

Early Learning Matters

Title: *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* retold by Bonnie Dobkin (from Creative Curriculum)

Big Ideas from the Text	
Main Idea	Be grateful for what you have.
Story Problem	The three Billy Goats Gruff need to reach the meadow across the river to find more grass to eat. But a hideous, hungry troll lives under the bridge and is blocking their path. They will have to outsmart him with a good plan to get across the bridge safely.
Final Why Question	Why did the hideous Troll change his mind about eating Middle and Little Billy Goat Gruff? Was it a good choice? Why/Why not?

Jump to [First Read](#) [Second Read](#) [Third Read](#) [Experiential Learning Opportunities](#)

First Read

Push in key events

Think Aloud and WHY Questions		Vocabulary P= point A= act T=tell
<p>Why Q: Why did the Three Billy Goats Gruff need to cross the Troll's bridge?</p> <p>Possible Answer(s): to get to the meadow; they ran out of grass in their home and need a new one</p> <p>Purpose Statement: The title of this story is <i>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</i>. Just like the story we read about <i>Little Red Hen</i>, the author, Bonnie Dobkin, retold this story. It's a story that a lot of people know but she told it again with her own words in her own way.</p> <p>On the cover I see a really big billy goat up close, and then some smaller billy goats a bit farther away. I also see a lot of green grass around them. Let's read to find out who these goats are.</p>		
p. 3	Children echo. Now I know that the three Billy Goats Gruff are a family. They are brothers. But they are all different.	
p. 5	Big Billy Goat Gruff is the oldest . That means he was born first and had the most time to grow. So it makes sense that he's the biggest and the strongest. He's so tough and strong that his hooves (feet) can crush rocks. That means he can break the rocks apart or into pieces just by stepping on them!	<p>oldest (P, T) – having lived the longest</p> <p>hooves (P, T) –</p> <p>crush (P, T) – break apart or into pieces</p>

p. 6	Middle Billy Goat is the next oldest. He's only half as big as Big Billy. It also says he is nervous , or worries a lot about what might happen. And he thinks that nobody listens to him or pays attention to what he's saying.	nervous (PAT) – worried about what might happen
p. 7	Last is Little Billy. He is the smallest and has a tiny body and horns. He talks a lot and thinks he is very smart.	
p. 8 - 9	Oh no, the Billy Goats have a big problem! They've eaten up all the grass in their valley . A valley is a place where the Earth dips, in between mountains or hills.	valley (P,T) – place where the Earth dips, in between mountains or hills
p. 10 - 11	<p>They need to go somewhere else to find more grass to eat. So Little Billy Goat came up with a smart idea – they will get grass in the meadow on the other side of the river.</p> <p>A meadow is a big open field of grass. Do you think this is a good idea? Show me thumbs up for yes or thumbs down for no.</p>	
p. 12-13	<p>Yikes, this idea is tricky! To get to the meadow with the yummy grass, the Billy Goats have to cross this bridge. A bridge is something that is built over a river, railroad, or other obstacle, that lets people travel across one place to another.</p> <p>And under this bridge is a HIDEOUS, HORRIBLE, STINKY troll! The Troll has bumpy skin and bulging eyes like a frog; his nose is dripping boogers and he has smelly feet. And this terrible, hideous troll will eat the Billy Goats if they try to cross his bridge.</p> <p>Let's vote again: Do you think this is a good idea, for the Billy Goats Gruff to cross the bridge to the meadow? Show me thumbs up for yes or thumbs down for no.</p>	<p>bridge (P,T) – something that is built over a river, railroad, or other obstacle, that allows people to travel across</p> <p>hideous (P,T) – word to describe something that is very ugly</p>
p. 14	<p>The Billy Goats are all a little different in the way they look and act. And they have different feelings about crossing the Troll's bridge too.</p> <p>Middle Billy Goat is scared and doesn't want to get eaten. Big Billy is not afraid. And Little Billy Goat is feeling ok because he has a smart plan.</p>	
p. 15	Trip-trap is the sound the goat's hooves make crossing the bridge. Show me with your feet/hands how it sounds when Little Billy is crossing.	

p. 16-19	<p>Little Billy Goat tells the Troll who he is and that he wants to cross the bridge.</p> <p>How does he convince the Troll not to eat him? Well he says the Troll should wait and eat his brother instead. Because Little Billy is small and the Middle Billy would make a better meal. So the Troll thinks, "Yes, I do want more food. I can always eat this Little Billy when he come back across." And he lets Little Billy go.</p>	
p. 20-22	<p>Here's Middle Billy Goat. He tells the Troll his name and that he wants to cross the bridge.</p> <p>How does he get across the bridge without being eaten? Well he tells the Troll the same thing! The Troll should wait and eat his brother instead. Because Middle Billy is small and Big Billy would make an even better meal.</p> <p>Is the Troll going to let him go? Yes/No</p>	
p. 23 - 24	Hurray! Middle Billy Goat made it across safely!	
p. 25 - 27	<p>Ohhh Big Billy Goat's hooves make a different sound because he's so big and heavy – TROMP, TROMP.</p> <p>Just like his brothers, he tells the Troll his name and that he wants to cross the bridge. But when the Troll says he wants to eat Big Billy, he also says something different.</p>	
p. 28 - 30	Big Billy charged the Troll, he ran towards him to attack! Then he stomped and hit the Troll, and knocked the Troll into the river.	charge (PAT) –rush forward to attack
p. 31 - end	<p>Wow! At the end of the story, the Troll is carried away in the water and doesn't come back. And the Billy Goats live happily ever after.</p> <p>Did their plan work?</p>	
Post Reading	<p>Let's think back. Why did the Three Billy Goats Gruff need to cross the Troll's bridge?</p> <p>Possible Answer(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to get to the meadow ● they ran out of grass in their home and need a new one <p>We can read this story another day, and we will talk more about how the the billy goats were feeling and thinking.</p>	

