



MEMOIR OF A GOLDFISH

AUTHOR: DEVIN SCILLIAN

ILLUSTRATOR: TIM BROWERS

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Memoir of a Goldfish](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

Day One I swam around my bowl. Day Two I swam around my bowl. Twice. And so it goes in this tell-all tale from a goldfish. With his bowl to himself and his simple routine, Goldfish loves his life until one day... When assorted intruders including a hyperactive bubbler, a grime-eating snail, a pair of amorous guppies, and a really crabby crab invade his personal space and bowl, Goldfish is put out, to say the least. He wants none of it, preferring his former peace and quiet and solitude. But time away from his new companions gives him a chance to rethink the pros and cons of a solitary life. And discover what he's been missing.

[Amazon.com](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Devin Scillian is an award-winning author and Emmy award-winning broadcast journalist. He has written more than 10 books with Sleeping Bear Press, including the bestselling *A is for America: An American Alphabet* and *Brewster the Rooster*. Devin lives in Michigan and anchors the news for WDIV-TV in Detroit.

[Amazon.com](#)

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Early in his career Tim Bowers worked for Hallmark Cards, helping to launch the Shoebox Greetings card line. He has illustrated more than 25 children's books, garnering such awards as the Chicago Public Library's "Best of the Best" list. He also illustrated the widely popular *First Dog*. Tim lives in Granville, Ohio.

[Amazon.com](#)

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- Look at this title! Have you ever heard of a memoir? I wonder what it could mean.
- What do you notice? Can you predict what this book might be about?
- I wonder if it's fiction or non-fiction? What do you think and why?

DURING THE STORY

MEMOIR OF A GOLDFISH

TOPICS & THEMES:

- **Memoir**
- **Feelings change over time**

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

"Tell me more, why do you think that?"

"How do you know that?"

"Why do you think they feel like that?"

"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content.

- Day 3:
 - Can you predict what will happen on Day 4? What makes you think that?
- Day 4:
 - What is this object in the bowl? Have you ever seen one? Where? What purpose do you think it serves in the fish bowl?
- Day 8:
 - What do you think of Fred? How is he acting? Why do you think the author made this character act like this? (crabby!)
- Day 11:
 - What is a reflection? Do you think there is a mirror in the bowl? Why or why not?
- Day 13:
 - What is plunge?
- Day 14:
 - How is goldfish feeling now? What makes you think this?

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read.

- What message did the author want us to understand from this book? How did he give us that message?
- Why do you think this book have the word memoir in the title?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- Can you act out how you would plunge into the water? (similar to page 13)

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- Turn to a neighbor and describe how you think Goldfish is feeling? How does the illustration help you understand how he is feeling?

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- How do Goldfish's feelings change throughout the book? What are some of the feelings he has? (Bored, sad, happy, lonely, frustrated, etc...) Choose a page and talk about how the illustration helps us understand the emotion.
- Discuss when students have experience some of the same emotions.
- Why do you think the author chose to a crab to be unfriendly? What does it mean to be crabby? Can you think of other animal words that describe emotions? (Foxy, sheepish, chicken, mulish, etc...)
- What do you call the place where these sea animals live? (Aquarium) have you ever seen one? How do you think you would care for animals in an aquarium?
- Have you ever had to share a space? How did you work it out? What were some things you had to decide? (Share an example from your own life, as well!)
- If you had a choice, would you want to live alone or with others? Explain your thinking.

Suggested Optional Activity:

- Write emotions that Goldfish experienced on slips of paper. Have students choose an emotion to pantomime with their facial expressions for others to guess.

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

Choose another animal. Write “Memoirs of a _____”

Write entries for three days telling what might have happened on these days. Write at least 3 sentences for each day and draw a picture to illustrate.

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Draw a picture of what might be in your fish bowl. You may copy the attached template for the drawing.

COMMON CORE LINKS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy RL.2.1 ,2.32.5,2.7