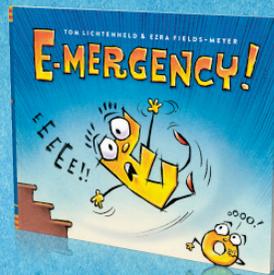


A TEACHER'S GUIDE for **E-MERGENCY!**

BY *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING ARTIST
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E-mergency!
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Guided Reading Level M



ABOUT THE BOOK

What happens when the most important letter in the alphabet gets a big owie?

One of the other letters has to take her place, but who? Z is too sleepy to help out and Q is useless without U. The logical choice is O because he is so well-rounded. Now every lunch menu, sign, and newspaper must be changed. So starting right now, it's O instead of E. That's it, **PORIOD!**

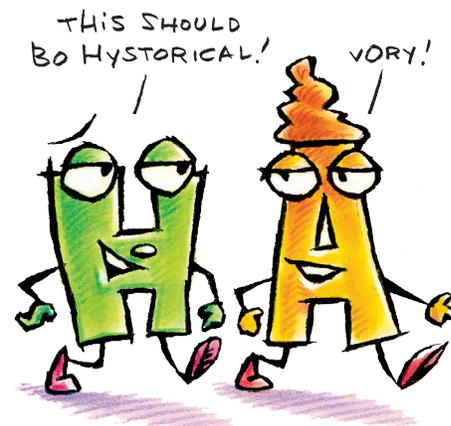
E-mergency! was inspired by an animated video made by high school student Ezra Fields-Meyer, who is the co-author of this story. You can watch Ezra's video at author and illustrator Tom Lichtenheld's website, www.tomlichtenheld.com/childrens_books/e-mergency.html.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Tom Lichtenheld loves drawing pictures and telling stories. His books include *New York Times* bestsellers *Duck! Rabbit!*, *Shark vs. Train*, and *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site*. Learn more at TomLichtenheld.com.

Ezra Fields-Meyer is a high school student and an expert animator. He is the creator of the animated short, "Alphabet House," which inspired this book, and is the subject of the memoir *Following Ezra* (by his father, Tom Fields-Meyer). He lives in Los Angeles.

Visit chroniclebooks.com/e-mergency to see the animated trailer and download printable activity sheets!



INTERACTIVE READ ALOUD

During interactive read alouds, the teacher poses questions throughout the reading that enhance meaning construction and also shows how one makes sense of text. *E-mergency!* is perfect for an interactive read aloud because it is packed with puns, wordplay and lots of silly situations.

Some tips for an *E-mergency!* interactive read aloud include:

- **Read the book first before reading it aloud to children.** This will ensure that unfamiliar words are pronounced correctly, speech balloons and character side comments are read with expression, and opportunities for pausing for comprehension and discussion are identified. *E-mergency!* does produce some challenges in reading words where E has been replaced by O such as friend/friond, guess/guoss, and everybody/ovorybody. In order to read the text smoothly, a little practice in reading these E-less words will add to the delight of the listeners as they recognize that you are substituting letters and making it sound like it could really happen.
- **Hold the book so that the comic detail of the letters can be seen by the children.** On the first page, it becomes evident that each letter has a distinct personality. *E-mergency!* incorporates lots of speech bubbles and character side comments along with the story's narrative. These text features are important in the enjoyment and comprehension of the story. While pre-reading the book, think about using different voices such as a sleepy tone for letter Z or a bossy tone for letter A. Read with expression and be as dramatic as each letter demands. Also, be sure that students recognize that the letter O is not substituted in words found in the narrative, only in those words being spoken by the letters.
- **Pause from time to time to assess comprehension.** Seeing that the children recognize the changing letters and distorted words adds to the hilarity of the story, so you don't want to read too quickly or pass by any worthwhile wordplay or playful puns.
- **Once listeners catch on to the changing of E in words, write down a few words and have them determine what the next word is and how it should sound.** In part, this is how *E-mergency!* invites students to interact with the story during the read aloud.

CHANGE-O NAME GAME

In *E-mergency!* after the letter E gets hurt, she is replaced by O in each word. Have students explore what their names would be if they were to substitute one vowel for another vowel. For example, Jimmy could become Jammy, Jommy, or Jummy. Amber might be changed to Imber, Omber, or UMBER. Next, look at items in the classroom and change a vowel in those words. Desk is now dosk, pencil becomes poncil, and paper is now referred to as papor.

You can also play "The Name Game", also known as "The Banana Song", which is a sing-along rhyming game written by singer Shirley Ellis that creates variations of someone's name. For example, Katie's song would be: Katie, Katie, bo-batie, Banana-fana fo-fatie Mee-mi-mo-matie Katie!

