

The Ugly Duckling

Written by Meg Stein

Illustrated by Meredith Thomas

Level 20

Getting ready for reading

Show the students a picture of a cygnet (baby swan) and an adult swan. Ask: *How does the baby swan change as it becomes an adult?* Discuss the gracefulness of adult swans and the awkwardness of cygnets.

Talking through the book

Give each student a copy of the book. Ask them to look at the front cover. *What kind of book do you think this is? What things on the front cover tell you this?*

Ask the students to turn to page 2 and to read the first sentence. Ask: *What kind of book do you think it is now? What do you think the last sentence in the book will be?*

You may like to ask the students to look for other things in the book that tell them it is a fairytale as they read the book individually.

Reading the book

Students read the book individually while the teacher observes each student's reading behaviours and prompts students to use cues to read unfamiliar words. The teacher may select an additional teaching focus based on these observations.

Returning to the text

Select the most appropriate teaching focus for the learning needs of the group. Choose one or more of the following.

Being a meaning maker

Encourage the students to support their answers with evidence from the book as they discuss these questions.

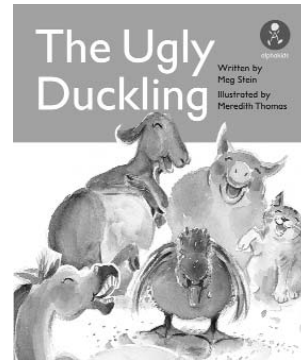
Why was the ugly duckling sad and scared?

Was he really ugly?

Why did the other animals think he was ugly?

Was the ugly duckling treated fairly? Why or why not?

Is beauty really in the eye of the beholder?



TEXT FEATURES

- **This narrative retells the traditional Hans Christian Andersen fairytale, 'The Ugly Duckling'.**
- **Colour illustrations support and extend the text.**
- **Sentences are of varying lengths.**
- **There are up to twelve lines of text on each page.**

Being a code breaker

Students could be encouraged to explore the short /u/ sound in the book: *duckling, ugly, duck, fluffy, until, fun.*

Being a text user

Discuss:

What kind of book is this?

What features in the text tell you this?

Being a text critic

Discuss:

Before the ugly duckling could be accepted by others, he had to look different.

Is this how things work in real life? Is it fair?

Does being beautiful matter? Explain the reasons for your answer.

Why did the author write this book?

Literacy learning centres – follow-up activities

T TEXT CENTRE

Students could complete a text analysis chart (see Blackline Master 10, page 121).

✍ WRITING CENTRE

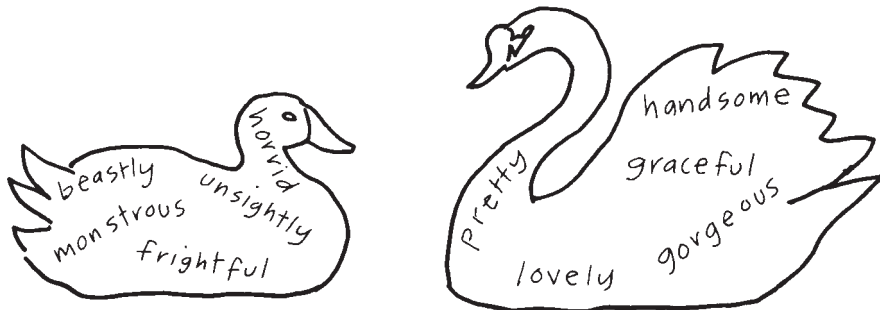
Students could write a letter from the ugly duckling to his mother that tells her about his new life as a swan.

🌊 INTERACTIVE LITERACY CENTRE

Students could work in cooperative groups to rehearse a play that retells the story of 'The Ugly Duckling'.

😊 WORD CENTRE

Students could make a list of alternative words for ugly and beautiful to use when writing. The words could be written on duck- and swan-shaped posters and displayed for future reference.



Keeping track

Asking students to retell a story from a different point of view provides information about their understanding of the story.