

The Dragons are Singing Tonight

Poems by Jack Prelutsky

Pictures by Peter Sis

This is a book of poems. It is not a story. All of the poems are about dragons. We will not have time to read each poem, so I have chosen three. If your group has time, you can choose more to read.

Jack Prelutsky was the first Children's Poet Laureate, chosen by the Poetry Foundation, in 2006-2008. He has written more than thirty books of poetry for children. He did not like poetry as a child. His teachers made poetry very boring. He wrote a poem in junior high that was published in the school yearbook. Some boys beat him up because of that. He first wanted to be an opera singer. He published his first book of poetry when he was in his 20s.

Peter Sis did the illustrations for the book. He was born in Czechoslovakia and moved to the United States as an adult. He has published some books of his own, as well as illustrating books by other authors.

(There are a few definitions at the bottom of the page.)

Introduce yourself and tell your group what you did on Halloween. Or, tell the group if you think of dragons as being friendly or unfriendly.

Poem 1: Once They All Believed in Dragons, page 39

Read the poem and ask questions about vocabulary and meaning.

Read the poem again with rhythm and expression.

Discussion questions:

What is your reaction to the poem?

Are dragons significant in your culture?

Do you enjoy reading and hearing old stories and legends about imaginary creatures and heroes with magical abilities?

Do you have any favorite stories about dragons?

Does the poem make you think of something other than dragons?

Poem 2: I Have a Secret Dragon, page 36

Read the poem and ask questions about vocabulary and meaning.
Read the poem again with rhythm and expression.

Discussion:

What is your reaction to the poem?

Did you have an imaginary friend as a child?

Poem 3: I Am Boom! page 31

Read the poem and ask questions about vocabulary and meaning.
Read the poem again with rhythm and expression.

What is your reaction to the poem?

If you have time, choose another poem to read. I suggest:

I'm an Amiable Dragon, page 6

Nasty Little Dragonsong, page 16

My Dragon Wasn't Feeling Good, page 19

I Am My Master's Dragon, page 20

The Dragons are Singing Tonight, page 22

Or:

Talk about the illustrations. What is your favorite illustration?

Do you enjoy reading poetry?

Do you write poems?

Is this a book you would share with a child you know?