

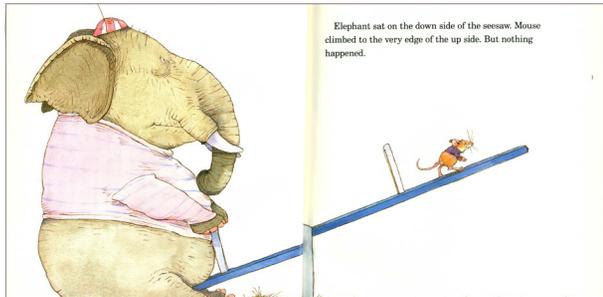
Just a Little Bit

by Ann Tompert and Lynn Munsinger

AGE LEVEL 5-7 YEARS

About the Story

Just a Little Bit is a hilarious story about an elephant and a mouse playing on a seesaw. When the elephant sits on one side of the seesaw and the mouse sits on the other, the elephant goes down and the mouse goes up. No matter how hard the mouse pushes down, the seesaw doesn't budge. They call on their animal friends to help push down the seesaw. Many animals jump on but it is only when one tiny beetle joins them that the elephant and the rest of the animals can play on the seesaw.



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Words to Learn

MATH WORDS

edge, end, next to, above, up, down, just a little bit, every little bit, more, one at a time

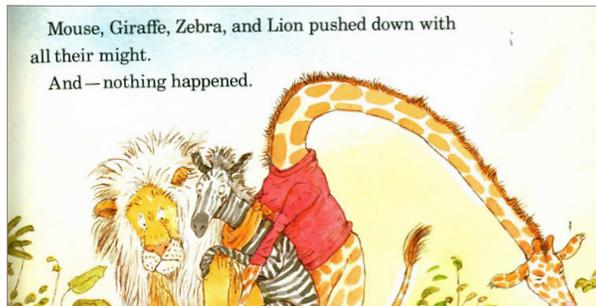
OTHER WORDS

seesaw, trotting, lumbered, grunted, groaned, grimaced, hovered, trumpeted

About the Math

Although *Just a Little Bit* doesn't have many measurement words in the text, the plot introduces children to the concepts of scales and weight distribution. In the story, children can learn:

- That different things weigh different amounts. Some of the animals are light, like the mouse. Some of the animals are heavy, like the elephant.
- How to combine smaller things together (addition) to equal the weight of a larger thing. At the end of the story, the weight of the mouse, giraffe, zebra, lion, and other animals is the same as the weight of the elephant.
- How to use tools to informally measure and compare weight. The seesaw is like a scale that compares the weight of different animals to show whether one side is heavier or both sides are the same weight.



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Math Talk During Reading

OBSERVE THE NUMBER OF ANIMALS ON THE SEESAW

Why are there several animals on one side and only one elephant on the other side, but the seesaw is still not moving?

DISCUSS OTHER ASPECTS OF SIZE, IN ADDITION TO WEIGHT

Which animal is the heaviest? Which is the tallest? Which animal has the shortest tail?

RELATE THE STORY TO YOUR CHILD'S LIFE

If you were playing on the seesaw, which animal would you want to play with? Which of the animals is closest to your size?

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

Activity After Reading

GO ON A SCAVENGER HUNT TO FIND SOMETHING HEAVY, SUCH AS A LARGE BOOK

Ask your child to collect a few lighter objects that are about as heavy as the book when put together. Ask your child to use their hands to "weigh" the objects. Are both sides the same weight?