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*Upcoming Events*

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Institute**

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**E-TOOLS**

*January 2008*



*Upcoming Events*

**C.L.A.S.S.  
Support Team**

**SPRING SESSION**

**March 18, 2008**

**Fishback Creek Public  
Academy**

**Indianapolis, Indiana**

**For more information:**

**765-483-3060**

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## Welcome to C.L.A.S.S. E-Tools!

Welcome to C.L.A.S.S. E-Tools for January. On the following pages, you will find our favorite books published in 2007. Our list may differ from other “best” lists you might see because we are thinking in terms of how we can use and enjoy these books with students. Most of the books on our list are picture books, but they have a plethora of uses with students of all ages in all subjects.

With each title on our list, we will provide just a few of the possible activities including connections to the Literacy Links and the Lifelines. We’re sure you can find many other uses for these great books. Look for these and many of the other books published last year in your school library media centers and share them with students -- because the best books are always those that are read!

### Agenda: January Issue

- Favorite Books of 2007

Suggested Activities including:  
Literacy Link Connections  
Lifeline Connections

- Next Month: Home to School Connections with C.L.A.S.S.

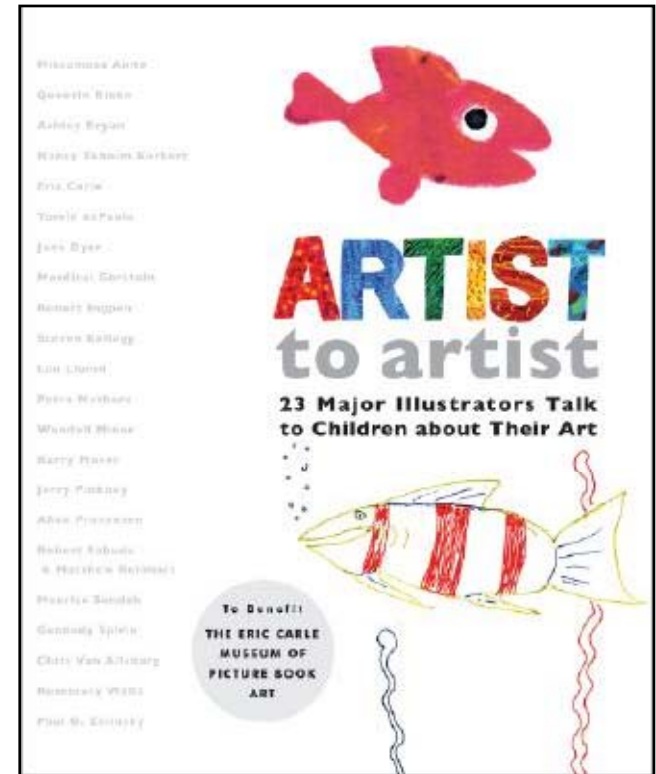


C. L. A. S. S.

# Artist to Artist

## by 23 major children's illustrators

- Maurice Sendak, Rosemary Wells, Eric Carle, and twenty other children's book illustrators speak informally to children about their art and careers. Includes fold-out pages with photographs of early work, studios, materials, sketches, and finished works, as well as self-portraits.
- Some suggested activities:
  - This book has a wealth of text that would make great welcome messages or quotes for hallway greetings.
  - Have students write their own inspirational story such as a person or thing that has influenced them the most. Perhaps they could write a letter to next year's class.
  - The unique format/layout of the book with the fold our spreads could be mimicked with students drawing their own self-portrait in their favorite style.
  - Use this as a start for students to create a writer's notebook. The page could be a way for student to keep possible ideas. Write a short letter or something about the author summary just as the illustrators did, a self-portrait on the outside and on the inside two page spread collect pictures or other ideas for writing.
  - Which of the Lifelines did each of these illustrators use to become successful? Ask students why they think those Lifelines were so helpful? Why are illustrations in books just as important as the words in books?

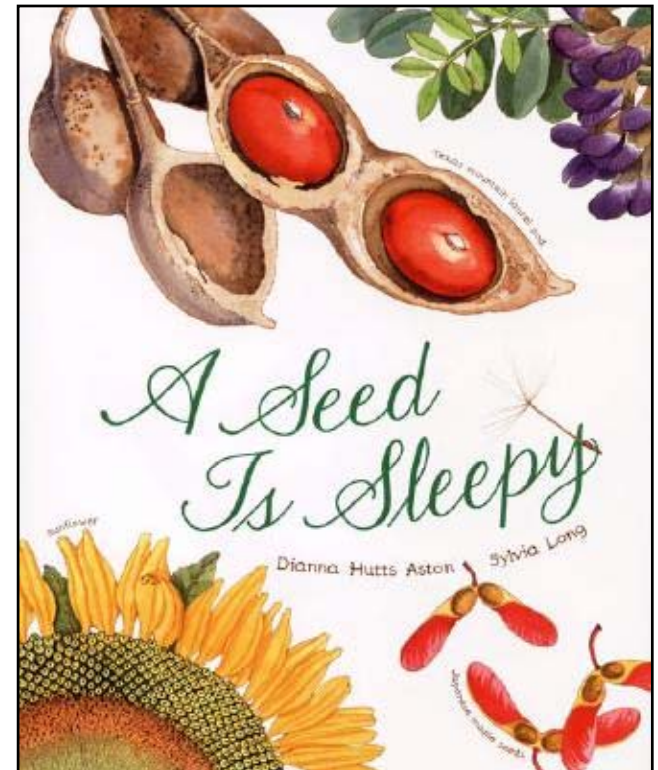


Published:  
ISBN:

Philomel Books.  
978-0-399-24600-5

# *A Seed is Sleepy* by Dianna Hutts Aston

- An introduction to seeds; explaining their varying shapes and sizes, where they are found, and their life cycles.
- Some suggested activities:
  - This book is full of great adjectives that describe seeds. Compile a list to see all the different choices the author made.
  - The layout of the book with one sentence in a large font followed by examples or details about specific seeds is a good model of a topic sentence with supporting details. (It doesn't look like a paragraph, but it could be!).
  - Have students compare the illustrations to actual pictures of these seeds. Note the details the illustrator included. Why are those important?
  - Use this book as a spring board for talking about plants and the plant lifecycle. Students can grow their own plants and write a story about them -- including their own illustrations. Students can mimic the format of the book with one major sentence along with detail sentences below.
  - As students research plants, can they find additional examples to support the author's topic sentences?



