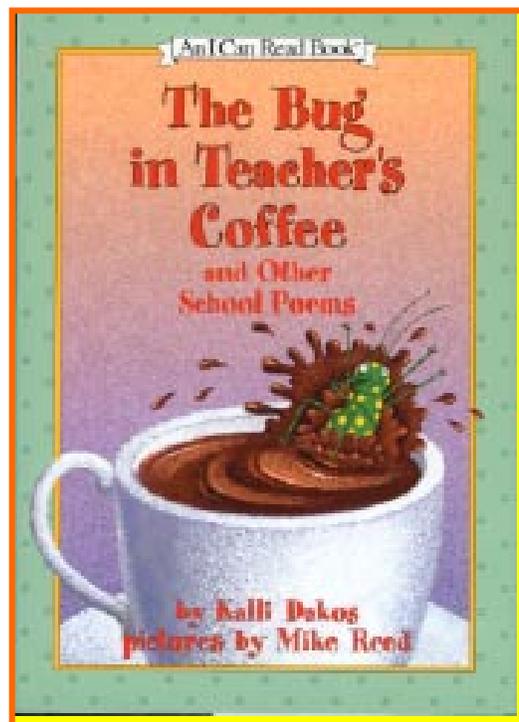


The Bug in Teacher's Coffee

Comments and Lesson Plans
By Kalli Dakos

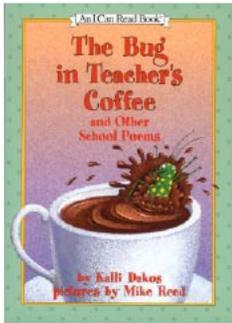


**Children's Choice Selection
2000**



The Bug in Teacher's Coffee

By Kalli Dakos



Comments by Kalli Dakos

Good Morning

- the school talks in this poem and tells the children that he is shining and clean and ready for a brand new day
- repetition and rhyme gives the poem a musical quality
 - Good morning is repeated.
 - too, new, you -- all rhyme and add to the rhythm
- who cleans the school?
- Using imaginations
 - Imagine the school talking. What would it say?
 - at the *end* of the day
 - at the beginning of the school year
 - at the end of the school year

Front Door

- Sound Poetry - I love poems that have sounds in them, and it was fun to make the school sneeze all over the place
- poems come in different shapes -- the shapes go with the ideas in the poem

- rhyming and repetition give this poem a nice rhythm too
 - rhyming - flu/achoo/flu
 - repetition - Keep me shut, have the flu.

The Class Goldfish (1)

- it was fun to play with the letters in this poem
- I made the letters in *fast* very close together and the letters in *slow* far apart - this fits the ideas in the poem and gives the poem an interesting look
- these words are opposites --- fast/slow
- when do you think the fish would move quickly? (to eat, to say hello to its owner, first thing in the day)
- when do you think the fish would move slowly? (when it is tired, when it has eaten too much)

Math Test

- why is the math test upset in this poem?
- what are the correct answers to the questions?
- why is the word "NOT" written in big letters?
- I like the way the illustrator made the number 3 in the picture look so angry - the eyeballs on the 3 are great!
- make up a math test that speaks and says it is happy
- make up a math test that speaks and says it is sad

Bee

- I love making poems in different shapes and I had fun moving the Buzzzzzz on the page, just like a bee would move
- Sound Poem -- it is fun to use sounds in poems.
- why do you think I put HELP in such big letters?
- there is a lot of repetition in this poem -- "I'll scare the kids in . . . "
- rhyme - words five and hive rhyme and the rhyme adds to the rhythm
- children love to discuss and make up stories about bees and bugs
- teachers have many such stories from their classroom experiences
- one poor teacher had hundreds of ants in her classroom one day, another teacher was stung by a bee, and another teacher heard a cockroach crunching under her shoe one day - *share stories*

Jack's Pencil

- what is a hostage?
 - have children look inside their desks to see if they have taken anything hostage
 - have each child look inside his/her desk, pull out an object, and pretend that it is talking to the class and telling about its life
 - this poem is a quatrain -- a poem that has four lines
 - lines two and four rhyme in each stanza - stanza 1 - Clark/dark
stanza 2 - back/Jack
 - there is a big space between the two stanzas
- Illustration - why is the background of the picture black (inside the desk)
- this is a pencil poem - children might want to write poems or draw pictures about their own pencils -- even pencils have stories!

Happy Birthday to You

- poems put to music become songs
- you can *sing* this poem because you already know the tune
- Poetic License* - poets have the license to make up words as long as they don't do it too often -- I made up the word "unbirthday"
- this poem can be performed like a small play -- one person is the book and another person is the ruler or one-half of the class is the book and the other half, the ruler-- I call this a *poetic play* or perhaps in this case, a *short poetic musical*
- look carefully at the wonderful repetition in this poem

The Teddy Bear in the Library

- this poem is based on a true story from Loudoun Country Day School in Leesburg, Virginia
- they have a teddy bear in their library that the children speak to when they have a problem
- the teddy bear *always* listens and keeps everything he hears a secret
- do you talk to your teddy bear?
- this poem is a quatrain - it has four lines and lines two and four rhyme - to/you

Comb

- some poems ask questions
- what question does the comb ask in this poem?
- I made the letters gigantic in "Oh nooooooooooooooooooooo!" and I used poetic license to add all those "o's"

- I want you to practise reading this part of the poem with lots of expression
- why is the comb so upset (he sees the messy hair on his owner)
- have you ever lost your comb or brush?
- have you ever had a messy hair day?

