My Pillow Keeps Moving! by Laura Gehl is about a lonely man who wants to buy a pillow, a footstool and a jacket. In the meantime, a dog and a cat, shivering outside, make a plan to find a home. The dog hides among the pillows and the man mistaking him for a pillow, gets tricked into buying the dog instead. He returns the pillow the next day and buys other things with similar results.

This is a warm tale of animal adoption and companionship with a couple of twists and turns that will have children chuckling and wondering what will happen next.

Ask Open-Ended Questions Before and After Story

Before the Story

- Introduce the story: A lonely man tries to buy a pillow and ends up with a new best friend in this silly and sweet doggy tale.
- What animals are on the cover?
- Why is the dog hiding in the pillows?
- Do you have any pets? What are they?
- If you could have any pet, what would it be?
- What is (!) called? What does it mean?
- Do you have a favorite pillow? What does it look like?

After the Story

- What was the problem with the pillow the man bought? What about the footstool? Coat?
- In the story, the man used a real dog for a pillow. Do you have a stuffed animal that you sleep with? Tell us about it.
- How was the dog sneaky?
- The man visited many stores. What are some stores you visit?
- Have you been to a place where you can adopt a pet? What was it like?

Introduce New Vocabulary and Concepts

Explaining unfamiliar words and concepts will help expand children’s vocabulary, develop their background knowledge and enhance future read alouds.

- belch: burp
- cozy: warm and snug
- customer: someone who visits a store
- emporium: a store
- factory: a place where they make things
- fluffy: light and puffy
- footstool: a place to rest your feet
- grunt: grumbling sound
- guaranteed: for sure
- sale: costs less
- zzzzz: snoring sound

This book provides a way to talk to children about adopting pets, animal companionship and friendship.
Engage Preschoolers in Early Literacy Book Extension Activities

Using My Pillow Keeps Moving!

- Invite children to play “Follow the Leader.” Each child has a turn leading their friends. The Leader acts like an animal (for example: barking or flying) and the others follow and copy. Ask the children what animal they were copying. Pick the next child to be the Leader.
- Add stuffed or plastic animals to your Block Center and invite children to build a park for pets.
- Collect different stuffed pet animals. Invite children to play a “Pet Guessing Game.” Show the children all the animals and ask them to close their eyes. Put an animal in a drawstring bag. Taking turns, instruct each child to put their hands in the bag and feel the animal. Ask them to guess which animal is in the bag. When all have guessed, you can reveal the animal. You can talk about how they made their guess.
- Gather six different toy pets and a dice. Invite children to take turns rolling the dice and choose the same number of pets as shown on the dice. You can make a chart and tally which pets were selected and talk about the pet selected the most and least.
- Invite children to draw or write about how to take care for different pets. When done, ask them to share their tips with their friends. You can compile the tips into a book for your Class Library.

Sing Songs and Chant Rhymes About Pets

Love Your Pets
(Tune: “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”)
Love, love, love your pets,
Love them every day.
Give them food and water too,
Then let them run and play.

Cat Says Meow
(Tune: “The Farmer in the Dell”)
My cat says, “Meow,”
My cat says, “Meow.”
She likes to purr and run and play.
My cat says, “Meow.”
My dog says, “Woof,”
My dog says, “Woof.”
He likes to jump and run and play.
My dog says, “Woof.”

Dogs in the Dirt
Ten little doggies went out one day, (10 fingers up)
To dig in the dirt and play, play, play. (pretend to dig)
Five were spotted, and five were not, (show one hand at a time)
And at dinner time they ate a lot! (pretend to eat)

Five Kittens in a Row
Five little kittens standing in a row, (stand up)
They nod their heads to the children, like so. (nod your head)
They walk to the left, (take a step to the left)
They walk to the right. (take a step to the right)
They stand up and stretch in the bright sunlight. (stretch)
Along comes a dog who’s in for some fun, (stick tongue out and pant)
Meow, see those kittens run. (run in place)

How Much is That Doggy in the Window?
How much is that doggy in the window? (bark)
The one with the wiggly tail.
How much is that doggy in the window? (bark)
I do hope that doggy is for sale!
How much is that kitty in the window? (meow)
The one that purrs so.
How much is that kitty in the window? (meow)
I do hope that kitty is for sale!
How much is that bunny in the window? (hop)
The one that goes hip-ity-hop
How much is that bunny in the window? (hop)
I do hope that bunny is for sale!