Is There an Alligator in the Pond?

Story by Laura Burton Rice
Illustrations by Jennifer Clark
Green Words (Phonetic):

alligators  jam  eat  if  
arms  swam  green  or  
take  jump  just  raft  
swim  sandwiches  jogged  jeep

Red Words (Sight):

don’t  onto  when  heard

Practice reading these sentences.

Jim, Jack, and Deena were at Alligator Pond.
They jumped in and swam to the raft.
Jack heard a big splash.
Jim said, “It’s an alligator.”
The twins, Jim and Jack, lived next door to Deena. One hot summer day in August, they invited her to go swimming with them at Alligator Pond.

Jim said, “Dad has a jeep. He can take us to the pond.”
Jack said, “Deena, ask your mom if you can swim with us.”

Deena asked her mom. She clapped and said, “Mom said I can go.”

Where was Dad going to take the children? [Dad was going to take the children to the pond.]
What did Deena have to do first? [She had to ask her mom.]
What did Deena’s mom say? [She said that Deena could go.]
Deena was excited. She couldn’t wait to swim in the pond.

The trip to the pond was not long in the jeep. Dad left the jeep near a tree by the pond. Jack jumped onto the grass. Deena and Jim jumped. The kids helped Dad unpack the jeep.

Where did Dad leave the jeep?  [Dad left the jeep near a tree by the pond.]
What did the kids do?  [They helped Dad unpack the jeep.]
Dad sat on the sand.
Jim said, “Let’s go! Jump in the pond!”
Jim jumped in.
Jack splashed in.
Jim and Jack screamed for fun.
Deena did not jump in.

What did Jim and Jack do? [They jumped in and screamed.]
What did Deena do? [She did not jump in.]
Deena just stood on the bank of the pond. She was worried that the water might be too cold.

Jim called, “Jump in! Jump in!”
Deena called back, “O.K.”
She splashed into the pond.
She grinned. It was fun.
Jim and Jack swam to the raft.

What did Jim say? [Jim said, “Jump in! Jump in!”]
What did Deena do? [She splashed into the pond.]
Do you think Deena was having a good time? Why? [Yes. She grinned.]
Deena waded deeper into the water. The twins climbed up onto the wooden raft in the middle of the pond. Would Deena make it to the raft?

Jim and Jack yelled, “You can do it, Deena. You can get to the raft.”
Deena kicked her legs and feet.
Deena splashed her arms and hands.
She did it! Deena swam to the raft!

Where were Jim and Jack?  [Jim and Jack were on the raft.]  Point to the raft.
What did Jim and Jack yell?  [“You can do it, Deena.”]
What did Deena do to get to the raft?  [She kicked her legs and feet. She splashed her arms and hands.]
Then Jack yelled, “Watch out for alligators!” Deena was glad she was on the raft!

Jack heard a big splash.
“Help!” he yelled.
Deena said, “It was just a fish.”
Jack said, “It was NOT a fish.”
Jim said, “It was just a bird.”
Jack said, “It was NOT a bird.”

What did Jack hear?  [Jack heard a big splash.]
What did Deena think the splash was?  [Deena thought it was a fish.]
What did Jim think the splash was?  [Jim thought it was a bird.]

Make a Prediction: What was making the noise?
(T-P-S) Have the students support their predictions.
Jim said, “I see it. It’s an alligator.”
Deena said, “It is NOT. It is not big.”
“An alligator can be big or small,” said Jim.
Jack screamed, “Help! I don’t like alligators!”

What did Jim scream?  [“I see it. It’s an alligator.”]
What does Deena think?  [She doesn’t think it is an alligator because it is not big.]
How does Jack feel?  [Jack feels scared.]
How do you know?  [He screamed for help.]
The children jumped up and huddled together in the middle of the raft. They yelled for Dad to save them from the alligator.

“Help! Dad, help us!” they yelled.
SPLASH!
A big, green frog hopped onto the raft.
“It was not an alligator!” said Jack. He was glad.
“It was just a frog!”
The kids grinned.

What hopped onto the raft? [A frog hopped onto the raft.]
Are the kids still scared? (WGR) [no]
How do you know? [They grinned.]
Dad said, “Come and eat. One, two, three, … jump!” The kids jumped off the raft. They swam fast. The frog jumped back into the pond.
Jack and Deena swam to the bank fast. Jim was last. They jogged to the picnic mat.

Who were the first two children to get to the bank? [Jack and Deena were first.]
What about Jim? [Jim was last.]
Where did they go? [They went to the picnic mat.]
The kids sat on the bank. They were all tired from the race and their narrow escape from the “alligator.”

Dad said, “Let’s eat.”
He handed the kids jam sandwiches.
“Mmmmmmm! Jam sandwiches!” they said.

What did the kids and Dad do? [They ate jam sandwiches.]
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Use T-P-S to discuss these questions.

1. What did the children do at Alligator Pond?
   [They went swimming.]

2. Why were the children afraid?
   [They thought that an alligator was in the pond.]

3. Was an alligator making the splash?
   [No, a frog was splashing.]

4. What did the children do after they swam?
   [They had a picnic. They ate jam sandwiches.]
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