

Before Five in a Row

Sample Picture Book Unit

Goodnight Moon



GOODNIGHT MOON



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Title: Goodnight Moon
Author: Margaret Wise Brown
Illustrator: Clement Hurd
Copyright: 1947

Summary

Gentleness and rhythmic calm prevail as a young bunny prepares for bedtime and says goodnight to each familiar object in his room, including his window!

Bible

Read Psalm 127:2 about God giving to His beloved, even in their sleep. It is a wonder to consider that even while we're sleeping, the Lord is aware and giving. Discuss this idea with your child.

Or you can read Genesis 1:14-19 and share with your child briefly about the creation of the sun, moon and stars which took place on the fourth day of creation.

Art

Notice with your child the first picture of the story. The room is lighted (from the fireplace and at least one lamp) so the outside, beyond the window looks very *dark*. In the last picture, the room is dark and now the outside looks *bright*. Looking through the pictures in between, does it slowly become lighter outside? No, it just *appears* lighter as the room becomes darker. At night you can show your child how this concept works, as our eyes become accustomed to the dark and the outside light seems brighter.

Bright primary and secondary colors are used in this art work. You may want to take this opportunity to learn red, yellow and blue as the primary colors. If there is a great deal of interest, and if your child is inquiring about the green used, you can decide if going on to teach the secondary colors and how they are derived from the primary colors is appropriate at this time.

On the third double-page, color illustration, there is a picture hanging on the wall over the dollhouse and bookcase. It looks like a bunny fishing for a bunny. The picture is from another book written by the author of *Goodnight Moon*, called *The Runaway Bunny*. The same illustrator, Clement Hurd, created the pictures for both books. If your child knows *The Runaway Bunny*, he will recognize the picture of the bunny fisherman. If not, *The Runaway Bunny* is included in the lesson plans of this manual and when you get to that book, re-read *Goodnight Moon* and see if your child notices the picture.

Science: Zoology

Talk about and point out different kinds of animals included in the text or illustrations of *Goodnight Moon*. Look in the text for new animals to add to your classification game begun in *Blueberries for Sal*. You may want to make additional index cards for cows, bears, mice, elephants, giraffes, cats, rabbits, etc.

Memory

Play a memory game. First, read the story. Then look at the picture of the room. Close the book and try to remember as many items and details as possible.

Literature: Nursery Rhymes

The story makes reference to the nursery rhyme “Hey Diddle Diddle” where the “cow jumps over the moon.” If your child isn’t familiar with this rhyme, it might be a good time to share it with him. Nursery rhymes can provide the beginning of “sound” recognition and introduce the appreciation of rhyming poetry. Also, just as there was an allusion to a well-known rhyme in this story, there are many references made in literature to famous nursery rhymes. So, the knowledge of these rhymes increases your child’s cultural literacy. In other words, as your child is presented with these references, he will recognize the source and often appreciate the reason why an author included such rhymes in his story.

Literature: Storytelling

In the first illustration, there is a picture on the wall of three bears sitting in chairs. Does your child know the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*? If not, you



might want to share it now. Your child will then recognize the source of the three bears picture in future readings of *Goodnight Moon*.

Another storytelling project you might want to try is to use the *pattern* of story line in *Goodnight Moon*. In this way, your child might make up a story about saying “Hello” to everything around him in the morning. The light would get brighter and brighter and each item could be mentioned as the room “awakened.”

Parent’s Note

Like Margaret Wise Brown, Eloise Wilkin has written another wonderful “goodnight” book that you might like to find. It is called *My Goodnight Book*, 1981 Golden Press. It comes in the young child’s board book format and has beautiful, soothing pictures.

Vocabulary

This story uses the word *great* to mean big. Talk with your older child about this usage and also other ways to use great, such as great meaning fantastic, or great meaning influential or powerful.

Math: Shapes

Goodnight Moon has many shapes represented in the illustrations. Talk about circles, squares, triangles, etc., and let your child look for these shapes as he examines the illustrations during future readings.

The story disk for **Goodnight Moon can be placed by your child on the story-book map at the house under the moon.*

More Before Five in a Row

Sample Picture Book Unit

Baby Bear Sees Blue



BABY BEAR SEES BLUE

Title: Baby Bear Sees Blue

Author: Ashley Wolff

Illustrator: Ashley Wolff

Copyright: 2012

Summary

Baby Bear wakes in the den with Mama Bear and starts a day of discovery and learning about the colors and things that make up the world around him. A sweet introduction to colors and nature!

Bible

For Parent:

Deuteronomy 6:6-7, “These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

Just like Mama Bear, you have an opportunity to teach your children God’s word, his commandments, and about the fantastic world around them that God created! Be encouraged today that you are doing important work ... messy, exhausting, fun, beautiful work.

For Child:

Genesis 9:13a, “I have set my rainbow in the clouds...”

God put the rainbow in the sky after the rain! God created the rainbow, and all of its beautiful colors.

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Language Arts: Book Title

Your child might notice after reading the story together a few times, that there is a page in the book that repeats the book title. When Baby Bear hears the birds singing, and Mama Bear tells him it's the jays, on the next page it says, "Baby Bear sees blue." If your child doesn't catch this after several readings, you can point it out by saying, "Hey, did you notice, these are the same words as the name of the book?" The author/illustrator might have chosen this part of the book to highlight as the title because of the lovely alliteration.

Language Arts: Alliteration

The title uses alliteration (repetition of two or more consonant sounds at the beginning of nearby words; in this case, the letter B) **B**aby **B**ear Sees **B**lue. This is a literary device that is common in children's nursery rhymes and in content aimed at children because it is memorable and sometimes funny-sounding, and can help call the reader's attention to a sentence. Bob the Builder, Mickey Mouse, and "Peter Piper Picked a Peck of Pickled Peppers" are just a few examples of alliteration.

Have fun with your child by putting together words that start with the same letter. **P**ick **p**up up. **D**og's **d**ay is **d**one. **J**ust **j**ump up and **j**itter. If they join in—excellent! Or if they just giggle while you say silly sentences, that's perfect too!

Alliteration builds phonological awareness, an early literacy skill, through hearing and playing with the sounds of words. (This is one of six early literacy skills; see the introduction to *More Before* for the entire list.)

Here's a list of a few alliterative books for young children to continue the fun!

Dr. Seuss's ABC: An Amazing Alphabet Book! by Dr. Seuss

Sheep in a Jeep by Nancy E. Shaw

Jamberry by Bruce Degen

Art: Color

The story is full of exciting introductions to many different colors! Yellow, green, blue, brown, red, orange, gray, and black. The author ties each color to an item in nature, which creates a lovely and intuitive learning experience.

Coloring or painting with your child is a fun way to play with and begin learning the colors they are hearing in the book. After reading through a time or two, have them color a picture as you read the story. Your child might use each color as you mention them or they might not. It doesn't matter if they color something from the story or not; just allowing them to listen while coloring can be an excellent experience for them!

