May 2015

To the Southdown Community:

As spring has sprung, and we have put the ELA/MATH assessments for our 3rd and 4th graders behind us, I would like to take some time to enjoy a tongue-tickling text with lingering language and silly sayings. Looking for a Moose, by Phyllis Root, provides just that! This was our choice as the spring principal and PTA book choice. Thank you to the PTA for purchasing one book for each of our 18 classes at Southdown!

As you flip the pages of this sometimes rhyming and sometimes repetitive text, Root brings us along on a moose hunt with children who have “never, ever, ever, ever, ever seen a moose,” and “really, really, really, really want to see a moose.” Children and grown ups of all ages will enjoy the interesting language and respect the craft in such a simple plot.

Teachers often encourage their students to include strong leads, colorful language, descriptive settings, and varied sentences in their writing. In this book, there are examples on almost every page of at least one of these devices.

The lead on the first page draws the reader in with a question, one that is filled with descriptive adjectives. This is certainly an introduction into the vivid language that you can anticipate ahead.

Onomatopoeia, where a word or a grouping of words imitates the sound it is describing, is evidenced through the tromping and stomping and squeeching and squooching the children encounter on their moose hunt.

You can find alliteration, the repeated occurrence of a consonant sound at the beginning of several words in the same phrase, in the lily-loppy swamp, and with the dinner-diving moose.

The setting changes as we hunt with the children through woods, swamps, bushes, and hillsides.

Sentences are varied and are effective for students to recognize punctuation and for practice reading aloud with fluency. Quotation marks to show dialog (“Now what?”) are used widely throughout the story.

There are words and phrases that rhyme and repetitive patterns for students in the primary grades.

I encourage you to read with your children each and every night. Enjoy the warm weather ahead!

Sincerely,

Mr. Oshrin