Second Read

Push in characters' thoughts, feelings, actions

Think Aloud and WHY Questions		Vocabulary P= point A= act T=tell
<p>Why Q: Why did Big Billy Goat Gruff feel brave and confident crossing the bridge?</p> <p>Possible Answer(s):</p> <p>We remember this book—it's The Three Billy Goats Gruff.</p> <p>Purpose Statement: Remember the big problem in our story? The three Billy Goats Gruff ran out of food to eat, so they needed to cross a bridge to get to a meadow with more grass. But under the bridge was a terrible Troll who liked to eat anyone who crosses his bridge.</p> <p>And each of the Billy Goat brothers were feeling a little different when they had to cross the Troll's bridge. Let's read and find out why Big Billy Goat Gruff feels brave and confident crossing the bridge.</p>		
p. 3	The three Billy Goats Gruff are brothers. Even though they are a family, they are all a little different.	
p. 5	<p>Big Billy Goat Gruff is the oldest. That means he was alive the longest of all his brothers. Tap your head if you are the oldest (or only) kid in your family.</p> <p>He's so big and tough and strong! His hooves can crush the rocks apart when he walks. Hooves are a type of animal feet. Instead of toes or claws, this type of foot is hard and solid.</p> <p>And the story says he wasn't afraid of anything. So we can call him fearless, because he isn't afraid to do anything.</p>	<p>oldest (P, T) – having lived the longest</p> <p>hooves (P, T) –a type of animal feet. Instead of toes or claws, this type of foot is hard and solid.</p> <p>crush (P, T) – break apart or into pieces</p> <p>fearless (P,T) - to have courage, to be unafraid</p>
p. 6	<p>Middle Billy Goat is the next oldest. He's not as big as Big Billy. Middle Billy thinks that nobody listens to him or pays attention to what he's saying. Raise your hand if you are a kid in the middle of your family, so you have an older sibling and a younger one.</p> <p>Do you see how his eyebrows are scrunched and his mouth has a little frown? He is nervous, or worries a lot about what might happen. Can you show me on our face how it looks when you feel nervous?</p>	<p>nervous (PAT) – to worry about what might happen</p>

p. 7	<p>And here is Little Billy. He's the youngest, so he was born last. Show me a thumbs up if you're the youngest kid in your family.</p> <p>Little Billy is tiny, with a small body and small horns. He talks a lot and thinks he is very smart.</p>	
p. 8 - 9	<p>Yikes. The Billy Goats have eaten up all the grass in the valley where they live.</p> <p>Middle Billy is worried they won't have enough grass to keep growing and living. Worried means he's feeling afraid or nervous about what might happen.</p>	<p>valley (P,T) – place where the Earth dips, in between mountains or hills</p> <p>worried (P,T) – afraid or nervous about what might happen</p>
p. 10 - 11	<p>The brothers keep talking about their problem and Big Billy says they need to go somewhere else to find more grass. And Little Billy sees a meadow on the other side of the river, with lots and lots of grass for them to eat.</p> <p>Big Billy and Little Billy don't seem worried like Middle Billy. They are smiling a little bit thinking about how to solve their problem.</p>	
p. 12-13	<p>And here is the troll! To get to the meadow with the yummy grass, the Billy Goats have to cross the bridge that he lives under. And he tries to eat anyone who crosses his bridge!</p> <p>This Troll is HIDEOUS, HORRIBLE, and STINKY! Hideous means he is very very ugly. What makes him hideous?</p> <p>Yes, he has bumpy skin and bulging eyes like a frog; his nose is dripping boogers and he has smelly feet.</p> <p>I would not want to cross this bridge where a hideous horrible troll would try to eat me! I wonder how the Billy Goats Gruff are feeling.</p>	<p>bridge (P,T) – something that is built over a river, railroad, or other obstacle, that allows people to travel across</p> <p>hideous (P,T) – word to describe something that is very ugly</p>
p. 14	<p>How is Middle Billy Goat feeling? He says, "We can't go across that bridge!" And I can see in the illustration that he's thinking about getting eaten by the Troll. I think he's feeling even more nervous and worried.</p> <p>Big Billy says he is not afraid. And Little Billy Goat is feeling ok. He thinks he has a smart plan to get them across the bridge safely.</p>	
p. 15	<p>First across the bridge is Little Billy. Let's make the small trip-trap sound like his hooves make crossing the bridge. Show me with your</p>	