Teaching Tip:

Young children are often restless and don't sit for an entire book, but allowing them to move around, color, use playdough, or build with wood blocks or LEGO® bricks while listening might allow for a pleasant extended reading time together. There are different learning styles as well, and auditory learners will often remember and learn just as well or better by listening without looking at the book. This style of teaching/learning can grow with your child and extend into their grade school days.

Art: Drama

After reading the story together, act out certain scenes with your child. The opening page offers an opportunity to yawn, blink, and stretch! Enjoy the giggles as you act out the story and see if your child can mimic your actions or do them on his own. You can wave, sing, wade, sniff, give butterfly kisses (fluttering your eyelash on your child's cheek), growl, and peek ... these are fun to do as you read the corresponding page of the story or even as a Simon Says-type game, throughout your day.

Science: The Five Senses

The five senses (touch, sight, hearing, smell, and taste) are introduced to your child through the sweet story of Baby Bear's day. Baby Bear **feels** the sun warming his body, the fish splashing water onto him, and the butterfly tickling him. He **sees** the leaves dancing, the trout, the rainbow, and all the colors and animals around him in the story. Birds call out, and Baby Bear **hears** them singing. He also **hears** the thunder rumble. The scent of strawberries on the breeze in the meadow allows Baby Bear to **smell** and find them. After smelling the delicious strawberries, Baby Bear **tastes** them!

Ask your child what they feel, see, hear, smell, and taste throughout the day as the opportunity arises. You can also set up interesting **sensory experiences** for them to enter into.

A sensory experience to go along with this story might include some leaves on a twig to tickle each other (feel). A bird song to listen to (hear) outside, or look up "bird song mp3" on the computer to listen to a specific bird (like the jays in the story). Strawberries cut up and ready to snack on (taste) ... don't forget to smell them first! Make sure to point out what your child is seeing (sight) throughout the experience.

You can provide your child with all sorts of sensory play daily, almost effortlessly, and without having to plan or buy things. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Smelling herbs together is a fun and simple way to talk about your sense of smell.

- Tasting opportunities are naturally placed throughout your day with meals and snacks, and can be discussed to help your child think about what they're tasting (sour, salty, sweet, bitter).
- Listen for exciting or new sounds to point out to your child: sirens, trains, car horns, crickets, the sound of the wind blowing through the trees, birds, etc. Talk about what they can hear and what sounds they like or dislike.
- We see things all day long! "I spy with my little eye..." is a fun game for young children and can help them focus on using their sense of sight to notice things around them.
- Our sense of touch is the first sense we develop! Before a baby can smell, taste, hear, or see, they can feel things. This helps babies with safety, security, and learning. Babies feel objects to learn about them. Scientists have even found that touch can support language development. Pointing to words in books as you say the word can help your child recognize words faster. Encourage your child to touch and explore the world around them! (The five senses are covered again in science lessons for *In a Blue Room*.)

Teaching Tip:

Games are a great way to teach children new skills!

Science: Trees - Oak

Looking at trees on walks can be a lovely way to notice the differences between trees. Different kinds of trees have differently shaped leaves, bark, and branches. Making leaf rubbings (lay a leaf under a piece of paper and roll over it evenly with an unwrapped crayon) is an interesting way to see the shape of each leaf

and make a fun memory together.

You might find acorns while on a nature walk with you child. Acorns are the fruit of the oak tree. Often you can find a cluster of acorns attached to a twig with oak leaves on it; this is a natural way for your child to see/learn that they are both from the same tree.

Science: Birds - Jays

The jays that are in *Baby Bear Sees Blue* are called Steller's jays. They are common in western United States mountain regions and forests which is where Baby Bear likely lives. If you live east of the Rocky Mountains, you might be more familiar with the



Blue jay



Stellar's jay

blue jay. If you're playing the Animal Classification Game, create your own card by drawing or cutting out a picture and gluing it to an index card. Or use the Steller's jay card provided in the index to add to your collection.

Looking for birds with your child through the window (you'll have even better viewing if you have a bird feeder or make one) or on walks is a great way to notice their different colorings, shapes, sizes, and songs!



If your child shows interest in birds, use your library to find more books about birds, feathers, and nests. Here are a few to get you started:

Baby's First Book of Birds & Colors by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes

Birds Board Book by Kevin Henkes

Mrs. Peanuckle's Bird Alphabet by Mrs. Peanuckle

You Nest Here With Me by Jane Yolen; Heidi E.Y. Stemple

Craft Idea:

Help your child make a natural bird feeder to hang in a nearby tree and watch the birds enjoy their treat. Find a pinecone or use an empty toilet paper roll, coat it in peanut butter, and then roll it in bird seed. You can tie a string to the pinecone or through the empty roll and then tie the other end onto a tree branch.

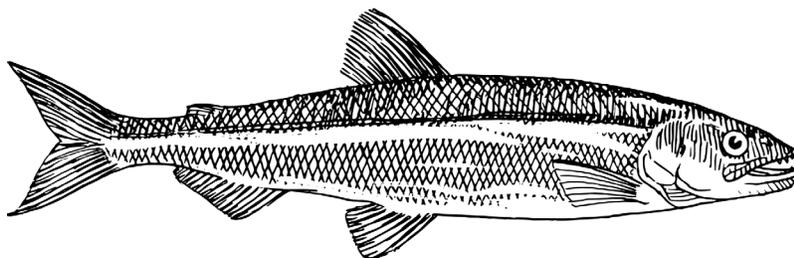
Science: Fish - Trout

After being splashed by a fish while wading in the river, Baby Bear peers into the stream and sees a brown trout. Fish are fascinating creatures to talk about with your child.

Where do they live? In water, oceans, lakes, streams, rivers, creeks, and ponds.

How do they breathe? Fish have gills that take oxygen out of the water around them.

Going to look at fish at an aquarium or pet store is fun and makes for a great learning field trip together (also look for a Bass Pro or other large



store that might have an aquarium to view fish). If you're playing the Animal Classification Game, create your own card by drawing or cutting out a picture and gluing it to an index card. Or use the trout card provided in the index to add to your collection.

A couple fun go-along books to continue investigating fish are:

A Good Day's Fishing by James Prosek

H is for Hook: A Fishing Alphabet by Judy Young

Teaching Tip:

ABC books with specific themes, like the fishing alphabet book above, are a fantastic way to build your child's vocabulary. They contain many words that relate to a specific theme. It could be the ABC's of cooking, fishing, boating, or flowers. Reading many different alphabet books will give your child new sets of vocabulary words relating to many different subjects/topics.

Safety: Weather - Thunderstorms

After reading the story with your child a time or two, see if they notice what Mother Bear does when the thunder rumbles. Your conversation might go something like this:

"Hey, what does Mother Bear do when Baby Bear asks, 'Who is growling at me?'"

