

# Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!

## A CLEL Silver Bell Award Book for TALK

by Mo Willems  
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The bus driver must leave and asks the reader to watch things while he is gone. He has one request: Don't let the Pigeon drive the bus! The Pigeon then tries to convince the reader to let him do just that. Speech bubbles and hand-drawn words of different sizes lets children see that print carries meaning along with the illustrations.

### Activity Ideas for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*:

- Ask the children to draw a picture of the Pigeon. Ask them what the Pigeon is saying in their picture, then draw a speech bubble on the page and write those words inside it. Read the words back to the children, pointing to each word as you read. This helps children learn that the marks we make on the page stand for the words we say out loud.
- Talk about how the Pigeon feels during different parts of the story. Is he hopeful? Angry? Frustrated? Sad? Excited? Talking about abstract concepts like emotions gives children a chance to learn vocabulary words for ideas that they can't see or touch.
- Act out the book with the children. Take turns being the Pigeon, the Driver, and the Readers (or Audience). Can the Pigeon think of new ways to try to convince his listeners to let him drive the bus? What would happen if the Pigeon didn't want to drive the bus after all? What would happen if the Driver never came back? Giving children ways to actively participate in sharing stories and books can increase their interest in reading.
- Choose different animals and different types of vehicles and have the children make up titles for new books, such as, "Don't Let the Gorilla Drive the Tractor," or "Don't Let the Dolphin Fly the Plane." Hearing and saying simple sentences over and over will help them recognize those sentence patterns more easily when they are reading.

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The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org> and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.



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