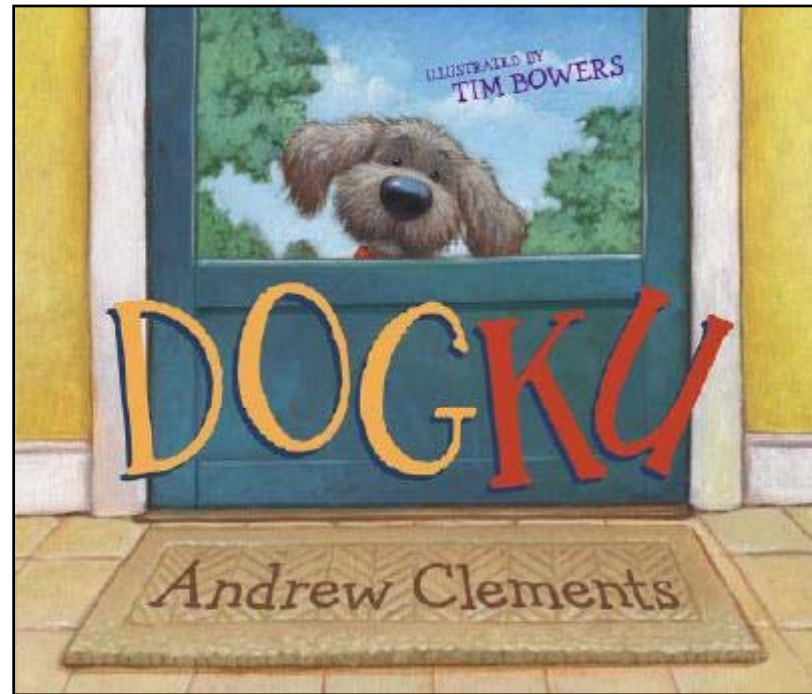
Published:  
ISBN:

Chronicle Books.  
978-0-8118-5520-4

# Dogku

## by Andrew Clements

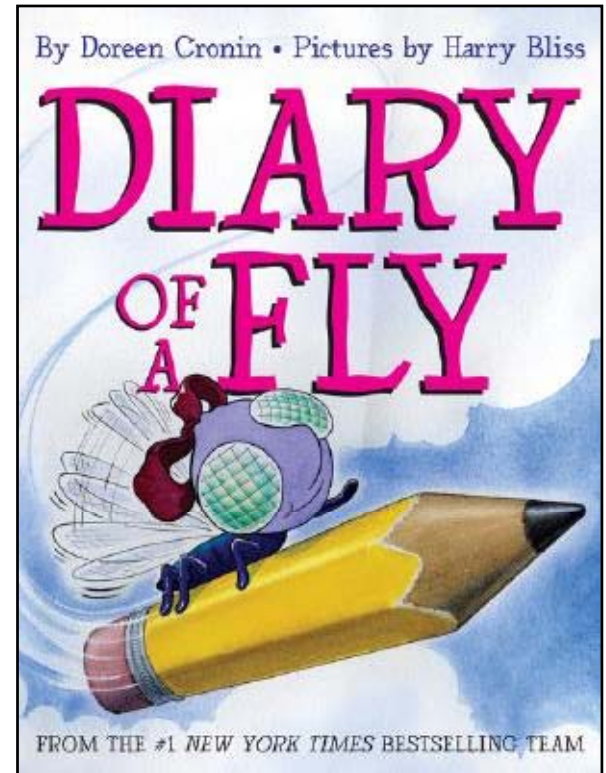
- Tells a story through haiku about a dog and the many things a dog named Mooch does, such as riding in a car, barking at the neighbors, and chewing on dirty socks.
- Some suggested activities:
  - The obvious connection to this story is poetry and the format of haiku. Start out and write one haiku poem as a class to start a story about another animal. Then as part of literacy stations ask students to add to the story. Come back together as a class to write a concluding haiku at the end of the week to end the story.
  - Haiku poems are based on the syllable pattern of 5 - 7 - 5. Use this as a way to talk about the number of syllables in words. How can you break words apart? How can you put them together?
  - Use the haikus as a summary of the story. Have students take the story and then expand and write the story in paragraph form.
  - Have students take the current novel or story they are reading and turn it into a haiku summary. What details do they have to include to make the reader understand the meaning? How can they be succinct and detailed at the same time? This shows the importance of word choice.



Published: Simon & Schuster Books for  
Young Readers  
ISBN: 978-0-689-85823-9

# *Diary of a Fly* by Doreen Cronin

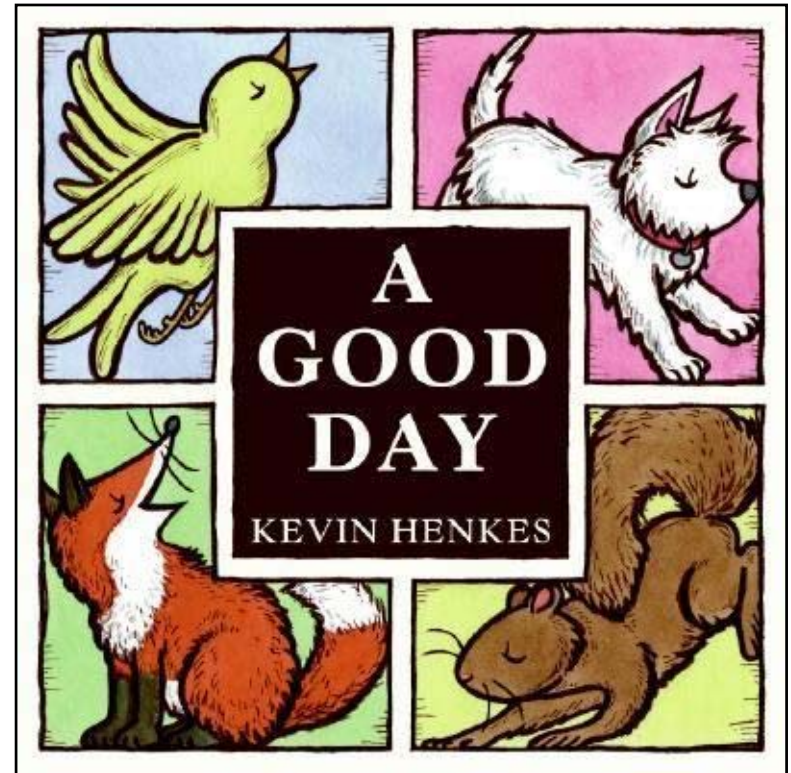
- A young fly discovers, day by day, that there is a lot to learn about being an insect, including the dangers of flypaper and that heroes come in all shapes and sizes.
- Some suggested activities:
  - This is an example of journal writing. Use it as a funny/witty way to introduce writing in a journal to students.
  - Follow this format as a way for students to use information they have researched. For example: *Diary of a Penguin*, *Diary of an Inventor*, *Diary of an Explorer*
  - The play on words and the perspective of the life from the smaller scale make for an interesting discussion. Ask students about how a different perspective changes the way we think about certain issues or actions?
  - This makes the third book in this series by Cronin/Bliss. Ask students to recommend to them what animal they should do next? Why? Is there any relationship or connections between the animals they have picked so far?



Published: Joanna Cotler Books.  
ISBN: 978-0-06-000156-8

# A Good Day by Kevin Henkes

- A bird, a fox, a dog, and a squirrel overcome minor setbacks to have a very good day.
- Some suggested activities:
  - This book is a great conversation starter as this very, very short book conveys a very, very big message -- taking a bad day and turning it into a day. The spin of the girl picking up the feather the bird lost is a great example of how you could have positive thinking...something that wasn't so good happened to me, but it might have helped someone else.
  - The text in this book is very simple and very short. Students could expand on the author's text and give more details to the story.
  - It is also is a good example for students to see the author's purpose for writing. Why didn't the author tell more of the story? Do you think he got his purpose across? Why or why not?
  - Ask student to share an example of when they had a bad day and how they turned it around - which makes a perfect prompt for writing.