Your child might say, "She says, let's hurry home."

"Yes, that's right! Why do you think she wants them to hurry home?"

"To stay dry or to be safe."

"Yes, she knows they'll be safe inside their home, and they can come out after the storm passes by. We go inside when it storms too. It's nice to stay dry and watch the rain and hear the thunder while being inside our cozy home!"

Discussions like these are great introductions for young children about safety in different situations. Learning about ways to be safe through a good story makes it easy for them to remember and also feel less frightened when they face a storm in real life.

Science: Rainbow

After the thunderstorm passes by, Baby Bear looks out and sees a rainbow! The colors of the rainbow are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Here are some interesting rainbow facts you can share with an older child: You can only see a rainbow when it is sunny and raining at the same time. When looking at a rainbow from the ground, you see the arch or bow (half circle), but if you were able to view a rainbow from the air (on an airplane), it would be a complete circle.

Health: Rest

Share with your child how rest is an essential part of each day for all of us! Notice how Mama and Baby Bear curl up together at the end of their long day. After playing all day, our bodies need to sleep so that we can be ready to play again tomorrow. Rest helps our brains work so that we can remember things. It helps our bodies heal and keeps us healthy, so we don't get sick as often.

Discussing what you can do to make it easier to go to sleep at night is a great thing to do with young children. You can ask them questions like: What helps you

to feel calm and happy? Do you like warm blankets or a light sheet? Do you want to read a story together or listen to a quiet song? Which pajamas would you like tonight? Using a few of these questions as part of a bedtime routine can be helpful. It gives the child a sense of power or choice in what's happening.

Starting a calm-down routine can be an excellent way to allow kids' brains and bodies to slow down and be ready to go to sleep when they head to bed. Here are a few ways to help calm a child before bedtime:

- A warm bath is often a terrific calming tool for babies and children.
- Turn screens off at least 30 minutes before bedtime. The blue light coming from TVs, iPads, etc., keeps the brain active and makes it hard to calm down and sleep.
- Slow rocking or rhythmic patting can help calm a tired child.
- Does your child enjoy being tightly wrapped up with a blanket, like a hot dog or burrito, while you read a story or sing a song before bed? This can calm a child in a similar way to a big hug. It's the same concept as swaddling a baby, and can be a useful technique for overactive kids who have a hard time calming down. (Note: Some children do not enjoy the feeling of being tightly wrapped, so be sensitive to what is comfortable for your child!)
- Fidget toys, a squishy ball, or a well-loved stuffed animal can be played with or held during story time. The tactile input is calming to many children and can help them quietly pay attention.
- A lightly warmed heat pack can be a lovely thing for your child to snuggle up to, especially during winter (just warm, not too hot!) Some heat packs or hot water bottles are even made in the form of stuffed animals. You can add a drop of lavender, vanilla or another favorite essential oil to the heat pack to add another calming sensory experience.

The story disk for **Baby Bear Sees Blue can be placed on the storybook map at the cave/den location.*

Five in a Row Volumes 1-3

Sample Picture Book Unit

The Story About Ping



The Story About Ping

Title: *The Story About Ping*
Author: Marjorie Flack
Illustrator: Kurt Wiese
Copyright: 1933
Category: Classic
Summary: A duck learns there are worse things than taking the consequences for one's mistakes.

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Social Studies: Relationships - Discernment

Ping learns on pp. 16-18 that everything that looks good (like the rice cake trap) isn't necessarily good. Discernment is an important life skill that comes with maturity. You can discuss with your student examples of things which may look better than they really are. Discussions might include offers of candy from strangers or diving into unfamiliar ponds or streams.

Ping runs away because he doesn't want to take his punishment. He discovers that the loneliness, fear and danger he encounters are far worse than any punishment he might receive. In the end, Ping learns that family relationships and a sense of community are a vital part of life. Everyone is tempted to avoid the consequences of his mistakes. Consider sharing an example from your own life of trying to run away from consequences or punishment.

Social Studies: Geography - China

The Story About Ping takes place along the banks of China's Yangtze River. (YANG-see) Longer than any other river in the world except the Nile and the Amazon, the Yangtze is nearly four thousand miles long. Discuss with your stu-

dent how long four thousand miles is by comparing it with a familiar distance. You might say, “Grandpa’s house is four hundred miles away, so the Yangtze is like driving to grandfather’s house ten times.” You can also compare it with how far your student went on vacation last summer.

The Yangtze is so wide in places that you can stand on one bank and not see the other shore. Ask if the student has ever been to one of the Great Lakes or to the ocean. From these places you can’t see the other side either. Imagine together what it might be like to live on such a long, and in some places wide, river.

Nearly one third of China’s population, more than 350 million people, live on or near the Yangtze river. In fact, one of every fifteen people in the world live along the Yangtze. That’s half again as many people as live in all of the United States combined. Help your student visualize how alone and frightened little Ping must have felt on such a huge, busy river. Be sure to place your story disk where Ping lived—in China, and on the Yangtze River!

Social Studies: Geography - Culture

As you read about Ping, point out the traditional clothes, hats, hair styles, houses and boats (one type of boat is called a “junk”) of past Chinese culture. Wonder with your child about life on a boat! Discuss the differences and similarities between our culture and the Chinese. In America, for instance, there is a long history of people living on house boats sometimes called “shantyboats” along the Mississippi River and throughout the bayou country (a small stream that wanders through lowlands or marshes) of southern Louisiana.

You may also want to discuss the eating of duck as a delicacy in traditional Chinese cooking. Little Ping

nearly becomes someone’s special dinner when he leaves the safety of family and friends. Ask if your student has ever eaten at a Chinese restaurant. What sort of foods did people eat there? Did they use chopsticks? Has the student ever eaten duck? Do you think people along the Yangtze ever eat pizza or hamburgers?

If you have an older student, she could research the foods of China and help prepare a special Chinese meal. She might also look up typical mealtime customs of the Chinese and share them with the family during the meal. If you don’t have an older student, you can research these things together with your student and plan a special menu featuring foods that are typically eaten in China.

Language Arts: Literature - What is a Classic Story?

This book is a classic. A “classic” is a book that generations of children have enjoyed. Ping was written in 1933. Even though the lifestyle, clothes and boats of the people in China may not be the same today as when Ping was first written (the Chinese do sometimes eat hamburgers!), the story of Ping is still as fresh today as it was in 1933.

When you begin any new book with a student, help her calculate how many years have elapsed since the story was written. You might try to identify an individual whose life dates from the early 1930s, in order to help your student comprehend how many years Ping has been in print. For example, you might say, “When Ping was written, your great-grandmother was about your age.” Because Marjorie Flack wrote this story about Ping that many generations of your family could all enjoy when you were children, someday, perhaps your student’s children and grandchildren will enjoy Ping, too. That’s what makes Ping a “classic.”