Flying Around the Classroom

- this poem is a *poetic play* and students can take parts
- they could make fly costumes, memorize the poem, and do a performance
- the whole class could make one big, giant GULP together

- lots of repetition
- should kids eat flies? (NO, they are dirty and filled with germs)
- this is based on a true story of a boy in a classroom who is known for eating flies - what next?
- why do you think the flies are passing on the message to other flies?

Gym

Sound Poem - poems can have sound effects like:

- zoom for a car
- bong for a drum
- bang for a loud noise

- students might want to try writing a sound effects poem
- why does the poor gym have an aching head?
- Poetic Shape - it was fun to make the Bongs go all over the place
- it makes the poems look interesting and it fits with the sound effects because bongs would be all over the place and not in a straight line
- what do you think other rooms in the school would say like the library, the cafeteria, the principal's office, the nurse's office and the art room

Monkey Bars

- have the children try making monkey sounds
- why do they call these *monkey bars*?
- rhyming words give the poem a nice rhythm -- every second line rhymes - down, around, sounds
- there are lots of ideas for poems outside on the playground

-imagine what other things would say if they could talk -- skipping ropes, balls, marbles, swings, etc.

Slide

-why are the first two words in this poem written in such a strange shape (to look like a slide)

-some poems are very long while others poems are very short

-how many words are in this poem counting the title? (only 9 words)

-rhyming words - Wheeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee/me

-poetic license- for all the extra letters on the word, "whee"

David Grabs Me

-do you play a sport?

-what would the ball in your sport say?

-students love to talk about sports and they might want to write a *sports poem*

-poetic shape -- I wanted the reader to feel he was right in the game, so I made the words run all over the page just like the player does on the field

-I love the illustration -- the look on the football's face makes me laugh and I am so happy that Mike Reid drew it like this

The Class Goldfish (2)

-*imagination*-- the goldfish has such a limited life in his little fish bowl, but with an imagination, he can go all over the place

-where is he going in this poem?

-the illustrator put a cactus in the goldfish bowl -- I think the fish is imagining the cactus is there

-why is the goldfish so lucky to have a great imagination -- life will be more exciting for him because he will imagine all kinds of wonderful things

Cold Dog on a Tray

-what happened to the poor hot dog?

-poets love to play with words, and I had fun changing the hot dog into a cold dog

-why did I put the word COLD in big letters? - to emphasize the word -- have children read the poem, and say the word COLD with great expression

-quatrain -- four line poem -

-lines two and four rhyme - tray/today

The Bug in Teacher's Coffee

- why is the bug in the teacher's coffee?
- should he be there?
- why does the bug yell the teacher's name at the end of the poem? (Mr. Robbins, the teacher, is putting sugar into the coffee and he is getting ready to drink it)
- the bug is scared-to-death when he sees Mr. Robbins and that is why I put the "OH NO!" in giant capital letters
- repetition and rhyme give the poem rhythm -- "It's warm/It's warm " and "It's fun/It's fun"
- I love the big eyeballs on the bug in the picture
- I think the illustrator, Mike Reid, makes great eyeballs

Schools Get Hungry Too

- what do schools eat when they are hungry?
- I had fun creating the pencil sandwich and I'm glad the illustrator put lettuce on it too -- a pencil and lettuce sandwich on whole wheat bread
- imagination* - make up a funny sandwich
- this poem is divided into two stanzas and each stanza has four lines
- when you see a big space in a poem, like the space between the two stanzas, you take a long pause
- spaces in poetry mean silence
- practise reading this poem

I'm the Teacher's Cookie

- when I wrote this poem, I imagined a big plate of cookies, and one cookie was special one for the teacher
- why is this special cookie bragging?
- really emphasize the word "gorgeous" when you read this poem, just like a cookie that was bragging would say it
- the last three words are in big capital letters and this means you must say them LOUDLY
- children have fun reading this poem and following all the secret directions that I have put in

Ten Ants in the Classroom

- ants are always getting into classrooms and causing problems
- what treats do the ants find in the classroom?
- why do you think they tell their friends?
- what happens to the ants when the teacher sprays them?
- why did the teacher spray them?
- there is both repetition and rhyme in this poem
- children can take parts for an oral reading and all chime in with:
They tell their friends.
- do you think ants really have friends?

Snowflake Peeking in the Window

- why would a snowflake want to go to school
- this poem is made up of one *rhyming couplet* - that is two lines in a row that rhyme
-- cool/school
- have you ever wanted to be a snowflake or something other than a boy or girl?

The Class Goldfish (3)

- I just love the picture of the little goldfish with the big imagination
- is it really snowing in the goldfish bowl?
- I love the hat and scarf the goldfish is wearing
- how do we know that Mike Reid, the illustrator, is just like the goldfish and has a big imagination too?
- why do illustrators need big imaginations?

The School Bell

- I love counting poems and this poem counts the seconds backwards from five
- try counting backwards from ten or fifteen or twenty
- the word, "ring", has letters that grow bigger and bigger -- try reading it this way
- do you ever count the seconds until it is time for something?