Engagement Text: “Looking For Mars”

James looks out the window, and what does he see? It is the moon. “Look, it is smiling at me,” says James. That gives James an idea!

James grabs Pat by the hand and says, “Pat, you are in for a treat! It is dark. It is not storming tonight, so the sky is clear. It is time to see Mars!” Pat claps her hands and says, “Let’s go!”

Pat and James start to walk to the park. But it is not warm, so they go back and grab a scarf for Pat. James puts on Grandad’s hat, and it is way too big on him. That makes Pat giggle as they walk down the street. “It is a short walk to the park,” says James. “But it is a long way to the stars!”

When they get to the park, they look up in the dark. “There are so many stars!” says James. “There is the North Star!” But it is hard for Pat to see the star.

“Mars is so far away. Look for the red. Just look very hard,” says James. But it is still hard for Pat to see. She does not see Mars. She does not see the North Star.

James and Pat go to the yard in the park, away from the streetlights. “We can see more stars here in the dark,” says James. Pat stands on a log to make herself tall. “That is better,” says James. Then Pat grabs his arm. “Mars!” says Pat. “I knew you could see it!” says James.

“I go to bed with stars?” asks Pat. “No, we can’t sleep out here tonight, Pat. That would not be safe. And it would be too cold! But we will do it again,” says James. Pat waves her little hand into the dark. “Bye, stars; bye, Mars.”

As Pat and James leave the park, Pat takes his arm. “I have fun looking at Mars for a while!” The moon follows them home, still wearing a smile.

B. Comprehension Conversation

Teacher asks the following suggested comprehension questions:

1. Recall:
   - “What did James see out the window?” (the moon)
   - “What do James and Pat go back to their house for?” (scarf and Granddad’s hat)

2. Vocabulary and Language:
   - “What did James mean when he said Pat was ‘in for a treat’?” (She was going to see Mars.)
   - “What does the author mean by the phrase ‘The moon follows them home’?” (James and Pat were able to see the moon the entire time they walked home.)

3. Digging Deeper: Extension Questions:
   - “Why can’t Pat ‘go to bed with stars’?” (Because she cannot sleep outside. She has to go back to her house.)
Engagement Text: "Sam's Hammer"

Sam's teacher gathers the class together in a circle. She says, "I have good news! Our class will perform a play. The play will be about an old farmer and his farm."

The kids are glad, and they begin to chatter about what roles they want to play. James wants to be the old farmer. Nell wants to be the banker. The teacher explains that first they have to try out for roles in the play.

But Sam is shy. He thinks, "What if I get embarrassed on stage? What if I trip over the set?" He does not want to perform in the play.

Sam tells Dad he wants to be part of the play, but he does not want to be onstage. Dad thinks about it. "Sam, you still can help. You can use your hammer!" Sam smiles. "I will not be a performer. I will help make the set. That will be much better!"

Sam and the kids work hard to get ready for the big night. Nell is working on her lines. James works, too. All the kids help out. Sam hammers. He gathers parts for the set. He makes it look like a farm!

Sam hurts his finger with the hammer. "Ouch!" he says out loud. The teacher takes time to look at his finger. "It will be okay," she says. "Thanks," Sam says.

The set is ready. The kids know all their lines. Now it is time to perform! Sam is in the corner. He helps with the set. The kids perform their parts.

When the play is over, the teacher gathers the kids together in a circle. She says, "I am so proud of all of you. You worked hard and played an important part to make the play super!" Sam says, "My hammer worked hard, too!" All the kids giggle.

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B. Comprehension Conversation (optional)

- Teacher asks the following suggested comprehension questions:
  - Recall:
    - "What is the play about?" (a farmer and his farm)
    - "How does Sam help with the play?" (He helps make the set with his hammer.)
  - Vocabulary and Language:
    - "What does the teacher mean when she says 'Our class will perform a play'?" (The class will act out a story for an audience.)
    - "What did Sam mean when he says 'I will not be a performer'?" (He will not act in the play.)
  - Digging Deeper: Extension Questions:
    - "Why is it more comfortable for Sam to help make the set and not act in the play?" (He is shy and does not want perform in front of people.)
Engagement Text: “Sam’s Throat Hurts!”

Sam woke up one morning. He had slept pretty well, but he still felt tired and weak. He realized he also had a pain in his throat. Then he opened his mouth to call for his dad, and he could not even speak! He could only squeak!

Dad made breakfast for Sam, but he could not eat. Sam did not even want his crunchy toast. He could not get it down his scratchy throat. “Ouch, the pain is bad! I only want some oatmeal,” Sam squeaked.

Sam could remember other times when his throat hurt this much. He knew Dad would know what to do. “You are burning up,” Dad said. “You have a fever. We should go to the doctor. I will take you after we finish up our breakfast.”