Language Arts: Literature - Fiction

Explain that fictional stories originate in the author's imagination. Point out that a fictional story often begins, "Once upon a time" You'll find other stories included in FIAR which also begin "Once upon a time ..." and you'll want to call the student's attention to this fictional device each time. You can even encourage your student to make up their own fictional story which begins "Once upon a time"

Note: There are occasional nonfiction stories that have the "once upon a time ..." beginning but they are the exception. This is most usually a fictional story starter.

Language Arts: Literary Device - Repetition

The story of Ping both begins and ends with a list of Ping's family members. Throughout the book, the author makes repeated references to Ping's family. The use of repetition as a literary device helps bring the reader "full circle" and provides both continuity and a sense of completion when the book is finished. Younger children particularly love the use of repetition. Many stories are built on repetition and children often memorize the familiar phrases and passages. Your student might enjoy creating her own story using repetition.

Art: Medium

See if your student can recognize what medium Kurt Wiese used in illustrating *Ping*. Most of the illustrations look like colored pencil or crayon. Encourage the student to try using colored pencils to do an illustration of their own. Notice how Wiese combines colors to create new tones in the sky on p. 9. At first glance, the sky appears gray, but have your student look closer and discover the variety of colors the artist has used to create the appearance of an evening sky. Similarly, notice the many colors Wiese used for the background on p. 32. Try using multiple colored pencils to create various effects.



Art: Drawing Water

Illustrator Kurt Wiese has drawn water throughout *The Story About Ping*. Discuss with your student the use of broken reflections to give the impression of water. For example, on p. 4, Wiese shows the sun's reflection in the Yangtze's surface. Cover up the reflection with your hand and see how the illusion

of water is lost. Give your student a chance to try drawing her own sun and reflection to give the impression of water.

You'll also want to note the use of small, irregular blue circles to show puddles on p. 22 beneath the boy. Let your student try drawing a simple figure like the ice cube on the previous page and adding "puddles" beneath it. Note the use of ripples on p. 15 to illustrate action. Allow your student to try drawing broken, irregular circles around any object and see how it suddenly appears as if the object is surrounded by water.

On pp. 10 and 14 Wiese has used trailing, wavy lines to show motion. This pattern is repeated behind boats and ducks to create the illusion of movement. Let the student add trailing wavy lines to a simple boat drawing and discover how the boat suddenly appears to be moving. If your student can't draw a boat, draw one for her or print a picture and let her draw the background motion lines. Or try a line of ducks, each with their own wavy lines behind them!

Art: Viewpoint

The cover illustration shows Ping from a traditional viewpoint. Ping's profile, the outline of his wing, tail and bill all help to identify Ping as a duck. But, discuss with your student Wiese's use of a head-on point of view on the title page. Without the profile, bill and wing, Ping looks quite different.

Notice how the illustrator has drawn Ping from many different points of view such as "bottom up" on p. 6, "head beneath wing" on p. 9, and "swimming away" on p. 12. Have your student try drawing an egg or a football in profile. Now have her draw it again looking end-on. Point out how our **viewpoint** changes the way we see the world around us. Discuss how

picking a different viewpoint adds variety and can make everyday subjects more interesting. Encourage your student to try drawing like Kurt Wiese, by exploring common subjects from uncommon points of view. In an excellent story called *Daniel's Duck* by Clyde Robert Bulla, a young artist tries an uncommon viewpoint for his handcarved wooden duck. (**Note:** *Daniel's Duck* is a featured story in FIAR Vol. 3. For now, see if you can find it for a single reading relating to this lesson in viewpoint and compare the illustrations of Wiese and Bulla.)

Art: Unity of Theme Through Subject

The illustrator has used the Yangtze River as the recurring theme which creates a sense of unity by tying the entire book together. Count the pages on which the river appears. You'll discover only three illustrations which do *not* include the Yangtze. Kurt Wiese has provided both unity and context through the repetitive theme of the water. We come away with a sense that for those 350 million people who live along the Yangtze's shores, the river is a part of everything they do. As a teacher, watch for the use of recurring themes built around a particular subject to create unity in other books you may read with your student.

Art: Composition

Every good drawing has good composition. Turn with your student to p. 9. Discuss how Kurt Wiese has created a diagonal from upper left to lower right with the foliage. This diagonal line divides the illustration into two halves. Each half includes a yellow highlight; the sun in the upper right, and Ping in the lower left. Notice how the grass fronds in the upper left create opposite diagonal lines.

Have your older student sketch some balanced compositions. Have her try pictures which are balanced diagonally, horizontally and vertically. Your student can even cut out magazine pictures or pictures found online and place them in pleasing, balanced compositions if she does not yet enjoy a lot of drawing. Encourage your student to look beyond content and think about composition whenever looking at an illustration. While good content makes an interesting picture, good composition makes for a pleasing picture.

Math: Counting Skills

Have your student count Ping's family, including: mother, father, two sisters, three brothers, eleven aunts, seven uncles and forty-two cousins. Don't forget to include Ping! To make the counting more fun, have the student draw a picture illustrating all of Ping's family surrounding Ping. Some students might prefer tracing a duck "template" on yellow construction paper and cutting out Ping's family and gluing them on a hand-painted Yangtze river. For your very young student, you might use blocks, coins or clothespins to account for each member of Ping's family. Arrange and rearrange the items as you count them together. Some children might enjoy counting *all* of the ducks or all of the boats in the book as well.

Science: Animal Kingdom

In *The Story About Ping* your student will be introduced to the animal kingdom by learning about ducks. What is Ping trying to catch when he misses the call on p. 6? Ducks search beneath the water's surface for insects, plants, small fish and snails. They look funny with their tails up. Many ducks also enjoy eating "people food." Discuss how Ping's love of rice cake crumbs on p. 15 nearly gets him in trouble.

Ask your student if she has ever "fed the ducks." Consider going to a nearby lake or park to feed the ducks corn, peas, oats, or other duck-friendly foods. Watch them dabble (poke about in the water) as they forage for food. The more time you spend observing, the more you'll learn about ducks! For more information about ducks, get *The Little Duck*, by Judy Dunn.

Science: Buoyancy

The illustrations on pp. 16 and 17 show a boy swimming with a barrel attached to his back. Ask your student why the boy is wearing a barrel. Both the wood and the air inside the barrel help the boy float, much like a life jacket helps a water skier. The

barrel works on the same principle of buoyancy as fishing bobbers, inflatable pool toys, etc., since both air and wood are lighter and less dense than water.

Try finding which things float in a pan of water: a cork, penny, grape, paper clip, pencil, tennis ball, leaf, golf ball, etc. Use the activity sheet at the end of this unit to document your discoveries.

