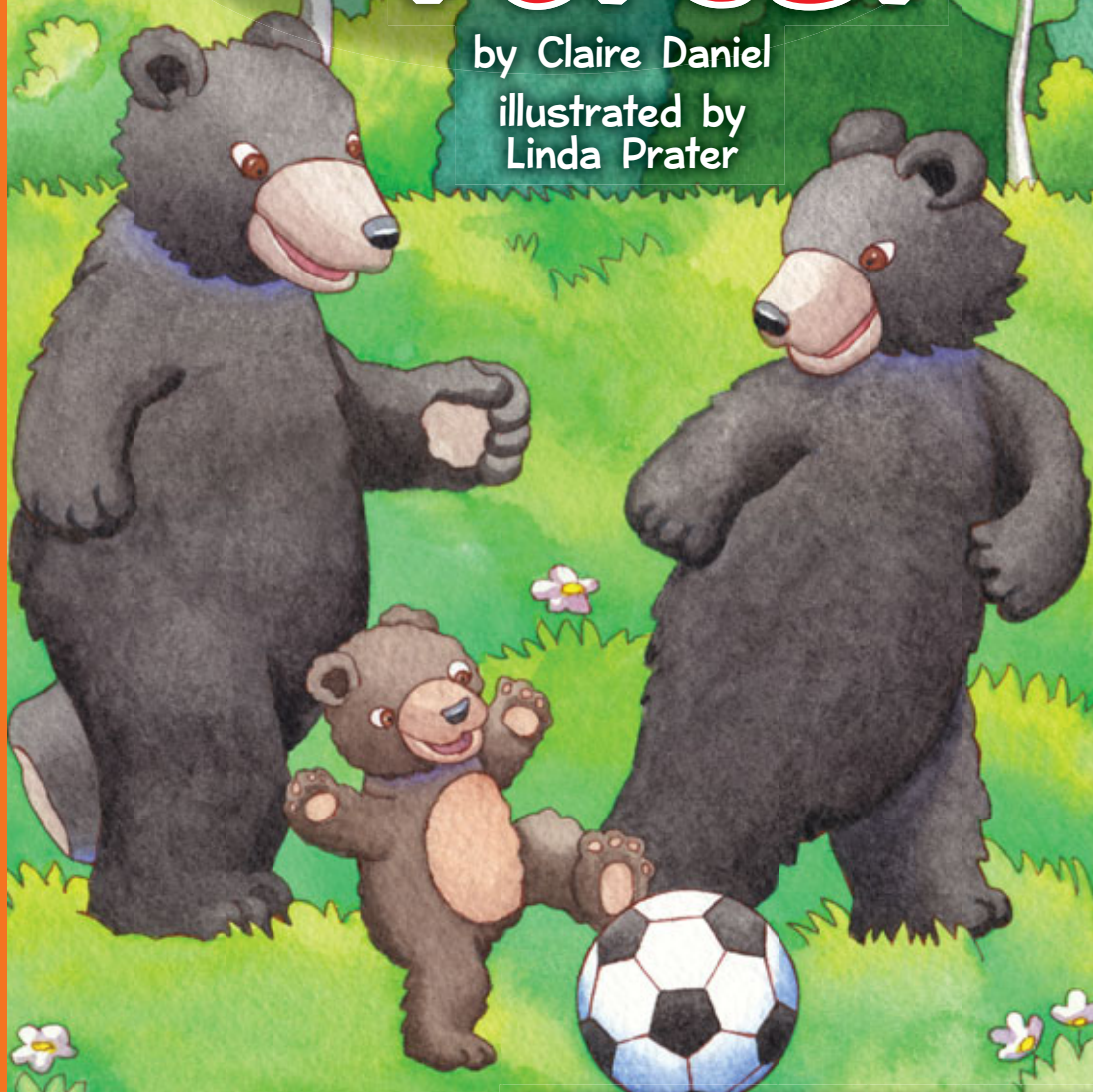


Fantasy

A New Bear in the Forest

by Claire Daniel

illustrated by
Linda Prater



Mc
Graw
Hill

PAIRED
READ

The Beckoning Cat

STRATEGIES & SKILLS

Comprehension

Strategy: Visualize

Skill: Point of View

Vocabulary Strategy

Paragraph Clues

Vocabulary

acquaintance, cautiously,
complementary, jumble,
logical, scornfully, scrounging,
trustworthy

Word Count: 1,466

**Essential Question**

How can you make new friends feel welcome?

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Chapter 1

There's a Bear Outside! 2

Chapter 2

Can't We All Get Along? 5

Chapter 3

The Soccer Game 9

Chapter 4

The Newest Bear 13

Respond to Reading 16

**PAIRED
READ**

The Beckoning Cat 17

Focus on Genre 20



CHAPTER 1

There's a Bear Outside!

Jennie and I love our new house. It's a big old cabin perched on the edge of a forest. We can hear wild animals outside at night, and the house has a lot of windows, so we can watch their comings and goings.

Coyotes howl, birds flitter in the branches, and rabbits scurry across the lawn. It's a totally different world from the crowded city we left last summer.



