

For the Love of Autumn

by Patricia Polacco

A heart-warming story about love – and about how one little kitten brings two people together in an unforgettable way.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *Have you ever found a stray animal?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder if the kitten is really that small?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *For the Love of Autumn*

- marveled: something that inspires awe, amazement, or admiration
- scurrying: to move at a hurried pace, usually with small fast steps
- hamper: a large basket with a cover that is used for holding dirty laundry
- cottage: a small vacation home in the country or beside the ocean
- wrestled: to struggle to lift or move something
- bubble wrap: a thin dome-shaped film that is filled with air or a gas
- enchanted: to charm, delight, or captivate somebody
- jasmine: a tropical climbing plant grown in a garden
- stalked: to follow or try to get close to a person or animal
- perched: a place or position that is secure
- gash: a long deep narrow slash or cut
- rumors: a story, report, or statement without facts to confirm its truth
- trellis: a lattice of wood, metal, or plastic used to support plants
- scrawled: messy writing
- slashed: to make long deep cuts in something
- snorted: to make a harsh sound by forcing air through the nostrils
- apologize: to say you are sorry for something that has upset somebody else
- compose: to create something, especially a piece of music or writing
- shriek: a loud high-pitched piercing sound
- sigh: to take in and let out a deep breath in relief or weariness
- unraveled: to separate something out from a tangle or other mass
- clump: a compact cluster or group of growing things
- gazed: a long steady look or stare

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Who was Autumn? Why was she given that name?
- Can you name some of the things that Autumn did to Miss Parks (Danielle) every night?
- Why did Miss Parks (Danielle) and Autumn move to Washington?
- What kind of help did Autumn give Miss Parks (Danielle) when she was packing and unpacking?
- Can you tell me the first thing that Autumn did in her new home?
- Was Miss Parks (Danielle) married?
- Why did Autumn run away from home? When did she return? What happened next?
- Who helped Miss Parks (Danielle) search for her cat?
- How long was Autumn gone? Weeks?
- Who can tell me where Autumn had been for six weeks? What was her condition when she returned? Skinny? Fat?
- Did Autumn ever run away from home again? When? How long?
- What was she wearing when she returned? What was written on her collar?
- What did Miss Parks (Danielle) do after she found the phone number on her collar?
- Who found Autumn on that stormy night? What did the stranger name her? Why?
- What did Miss Parks find on Autumn's collar when she came home the next time?
- What did the note say? What did Miss Parks do after she read the note? Then what happened?
- What happened when Miss Parks finally met Mr. Noton, the stranger?



Do

Kitty Collage

Let the children find and cut or tear out pictures of cats from greeting cards and magazines. Children can then paste their cats on pieces of construction paper.