The doctor checked out Sam’s throat. She said his tonsils were very red. “Not every sore throat is this bad, but you have had sore tonsils too many times,” the doctor said. “If we take them out of your throat, you won’t have to worry about this happening anymore. But you will have to go the hospital to have them removed.”

Sam wanted to scream! He was scared it would hurt to have his tonsils taken out. “I know you are scared,” said Dad. “But you will be safe at the hospital. The doctors will know what to do, and then you won’t ever have to worry about a sore throat again and you will heal. And you will get to eat lots of ice cream!”

“Ice cream for breakfast, lunch, and dinner?” Sam asked.

“Sure,” said Dad. So Sam agreed.

After his tonsils were gone, Sam woke up. He asked, “Where am I?” He felt like he was in a dream. Sam’s throat hurt, but the pain wasn’t as bad as he thought it would be. Then he saw Dad and James. They had ice cream! James asked, “Would you like to eat?”

Sam smiled. Now he was very glad he had his tonsils out. “If this is a dream, it is a good dream! I get to have ice cream for all my meals!” said Sam.

B. Comprehension Conversation

- Teacher asks the following suggested comprehension questions:
  - Recall:
    “How did Sam feel when he woke up?” (His throat hurt.)
    “Why was Sam scared?” (He was scared of having his tonsils taken out.)
  - Vocabulary and Language:
    “What did Dad mean when he said Sam was ‘burning up’?” (He had a fever.)
  - Digging Deeper: Extension Questions:
    “Why did Sam feel like he was in a dream?” (He was tired from surgery.)
    “Do people need their tonsils out every time they have a sore throat?” (no)
    “What from the story helped us know this?” (The doctor said this sore throat was different. Sam’s tonsils had been giving him problems a lot, so even though most of the time it is just a sore throat, only the doctor can tell you if you need your tonsils out.)
Engagement Text: "Pat's Birthday"

Pat and I look at the calendar. Friday is Pat's birthday! She will be three years old. She says she will be a big girl. She can't wait!

On Monday, she says, "Today?" "No, not today," I say. I count with Pat on the calendar. "Four more days: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday."

The next day, Pat asks again, "Today?" "No, not today," I say. I count with Pat on the calendar. "Three more days: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday." I ask Grandma, "Do you think she will ask again tomorrow?" "Yes," Grandma nods with a smile.

I ask Pat, "What do you want for your birthday?" Pat claps her little hands and says, "Snow!" "But it is May, Pat. It does not snow in May," I laugh. "I make snowman on Friday! I play in snow," Pat says.

I take Pat to the window. I show her the warm rays of sun shining on the green grass outside. "There is no snow in May," I say. But I have a plan. Pat will have snow on her birthday.

It is Friday! Time for Pat's party. Today, Pat gets nice gifts with bows and cards. But no snow. There are balloons, too! But no snow. Grandma brings out her cake on a tray. Grandma always makes a cake for birthdays. On top of the cake is a fluffy snowman! But no snow.

Then I give Pat my gift. It is a bowl full of cotton balls! Pat claps her hands. "Snow!" she cries. We play and play with the cotton ball snow. We blow it in the air. We make it into a snowman. "Snow for my birthday in May!" Pat says. We both laugh as we take a bite of Grandma's fluffy snowman cake.

B. Comprehension Conversation (optional)

- Teacher asks the following suggested comprehension questions:
  - Recall:
    "What does Pat say she wants for her birthday?" (snow)
    "What is the narrator's plan for Pat's birthday?" (use cotton to make pretend snow)
    "What does grandma do for Pat's birthday?" (makes a cake with a snowman)
  - Vocabulary and Language:
    "In this story, Pat keeps asking, 'Today? What does she mean when she asks that?" (She wants to know if today is her birthday.)
  - Digging Deeper: Extension Questions:
    "What word or words could we use to describe the narrator in this story?" (various responses: "nice," "kind," "helpful," "thoughtful")
    "What did the narrator do that supports that description?" (text-based responses. Example: "made pretend snow for her birthday")
Engagement Text: "A Little Seed"

See the little seed under the tree? It is so small that it is almost like nothing at all. But this little seed is about to take a big trip! It will find a new home.

It is a windy day. The wind sweeps the tiny seed all the way to the city. It lands on a roof. But that is not where the seed will stay, because the wind is angry today.

The seed speeds through the air, sailing on the breeze. It lands in a sunny park. The park is a perfect home for the little seed.

The little seed goes deeper into the grass and begins to grow roots. It will need plenty of sun and rain. They are like food to the tiny seed.

It is a sunny day. The afternoon sun warms the seed. More roots grow into the ground. The next day is rainy. Every raindrop will help the seed grow. The next day is cool and misty. The tiny seed is now a shoot. It has even deeper roots now.

