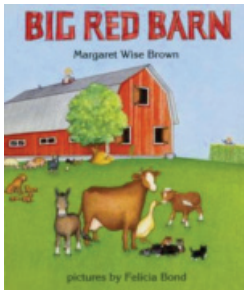


April 24, 2020

linking language development to literacy



In school, the teacher would choose books to read aloud to the children in pre-K and beyond. Many of these are called “adult directed, or AD.” Teachers were also aware of the reading levels of books they chose. These levels relate to the complexity of the books themselves and also to the appropriate reading levels of students as they progress through school. Teachers check the book levels, also called Lexiles, as they choose books to focus on in the classroom. These designations assist teachers in choosing books that would be applicable to children throughout the grades. For instance, *Big Red Barn* is classified as Lexile level AD490. It is adult directed and would appeal to students in grade two and below. (For more information, see Lexile Measures online.)



When choosing *Big Red Barn* as a follow-up to the “At the Farm” assigned passage, my purpose—as a parent at home—was to use the book to elaborate on the topic that was presented in the assigned passage, as a teacher may do in school. I wasn’t worried about lexiles. I wanted a book that would appeal to a child in kindergarten to read for fun and maybe to teach a few things. When looking through *Big Red Barn* I found many elaborations!

I have included an in-depth analysis here for you. You may want to use some of these language features as you work with your child at home.

**TEXT STRUCTURE:** The book is a *Descriptive Sequence*. It has *characters* in a *setting* doing everyday things within that setting. *Big Red Barn* has animals as characters, a barn/farm field as the setting. The author describes the animals by their physical characteristics, their actions and sounds they make. The book is about the usual, ho-hum setting of a farm.

**SENTENCES:** *Sentences are simple*. There is a repetition of the following sentence structures:

*“There was a \_\_\_\_\_.” “In the \_\_\_\_\_ there was a \_\_\_\_\_.”*

You may want to invite the children to use the above sentence starters for the animals within this book:

“There was a great big horse in the great green field.” OR “In the great green field there was a horse. The horse was stomping.”

Within the sentences there are prepositions in and under showing direction.

*Big* and *little* are size words used as descriptive details. (big red barn, very little mouse, very little horse)

**Verbs within these sentences:** “squealed” (shrill sound of a pig), “bray” (the hee-haw of a donkey), “lowed” (a deep moo of a cow); “me-ow” and “bow-wow” were present too!

**Illustrations:** On one page there are three winged animals. Each with two feet, rather than four. This is an opportunity to compare and contrast. All have wings. All have two feet. The pigeon flies. The rooster and the hen fly short distances.

Notice that the illustrations turn to silhouettes as evening approaches. Contrast the pictures with the children.

### **VOCABULARY WORDS:**

There are many describing words: “big red barn,” “great green field,” “bantam (small) rooster,” “sweet warm hay.”

