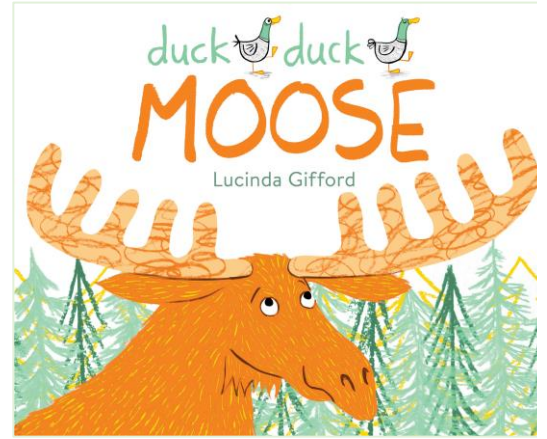


Duck Duck Moose

By Lucinda Gifford

June 2019 ISBN 9781760634704
 Hardback picture book
 Recommended for 3-6-year-olds



Summary

Who can resist a gloriously goofy moose? These ducks apparently. Or can they?

Duck duck ... moose?

A hilarious and heart-warming story about finding friends in unexpected places.



Playing on the title of the popular children's game this delightfully minimalist book is effectively a dance to-and-fro by a pair of ducks and a moose who keeps popping up in unlikely places and wanting to be included in their game.

With its bright orange, vivacious moose dominating each spread on which it appears, and a range of emotions to be found on the faces of the simply (but boldly) drawn ducks, the book creates such a strong visual sense to back up its simple plot, it can do almost entirely without words, except for the obvious ones of the children's game (with a quadrupedal twist).

Use in the curriculum

Duck Duck Moose will be useful in preschools and kindergartens with pre-literate or becoming-literate children. The story can be understood very well from the illustrations – a great introduction to visual literacy. The four words of the text are used to create humour through repetition and children can have fun predicting the words accompanying relevant pages.

The book also obviously invites a game of *Duck Duck Goose*. Teachers should be aware that there are various versions of this game and very similar games from other cultures as well as the English 'Drop the Hanky'. It can also be adapted to practise new vocabulary.

<https://www.kidspot.com.au/things-to-do/activity-articles/duck-duck-oose/news-story/db6d250d75e48a6f55302675796ff1f4>

(Note: Children from some cultures will have an aversion to being tapped on the head. Either explain that this is OK in kids' games in English-speaking cultures or change the game to tapping on the shoulder.)

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Themes

- friendship
- kindness
- fitting in
- including others

Discussion questions

1. Before opening *Duck Duck Moose*, look at the title and cover design. Discuss what students think the story might be about and the clues in the picture that make them think that. Ask questions, such as:
 - Do the colours on the cover make you think this story will be funny or sad?
 - Do the illustrations of the ducks and the moose make you think the story will be funny or sad?
 - Do you think this moose is likely to be friendly?
 - Do the ducks look as friendly?
 - Does the title in this story remind you of a game? What is the name of the game and how do you play it?
2. Read the story through once and ask students the following questions to help them explore the story:
 - Who do you like better in the story, the ducks or the moose?
 - Are the ducks nicer to the goose than the moose?
 - How does the moose feel about the ducks being nicer to the goose?
 - Who does the goose prefer, the ducks or the moose?
 - How do the ducks feel about this?
 - How does the moose feel about this?
3. Explain to students that the words *moose* and *goose* **rhyme** i.e. they share the same sound-endings. Give a few examples of other words that rhyme with *moose* and *goose*, such as *loose*, *juice*, *spruce* and *truce*. Now see if students can come up with their own rhymes for simple words such as: *smock*, *get*, *meet*, *orange*. (**Note:** *the last word here is the most famous example of a word in the English language that does not have a rhyme*).
4. Point out to students that there are only three words in this book and the story is told almost entirely through the illustrations. Turn to pages where the ducks turn their backs on the moose and ask students what in the pictures shows us how the ducks are being mean and how the moose is feeling. Now turn to the last double-page spread and discuss how the artist has shown the ducks grumpy and the moose and goose happy.
5. Explain that sometimes the way a word looks can also tell us a lot about what is happening in a story. Compare the appearance of the words 'MOOSE' and 'moose' on the second and third page-spreads. What does each tell us about how the ducks greet the moose?
6. Turn to the book's front endpapers and ask students what they think the image says about how the moose is feeling? Now turn to the back endpapers and ask them how the moose's feelings may have changed and what has happened to make this change?

7. Ask students to find one interesting fact about moose and geese. Collate all answers on a poster with images of both animals and display it in your classroom.
8. Play a game of *Duck Duck Moose* in your classroom. Change the way the game is played traditionally by allowing the child who is walking around to decide whether to say moose or goose and to make the sound of the chosen animal once they are running.

Author's inspiration

'I was inspired by the moose I met on holiday in Sweden. They are so placid. I thought, 'Who could not want a moose around?' Then I thought about that game you play in preschool called "Duck Duck Goose". What if it was a moose? What if the ducks didn't want the moose?

After storyboarding the book in pencil and pen, I splashed ink around and made big gestural drawings, which I photographed and then compiled digitally.'

— Lucinda Gifford

The author

Lucinda Gifford is the author and illustrator of many well-loved books for kids. Many years ago, Lucinda studied architecture in Scotland, where she learned to draw fancy buildings and moody scenery. She also likes to draw dragons, cats and magical frogs—despite never having studied witchcraft. Now based in Melbourne, Lucinda works from a small home studio full of books, plants, dragons' blood and newts' tongues.



Photo credit: Penny Lane Photography