

Save the Ducks!

by Norma Morales



Genre	Build Background	Access Content	Extend Language
Realistic Fiction	- Wildlife Rescue - Volunteers - Needs of Animals	- Labels in Art - Captions - Definitions	Animal Action Verbs

Scott Foresman Reading Street 2.5.2

Illustrated by Peter Church





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These volunteers work without pay. They will help the ducks.



Oh, no! Oil has spilled into the water. The ducks are in trouble. Their wings are covered with black oil. They cannot fly. They look sick. Did they drink the **polluted** water?



Volunteers hurry to the spilled oil. They must help the ducks quickly. It is hard to catch the ducks. The water is **choppy**. It pounds against the boat. The boat is rolling from side to side. Finally, the volunteers catch all the ducks.

polluted: dirty

choppy: rough, filled with waves



The volunteers take the ducks to a **vet**. There is more work to do. First the volunteers wipe the ducks with towels. They wipe off as much oil as they can. Then they check the ducks for broken bones or cuts.



The ducks are sick from drinking the polluted water. The vet gives them medicine. Then the ducks rest in a warm, peaceful place.

vet: veterinarian, a doctor for animals



The volunteer has learned how to help animals.





The ducks eat some food. They begin to feel better. But they are not healthy yet. Feathers with oil on them are not **waterproof**. The ducks will drown in water if their feathers are still oily. Also, oily feathers cannot keep the ducks warm.

waterproof: able to keep out water



The volunteers wash out the rest of the oil with dish soap and warm water. They wash the ducks again and again until all the oil is gone. Then they rinse the soap away. Now they will take the ducks to a new, clean home.





The ducks are healthy. The volunteers take them to clean water. The water is cold, but it will not hurt the ducks. They rush into the water and begin to paddle, swim, and quack.

How do you think the volunteers feel now?



Talk About It

1. How do the people in the story help the ducks?
2. Would you ever like to be a volunteer and help ducks or other animals? Tell why or why not.

Write About It

3. Imagine that you are helping ducks that have oil on them. On a separate sheet of paper, write the steps for cleaning a duck and returning it to the water.

Extend Language

The verbs *paddle*, *swim*, and *quack* tell some things ducks can do. What are other words for things that ducks can do?

ISBN: 0-328-14148-8

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