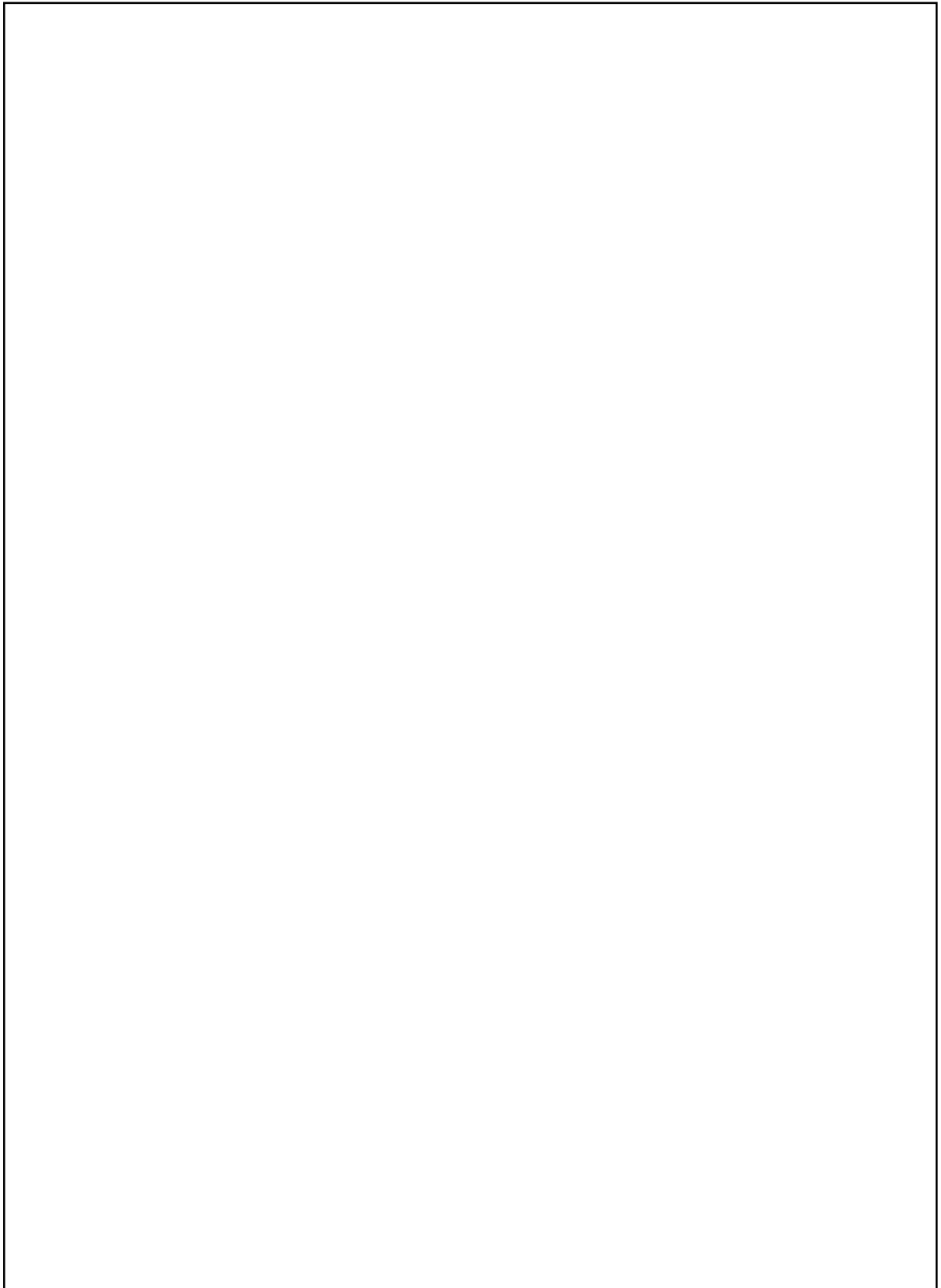
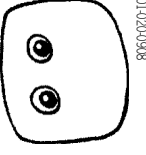
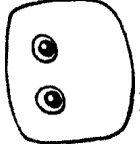
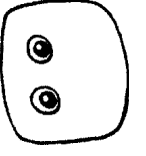
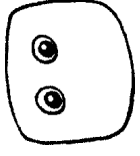
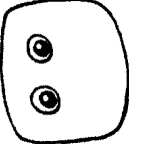
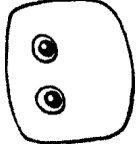
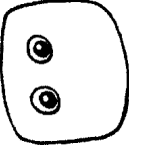
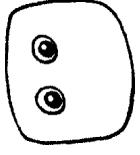
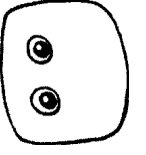
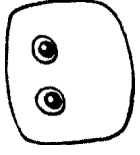
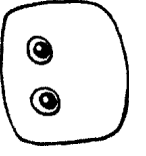
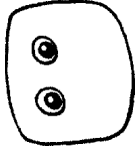
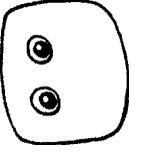
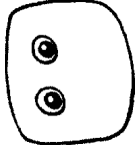
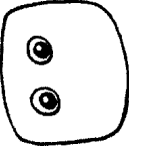
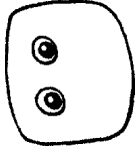
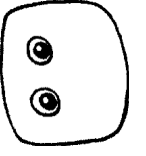
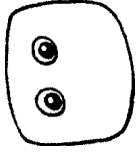
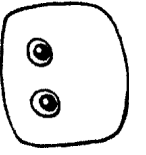
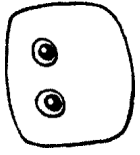
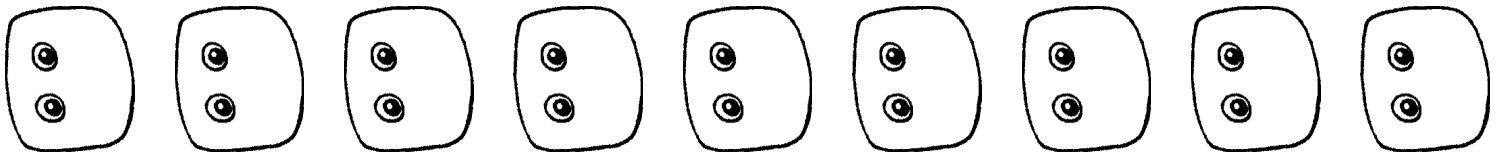
There are words that will need definitions: “clutch” (group of eggs), “weathervane,” “winged horse,” even a “tiger” tom cat.

