaginary animals.
- Children will identify different ways of telling a story.
- Children will experience the fun of knowing how to read and write.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Show students the cover of the book or video, and ask them to discuss the title and art. From the words "Cows that Type," children should reason that this will be a silly story. Ask them to imagine what cows would write about and to pay attention to the story to see if the writer imagined the same things they did. Rehearse the refrain "Click, Clack, Moo!" and ask children to read along when they hear or see it in the story.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Ask children why they laughed at the ending of the story. Talk about how the repeated words changed at the end and added to the surprise. Go back over the story, encouraging children to list all the surprising things that happened: the cows discovering an old typewriter, learning to type, typing the notes, and so forth. Identify the parts of the story that were letters or notes, the parts that just told the story and the parts that were poetry.

Connect the story to reading and writing by encouraging students to keep the story going in some way. They might tell what happens when other animals learn to type, or when one of the animals gets a computer. Use the imaginary stories they suggest as opportunities to talk about why

it's fun to know how to read and write.

Connect the story to poetry and music by encouraging children to retell the story in musical form. Dance elements might be added as well. You might add scenes where the cows are learning to identify and read letters, to the tune of "Old MacDonald."

Connect the story to art by pointing out how the art is similar to comic book art. Discuss what the farmer's clothes and expressions tell us about the farmer. Point out how the artist uses shadows to add depth to the picture and printed notes to advance the story. Encourage students to draw their own animal comic strips.

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