The seed grows and grows. Soon it has a stem and one leaf. Look again—now there are three green leaves! The days go by. The sun shines down, more raindrops fall to the ground, and the bees buzz all around.

See the pretty flower? It is not a weed. It came from that one tiny seed! The little seed took a big trip and found a new home in the park. The little seed is not really a seed anymore!

B. Comprehension Conversation (optional)
- Teacher asks the following suggested comprehension questions:
  - Recall:
    "What places did the seed land during its trip?" (roof, park, deep in grass)
  - Vocabulary and Language:
    "What does it mean to 'begin to root'?' (Part of the plant begins to attach to the ground.)
    "What is another word for 'misty'?" ("fuzzy," "blurred," "unclear")
  - Digging Deeper: Extension Questions:
    "Plants come from seeds. What are some of the things described in the story that seeds need to grow?" ("rain," "sun," "wind," "time")
Engagement Text: "Night Skies"

Have you ever looked up high in the night sky? If you have not, you should look up tonight! There is so much to see, and it never looks the same.

Some nights you will see bright stars shining all around. Other nights the stars hide behind fluffy puffs of clouds. It is hard to see the stars shine in cloudy skies.

On some nights, you might see a moon that looks like part of a pie. On other nights, the moon looks like it has a crooked smile! On some nights, the moon hides behind clouds passing by. Or it peeks in and out all through the night.

Have you ever tried to see the man in the moon? That only happens when the moon is full and bright. Sometimes you can even see the moon in daylight!

On special nights, you might see the bright, colorful lights of fireworks and hear a pop! If you look hard, you will see the lights of a plane as it flies by. It is fun to follow the lights as they blink across the night sky!

You never know what you will see as you look up high. If you are lucky, you might see a star shoot through the sky! The stars like to show off on a really dark night.

Have you ever looked up high into the night sky? There is so much to see. Give it a try! What do you think you will see in the sky tonight?

B. Comprehension Conversation (optional)

- Teacher asks the following suggested comprehension questions:
  - Recall:
    "What are some of the things you might see in the night sky?" ("moon," "stars," "fireworks," "shooting stars")
  - Vocabulary and Language:
    "What does it mean to have a 'crooked' smile?" (not straight)
    "What is another word for 'peek'?" (look)
  - Digging Deeper: Extension Questions:
    "'Personification' is when an author makes something that is not human have human qualities. For example, the author wrote: 'the stars hide behind puffy clouds'—even though stars do not actually have the ability to hide like a person does. What are some other examples of personification in this text?" ("the moon looks like it has a crooked smile"; "some nights the moon hides behind the cloud"; "or it peeks in and out all through the night"; "the stars like to show off on a really dark night")
Engagement Text: “Reading Together”

Pat and James always read together in a big blue beanbag chair. Pat opens her favorite book and tries to read it. “I read,” says Pat. But James helps her with the words that are too hard.

They are reading about a girl named Daisy. Daisy sees shadows in the nighttime, and she is afraid. Pat always claps at the end of the story when Daisy gets home safe.

“Again!” says Pat. James smiles and repeats the story. Then Pat decides to read the book one more time by herself.

James goes to the bookcase. “What should I read now?” He decides to read a book about trains on the railroad. While he reads it, Pat tries to read a book about a greedy beaver.

The doorbell rings, and James gets the door. It is Sam! “We are reading,” explains James. “It’s rainy today,” says Sam. “We cannot go to the playground. So I will read too. It sounds like fun!”

Sam sits in the other big blue beanbag chair by himself. He is reading about a baseball player and his team. He likes the story, and he is eager to read more.

When Grandma peeks into the room, she sees the three eager readers sitting on the big blue beanbag chairs. “This looks like fun!” she says. “Reading is always a really good way to spend the day.”

Sam and James and Pat look up from their books and smile. They agree!

Do you agree? What do you like to read?

B. Comprehension Conversation

- Teacher asks the following suggested comprehension questions:
  - Recall:
    “Where do Pat and James always sit when they read together?” (blue beanbag chair)
    “What are they reading about?” (a character named Daisy who is afraid of shadows in the nighttime)
    “What does Sam read about in his book?” (a baseball team)
  - Vocabulary and Language:
    “In the story, when James finishes the book, Pat says ‘Again!’ and James repeats the book. What does the word ‘repeat’ mean?” (do something again)
    “How does Pat saying ‘Again!’ help us know what ‘repeat’ means?” (By saying “again,” she’s saying she wants him to read it another time.)
  - Digging Deeper: Extension Questions:
    “In the story, Grandma says that reading is a good way to spend the day. In the story, does it say why she thinks that?” (no) “Why do YOU think she might think that?”