Characteristics of the Text

**Genre**
- Folktale

**Text Structure**
- Third-person narrative
- Chronological order, with a reference to earlier events

**Content**
- Bear and fox
- Bragging
- Trickery

**Themes and Ideas**
- People tell stories to explain why animals look the way they do.
- Nobody likes someone who brags.
- A fox is a story character who often tricks others.

**Language and Literary Features**
- Conflict between characters introduced on first two pages

**Sentence Complexity**
- Sentences of thirteen words or fewer
- Split dialogue

**Vocabulary**
- Familiar words supported by illustrations
- Some target vocabulary highlighted in text

**Words**
- One- and two-syllable words
- Words ending with *-ed*

**Illustrations**
- Illustrations convey playfulness.
- Bubbles used to convey character’s thoughts.

**Book and Print Features**
- Extra space after each sentence end mark.
- Some objects in pictures are labeled.
Bear’s Long, Brown Tail by Dermot McManus

Build Background
Read the title to children and have them name the animals in the cover illustration. Talk about what is unusual about Bear’s tail, making sure children understand that real bears have very short tails that are nearly hidden in their fur. Anticipate the text with questions like these: How does Bear seem to feel about his tail? What might happen to his tail in the story?

Front-Load Vocabulary Some everyday words may be unfamiliar to English learners. Before reading, check understanding of the following words: talk, tail, long, short, fish, ice, trick, many, hole, cold.

Introduce the Text
Guide children through the text, noting important ideas, and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so they can read the text successfully. Call their attention to any labels. Here are some suggestions:

Page 2: Tell children that storytellers long ago told this tale about Bear and Fox to explain why bears have short tails. Point out the labels in the illustration and explain that the labels tell the names of characters and things in the book.

Suggested language: Turn to page 2. Find Bear in the picture. Bear liked to talk about his long, brown tail. Say brown. What letter does the word brown begin with? Find the word brown and put your finger under it. Cultural Support: Tell children that many folk tales explain something about nature: certain weather events or why animals look the way they do. Invite children to share tales they know that explain some aspect of nature.

Page 3: Bear liked his long tail and told Fox that his tail was short, which did not make Fox very happy. What letter would you expect to see first in very? Find the word very, say it, and put your finger under it.

Pages 5–6: Explain that artists use thought bubbles to show what a character is picturing or thinking about. Now on page 5, there is a thought bubble over Fox’s head. Fox is thinking about how much Bear talks about his long tail. How does listening to Bear probably make Fox feel?

Page 9: Look at the picture on page 9. Bear’s tail came off! Off is a word with three letters that starts with the letter o. Find the word off and put your finger under it.

Now turn back to the beginning of the story and read to find why Bear’s tail came off and what he learned about talking about himself too much.

Words to Know

brown cold long off very
Read
As children read, observe them carefully. Guide them as needed, using language that supports their problem-solving ability.

Respond to the Text
Personal Response
Invite children to share their personal responses to the story. Begin by asking what they liked best about the book, or what they found interesting.
Suggested language: Do you think Bear will brag about his new tail? Why or why not?

Ways of Thinking
As you discuss the text, make sure children understand these teaching points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Within the Text</th>
<th>Thinking Beyond the Text</th>
<th>Thinking About the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bear brags to Fox about his long, brown tail.</td>
<td>Bragging can be annoying.</td>
<td>The writer wants to teach a lesson about not being too proud of yourself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox tricks Bear into tail-fishing in an icy lake.</td>
<td>It is not nice to tell others that you are better than they are.</td>
<td>The story has clues that help readers predict that Fox will try to get even with Bear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When Bear tries to yank his tail out of the fishing hole, the frozen tail snaps off.</td>
<td>The story explains why bears have short tails.</td>
<td>The pictures show that the story is silly and funny.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Choices for Support
Fluency
Invite children to choose a section that would sound interesting when read aloud. Tell them to rehearse so that they can sound like a storyteller when reading their chosen section.

Phonemic Awareness and Word Work
Provide practice as needed with words and sounds, using one of the following activities:

- **Consonant Blends** Say words from *Bear’s Long, Brown Tail* that begin with consonant blends, and have children name other words that begin with the same blend. Words to use: sky, snow, brown, trick.