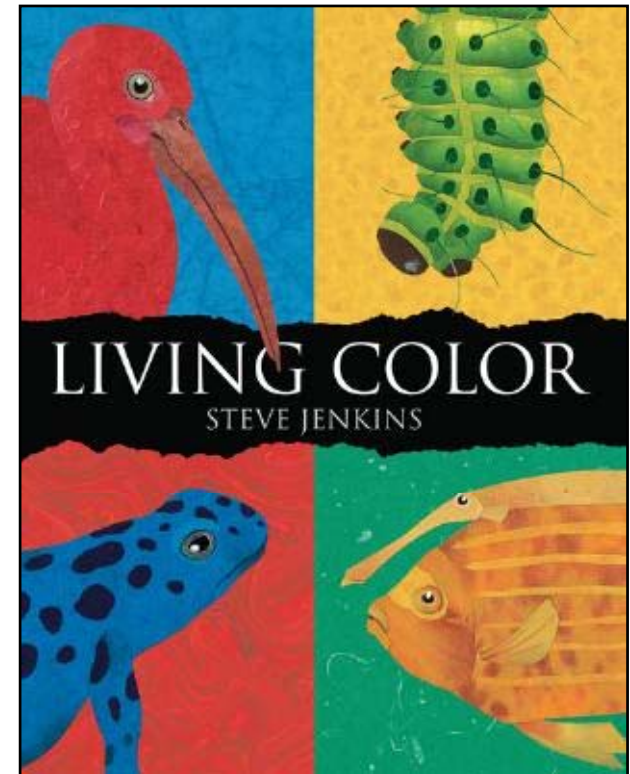


Published:  
ISBN:

Greenwillow Books  
978-0-06-114018-1

# *Living Color* by Steve Jenkins

- Looks at a wide range of colorful animals, describing how their feathers, scales, shells, and skin help them survive, warn predators, signal friends, attract a mate, or hide from their enemies.
- Some suggested activities:
  - Colors are more than just something pretty to look at, but also part of the survival of many animals. This book gives lot of example of colors help animals survive. Have the students see if they can find other example.
  - Jenkins details in his illustrations are amazing. The cut-paper collage is detailed. Ask students to compare his collages work to others such as Eric Carle. What is the same? What is different?
  - Jenkins has used color to group animals. Ask students to think about what other types of categories they could use to group animals? Use the four-corners cooperative group strategy and show how animals could be group by the way they feel, what type of animal they are, or how they protect themselves, etc.
  - Jenkins has provided little bits of information about each animal. Have student research the animals and see what else they can find out about them.



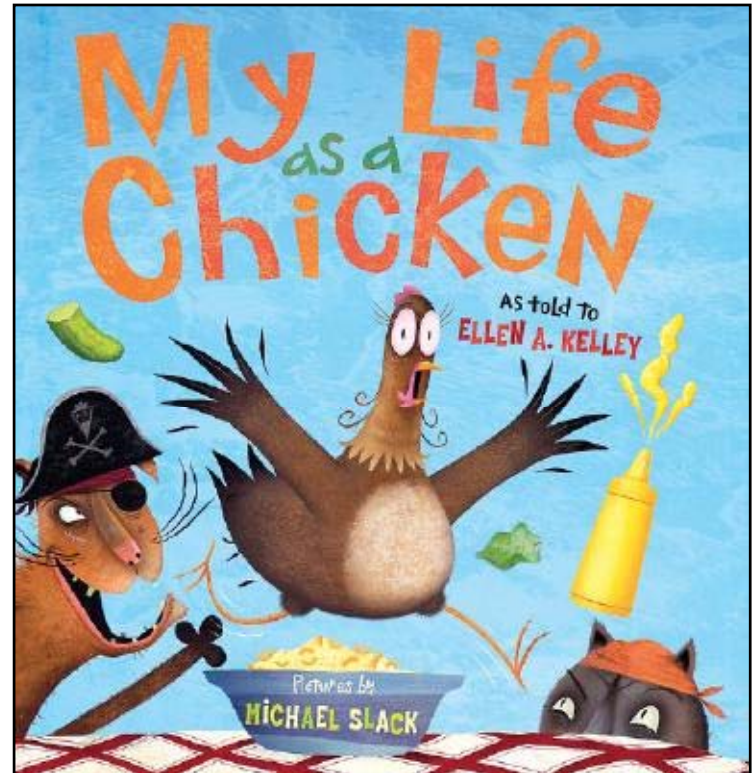
Published:  
ISBN:

Houghton Mifflin  
978-0-618-70897-0



# *My Life as a Chicken* by Ellen A. Kelley

- After escaping the frying pan, a chicken has an adventure that includes pirates, a typhoon, and a balloon ride before landing happily in a petting zoo.
- Some suggested activities:
  - The rhyme in this book is terrific. The author makes great word choices. Make a list of some of the rhyming words you find - brutes/hoots, scramble/brambled, flail/prevail, etc. Many of these words will require students to apply background knowledge, look at the pictures, see if there are context clues, or use the dictionary to find their meaning!
  - Use this as a great time to talk about the Lifeline perseverance. “Pauline Prevail!” is repeated throughout the book to help keep the chicken motivated to continue her adventure.
  - This book also lends itself well to sequencing. Can students put the in order the adventures Pauline goes through until she finally gets to the petting zoo?

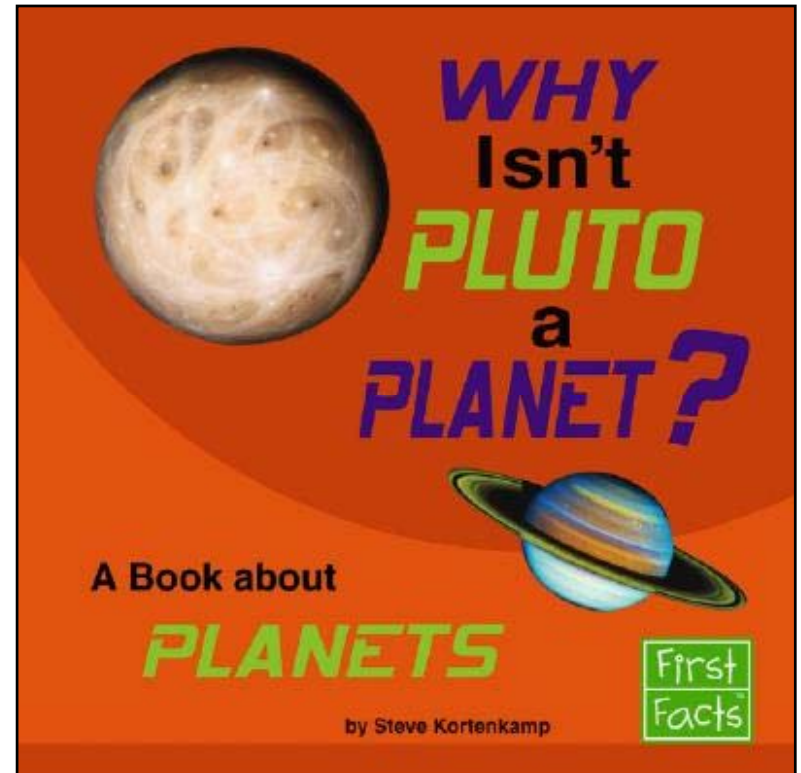


Published:  
ISBN:

Harcourt  
978-0-15-205306-2

# *Why Isn't Pluto a Planet?* by Steve Kortenkamp

- Explains what makes a planet a planet and why Pluto is no longer considered one, and describes planet rotation and orbits.
- Some suggested activities:
  - This book made our list as a representative of some of the amazing non-fiction series published each by folks like Capstone, Gareth Stevens, Children's Press, Franklin Watts, Scholastic, etc. The timeliness of the topic makes it of interest to students. Framing the title in the form of a question is great emotional hook. It would make a great hallway greeting that students could then research to find the answer.
  - Great non-fiction books include: a table of contents, glossary, index, online resources. Have students evaluate books in a series to see if they meet the criteria of a good non-fiction book while at the same time learning the parts of the book.
  - Take a scientific or social studies topic that can be complicated and see if students can write it in a format (such as this book) where younger students could understand it?

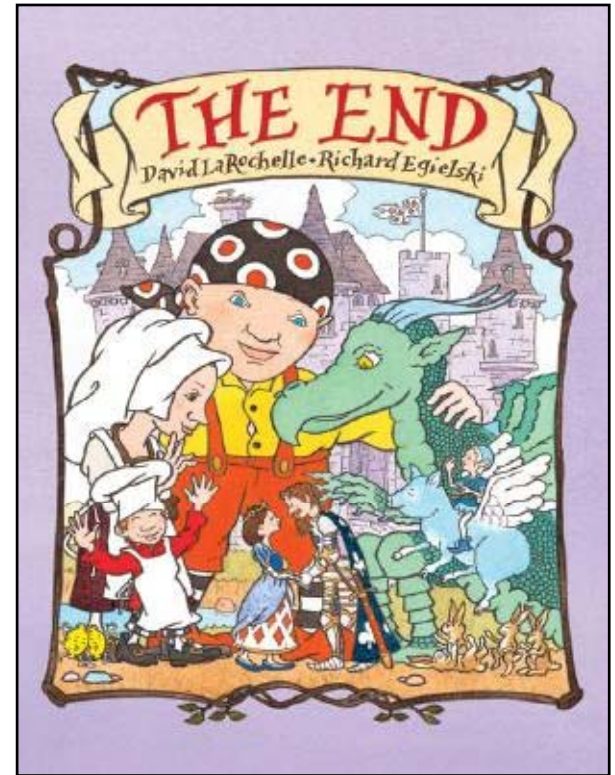


Published: Capstone Press  
ISBN: 978-0-7368-6753-5

# The End

## by David LaRochelle

- When a princess makes some lemonade, she starts a chain of events involving a fire-breathing dragon, 100 rabbits, a hungry giant, and a handsome knight.
- Some suggested activities:
  - Because of the backwards way the story is told, this is a great book for illustrating cause and effect.
  - Students could write a backwards version of any story or novel they are reading. Can they find the events that led to the actions of the characters?
  - The story is also circular in nature just like the Numeroff books (*If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, etc.) Use Inspiration™ or Kidspiration™ to draw a visual representative of the story and show the circular format.
  - Sequencing would work well with this book. Write the story out on sentence strips. Read the story once through, mix up the sentence strips, and then have students put these back in order!

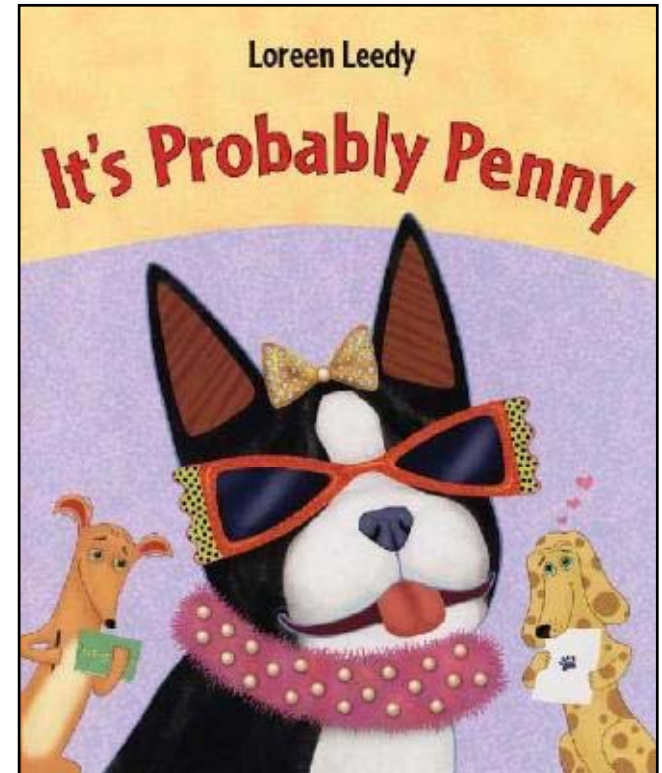


Published:  
ISBN:

Scholastic  
978-0-439-64011-4

# *It's Probably Penny* by Loreen Leedy

- Lisa and her class learn about probability.
- Some suggested activities:
  - This book has several examples of using a welcome message to share topics with students. Mr. Jayson uses two messages on his board to get students excited about the topic of probability. Can you use or adapt his welcome messages for your room?
  - Mr. Jayson's weekend assignment is perfect to give students as you talk about probability. Model doing one with your students and then have them try it on their own.
  - Lisa uses her dog Penny in many of her examples because she loves her dog. Ask students what topics they could use to make some probability problems. Why did they pick those subjects?

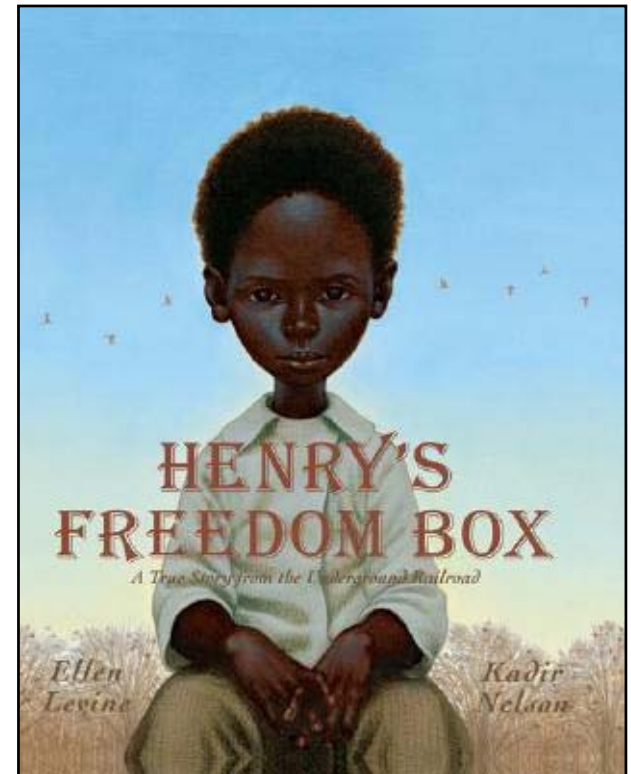


Published:  
ISBN:

