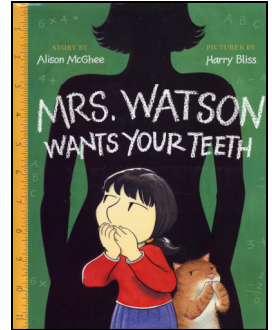


Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide



Title: *Mrs. Watson Wants Your Teeth*

Author: Alison McGhee

Illustrator: Harry Bliss

**Publisher and
Copyright Date:** Harcourt, 2004

**Connection to
Minnesota:** Minnesota author

Summary: This is the story of a first grade girl who's frightened on the first day of school after hearing a rumor that her teacher is a 300-year-old alien with a purple tongue who steals baby teeth from her students. This book could be considered a sequel to *Countdown to Kindergarten* by the same author and illustrator.

Suggested ages: 4-6

Tips for Reading:

- As the story is written in the first person, read most of the book as the nervous young girl.
- Change your voice for the different characters, and for when you're reading the little girl's thoughts.
- After you read the book the first time, go back and review the pages with information on the walls (which contain tooth-related puns).

**Questions
before reading:**

- Have you lost any of your baby teeth yet? What happened?
- Have any older kids ever told you something that made you nervous or scared? What happened?

**To Introduce
this story say:** It's the first day of school for a girl in first grade. She gets scared after an older girl who's a second grader tells her something spooky about her teacher. Let's see what happens.

**Questions
After Reading:**

- Why did the second grader tell the girl the story about Mrs. Watson?
- Did you think Mrs. Watson might be a 300-year-old alien with a purple tongue who steals baby teeth? Can you see why the little girl thought so?
- Have you ever been nervous or scared on your first day of something new, like a school or class or program or sports team? How long did it take before you felt comfortable in the new situation?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Art:**
- Draw a picture of yourself smiling with one or more missing teeth.
- Language:**
- Make a list of what the children are afraid of, and after the list is finished talk about some of the fears.
 - Pair children up and ask them to talk with each other about what happens when they start losing their baby teeth.
- Math:**
- Have children look in a mirror and count their teeth.
- Science:**
- Discuss baby teeth, adult teeth, tooth brushing, flossing, visiting the dentist and overall oral hygiene.
 - Take a field trip to a dentist's office, or invite a dentist to present to your group.
- Other:**
- Download classroom ideas, resources, fun activity sheets, and more from the American Dental Association web site of <http://www.ada.org>.
- Suggestions for English Language Learners:**
- Have children retell what the 2nd grader told the girl in the story. Ask children what is true or false about her warnings. Have children retell what actually happened in the classroom.
 - Talk about tooth traditions – what happens when children lose their baby teeth - from their home countries.
 - Discuss the similar feelings that an ELL child might have in a new situation, like the first day of school, because he/she might be nervous.
- Related Books:**
- ***Countdown to Kindergarten*** by Alison McGhee, illustrated by Harry Bliss (Harcourt, 2002)
 - ***Throw Your Tooth on the Roof: Tooth Traditions from Around the World*** by Selby B. Beeler, illustrated by G. Brian Karas (Houghton Mifflin, 1998)
 - ***Ira Sleeps Over*** by Bernard Waber (Houghton Mifflin, 1972)
 - ***First Day Jitters*** by Julie Danneberg, illustrated by Judy Love (Charlesbridge, 2000)
 - ***Wemberly Worried*** by Kevin Henkes (Greenwillow, 2000)

