

Talking Chips and *Moonbeam Cow*

1. Students are grouped in teams of four, and each child is numbered as person 1, 2, 3 or 4. Each student is given five “talking chips,” which can be corn kernels, small counters, etc*. A butter tub or other container with a slot cut in the cover is placed in the middle of each group’s table to hold the chips as they are used.
2. Teacher reads part of the book, *Moonbeam Cow* and stops.
3. Teacher gives a sentence prompt. Examples: “I like...”; “My favorite character is...”; “I wonder if...”; “I want to know...”; “I hope...”
4. Students take turns sharing responses, with person 1 going first, etc. When a student shares with his team, he places a talking chip in the container in the middle of the team table. He may not talk (share) again until each person on the team has had a turn sharing and the teacher reads more of the story and calls out the next prompt.
5. When each student has “played” a chip (placed a chip in the container and individuals have shared), teacher continues reading story.
6. Repeat steps 1-4 for rest of prompts.

This activity encourages listening skills, contribution of ideas to group discussion, and promotes practice in using complete sentences.

* With *Moonbeam Cow*, use cotton seeds with the linters still attached. At the end of the reading, talk about the fact that cows eat cotton seed; they are full of protein which is good for cows – just as protein is good for humans. Humans eat foods that have cotton seed oil in them, but they don’t eat cotton seed!

This book is an excellent one to use when introducing literary style – specifically legends. Also, with K, 2nd and 5th grade science, the meteorological concept of fog.

Source: *Moonbeam Cow* by Sharma Krauskopf, ISBN 1-57274-271-2 ©2000