At breakfast one day, an article in the newspaper caught Dad's eye.

"It says here that they are moving a bear to this area," he said. "The bear has been picking through trash cans in town and making people anxious."

Mom wasn't paying attention. She was calling our black Labrador retriever. "Fenway, come inside for breakfast!"

Fenway nudged my hand under the table. "She's right here," I yawned.

"So what on earth is that?" Mom pointed outside. We followed her finger, and our sleepy eyes grew wide.





An enormous black blob of fur was shuffling around near the bird feeder.

We crowded around the window, and Mom grabbed her camera. “I can’t wait to show Grandpa who came for breakfast,” she said.

The bear turned its head as though it had heard her. I clearly saw its lips form the word “Yikes!” before it disappeared into the forest.

Jennie said that I’d imagined it.

STOP AND CHECK

How is the girls’ new home different from their old one?

Can't We All Get Along?

The next day was Saturday. After playing soccer for a while, we decided to explore more of the forest. I ran inside and asked Mom if we could take a walk in the woods. Then I tucked the ball under my arm, and we headed for the trees.

Fenway came along, too. Soon we heard a jumble of voices. We crept toward a big tree. I grabbed Fenway's collar, and the three of us peeked around the tree trunk.

A porcupine, a coyote, a rabbit, and the bear that we had seen yesterday were gathered in a circle. Jennie's jaw dropped as the porcupine spoke, and I whispered, "I told you so."





“Are city bears trustworthy?” the porcupine asked the others.

“Absolutely not,” the black bear answered. “Nasty scrounging is what they do. They raid trash cans. They don’t know how to find berries or dig for roots.”

“It’ll change everything!” the coyote said. “We’re happy here all by ourselves!”

“I could scare him with my quills and make him go away,” the porcupine said.

I would have approached the animals cautiously, but Jennie isn’t like me. She stepped out from behind the tree and said, “That’s not very friendly!”

“People alert!” the coyote cried and let out an ear-splitting howl.

“Be quiet, Coyote!” the bear said. He turned to Jennie and asked, “Do you live with the family that just moved in?”

“Yes,” Jennie replied, “and I think you should welcome this bear. He could be nice.”

“We don’t want some stranger in the forest who doesn’t know how to behave!” the porcupine said scornfully.

“You’re not being logical. You don’t even know this new bear,” I protested.

“That’s right,” Jennie said. “We were the new girls at our school, and everyone was really friendly. It would have been horrible if no one had spoken to us just because they didn’t know us yet.”

It seemed perfectly natural to be chatting with the animals, but still I had to ask. “Speaking of talking, I didn’t know that animals could talk.”

“All animals can talk—you just have to listen,” the porcupine replied. “Adults never listen, and that’s why they don’t hear us.”

The rabbit spoke up. “She’s right. We should welcome the bear. We’re all friends because we have complementary behaviors. This bear might be able to do something we can’t do.”

“We can teach the city bear how to be a forest bear,” the coyote suggested. They all nodded their heads.

Then Jennie and I had to leave. We didn’t notice that we’d left the ball behind.



STOP AND CHECK

Why do the animals decide to welcome the new bear?

The Soccer Game

The next morning, we rushed into the forest to tell the animals that the new bear was arriving today. Then we saw a bizarre sight!

The same animals were gathered together. The bear was licking our soccer ball. Then the rabbit tried to flatten it. The coyote tried to bite it. The porcupine was waiting its turn. It wanted to pop the ball with its quills.



“Wait!” Jennie yelled.
“That’s not what you do!”

She took the ball and dribbled it with her feet. “This is what you do.”

She set up a goal with some fallen branches. “That’s called a goal. Now try to kick the ball into the goal.”

We showed the animals how to kick the soccer ball. They weren't bad, but the porcupine still tried to pop the ball with its quills.

We'd forgotten all about the new bear until Fenway came racing through the trees. A bush shook, and we all froze.

Suddenly it didn't seem like such a great idea for Jennie and me to be waiting around to meet a new bear.

A big black head poked out from the bushes. "Hello," the new bear said nervously.

"We've all been waiting for you," the rabbit said.

"Pleased to make your acquaintance," the bear answered politely. When it spotted the ball, its face lit up.

"Wow! I was so worried about coming here. But now I see that you play soccer!"

The new bear took the ball and bounced it on its head. Then the bear kicked it cleanly into the goal.

“You’re pretty good,” the porcupine said.

So the animals played soccer while Jennie and I watched. The new bear taught them how to dribble the ball and pass it around.

When we went home, they were still playing. We left the soccer ball as a welcome-to-the-forest present for the new bear.



STOP AND CHECK

Why is the new bear accepted by the other animals?





The Newest Bear

Jennie and I never heard the animals talking again. We got busy with school and friends. We saw the animals sometimes, but they just seemed to growl and snuffle like ordinary animals.

We did see the soccer ball again, though.

One summer's day, we were in the kitchen eating lunch. We looked outside, and we couldn't believe what we were seeing.

We yelled for Mom and Dad to come.



Jennie and I pointed to the three bears kicking a soccer ball across the yard.

“Am I seeing things?” Dad exclaimed.