- **Clapping Syllables** Have children hear and say syllables in these words from *Bear’s Long, Brown Tail*: happy, tail, about, winter, cold, fish, water, tricked, myself. Have them clap on each syllable: hap-py, tail, a-bout, win-ter, cold, fish, wa-ter, tricked, my-self.
Writing About Reading

Critical Thinking
Read the directions for children on BLM 12.9 and guide them in answering the questions.

Responding
Read aloud the questions at the back of the book and help children complete the activities.

Target Comprehension Skill

Sequence of Events
Explain to children that they can tell about the events in a story by thinking about what happens first, next, and last. Model how to think about the sequence of events:

Think Aloud

What order do things happen in the story? What happens first? First, Bear talks and talks about his long, brown tail. What happens next? Next, Fox tricks Bear into using his tail to fish in icy water. What happens last? Last, Bear’s frozen tail comes off.

Practice the Skill
Have children use the words first, next, and last to tell what happens on pages 4–6 of Bear’s Tail.

Writing Prompt
Read aloud the following prompt. Have children draw and write their response, using the writing prompt on page 6.

At the end of the story, Bear feels sad. How do you think Fox might feel at the end of the story? Draw a picture to show how Fox feels.

Write about how Fox feels at the end of the story.
English Language Learners

Reading Support Pair advanced and beginning readers to read the story softly aloud. You may also have children use the audio or online recordings. After listening or reading aloud, have children talk about words or phrases that describe a character.

Oral Language Development

Check the children’s comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches their English proficiency level. Speaker 1 is the teacher, Speaker 2 is the child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning/ Early Intermediate</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Early Advanced/ Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> Is Bear’s tail long or short in this picture?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> long</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> What did Fox catch?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> a fish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> Why does Bear put his tail in the water?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> to catch a fish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> What does Bear talk and talk about?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> He talks about his long tail.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> How does Fox say he got his fish?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> with his tail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> Why is Bear’s tail short in the end?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> It came off in the ice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> How does Fox trick Bear?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> Fox says that he got a fish with his tail. Bear believes him and puts his own tail in the water.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 1:</strong> Why does Fox trick Bear?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker 2:</strong> He wants Bear to stop talking and talking about his long tail.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Responding

Check the children’s comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches their language proficiency level. Speaker 1 is the teacher, Speaker 2 is the child.

| **Speaker 1:** Bear thinks his tail is better because it is |
| **Speaker 2:** long |
| **Speaker 1:** Bear's tail came off because it was |
| **Speaker 2:** frozen |

Making Connections Think of another animal who likes to trick others. Draw a picture of this animal. Label your picture.

Write the word that completes each sentence.

1. Bear thinks his tail is better because it is _______.
   - short
   - long
   - brown
2. Bear’s tail came off because it was _______.
   - frozen
   - cut
   - burned

Text to Text Think of a different story that tells why an animal looks the way it looks. Draw a picture of the animal. Write a sentence to tell about the animal.
Bear’s Long, Brown Tail

At the end of the story, Bear feels sad. How do you think Fox might feel at the end of the story? Draw a picture to show how Fox feels.

Write about how Fox feels at the end of the story.
Think About It

Write the word that completes each sentence.

1. Bear thinks his tail is better because it is __________.
   - short
   - long
   - brown

2. Bear’s tail came off because it was __________.
   - frozen
   - cut
   - burned

Making Connections Think of another animal who likes to trick others. Draw a picture of this animal. Label your picture.
Bear's Long, Brown Tail • LEVEL H

Bear liked to talk. Bear talked about the sky. Bear talked about the snow. Bear talked about the trees. Bear really liked to talk about his long, brown tail!

Bear talked about his long tail all the time.

Bear liked his long tail.

Bear said to Fox, “My tail is long. Your tail is short.” Fox was not very happy.

Fox did not want Bear to talk about his long tail.

Behavior Code Error

- Read word correctly: ✓
- Repeated word, sentence, or phrase: ®
- Omission: ❌
- Substitution: cut
- Self-correction: cut
- Insertion: the
- Word told: ∗

Accuracy Rate

(# words read correctly/71 × 100) %

Self-Correction Rate

(# errors + # Self-Corrections/ Self-Corrections)