Science: Health and Safety

The boy and his barrel can also provide a good opportunity to discuss water safety. Discuss the role of lifeguards, life jackets or personal floatation devices (PFDs) and the dangers of swimming alone in unfamiliar water. Even the best of swimmers can get caught in currents and life jackets provide an added measure of safety, like wearing seat belts in the family car.

Science: Reflection of Light

See if your student can figure out why you see reflections on water. Look at the illustrations which show reflections. Discuss the fact that shiny surfaces “bounce” light, reflecting it in new directions. Take a small mirror and do some simple experiments. Try reflecting sunlight onto the ceiling or opposite wall. Now take the mirror and lay it flat on a table. Place various objects on the mirror and look at their “reflections” off the shiny glass surface. If you live near a pond or lake, go there and look at how the shiny surface acts as a mirror, reflecting the image of shoreline trees, boats, the sun, etc.

A. A. Milne wrote a poem entitled, “The Mirror.” It can be found in the book of poems called *When We Were Very Young*, or in the combined volume called

The World of Christopher Robin. One line says,

“And there I saw a white swan make
another white swan in the lake.”

Milne’s poem paints a verbal picture (imagery) of the reflection off the water’s surface. Obviously, the second swan was simply the reflection of the first swan on the lake’s glassy surface. Perhaps you’d like to find *The World of Christopher Robin* and read this poem while looking at the lovely illustration which accompanies it.

Teacher’s Note: A. A. Milne wrote two volumes of stories about Winnie-the-Pooh titled, *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*. These story books can be found in bookstores and at libraries under these titles. There is also a book with both of these volumes combined, titled, *The World of Pooh*. Milne has also written two volumes of poetry, titled, *When We Were Very Young* and *Now We Are Six*. There is also a combined book with both volumes called, *The World of Christopher Robin*. Regardless of the format, these books are treasures to be shared and enjoyed over and over! The stories and the poetry have been loved for several generations. They have brought to their readers many moments of shared intimacy, humor and poignancy. If you haven’t had the pleasure of enjoying the literary world of Christopher Robin and his friends, explore some of it today!

Teacher’s Note: The book *Water: Through the Eyes of Artists* by Wendy and Jack Richardson showcases twenty artists and their treatment of water. It is copyrighted 1991 by Children’s Press, Chicago. If you can find it in your library, use it with the “Drawing Water” lesson by mentioning the names of the artists and just looking at their interpretations of water. You may find the information about the artists interesting for yourself, but your children will enjoy just looking at the pictures. Drawing or painting water is a fascinating subject!

Teacher's Notes

The *Five in a Row* lesson options for each unit in the manual are all you need to teach your child. The additional resource area provided below is simply a place to jot down relevant info you've found that you might want to reference.

THE STORY ABOUT PING

Date: _____

Student: _____

Five in a Row Lesson Topics Chosen:

Social Studies:

Language Arts:

Art:

Math:

Science:

Relevant Library Resources: Books, DVDs, Audio Books

Websites or Video Links:

34

Related Field Trip Opportunities:

Favorite Quote or Memory During Study:

Name:

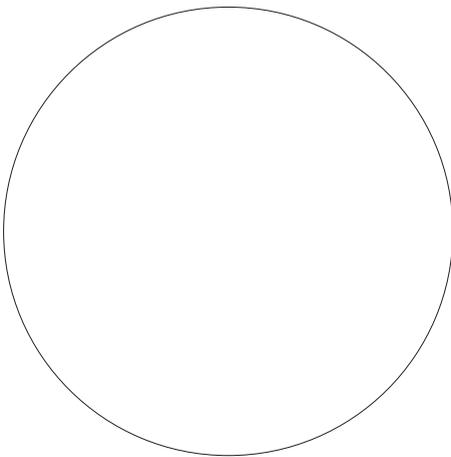
Date:

Science: **Buoyancy**

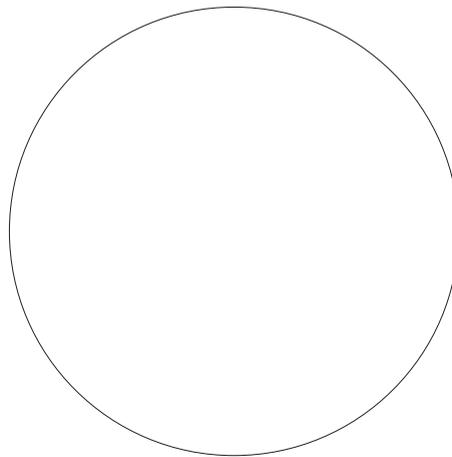
The boy swam with a barrel attached to his back. The air inside the barrel made him float since it is lighter than water.

Prediction = a statement about a future event, which is usually based on knowledge or experience.

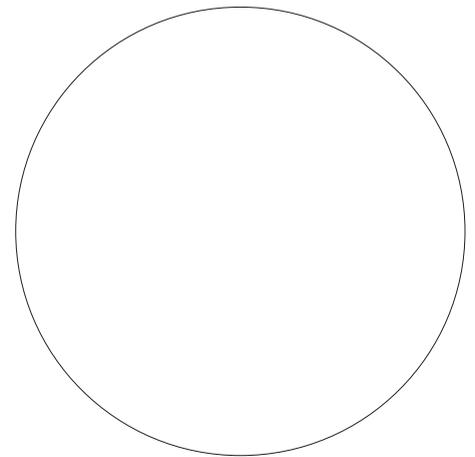
Find objects around the house or outside, make a prediction and then test it out by placing items in a bowl of water.



