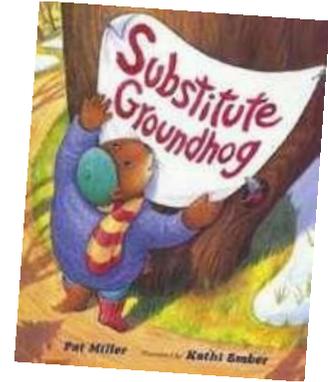


Substitute Groundhog by Pat Miller



Characters:

Groundhog	Mole	Eagle	Squirrel
Dr. Owl	Armadillo	Narrator 1	Narrator 2
	Narrator 3	Narrator	(Groundhog 2)

Scene:

In the woods near Groundhog's hole in the ground

Narrator 1 The day before Groundhog Day, Groundhog woke up sick.

Narrator 2 His muscles ached, and his throat hurt. He decided to see Dr. Owl.

Dr. Owl You have a bad case of flu, you do. You must rest in bed for two days.

Groundhog How many?

Dr. Owl Two, two.

Narrator 1 But Groundhog Day was tomorrow.

Narrator 2 If he was in bed sick, how could he do his job?

Groundhog I know what I'll do! I'll advertise for a substitute.

Narrator 1 He put a notice about groundhog tryouts on a tree near the Hidey Hole Diner.

Narrator 2 By 10:00 the next morning a line of animals waited to try out. Mole was first.

Groundhog You have to go down in my hole. It's pretty dark down there.

Mole No problem. My own hole is even darker.

Narrator 1 Mole got comfortable underground.

Groundhog Now come up and look for your shadow!

Narrator 2 Mole came up and squinted at a nearby tree.

Mole Is that you, Groundhog?

Groundhog Sorry, this won't work. I need someone who can see well.

Narrator 1 Eagle swooped down from the sky.

Eagle I see well! From high in the sky I saw the feather stuck to your fur. You've been to see Dr. Owl.

Groundhog Good eyes! Climb down in my hole and let's practice.

Eagle Will there be room enough down there to stretch my wings?

Groundhog This won't work. I need someone who sees well and is not bothered by small spaces.

Bear My own cave is snug and cozy.

Groundhog Great! Climb down and let's practice.

Bear This is perfect! It's even more comfy than my own cave.

Groundhog Come out and take a look.

Narrator 2 But there was no answer.

Groundhog Bear! Come look for your shadow!

Narrator 1 The only answer was a deep, slow snore.

GROUNDHOG I need a substitute who can see well, isn't bothered by small spaces, and won't fall asleep!

Squirrel I can do it! I can do it! Let me try!

Groundhog Okay. Go down in the hole, come back up, and look for your shadow.

Squirrel Wheeee!

Narrator 2 Squirrel leaped in. Then she popped her head back up.

Groundhog Did you see your shadow?

Squirrel Oh! I forgot to look.

Narrator 3 Down she went. She popped back up. She dropped back down.

Squirrel I keep forgetting to look! This is fun!

Groundhog But what I need is someone who will pop up and stay up.

Narrator 4 By now, Groundhog was feeling even worse.

Narrator 3 Was he ever going to find a substitute?

Armadillo Howdy there, Groundhog. How about giving me a chance? My name is Armadillo.

Groundhog You're not from around here, are you?

Armadillo Nope, I'm from Texas. But I can do this job. I live in a hole. I like small spaces. I see my shadow just fine. And I will pop up and stay up.

Groundhog All right. Let's see how you do.

Narrator 4 Armadillo climbed into Groundhog's hole. When she poked her head up, she saw her shadow.

Groundhog If that happens tomorrow, tell folks that winter will drag on. But if you don't see your shadow, spring will come early.

Armadillo Got it. Let's shake paws.

Narrator 3 Groundhog climbed down his hole and put his sore, sick self to bed.

Narrator 4 The next morning, all the animals gathered early to see what Armadillo would say.

Narrator 3 They all got quiet as Armadillo poked her head up. On the ground, she saw her shadow.

Armadillo Six more weeks of winter!

Narrator 4 Armadillo dropped back into Groundhog's hole.

Armadillo Did you hear that Groundhog? Six more weeks of winter.

Groundhog Oh, no!

Armadillo How ya feeling, Groundhog?

Groundhog A little better. But I'd feel a *lot* better if it was spring already.

Armadillo Spring already? Say, that gives me an idea.

Narrator 3 Armadillo found Groundhog's suitcase.

Armadillo Get your gear together, Groundhog! It's already spring in Texas! You can come home with me!

Groundhog Really?

Armadillo You bet!

Narrator 4 Groundhog jumped from his bed and packed his teddy bear and his toothbrush.

Groundhog I've always wanted to see Texas. Do you think they have cowboy hats in my size?

Armadillo Sure as Texas has a Lone Star!

Narrator 3 Together, they walked through the cold to the bus station.

Narrator 4 And their shadows followed them all the way there.