

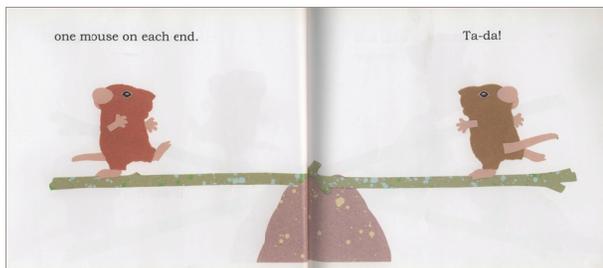
Balancing Act

by Ellen Stoll Walsh

AGE LEVEL 2–6 years

About the Story

Balancing Act is a simple yet engaging story about two mice who create a teeter-totter by balancing a stick on a rock. When a salamander joins them, it creates an imbalance until another salamander balances on the other side. Children can make predictions about what will happen when more and more creatures flock to either side of the stick.



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Words to Learn

ANIMAL WORDS

mouse, salamander, frog, bird

OTHER WORDS

teeter-totter, balance, luckily, stepped in

About the Math

Balancing Act is about balancing weight on either side of the teeter-totter. When reading the story, children can learn:

- How the stick becomes balanced or unbalanced, depending on which creatures join the mice.
- Balancing doesn't depend on the number of animals on either side of the stick. Instead it depends on the weight on either side.
- How to describe and compare weights. For example, the mouse and the salamander weigh more than just the mouse alone.
- We can use tools, such as a teeter-totter or a scale, or measure weight



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Math Talk During Reading

MAKE A PREDICTION

What will happen when the salamander joins the mice? How do you know?

TALK ABOUT BALANCING

Do you think one side weighs more than the other side, or do both sides weigh the same? How can you make sure the stick is balanced?

NOTICE THE SYMMETRY

Look at this page on the left and look at this page on the right. Do they look the same or different? What makes them look the same or different?

Try to come up with some of your own questions and comments, too!

Activity After Reading

CONNECT THE STORY TO YOUR CHILD'S LIFE

Have you ever played on a seesaw? What would happen if you sat on one side of the seesaw and the mouse sat on the other side?