Henry Holt  
978-0-8050-7389-8

# *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine

- A fictionalized account of how in 1849 a Virginia slave, Henry "Box" Brown, escapes to freedom by shipping himself in a wooden crate from Richmond to Philadelphia.
- Some suggested activities:
  - Have students research Henry Box Brown. You can find his first hand account posted online at: <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/boxbrown/menu.html> Use this primary source to show students a first hand account of the slave who mailed himself to freedom.
  - Help students build a box (or find a cardboard box about the same size) the size of Henry's box. Imagine being in it for over 27 hours and being moved, turned, and tossed. What would it be like? What would you be thinking?
  - Ask students to research connections to the Underground Railroad in Indiana such as Levi Coffin. How did he help slaves reach freedom?
  - This is a true story that has been fictionalized to simplify the story. Students could take the biography of someone else famous and pick a defining moment of their life and write a fictionalized account of that event. What might that person have said? How might they have been feeling?

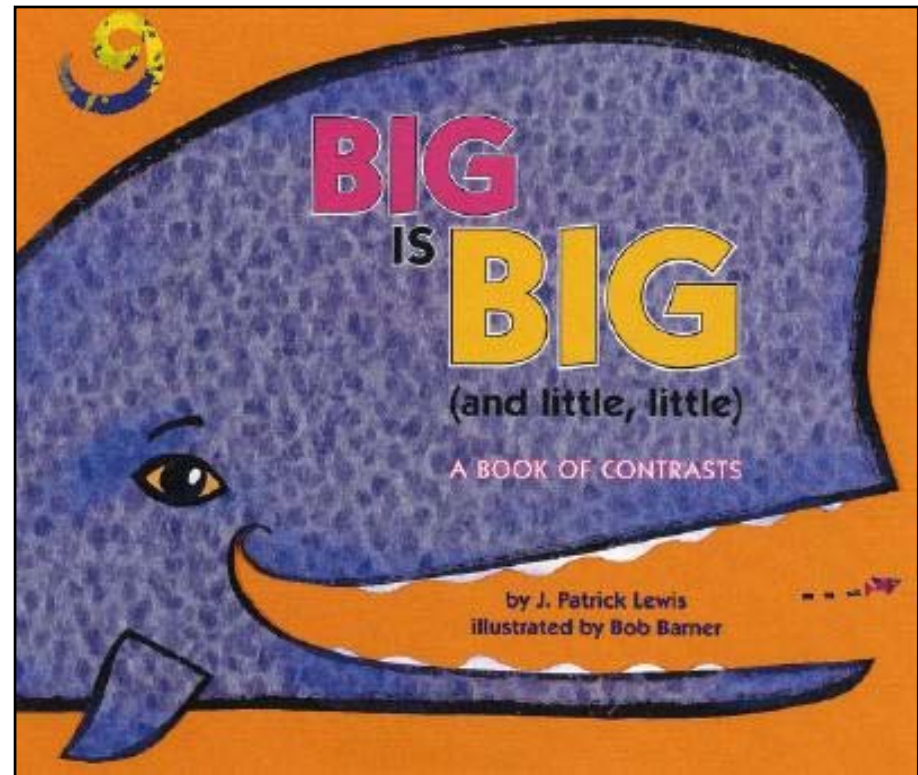


Published:  
ISBN:

Scholastic Press  
978-0-439-77733-9

# *Big is Big (and little, little)* by J. Patrick Lewis

- Rhyming text and animal illustrations demonstrate the meaning of opposites.
- Some suggested activities:
  - This book is full of contrasting words and illustrations to demonstrate the difference. With your students, make a list of the words you find in the book and then see if they can come up with other contrasting words. Have them draw illustrations to explain those words? Can they make rhyming phrases, too?
  - These words are also synonyms and antonyms. This would be a perfect opportunity to share with students a thesaurus and how using it could help them add to their list of contrasting words.
  - Barner is another illustrator like Steve Jenkins and Eric Carle who use cut paper collages to make their illustrations. Students could compare his work to the other two illustrators. What is similar? Different? Have students make their own book illustrated with cut paper illustrations?

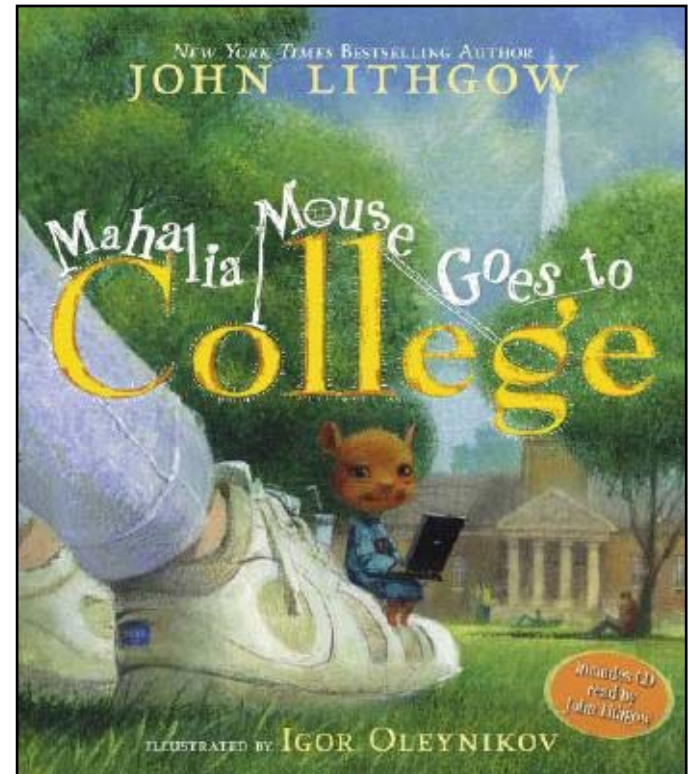


Published:  
ISBN:

Holiday House  
978-0-8234-1909-8

# *Mahalia Mouse Goes to College* by John Lithgow

- Sent by her parents to find food, Mahalia Mouse finds herself trapped in a backpack and transported to a physics classroom at Harvard University, where she discovers an aptitude for science; and includes an audio CD.
- Some suggested activities:
  - One of the best thing about many of the books by John Lithgow is they include a CD of the book being read by the author. This is a perfect example to show student what good writing sounds like read aloud. Lithgow is one of the few celebrity writers who can write and his readings pull the listener into the story!
  - This story was part of Lithgow's commencement speech to Harvard University in 2005. The tale is one of perseverance and making choices. Ask students to think of examples where they worked hard and achieved great results.
  - Have students think about Mahalia's family. What do they think the family was thinking when Mahalia didn't come back? Why didn't Mahalia go and tell them where she was? How did they find out about her success?

