

We're Going on a Bear Hunt

This storybook could be useful to help children explore movement and sensory experiences. There is a strong rhythm and lots of repetition which can support children's participation.



Video

There are lots of versions of this story online. Here are a few which might be useful.

This version performed by Michael Rosen has actions with the illustrations from the book in the background.

Here Michael Rosen performs again but the emphasis is on exposure to print, bringing text alive in a fun and visual way.

If you are looking for something to support your use of Makaton, try this version which has a nice pace for learning.

Cueing in...

Bring out some soft fur material to feel or reveal a toy bear slowly from a bag to help guess what the story will be. Another way to cue in the story could be to start a drum rhythm to the beat of 'we're going on a bear hunt...' You could repeat this drum beat as a 'chorus' each time it comes up in the story.

Accessibility

To make this longer story more accessible for some children, you could shorten it to include just 2 or 3 'adventures' e.g. the grass, the river and the mud initially, and then build up the story in stages.

Communication and Language

- Introduce a BIGmack switch or a Talking Tin to play one of the repetitive phrases e.g. "we're not scared". Initially you may need to model the use of the switch, perhaps using a prompt such as hand over hand support. Eventually you may just need to pause at the right place in the story to offer the child an opportunity to activate the switch or Talking Tin independently.
- When learning Makaton you could select the repetitive words from the story e.g. 'over' 'under' and 'through' to focus on.
- Use photos or pictures to make connections with the different environments in the story. Then use these to play sequencing games linked to the storyline.



A Sensory Touch

This book is an ideal resource for creating a sensory story to support a child's understanding and to help them engage. This video gives a wide range of ideas to support a whole sensory approach. The ideas include everyday objects and materials for you to illustrate the story page by page.

Movement Ideas with Props

This is a good story for acting out inside or outside. Props and musical instruments can be used to enhance the experience as you pretend to go through the obstacles e.g. you could:

- stomp/march to a drum beat for the 'chorus' or tap the rhythm on your/the child's knees or body;
- shake or rustle raffia or tinsel cheerleader pompoms for swishing grass;
- squeeze sensory bags full of custard/yoghurt to 'feel' the mud;
- 'shiver' for the cold river or the snowstorm;
- use a wood block or two sticks for 'stumble trip' as you move through the forest;
- creep along the floor as you approach the 'bear' and run away when they turn around; or
- use a torch to explore under a blanket/sheet cave – what can you find?



Finish

Remember to prepare the child to understand that the activity is about to end. Use phrases like 'last one', 'one more, then finish' or something similar. If any props are used, involve the child in putting them back into the box/bag they came from. If you feel the child is giving you cues that they are ready to finish earlier, use your finish routine to support this.

For some children being involved in the sensory or movement activities can be tiring or overstimulating. On those occasions it might be a relaxing activity to watch the animated story online. See the video list above for links.