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# Big Al

Illustrator  
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## Book Language

Front Cover    Back Cover  
Spine            Page  
Title             Author  
Illustrator      Publisher  
Non Fiction    Fiction

## Vocabulary

Friendly, Nicer, Scary, At Least,  
Many, None, Lonely, Cried,  
Disguise, Clever, Silly, Clumsy



Take Our Survey

## Discovering Characters

Introduce the characters from the story to your child. Share what you notice.

## Before Reading Setting the Stage

Big Al follows the story of one large and scary-looking fish who is anything but scary. Read along as we see how Big Al tries to change himself to find friends, how those efforts work out for Big Al, and the surprises he meets along the way.

## While Reading Exploring the Story

While reading the story, pause and ask your child if they have ever felt lonely or like they didn't fit in. What did they do? Do they think Big Al will be able to find friends by changing himself?

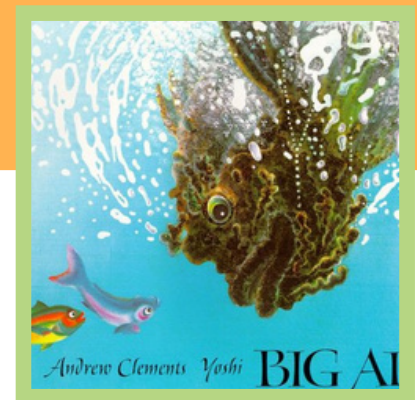
## After Reading Reflection

While reflecting on the story with your child, ask open ended questions about events in the story. Allow your child to answer and then you take a turn to speak. Turn-taking is a foundation for speech and language development.

## Conversation Serve and Return

You may have heard the terms Serve and Return. This is the art of back and forth communication with your child.

- Notice what your child is interested in. Share the child's focus and attention. Try looking at the same item in the book.
- Return the serve by supporting and encouraging. Point at the picture and ask, "What else do you see?"
- Give it a name. "You see a yellow fish!"
- Take turns.....and wait! Keep the interaction going back and forth. With infants, this can be as simple as responding to a gesture or glance.



## Outdoor Experience

Take a walk around your neighborhood. What animals can you see? Are some cute and cuddly? Are some big and scary looking?

# Music and Movement

Fingerplays are important for kids because it boosts oral language skills. When singing songs, your child is expanding their oral language skills by “working out” their mouth muscles. When a child engages with fingerplay they have to create images in their mind to accompany the songs.

## Once I Caught a Fish Alive

One, two, three, four, five, Once I caught a fish alive, Six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Then I let it go again. Why did you let it go? Because it bit my finger so. Which finger did it bite? This little finger on my right. One, two, three, four, five. Once I caught a fish alive. Six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Then I let it go again. Why did you let it go? Because it bit my finger so. Which finger did it bite? This little finger on my right  
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWWEUChKo6s>

## S.T.E.M.

Big Al tries to change himself with camouflage so he can look smaller or like other fish. Many animals in nature use camouflage, including chameleons, octopus, and owls. Some animals use camouflage to trick predators into thinking they aren't there, or to confuse them. Zebras have wild stripe patterns making them blend into one another, which makes it harder for lions to target just one zebra. Predators like leopards use camouflage to sneak up on their prey. What type of camouflage would you use if you were an animal? Would you be a color-changing octopus or a butterfly with beautiful coloring? Explore more camouflage activities at: <https://tinyurl.com/549wf4fd> under "Hiding in Plain Sight".

## Social Emotional

**Circle of Security** is the idea that when children know they have a trusting, safe and nurturing relationship with an adult they will feel more confident to explore their surroundings and develop greater self-esteem. A secure attachment to at least one adult creates the foundation for healthy social-emotional development. Big Al gives us the space to talk to our kids about trying to change ourselves for others. Naturally, kids want to fit in. They want to know they are loved and accepted. What are ways to encourage kids to be themselves?

## What's That?

### What is a Disguise?

A disguise is a way of hiding what you look like or who you are. Big Al used seaweed to wrap up and dirt to cover himself, to try to look smaller and less scary. Did his disguises work? Have you ever worn a costume to disguise yourself? What were you pretending to be?



### Dive In Deeper

Inspired by the Leviathan's Library model. Brought to you by the Literacy Hub Grant Region 2, a program of Great Start to Quality and the United Way of NW Michigan

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