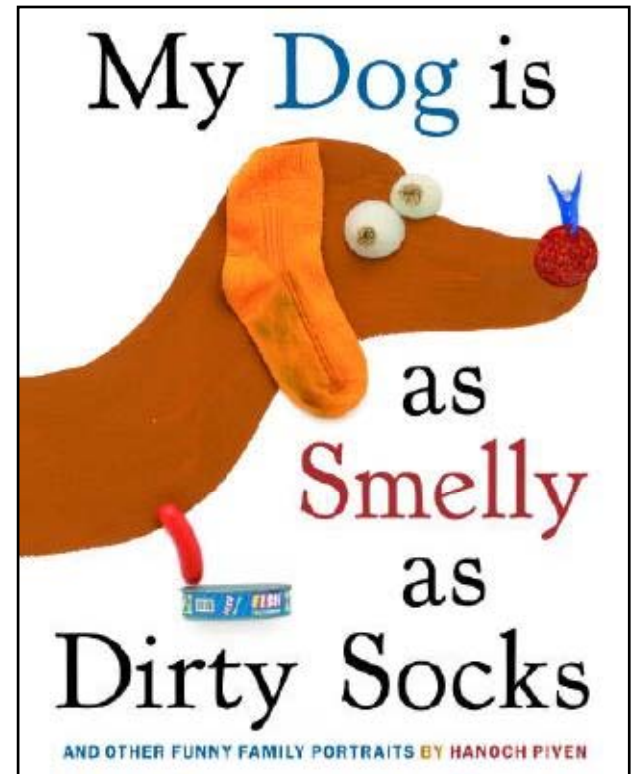


Published:  
ISBN:

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers  
978-1-41692715-0

# *My Dog is as Smelly as Dirty Socks* by Hanoch Piven

- A young girl draws a family portrait, then makes it more accurate by adding common objects to show aspects of each member's personality, such as her father's playfulness, her mother's sweetness, and her brother's strength.
- Some suggested activities:
  - What is fun about this book are all the similes the boy uses to describe his family. Then using the real life objects in his similes, he created illustrations of each person. Ask students to write their own similes and then create these illustrations, too.
  - At the end of the book, the author shares possible objects to help students build their own similes. Do some brainstorming as a class and see if students could add objects or think of other describing words they could use.
  - This book is a fun combination of art and language. Students could use this as a spring board to an art 3D collage.



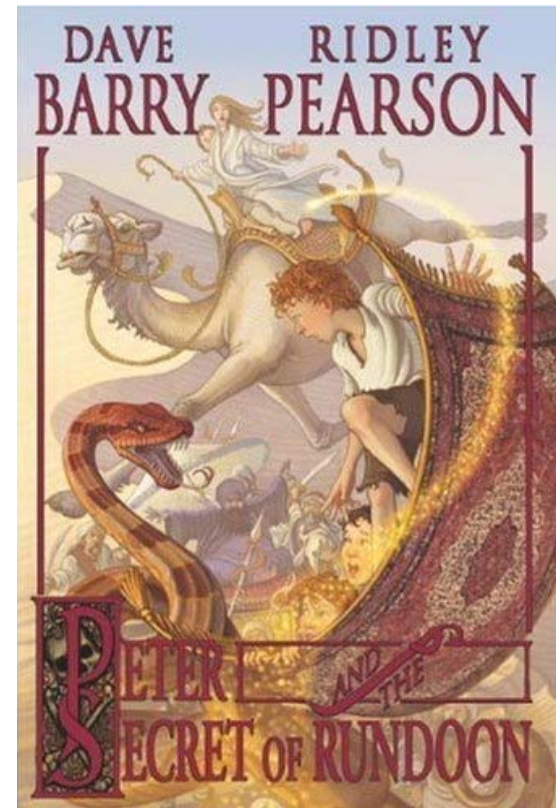
Published:  
ISBN:

Schwartz & Wade Books  
978-0-375-94052-1



# *Peter and the Secret of Rundoon* by Ridley Pearson and Dave Barry

- Fearing that the sinister Lord Ombra was not destroyed, Peter and Molly travel to the land of Rundoon, which is ruled by the evil King Zarboff.
- Some suggested activities:
  - This is the third book in a trilogy of prequels to J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan. The pretext for the novels is very interesting and centers from Ridley Pearson's daughter's question "How did Peter meet Captain Hook"? Share the original story from Barrie and ask students to think about how Peter met Hook and write their own adventure.
  - These are pretty lengthy novels, but there are many passages of adventure that could be read aloud to model good writing for students. In addition, because students may see the length of the books and shy away from them, these would be great books to read a chapter or two aloud to draw in the reader who will want to read more.
  - Check out the audiobook versions of these tales. This is a great way for students to hear good readers, enjoy text that might be higher than their independent reading level, and provide a great opportunity for teachers to ask students to tell them what they liked and didn't like. (Not a book report, but more just a time to share and discuss good books! This helps develop students who love to read!



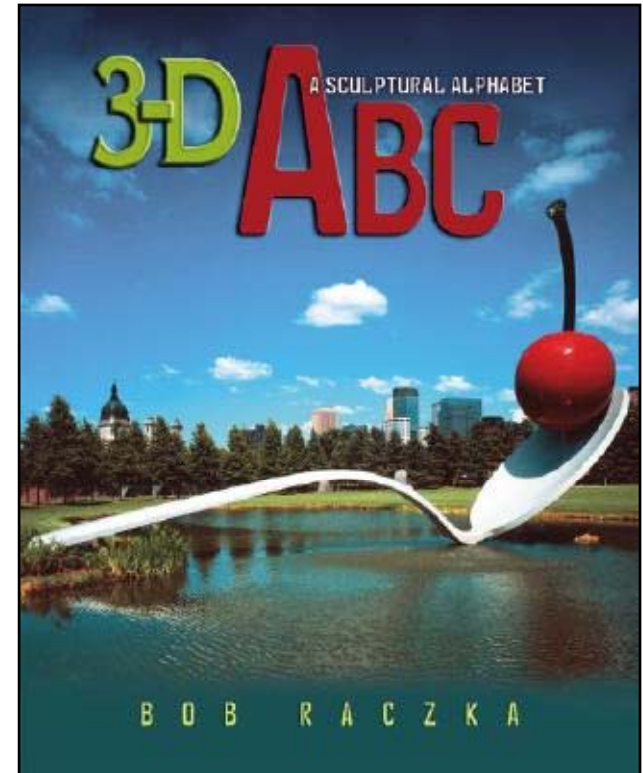
Published:  
ISBN:

Hyperion Books  
978-078683788-5

# 3-D ABC

## by Bob Raczka

- Uses an A to Z format to profile sculptures from the twentieth century, covering a wide range of styles and media that sculptors can use.
- Some suggested activities:
  - Go on a walking tour of the building or around the neighborhood. Can you find examples of sculptures? Take pictures with digital cameras and writing describing paragraphs about what you see.
  - Use some of the sculptures in the book. Can they springboard a story for students? Could they imagine how the sculptures were created? After they've made up their fictional story, students could research to see if they could find out any other information about how it really was constructed.
  - Raczka's ABC format was interesting because he used a part or piece of the sculpture to organize it instead of the title or type of sculpture. What kind of unique ideas might students have for creating an ABC book?



