

Character Overview and Educational Outcomes for Thinking Friends Farm

Introducing Cowsie Cows N. Effect:

Who is Cowsie Cows N. Effect?

Cowsie Cows N. Effect examines the CAUSES and EFFECTS of actions or events. Causal reasoning can be very difficult so it needs to be presented through fairly simple examples for young children. Cowsie Cows N. Effect is quite deliberate and slow in her thinking about causes and effects as she works to reason through her examination of causes and effects – recognizing that events are complex and it can be difficult to know what causes something to happen and what effects might be.

Educational outcomes

- When children understand and can apply cause and effect like Cowsie Cows N. Effect...
- Children can identify or speculate as to causes of a particular event.
- Children can identify or speculate as to the effects of a particular event.
- Children can identify when causal reasoning is needed.

How you can assess progress

- After being introduced to Cowsie Cows N. Effect...
- Children will identify at least 2 examples of Cowsie Cows N. Effect examining causes and effects of events from the stories.
- Children will recognize at least 1 example of causes and effects of events in their school day.
- Children will be able to identify at least 2 possible causes of a particular event in a story.
- Children will be able to identify at least 2 possible effects of a particular event in a story.



Five Step Plan for Introducing Cowsie Cows N. Effect

Step 1

What You Need:

- Chart Paper or White Board
- Marker
- Event Picture Card (see Appendix E)



What You Do:

Introduce Cause and Effect

- What does “cause” mean? What does “effect” mean? (e.g. makes something happen and then the results once something does happen)
- Provide some examples of cause and effect from your life. For example: At night I set my alarm clock. When my alarm clock goes off in the morning I get up and get ready for school. The cause of the alarm going off is that I set it at night because I want to get to work on time. The effects of my alarm clock going off are that I get up and I get ready for school.

Introduce Vocabulary

- Write Cause and Effect on chart paper. Remember that Cause is what makes something happen and Effects are the results once something happens.
- Event - The event is what happens.

Discuss

- Remember when we read about Chicky Comparer she was looking at clouds. There was a dark cloud and it rained. When it rained the farmer couldn't do her chores. The rain is the event – the thing that happened. The cause of the rain was the black cloud. The effect of the rain was that the farmer couldn't do her chores. Can you think of other effects because it rained?
- Ask students if they have ever heard you say, if you stand in line quietly, then we will go to recess and you can play. So, what is the event? You can go to recess. What is the cause of you getting to go to recess? Yes, standing in line quietly. What is the effect of going to recess? Yes, playing.
- Why is it important to know cause and effect?

Practice:

- Using the event picture card of the boy falling off his bike. Ask students why they think he fell off his bike (the causes). What might be the effects of his falling off the bike?
- Draw it! Have students draw one of the causes or effects of this event. Create a display of this event with the causes on the left side and the effects on the right side of the event. Have the children add arrows leading from the causes to the event and arrows leading from the event to the effects.

Five Step Plan for Introducing Cowsie Cows N. Effect

Step 2

What You Need:

- Cowsie Cows N. Effect
- Chart Paper or White Board
- Marker
- Picture Cards (see Appendix E or use pictures of your own choosing)

What You Do:

Review Cause and Effect and Vocabulary

- Yesterday we learned new words – cause and effect. What do they mean?
- We also learned the word Event. What does that mean?
- Review words on chart.
- Look at this picture (Cars colliding). What is the event or the thing that happened? What might have caused it to happen? What might be the effects?

Introduce the Character

- We have someone here who can help us. She is a Cow!
- Have you ever seen a cow? What do you know about cows? Discuss.
- Explain that Cowsie is always thinking about causes and effects—her name is “Cowsie Cows N Effect”—Ask the children, What do you think she likes to do? She will help us remember to explain or understand causes and effects!

Practice:

- Say to the children, Let’s look at these picture cards. Each one is an event. Tell me what you think caused the event. There can be more than one cause.
- Now tell me the effects. Remember that there can be more than one effect. I will record them on the chart paper.



Five Step Plan for Introducing Cowsie Cows N. Effect

Step 3

What You Need:

- Cowsie Cows N. Effect Story (below and Thinking Friends Stories)
- Chart Paper or White Board
- Marker
- Parent Letter (see Appendix E)

What You Do:

Review

- Yesterday we met a new character. What was her name?
- What special thinking skill does she have?
- How can she help us?

Pre-Reading

- What are some of the things the Farmer Framer has to do for the Cow?

During Reading

- Ask children to listen to the story to figure out what event Cowsie is thinking about for which to determine the causes and the effects.

Cowsie Cows N. Effect Wonders Why Farmer Framer Grows So Much Hay – Part 1

Cowsie is eating in the pasture. It is a beautiful fall day and Farmer Framer comes down to feed her. She is riding in her tractor pulling a trailer filled with hay bales.