	feet/hands how it sounds when Little Billy is crossing.	
p. 16-18	<p>Little Billy Goat tells the Troll he wants to cross the bridge to get to the yummy grass.</p> <p>The book says he trembled, which means his body is shaking. Can you repeat after me and show me with your hand what tremble means? Because his body is shaking while he talks to the terrible Troll, I think he's feeling afraid and scared.</p> <p>Little Billy also tells the Troll not to eat him, because he is so small that the Troll could eat him in one bite. And the Troll agrees! But he is sneaky, or tricky too. The Troll thinks to himself, "I can eat this Little Billy later when he come back across." Little</p>	
p. 19	And how does Little Billy feel now? He gets away without being eaten, so he has a smile on his face. How do we think LB is feeling here? Yes, happy .	happy
p. 20-24	<p>Next comes Middle Billy. He also tells the hideous Troll that he should wait for a bigger meal instead of eating Middle Billy.</p> <p>Can you make this same face, and open your eyes and mouth wide like Middle Billy? (p. 22) We know he is the nervous billy goat. But in this part of the story I think he's feeling terrified. That means he is very very afraid. He's probably thinking, "The Troll isn't going to agree with me and will eat me up in just two gulps. This is the most scared I have ever felt."</p> <p>He gets away safe but he still looks a little bit scared as he's running on the other side of the bridge.</p>	terrified (P,T) - very, very afraid
p. 25-26	<p>Last across the bridge is Big Billy. His hooves make the loudest sound because he is the biggest.</p> <p>Can you make the loud TROMP, TROMP. with your hands/feet while I count down from five?</p>	
p. 27	<p>Oh wow! Instead of begging the Troll not to eat him like his brothers did, Big Billy yells back at the Troll, "What are you waiting for?" He's not afraid at all. Big Billy's telling Troll to come and get him!</p> <p>Why is Big Billy feeling so brave and confident? Brave is a feeling word to describe when you might be feeling scared on the inside, but you do a hard thing anyway. Confident means you are</p>	<p>brave - doing something even though we're scared.</p> <p>confident - when you feel sure of yourself and your abilities</p>

	<p>sure of yourself and you know you can do hard things.</p> <p>Turn & Talk to your PB/Jelly partner about a time when you felt brave and confident.</p>	
p. 28-31	<p>The hideous stinky Troll and Big Billy stare at each other, and then Big Billy charges to attack him.</p> <p>Big Billy knocks the Troll down with his head and stomps him with his big hooves. And then he picks up the Troll and throws him in the river!</p> <p>The Troll is carried away in the river and Big Billy can cross the bridge safely.</p>	
p. 32	<p>At the end of the story, all three Billy Goats Gruff are together. They can eat the grass on both sides of the river, because the Troll is gone and they can go back and forth across the bridge whenever they want.</p> <p>How do we think they're feeling here?</p>	
Post Reading p.27-31	<p>Let's look back.</p> <p>Why did Big Billy Goat Gruff feel brave and confident crossing the bridge? (Take children's answers and help develop more fully):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Big Billy is the biggest and strongest ● He made a plan to attack the Troll and knock him off the bridge ● Big Billy knew he was big and strong, and could take care of/fight off the Troll 	

Third Read

Pull out key events & characters' thoughts, feelings, actions

	Think Aloud and WHY Questions	Vocabulary P= point A= act T=tell
Third Read Pull out key events & character s' thoughts, feelings, actions	Why Q: 3. Why did the hideous Troll change his mind about eating Middle and Little Billy Goat Gruff? Was it a good choice? Why/Why not? Possible Answer(s): He wanted to wait for a bigger and better meal; the first two goats convinced him to wait for the bigger brother; he was greedy and wanted more food.	
	Purpose Statement: Remember how the hideous Troll liked to eat anyone who crossed his bridge? And when Little Billy and Middle Billy went across the bridge, the Troll had a chance to eat them. But he didn't! I wonder why he changed his mind. Let's go through the book and talk about what happened and how the characters were feeling.	
	During the third read you shouldn't read the text. The students should tell you what is happening on each page. This is their opportunity to show you how well they know the story, can make inferences about characters' thoughts and feelings, and understand the theme. Prompt students to retell, make inferences, & push in the tier 2 vocabulary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What happened here? ● How is ___ feeling? Or What is ___ thinking? ● Show me how I could/what it looks like/what it means to... [vocabulary term] ● Thumbs up/down Procedure – for answering yes/no questions 	

Experiential Learning Opportunities

Consider options for how to set up play and experiential opportunities for children to develop vocabulary.

Experiential Learning Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Art Center: Children will be invited to make drawings of a favorite part of the story and teacher will encourage use of target social-emotional (Read 2) words: fearless, nervous, worried, terrified, brave, confident. Teacher will provide support by photographing children demonstrating the words and printing photos to have available at the art table. Teacher will also provide a hand mirror. Teacher language prompt: "What feeling word/emotion are you demonstrating, or showing?" ● Art Center II: Children will be encouraged to create their own "hideous" creatures, using that vocabulary word as connected to the troll in the story.