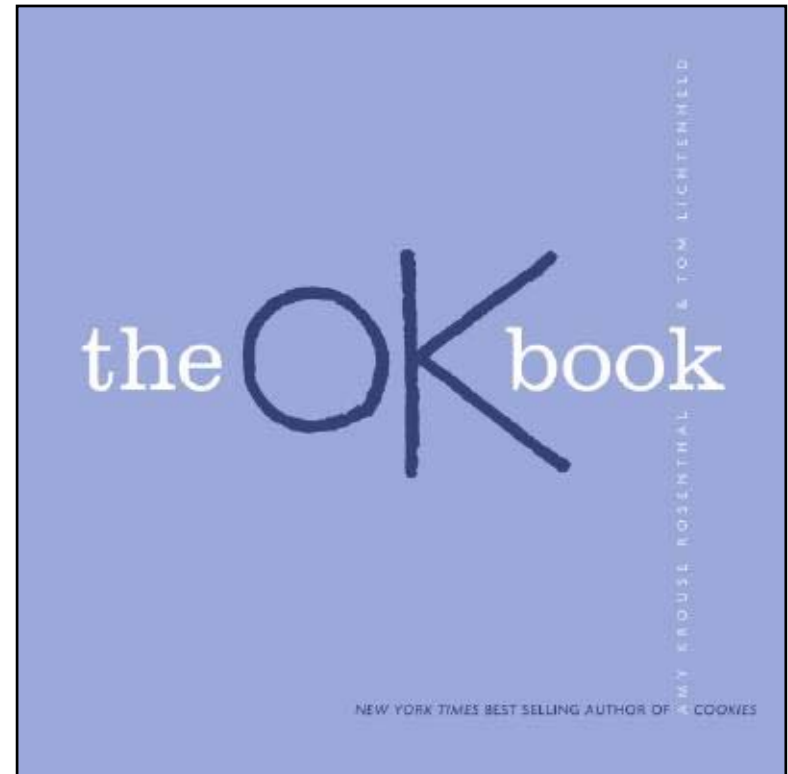
Published:  
ISBN:

Millbrook Press  
978-0-7613-9456-3

# *The OK Book*

## by Amy Krose Rosenthal

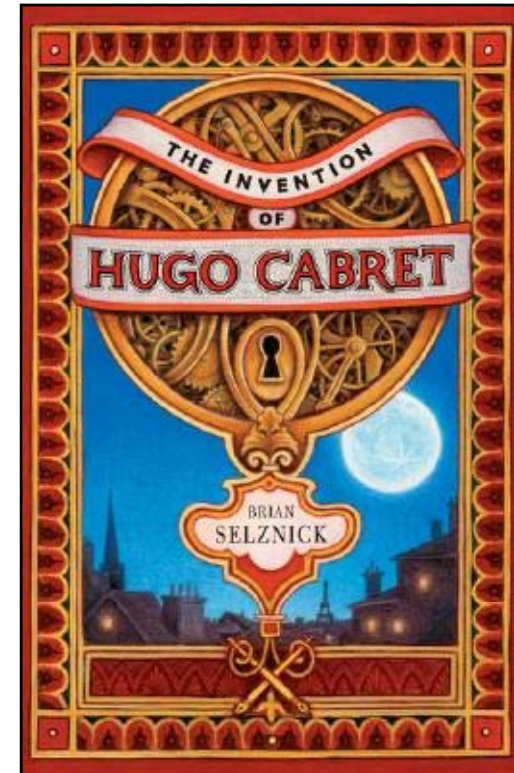
- A character enumerates a great many things that it enjoys doing, although not great at any of them, knowing that someday it will excel at something.
- Some suggested activities:
  - Have students brainstorm a list of all the things they are “ok” at. Talk about how you get better at them by practicing, but at the same time share with them that we aren’t all going to do everything perfectly and that’s ok, too.
  - The illustrator used the letters OK and flipped them on their side to make the stick figure for the illustrations. Have students draw a picture of them doing some “ok” using the stick figure!
  - Have students each make an “I’m ok at...” page. Combine them into a class book. As students read they can see that combined their class has lots of talents and can accomplish great things working together!



Published: HarperCollins  
ISBN: 978-0-06-115255-9

# *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick

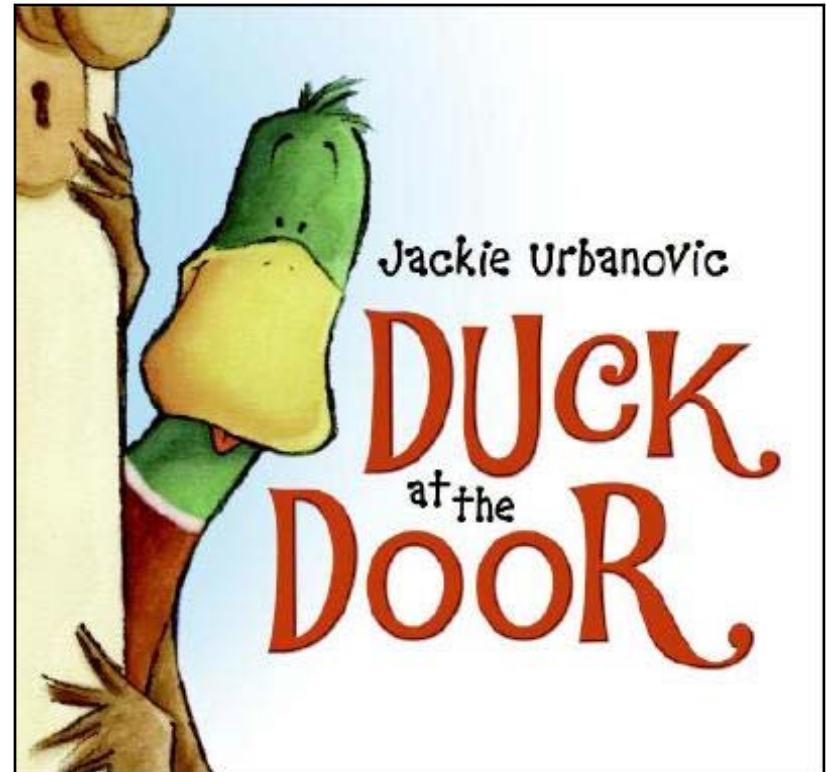
- When twelve-year-old Hugo, an orphan living and repairing clocks within the walls of a Paris train station in 1931, meets a mysterious toyseller and his goddaughter, his undercover life and his biggest secret are jeopardized.
  - This is perhaps one of the most talked about books of 2007. It is over 530 pages long -- half of it is told in pictures and half of it is told in text. Many wonder if it might win the the Newbery Medal or Caldecott Medal for 2008, but at the same time many aren't sure whether it really fits either category -- it truly is a work all of its own! Students can look at the Caldecott and Newbery criteria and have them decided if they think the book might win (The medal winners will be announce Jan. 14th).  
<http://www.ala.org/alsc/>
  - Share a section of photos and then a section of text. Ask students which told the reader more? Why? This is a great example of why illustrations can be critical elements to telling the story.