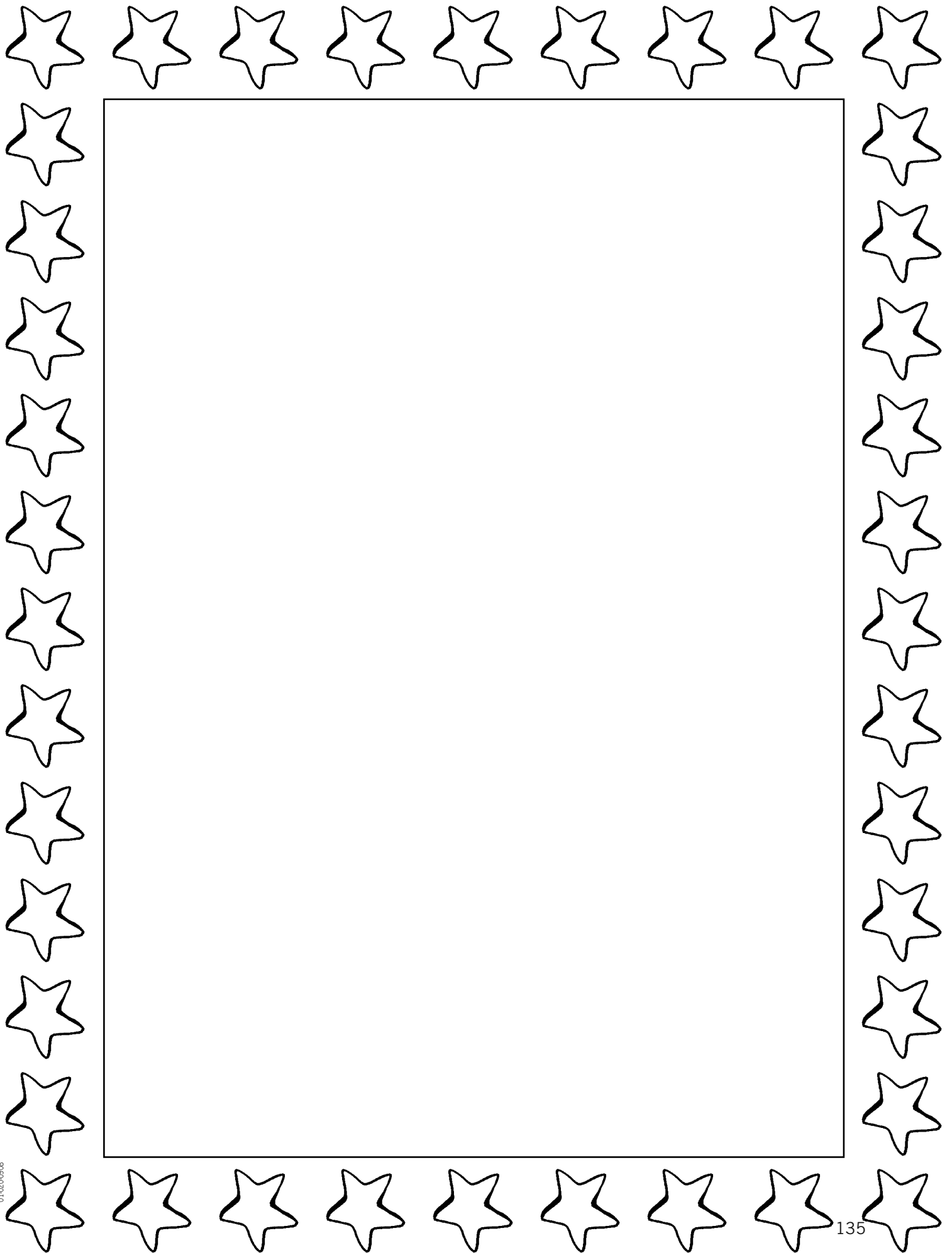
**As you can see by this deep analysis** of the language of the book, there are many things to bring to children’s attention. Choose one or two of these and talk about them with your child.

Please see our blog about “Big Red Barn” on our website:

<https://mindwingconcepts.com/blogs/news/121854721-activity-for-a-field-trip-big-red-barn>

Please go to our website at [www.mindwingconcepts.com](http://www.mindwingconcepts.com) to read about our history, awards and our collection of lesson plans compiled by Sheila Zagula, a thirty-eight-year teacher for the city of Westfield, Massachusetts. She is now retired, but was a kindergarten teacher, a special education teacher and literacy coach during her tenure. There are also lessons, written monthly for the past five years by Sean Sweeney concerning the SGM®/Braidy® and technology. There are lists of articles showing evidence of the professional value of our approach and tools. We have—for the past 29 years—devoted our minds and hearts to the development of oral language at the discourse level in order to make a difference in the lives of the children in our care.





warm up by  
sitting in the  
sun.

to hide in  
shade.



Crocodiles  
get warm when  
they bask in  
the sun.



Gallagher, M & Anderson, B. (2016). Get all "Jazzed Up" for vocabulary Instruction: Strategies that engage. *The Reading Teacher*.

Fray Model (1969) ---- Graffiti