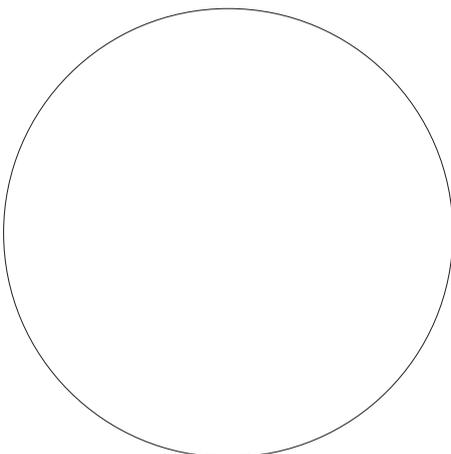
1. _____
SINK or FLOAT



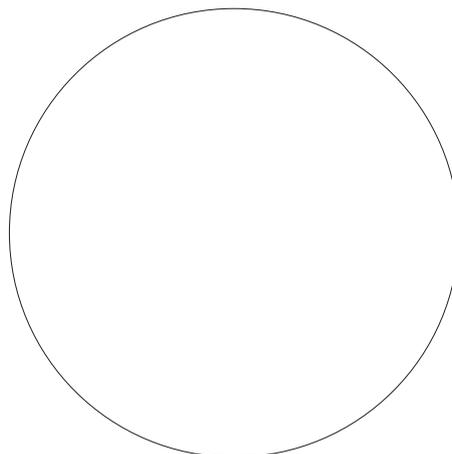
2. _____
SINK or FLOAT



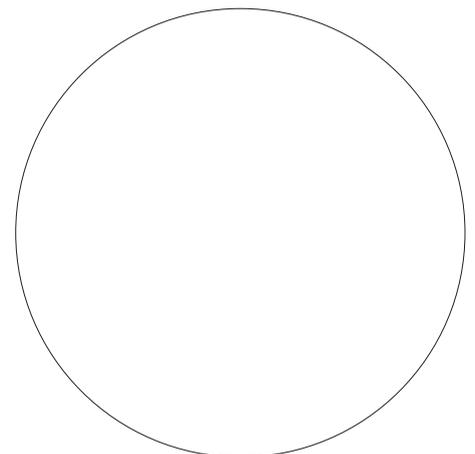
3. _____
SINK or FLOAT



4. _____
SINK or FLOAT



5. _____
SINK or FLOAT



6. _____
SINK or FLOAT

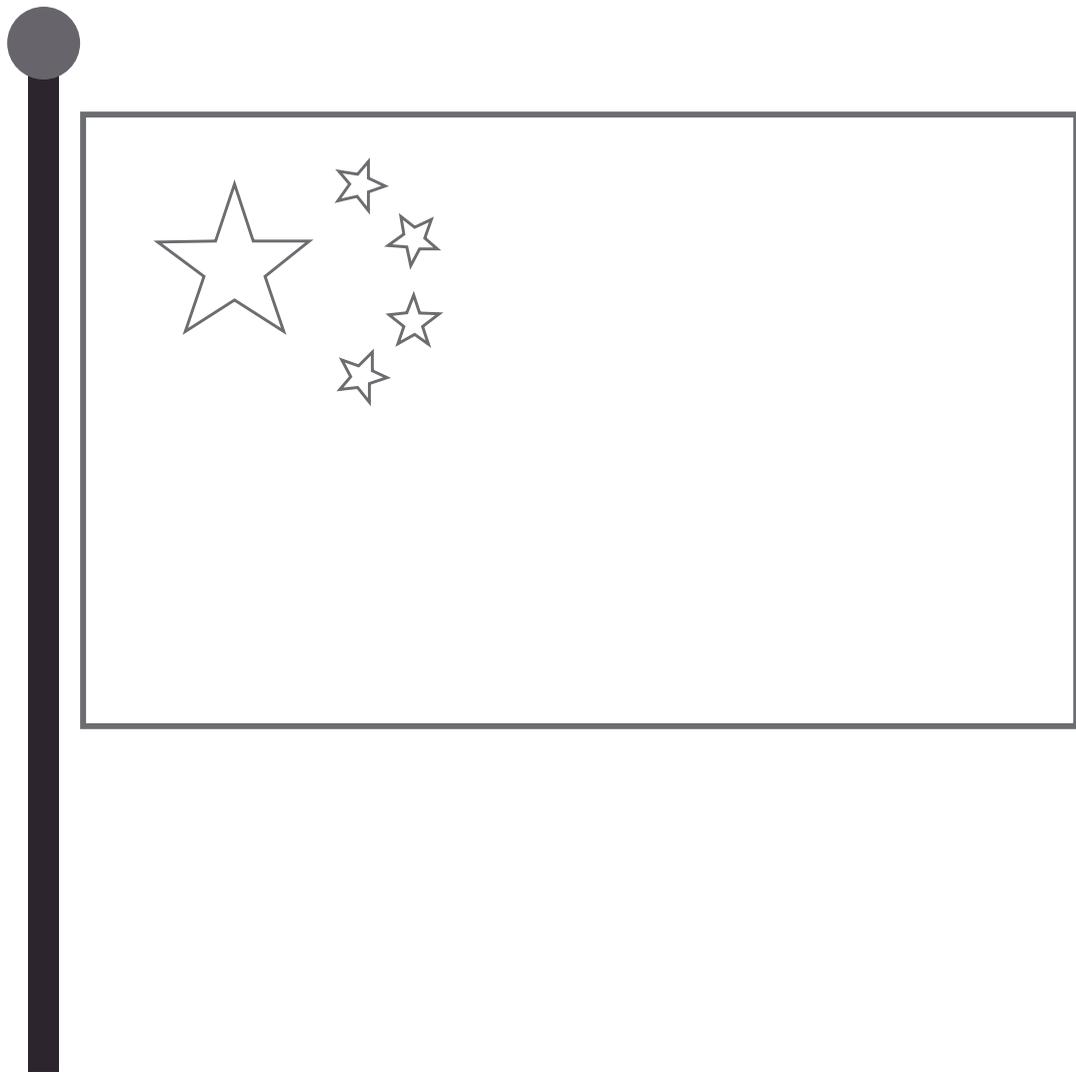
Name:

Date:

Geography: **China Flag**

The flag of China is red with five gold stars in the canton: one large star with four smaller stars in a semi-circle towards the fly. *For more information, see Parts of a Flag on page 222.*

Color in the China flag below.



Five in a Row Bible Supplement
Volumes 1-4

Sample Picture Book Unit

The Story About Ping

The Story About Ping

I Kings 3:9

The Story About Ping reveals the value of **discernment**. Ping finds out that everything that looks good is not necessarily so when he pursues the rice cake and finds it's a trap. Discernment, the ability to distinguish good from evil, is an important thing to request of the Lord. Solomon makes this request in I Kings 3:9. Perhaps you can discuss cultivating an inquiring heart that often asks the Lord if something that “looks” good is actually a good thing.

The Story About Ping also brings up the issue of **honoring authority** and **obeying rules**. The reader may think that Ping is intentionally too far away to respond to his master, or perhaps he just accidentally forgets to pay attention at the going home time. However, either way Ping has a **responsibility** to respond to the call.

1 Peter 2:13-20

Jonah

There are many verses that encourage a positive response to authority. Try 1 Peter 13-20 which is a list of ways to be submissive to authority. The story of Jonah, in the book of that name, might fit here. Both Jonah and Ping were not where they were supposed to be, and they both find out through trying circumstances that there usually is more peace of mind and safety in doing what one is asked to do.

Jonah

Being willing to take **consequences** for neglecting a responsibility is an important mark of **maturity**. Ping learns that lesson as he accepts the spank and is reunited with his family. Again, the lessons from the Bible story of Jonah can be used here.

Teacher's Notes

The *Teacher's Notes* are optional but provide a space for you to document which Bible verse you choose and any other discussion points, songs, verses or notes you wish to keep record of for your student.