Published: Scholastic Press  
ISBN: 978-0-439-81378-5

# *Duck at the Door* by Jackie Urbanovic

- A family takes in a little lost duck until its flock returns.
- Some suggested activities:
  - Duck decides not to migrate with his flock. Have students research migration? What is? Who does it? When? Why?
  - Brainstorm / Research a list of animals that don't migrate during the winter. Ask students what those animals do during the winter? Where do they go?
  - Possible other discussion questions might include: Why do the other animals miss Max after he leaves? Do you think they will enjoy living with Max's entire flock?
  - This is just a funny read aloud for students. They can enjoy listening to the story. Use it as an opportunity to show them read aloud techniques. Show them how excited the animals get about Max's return home at first and their annoyance with him during the middle. Show students that they can tell these moods just by how you read the words.



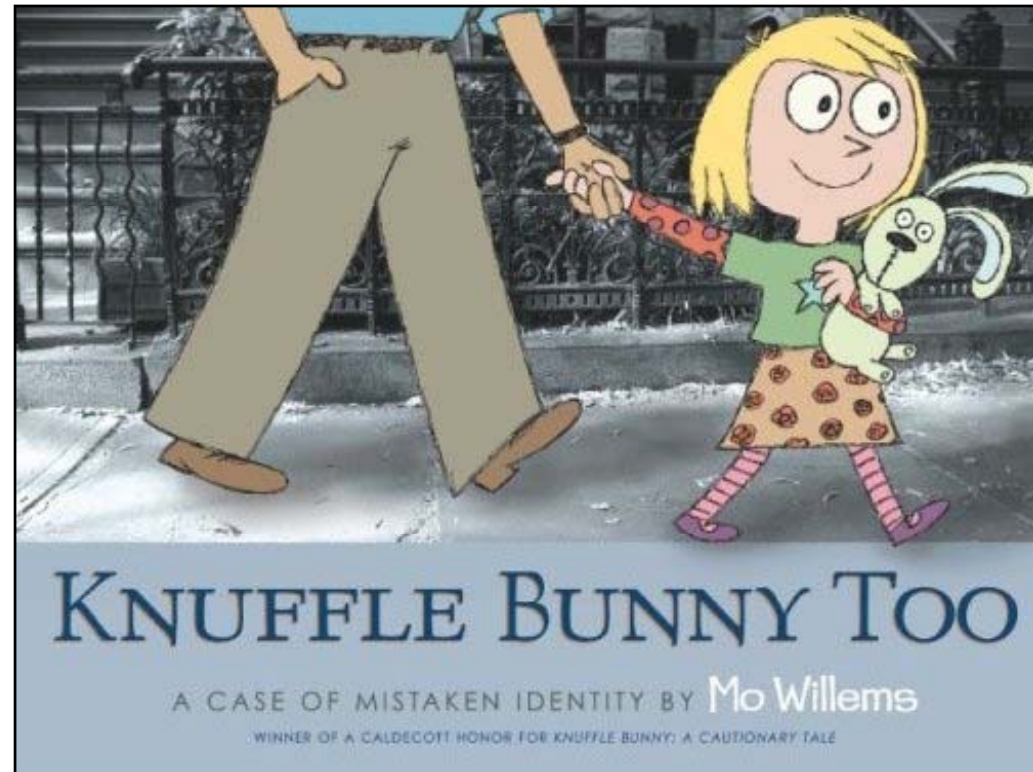
Published:  
ISBN:

HarperCollins  
978-0-06-121439-4

# *Knuffle Bunny Too: a Case of Mistaken Identity!*

## by Mo Willems

- Trixie's first day of pre-kindergarten gets off to a bad start when she and Sonja discover they have the very same "one-of-a-kind" Knuffle Bunnies.
- Some suggested activities:
  - One of the best parts of this book and its predecessor is that it combines real photos with illustrations. Students could take a digital camera combining real photos they took with illustrations they made for their own stories. Show how the same characters might act differently with different settings.
  - This is a great friendship story about taking something that was a conflict and having it become something that helped make two new friends. Talk about that with students.
  - This is also a great example of a story written from one real-life event (or at least it was possible). Show students how they can write their own stories from their life.

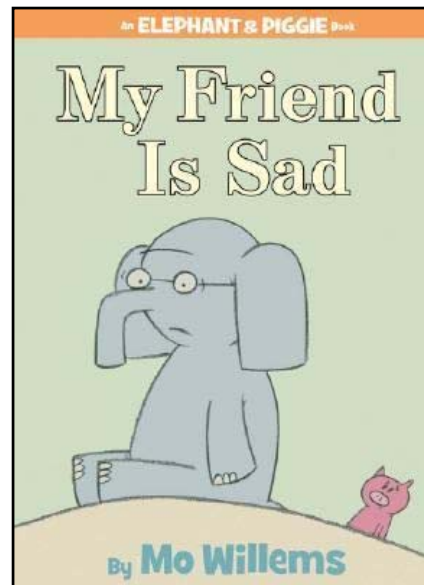


Published:  
ISBN:

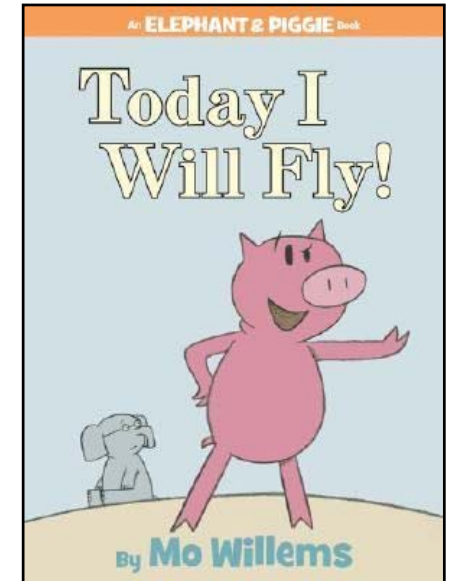
Hyperion Books for Children  
978-1-42310299-1 (hc.)

# *Today I Will Fly!* and *My Friend Is Sad* by Mo Willems

- *My Friend is Sad*: When Gerald the Elephant is sad, Piggie is determined to cheer him up, but finds after many tries that it only takes the simplest thing to change Gerald's mood.
- *Today I Will Fly!*: While Piggie is determined to fly, Elephant is skeptical, but when Piggie gets a little help from others, amazing things happen.
- Some suggested activities:
  - These are the first two books in a series by Mo Willems. These beginning chapter books are simple, funny, and great for reading aloud in a group or all by yourself.
  - The books are great at showing dialogue and expression. Use these these to help students write expressive and creative dialogue for their characters.



Published: Hyperion Books for Children  
ISBN: 978-1-42310297-7



Published: Hyperion Books for Children  
ISBN: 978-1-42310295-3