She stops the tractor and greets Cowsie. "Hi Cowsie, are you ready to be milked and fed?" asks Farmer Framer.

Cowsie turns to look up at Farmer Framer in the tractor and says, "That's a full load of hay you have there. I was just wondering what causes you to cut and bale so much hay? That's more than I can eat!"



Five Step Plan for Introducing Cowsie Cows N. Effect

Step 3 *continued*

Farmer Framer stops to think for a moment. Cowsie Cows N. Effect says, "I think I know why you to cut and bale so much hay. Lots of other animals on the farm need to be fed and like to eat hay, like Pony Parter and Donkey Describer. I also know that hay doesn't grow in the winter. So I need to cut and bale it now to store it in the barn for you to eat when the ground freezes."

Farmer Framer says, "Yes, you're right Cowsie! Once it grows tall enough, I cut and bale the hay. I do this several times before the grass stops growing and the cold weather comes. What are the effects of me cutting and baling the hay once it has grown?"

Cowsie looks carefully at the trailer full of hay bales and licks her lips. "Well, one major effect is that I will have food for the winter, once there is no longer fresh grass to eat."

Another effect is that Pony Parter and Donkey Describer will also have hay to eat. It's also expensive to feed all of us so it saves you money to cut and bale your own hay."

Farmer Framer nods, "Yes, it is important that all the animals have food for the winter because when it's very cold and the ground is frozen, plants that you like to eat, like grass, stop growing."

After Reading

Discuss the following with children:

- Farmer Framer helps Cowsie Cows N. Effect look at the causes and effects of an event. What is the event?
- What are the causes?
- What are the effects?
- Record them on the white board or chart paper.

Practice

- Ask students to think of an event/something that happened to them or that they did. What caused them to do it? What were the effects?
- Homework – have students take home the Parent Letter and do the activity with their parents.



Five Step Plan for Introducing Cowsie Cows N. Effect



Step 4

What You Need:

- Cowsie Cows N. Effect Story (below and Thinking Friends Stories)

What You Do:

Review

- Yesterday we read about Cowsie Cows N. Effect and Farmer Framer.
- What is Cowsie's special thinking skill?
- Why is identifying cause and effect important? What would happen if you didn't understand what caused something to happen or the effects?

Pre-Reading

- Today we are going to finish the story.
- What was the event that Cowsie and the farmer talked about?
- What were the causes of the farmer cutting and baling the hay?
- What were the effects?

During Reading

- I am going to read the rest of the story. Let's listen to see what else happens and what the causes and effects are.

Cowsie Cows N. Effect Meets Farmer Framer – Part 2

Farmer asks, "Can you think of another example of something that happens and what causes it and what the effects are?"

Cowsie laughs and says, "Yes, when my udder gets full, this causes you to milk me. One effect is that I feel better. Another effect is that you get milk for people to drink. And another effect is that you can sell the milk and earn money for the farm."

Farmer Framer says, "Yes, exactly. Thank you Cowsie for helping me understand how important it is to look at the causes and effects of things that happen. Sometimes it can be very helpful to know what causes something to happen and what the effects might be. Thinking about the causes and effects of things makes me a better farmer."

After Reading

- What happened? What were the causes and effects?
- What did we learn about Cowsie?

Practice

- Write/Tell/Draw About It! Work with students to retell the story focusing on the causes and effects.

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Step 5

Extending the Curriculum

What You Need: Visual representation for Cause and Effect reasoning (see Appendix E, Parent Letter p.131)

Cause and Effect is a critical thinking skill that is essential to reading comprehension. After Cowsie Cows N. Effect has been introduced student should be encouraged to recognize the event, cause and effect in other stories.

Applying these ideas to other stories:

When you are reading aloud to the children, ask them at the end (or part of the way through), "What has happened? What caused that to happen? What are reasons why it happened? What are the effects? When appropriate, encourage the children to identify multiple causes and multiple effects for an event.

There are many stories available for identifying cause and effect. One of the most popular is the book If You Give a Mouse a Cookie. There are many other books in this series that you can use to reinforce and practice identifying what has happened, the causes and effects.

Think and Draw:

Ahead of time: Select pictures from If You Give A Mouse a Cookie and create flannel board pieces. Use the pieces to retell the story with the students and to identify the event, causes and effects.

After completing this activity with the students (you can do this with other books in the series, as well) ask students to select events they remember from other stories or events from their own lives that they would like to illustrate. Once they complete the illustration of the event, they can be invited to tell their classmates about the event and identify the causes and effects of it. Encourage the children to use the words "cause" "event" and "effect" when explaining their drawing. Be sure you are modeling this when you demonstrate to the children before releasing them to do the activity independently.

Sock Puppet

Make a Cowsie Cows N. Effect sock puppet. Glue black felt patches on a white sock. Add a pink patch on the toe of the sock on which to draw nostrils and a mouth. Glue wiggle eyes above that.