THE STORY ABOUT PING

Date: _____

Student: _____

Five in a Row Bible Verse:

Memorized Verse / Copywork

Memory verse option for young student:

(choose a brief or shortened verse)

Memorized Verse

Character Trait or Life Lesson to apply:

Related Worship Songs/Hymns

Misc. Notes:

Have your student draw a picture based on the Bible verse in the space below.

Five in a Row Volumes 4-5

Sample Picture Book Unit

Roxaboxen



Roxaboxen

Title: *Roxaboxen*

Author: Alice McLerran

Illustrator: Barbara Cooney

Copyright: 1991

Summary: Roxaboxen, where children take a real place and enormous imagination and create an incredible town of their own.

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Social Studies: Geography - Arizona

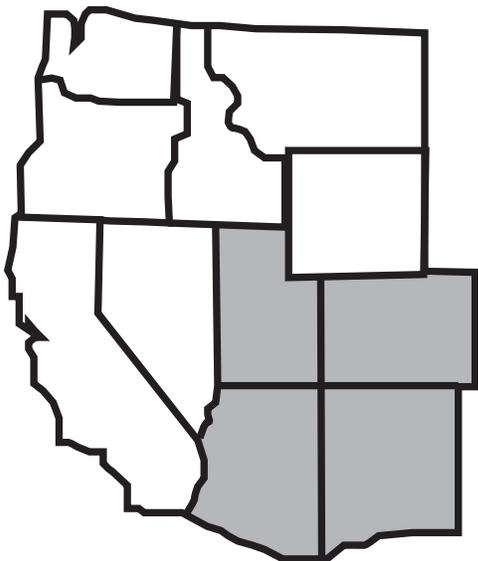
The author's text of *Roxaboxen* does not tell exactly where the story takes place. Perhaps this is the author's way of keeping Roxaboxen the universal play place—an extraordinary place for play that could exist anywhere! Many authors choose to treat their settings in this manner. Talk with your older student about authors' choices. One choice authors make is the setting of their story. Some writers choose to write their stories in the context of a real setting while some choose a fictional place. Yet there is still another option. A writer may also choose to never actually mention where a story takes place—either a real-life setting or a fictional one. Remind your student that he can make these same choices regarding *his* setting, as he writes *his* stories.

Only in the afterward of the book do you find that the original Roxaboxen actually did exist in Yuma, Arizona! Find Arizona on the map and place your story disk there. Arizona is considered one of the Southwestern States. The terminology *southwest* generally refers to the states of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma. Phoenix is the capital of Arizona, while Flagstaff, Tucson and Yuma are other important cities.

Arizona was the 48th state, admitted to the union of the United States of America in 1912. The name Arizona comes from a Native American word *arizonac* meaning small spring. In fact the names of twenty-six of our fifty states in the U.S. are named for Native American words or tribes! There are many Indian reservations in Arizona including a large Navajo reservation in the northeast corner of the state.

Arizona has many different kinds of cactus, lizards and snakes, as well as the spectacular Grand Canyon, and Monument Valley that includes the Painted Desert and Petrified Forest areas. Find a book on Arizona at the library, or help your student search online to see the interesting and magnificent sights of Arizona.

Does your student know that Arizona is one of the “Four Corners” states? Arizona and three other states (New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah) have shared boundaries that all touch at a single point. Look at a map and discover how this works. A person can stand at one place and technically be in all four of these states at once!



Social Studies:

Towns with Rules and Consequences

If you have used *Five in a Row* Vol. 1, you have probably explored lessons on “towns” in *Katy and the Big Snow* and in *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*. Roxaboxen also becomes a town with the addition of shops and homes, a mayor, police and a jail. Have you ever engaged in such wide scale pretending in your childhood? Has your student? This type of play promotes physical health as well as lots of enjoyment and actual learning experiences. Acting out scenes from life has always been an important part of playing pretend. If your student is interested (and especially if he has someone to create a town *with*) he could use large boxes to make store fronts and buildings for his town. Or he could just line out a town (outside with chalk or rocks and inside with pillows or tape) and use prepared signs to designate the buildings. He could pretend being a police officer, firefighter, shopkeeper, etc.

Does your student think the town of Roxaboxen runs well? (It seems the inhabitants of Roxaboxen are happy living in their homes, buying and selling and driving everywhere. Except maybe for the times of war, in general, the town runs well, in an orderly and enjoyable way.) Does your student know what a mayor does? A mayor, usually an elected official, is the head of a city or town government or municipality. The mayor is responsible for conducting the business of the city, seeing to its laws as well as its growth and well being. Remember when Frances moved to a new house on streets that were added later? This is an example of town growth. Is there an area of new construction and growth near you where your student can watch over a period of time as his own town grows? As a town grows it needs more shops, police

stations, fire stations, post offices, libraries, hospitals, disposal services, etc.

Explain the beginnings of town politics in this simple way: In the town of Roxaboxen (as well as in real towns) people get along with each other because there are some basic rules and people follow them. Most of the rules have to do with treating the citizens of the town just like you would like to be treated. This includes such conduct as keeping your word, and not harming other people or their property. If the rules are not followed there are consequences. The consequences usually consist of having to pay for something damaged or having to give up some of your own time, money, and/or freedom to repay a wrong done. The consequences exist to help people remember *not* to break the rules. Talk about the fact that it is this idea of consequences being a deterrent that makes Roxaboxen humorous when little Anna May is always speeding. The story says “you’d think she liked to go to jail.” In real life it would be unusual for anyone to enjoy being in jail; perhaps she just liked going fast. So, there are rules (or laws) to help keep order, and consequences like fines or jail for the public protection if someone cannot seem to keep the rules. The rules are set by the people of the town through the voting process.

Also, a town has a government structure with a person who acts as head of that government, usually called a mayor. Often the building where the mayor works is called the town hall. In *Roxaboxen*, Marian was the mayor, perhaps because she was the oldest or maybe because she had natural leadership skills. Are you more of a leader or a follower? How would your student describe himself in this area of relationships? How about others you know? What attributes do you and your student think make a good leader? A good follower? Both good leaders and good followers are needed to make a town (or any group of people) run smoothly!

Language Arts: Writing a Story from Third Person Point of View

Alice McLerran writes the story of *Roxaboxen* from the **third person point of view**. Your student may have studied some of the *Five in a Row* story lessons on first person point of view in *Night of the Moonjellies* (FIAR Vol. 1), *Owl Moon* and *All Those Secrets of the World* (FIAR Vol. 2), and *The Wild Horses of Sweetbriar* (FIAR Vol. 3). If you have any of these books available, read a few pages of the story to remind your student what first person point of view sounds like. Such a story is told by a character in the story using words like “I,” “mine,” or “it happened to me.”

