

TOO  
BIG!



## EYFS activities

4 PAGE  
PULL-OUT

### Sharing books...

# The Perfect Sofa

by **Fifi Kuo** (Boxer Books, 2019)

**T**his is a simple story about two friends, Panda and Penguin, and their hunt for a new sofa. The problem is that each new sofa they find on their shopping trip has always something wrong with it. One is too small, another is too big, while another is too squishy, and on it goes. At the end of the day, when night has fallen, they finally give up and go home – where they suddenly see their old sofa in a new light.

It turns out that with a bit of fixing, it was perfect all along. This is, therefore, a book with a moral to it: you may wish for something new, but you should try to be content with what you already have.

### A GOOD CHOICE

The suggested age range for this book is three to five years, although many two-year-olds are likely to enjoy this story as the text and plot are simple. From three onwards, children are likely to pick up on the humour that runs through the book. It is also a good book for four- and five-year-olds to encourage early reading, as once they have heard the story, they are likely to be able to remember and read many of the words.

As with all good children's books, this one appeals to adults. Many of us will have traipsed around the shops looking for something only to come back empty-handed.

### SHARING THIS BOOK

This book is worth sharing in pairs or very small groups, as it will allow you to ask questions and enable children to make comments about what is happening during the story. Children may also want to talk about where they sit at home. At first glance, the illustrations may seem very simple, but on second or

third reading, children may increasingly notice more detail. A good example of this is at the end where we see that Panda and Penguin's sofa has been mended and that there are tools lying on the floor. Children may also spot that Panda is wearing a pair of sunglasses and also a hat during the story.

### SUPPORTING LEARNING

#### Personal, social and emotional development

Wanting new things or what someone else has is a concept that is worth exploring with older children. In this story, Penguin and Panda think that they want a new sofa, but actually the one that they have is fine. You can see if children can talk about things that they want and also their feelings of disappointment. When have they been disappointed and how quickly did those feelings pass?

With younger children, this is also a book to explore friendship and how Panda and Penguin worked together to solve the problem of the sofa.

#### Language development

The text in this book is quite simple, but there are a few phrases that are worth exploring. What does it mean if something is 'too old fashioned' or 'too expensive'? You could also see if younger children can retell the story by looking at the illustrations.

There is a surprising amount of vocabulary that links to sofas and chairs. You could use the illustrations to talk about features of sofas such as 'cushions', 'legs', 'armrests' and 'two-seater'. You



#### ABOUT THIS SERIES

Over the course of this monthly series on sharing books with children, **Penny Tassoni** will look at a range of fiction and non-fiction titles, from rhyming books for babies to picture books that adults and children can explore together.

could also play a language game using the inside covers of the book. You could describe a sofa and see if children can guess which one you are looking at.

#### Literacy

You could ask older children to help you write down a list of things that are important when choosing a chair – for example, its level of comfort, colour and size. You could also look at a catalogue that has different sofas and chairs in it. What does the text say about each chair? You could also link this book to Goldilocks and the Three Bears as Goldilocks also tries out different chairs and beds.

#### Mathematics

You could see if children can count the different sofas that Penguin and Panda have tried. You could also use the inside cover and see if children can match the pictures of sofas to the ones in the story. In the story, one sofa is too small, but another is too big. Why is it too big? You could also ask the children if they can see the largest piece of furniture in your setting and also the smallest.

#### Role play

There are a couple of role-play ideas that you could pull from this book. You could set up a furniture shop along with prices, and the children could try out different chairs and cushions. The other role play could be a repair and recycling shop led by an adult. There might be toys that need cleaning or items that can be made using scrap materials – for example, using a water bottle for a musical instrument. ■

