

Decodable Reader 26



Black and White and Big All Over

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Phonics Skill

Vowel sounds in tooth (oo, ew, ue, ui) and cook (oo, u)

bamboo

bush

chew

cook

fruit

put

raccoon

school

Sue

zoo





Josh dressed quickly. His long wait was almost over! Today was his class trip to City Zoo.

At nine sharp, a big school bus parked at Cook School. Josh and Brooke got on first. Soon everybody else joined them. Some children began playing wildly. Cooper jumped up on his seat. Ashley shouted loudly. Josh wasn't unruly. He just wanted to focus on zoo sights he'd see.





"Quiet, please!" Miss Rooney called. At last Josh and Brooke could hear themselves think.

"I'm excited about seeing tigers," Brooke said happily. "They're the animals I like best. Which do you like best, Josh?"





"You will find out soon," Josh replied. He smiled shyly at Brooke. Josh didn't really like keeping secrets. But talking too much about the animal might bring bad luck. He hoped he'd find it playing outside. Last time, the animal had hidden in its cool, dark cave. Josh could hardly see his furry friend.





At City Zoo, a helpful zookeeper named Sue greeted Miss Rooney's class. She began showing the excited children zoo animals. They saw lions, tigers, camels, and monkeys. Josh liked them all. At each stop, Brooke asked, "Isn't that the animal you like best, Josh?" Each time, Josh replied, "No."





At long last Sue led everybody to the animal Josh liked best. Just as Josh had hoped, it sat outdoors. It was black and white and quite big. A big black mark circled each eye.

"It looks like a large raccoon!" Martin shouted.

"It looks like a gentle grizzly bear!" Ginny yelled.





"It's not a raccoon or a bear, but it has traits of both. It's a giant panda! Which food do you think Pete Panda likes most?" Sue asked.

"Fruit?" Kevin asked. Sue shook her head.


"Meat? Noodles?" Jane asked. Sue shook her head twice.

"Leaves from a lilac bush?" Kate asked.

Josh just had to speak up. "Bamboo," he said.





 "That's true," Sue nodded. "Lots of bamboo trees grow in China where pandas live. Pandas chew bamboo shoots, or tiny branches. They chew bamboo leaves as well. Aren't pandas picky? Bamboo is one of the few foods they'll put in their mouths."

Soon everybody got back on the bus. "Now we all know which animal you like best, Josh," said Brooke. She gave Josh a high five. "Cool!"