“I’m getting my camera!” Mom shouted.

I couldn’t let that happen. Once word got out, everyone would want to come and see the soccer-playing bears. They’d never get any peace.

I tapped on the window. The bears looked up, and the biggest one winked at me. The cub booted the ball into the forest, and they all disappeared into the trees.

I don’t know—I can’t say for sure—but I think that new bear was accepted after all!

STOP AND CHECK

Why does the narrator think that the new bear has been accepted by the other animals?



Respond to Reading

Summarize

Summarize the important events from the story. Information from your Point of View Chart may help you.

Details

↓

Point of View

Text Evidence

1. How do you know that *A New Bear in the Forest* is fantasy? **GENRE**
2. Who is telling this story? What clues in the text tell you that? **POINT OF VIEW**
3. What does *bizarre* on page 9 mean? Use clues in the next paragraph to help you figure out the meaning. **PARAGRAPH CLUES**
4. Write one of the scenes from the story from the point of view of one of the animals. **WRITE ABOUT READING**

Compare Texts

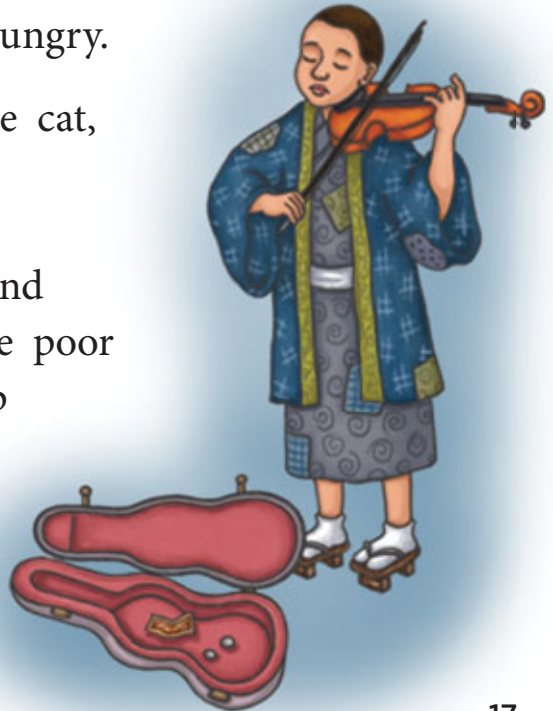
Read a story from Japan about a cat and a young man who helped each other.

The Beckoning Cat

Once there was a poor young musician. He played the violin well, but he made barely enough money to be able to buy food to eat.

One evening he was eating his supper of rice and fish. A scrawny white cat came up beside him and meowed. The cat looked very hungry.

Feeling sorry for the cat, the musician gave it a handful of fish and rice. The cat purred and walked away, while the poor musician went to sleep hungry that night.



The next evening, there was a storm. The musician took shelter under a large tree next to a big white house. Thunder boomed and lightning lit up the sky.

The musician glanced toward the house and the warm lights inside. On the doorstep sat the white cat from the night before.

It meowed and raised a small white paw as if to beckon the young man forward! He ran into the yard. A man opened the door, and as the cat slipped past, the man invited the musician inside.

Seconds later, a bolt of lightning struck the tree, and a large limb fell to the spot where he'd been. The cat had saved the musician's life.

Inside the house, the musician ate a delicious meal with the man. Then the man asked the musician what was in his case. The musician took out his violin and began playing.

The man clapped with pleasure. "Luck has brought you here tonight!" he said. "I conduct an orchestra, and we need a violinist. Would you join us?"

“I can begin tomorrow!” the musician said.

From that day on, the cat and the musician were never apart. The man adopted the musician as his son. He became a famous violinist who was known throughout the world. All because of the beckoning cat.



Illustration: Chi Chung



Make Connections

Why did the cat help the young man?

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Compare how making a new friend in *A New Bear in the Forest* and *The Beckoning Cat* turns out well for everyone. **TEXT TO TEXT**

Focus on Genre

Fantasy Fantasy fiction has features that wouldn't happen in real life. Some fantasy fiction is set in ancient worlds with dragons and treasures. Other fantasy stories have a modern setting and include talking animals or unreal creatures that have special powers.

Read and Find Reread the descriptions of the forest animals and the way they talk to each other. Jennie and her sister are surprised at first, but seem to accept that the animals can talk and think about things in the same way that people do. How believable are the animals?

Your Turn

Work in a group to turn a chapter from *A New Bear in the Forest* into a drama. How will you show the different animals in the scene? You could make masks or simply behave like the animals and have each animal use an appropriate voice. Make sure you include Jennie and her sister in the scene interacting with the animals so your audience knows this drama is a fantasy.

Literature Circles

Fiction

Thinkmark

Characters

Who are the main characters in *A New Bear in the Forest*?

How did the animals' point of view change from the beginning to the end of the story?

Setting

Where did *A New Bear in the Forest* take place?

When did it take place?

Sequence of Events

What happened first, then, next, and finally in *A New Bear in the Forest*?

Plot

What was the animals' problem in the story?

How was it resolved?

Make Connections

What other stories does *A New Bear in the Forest* remind you of?