There are a number of versions of the song that could be viewed on www.youtube.com to familiarize children with the tune and the name variations.

THINK ALOUD

The purpose of a think aloud is to model for students the thought process that occurs when challenging text is being read. When using think alouds, teachers verbalize their thoughts while reading aloud a story. Students will gain an understanding of comprehension strategies as the teacher models this process. *E-mergency!* naturally lends itself to this strategy because of the play on words and the various comments and actions of the letter characters throughout the book.

Use the following process to model a think aloud:

- Read sentences or passages that contain unknown words, or in reading *E-mergency!*, a sentence in which several words have been altered because of the insertion of O for E.
- Stop to verbalize the thinking that occurs when difficult or confusing material is encountered. Students listen as the teacher thinks through the trouble spots. So when the word “cooperation” is read, the teacher could pause and state, “I wonder what that word should be. I think that it should be cooperation because the letters D and C are asking for help from the government.”
- Pair students to practice think aloud as they take turns reading sentences or passages and sharing their thoughts.

BAFFLING BINGO

Children can play Bingo using the words they have generated from changing letters in the names of items in the classroom or the teacher can select words to enhance vocabulary or reading development.

To play Baffling Bingo:

- 1 Decide on the topic for the Bingo game. You can play traditional bingo using spelling words for the week, words of familiar items, or new vocabulary words for students to learn.
- 2 Make a list of words and their variation with one vowel changed. Print the “correct” words on the Bingo cards and keep the variation of the word to choose out of a hat. So if the teacher yells, “dosk” the student would then cover the word “desk” on his or her Bingo card.
- 3 The first person to get 5 in a row (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal) wins the game!

MUDDLED MESSAGE

Tell students to find and/or select a comic strip, newspaper ad, lunch menu or other short print item. Have them choose a vowel to change and rewrite the text. Once finished, they can give it to another student who will attempt to determine what letter has been changed and what the item was supposed to have conveyed.

CHAIN OF EVENTS

Chain of events can be used to describe the stages of an event, the actions of a character, or the steps in a procedure. Ask students key questions such as, “What happened first in *E-mergency!*? What did the character(s) do next? How did one event lead to another? What is the final outcome?” More than one event can constitute the “second” portion of the chain of events.

GRABBING ACRONYMS

E-mergency! includes numerous attention-grabbing acronyms. What makes them attention-grabbing is that they are often in bold black capital letters such as **EMTs**, **IV**, **CPR**, and **ER**. Write down a list of these acronyms and what the letters stand for on a chart. Then have students think of other acronyms or go on an acronyms search by looking through newspapers and magazines, around the classroom and neighborhood, or even to ask their parents or another adult if they know of any acronyms. Add these to the list as well.

A few acronyms that might get the ball rolling are:

NASA: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

PBS: Public Broadcasting System

OJ: Orange Juice

IQ: Intelligence Quotient

BLT: Bacon, Lettuce, and Tomato

DJ: Disc Jockey

ASAP: As Soon As Possible

PUNNY LANGUAGE

E-mergency! is packed with puns or jokes in which a word has two meanings. When readers open the book, they will see that the left hand side of the endpapers shows the letters of the alphabet which are “The Cast” of characters in the book, while on the right hand side, the letter E is depicted wearing “The Other Cast” on his leg. During a second reading of *E-mergency!* have students listen for puns. Once the pun is identified, write it down on a chart. After you have finished reading *E-mergency!* brainstorm other puns with students and write those down as well. Have each student or a small group of students select one of the puns and create a poster of it. Display the posters in the classroom or hallway.

THE ABCs OF POETRY

The letters of the alphabet in *E-mergency!* each have unique attributes such as the authority of A or the sleepiness of Z. This activity provides a way for students to play with words and letters in an imaginative way.

- Have a collection of letters of the alphabet that are cut out of paper or preferably out of foam or a material that gives them a 3D effect. Select one of the letters. Tell students to forget that this is a letter and think about all the things it could be. Turn the letter upside down, on its side, or show it at an angle. Then brainstorm with students what the letter should be. For example, Z could be a winding road, a sound a person makes while they are sleeping, steep climbing hills, a zigzag, a pinball on its way to the bottom, or the sign for Zorro. Try to brainstorm as many ideas as possible.
- Once the students have produced a range of images, have them think of at least five words that begin with the letter. So for Z it might be zipper, zebra, zephyr, zillion, zoo, and zinger. Have them select five of the words and place a star next to them.
- Next, create a poem using the images and words that have been generated.
Z is a steep climbing hill, winding road, person sleeping
Z is Zorro, zigzagging, or a pinball on its way to the bottom
Z is zipper, zoo, zinger, zephyr, zillion
- Now have students select their own letter and repeat the process. Allow them to work in groups and to access the internet if they are in search of words.