

Assessment

SECTION

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Assessment advice

Flat Stanley is a story written about the over-the-top adventures of a boy whose life is changed by an unlikely accident. The author's rather formal style and restrained, understated humour enhances the enjoyment of the adventures that Stanley experiences when he is flat. However, the underlying theme is one of sibling rivalry. This provides an ideal opportunity for assessing children's ability to read beyond the events and between the lines, and discover motives behind characters' behaviour.

Ask the children questions as they read about how a character feels at a certain point, for example, Arthur, when he gets wet in the rain but Stanley does not because he is rolled up. Tell them to support their suggestions by giving reasons, for example, by asking: *Is there anything in the text that makes you think that?* When Stanley is flying as a kite, ask them why Stanley does all the amazing kite actions. Is it to please Arthur? Again, encourage them to give reasons for their opinions.

There is also a good opportunity to assess children's understanding of the importance of the events in a story. Ask them to suggest which events are the most important and why. Are there any events that could be missed out without affecting the plot? Could you alter the sequence of some of the events? Would it affect the plot?

Humour is also one of the important elements in the story. Invite the children to identify any actions, events or dialogue they thought were funny and to say why. How would the story change if it were not told with humour?

When the children do the assessment activity, their answers to the questions will demonstrate their abilities to think beyond the obvious, simple responses. The order into which they put the questions will allow an insight into their reasoning processes. The order of importance demonstrates an understanding about the importance of using deduction and inference. The order of the sequence of events demonstrates a more literal approach, as does the order of difficulty.

Tell me why

Assessment focus: To deduce, infer and interpret information, events or ideas.

What you need: Copies of *Flat Stanley*, photocopiable page 32 and scissors.

What to do

- Provide the children with a copy of photocopiable page 32 and scissors. Ask the children to work individually. Tell them to read the questions first, then to cut them out and put them into the order that they think the questions should be answered. Explain that the order is entirely their choice.

- The children may put them into an order of difficulty or importance to the plot. Some may put them into the order of events in the book.
- Once they have ordered the questions, ask the children to read each one again and think of answers. On each speech bubble let them make notes of key points to help them give their answers. Encourage them to think of more than one answer for each question.
- Invite the children to give their answers orally, and then to choose the question where they think they have given the best answer. Ask them to copy their chosen question on to a sheet of paper and write their answers in full underneath.