However, in *Roxaboxen* the story is *not* told by a character but rather by someone outside of the story. That someone is called the story's narrator. In other words, someone outside the story is telling or narrating the story. Read some of *Roxaboxen* and then part of another story written in first person and see if your student can easily tell the difference. If your student is able to understand the difference, let him write a paragraph or short story from third person point of view like Alice McLerran did in *Roxaboxen*. But, if the lesson is still too difficult, let it be just an introduction to the idea of third person point of view.

Language Arts: Reading - Inferring, Wondering and Exploring

Marian digs up a box filled with black pebbles. Ask your student how he thinks the box of pebbles became buried. Where did they come from? Let him consider the question for a moment. (It could be a child from years ago had played in the same place and buried his box of treasured black pebbles. Unless Marian hid the box to find it and surprise everyone, no one else had known that the box of stones even existed. If they had, they would have said so.) You may never know exactly how the box of stones came to be there, but isn't it fun to wonder?

Did you ever find a buried treasure of any kind? Has your student? We never know when, but if we are observant we may find something special, too. Has your student ever seen someone using a metal detector to find items buried beneath the ground or on the beach? Many types of items have been discovered in this manner!

Art: Inspiration and Memories

Don't miss the fact that Barbara Cooney took the

then-eighty-year-old Frances back to Roxaboxen to help the illustrator imagine what Roxaboxen must have been like from a true Roxaboxenite! This information is found in the artist's information at the end of the book. Discuss with your student how difficult it would have been for an artist to capture the wonder, color, action, excitement and imagination of Roxaboxen if she had never been there. Does your student think Barbara Cooney's pictures are better because she went to all the work to visit the actual site and listen to Frances' memories before she drew the pictures?

Artists often get inspiration from visiting a locale in person before illustrating a story. (Garth Williams visited every site where Laura Ingalls Wilder had lived before illustrating her *Little House* book series.) Maybe your student would like to pick a topic to write about—one where he can visit before he writes or illustrates his story. For instance, if he wanted to write an article about fishing at a certain lake, he could visit the lake before he wrote the story. Or perhaps a new store he has wanted to visit could be the theme of his story. Have him outline what he thinks he might write about and then after visiting and writing, have him look back and see how much richer his work is because of the first-hand visit.

If you have more than one student doing this assignment, let them compare their work to notice what different things they each see at the site.

Art: Traditional Colors of the Southwest

With your student, spend a few minutes enjoying the picture on the title page. It is rich in the colors of the Southwest, mountains in the background and ocotillo bushes on each side. Isn't it a beautiful picture?

Traditionally there are certain colors associated with the Southwestern states of the United States. In art, pictures of home decorating in the Southwestern style, and in advertisements for products and places of the Southwest you will often see some traditional colors used. These colors tend to be the colors Barbara Cooney uses on the title page illustration, the illustration showing the jail, and throughout the scenes of *Roxaboxen*. Often traditional colors of the Southwest are rich in oranges, reds and terra cotta, browns, teal and dark blues, pinks and purples, sage and dark greens, which reflect the colors of the sunsets and dawns and the various plants that grow there.

Using a large box of crayons, a large paint chart (from an art supply store), or paint chips from a home improvement store, have fun trying to match the colors from Cooney's paintings to the sample colors or crayons. For added fun, use a large set of watercolors (such as the Prang 16-color set) and try mixing to obtain the colors you wish to match.

Again, as you and your student see examples of Southwestern color combinations in art, advertising, decorating shows and stores, stop and enjoy the colors and reminisce about the desert sunsets in *Roxaboxen*!

Art: Detail

By the end of the week your student may be able to look back at the cover of this story and now be able to identify the ocotillo spears. Your reading student will perhaps see the flag that says Fort Irene.

Art: Design Your Own Roxaboxen

Even if you choose not to play pretend and set up a similar play town like Roxaboxen, your student might enjoy drawing such a town, designing the buildings and thinking about town growth. You could design your town in an aerial view as seen from above, or in perspective drawing with different pages for different directions. Your student could also have different pages to reflect the original site and then town growth in various stages. Let him design the town any way he wishes and have fun in that place of imagination!

Just as Frances designed her own space when she moved to her new house, your student can also do a drawing plan for just a single home space and decorate it any way he likes.

Math: Grouping, Borrowing and Skip Counting

Marion digs up a box filled with round black pebbles. Find some kind of round-ish black stones (gardening store or hobby store), black beans, etc., and put them in a tin box. Let your student use these *Roxaboxen* units to work on appropriate math concepts. Math is more *fun* (that means easier to learn) when it is tied to something that stirs the imagination!

Math: Seasons - Numbers in Months and Days

Since *Roxaboxen* talks about the seasons, use this as a springboard to review number concepts about days in a week, in a month, in a year, and also in a season (like from September 21 to December 21. Don't forget the month of February during leap year!)

Science: Rivers in the Desert?

Marian names the curving road, River Rhode, because it is like a curving river. Then the text says you have to ford the river to reach *Roxaboxen*. Maybe there was a real river or stream in that place or perhaps a dry stream bed that only has water during brief thunderstorms. However, it is also possible that River Rhode is strictly an imaginary river and they only pretend to cross or "ford" the river to get to their play town.

Either way, what does it mean to ford a river? To ford a river is to cross it by means of walking, driving, floating a raft, etc. Sometimes it isn't safe to ford a river by walking, driving or swimming because of the strong currents that rivers often have. Assure your student that it is *extremely important* to find out about any water that he might have to cross. He might ask

people who know the river to tell him about any dangers, or be able to find information at a conservation headquarters.

How else can you cross a deep river? You can use a boat, a raft, or a ferry. (If you want to extend this list in humor, you could also swing over the river on a rope or vine, wear stilts, develop some type of hovercraft or an airboat like they use in the Everglades, etc.) If you must walk across unfamiliar water it is essential that you take along a staff or walking stick to continually probe the water ahead of you to test for depth.

Science: Desert - Biome

Though many think the defining characteristic of a desert is a place of extreme heat, the first factor is actually the amount of rainfall. Deserts receive very little rain. There are some deserts in the world with no recorded rainfall. The necessary moisture for these areas to support any plant or animal life comes from thick fog that occurs now and then. Other desert areas have short, sometimes violent periods of precipitation and then long stretches with no rainfall at all.

Find a simple children's book on deserts and read through and discuss the many facets of desert life: heat and cold, plants and animals that can live with little water, animal behavior in extreme climates, the places of deserts in the world, mirages, etc.

In the story of *Roxaboxen*, some of the elements of desert life you can talk about, search for, and identify are: large expanses of dirt (sand) and stones, ocotillo plants, various scrub brush type plants, prickly pear cactus and other cacti, and succulents, a lizard, and a hummingbird.

Science: A Simple Machine or Not a Simple Machine?

Previously in *Five in a Row* Vol. 1, we've talked about simple machines. Simple machines help us do work more easily. Can your student remember some of the six simple machines and give an example of how they are used? They are: lever, wedge, wheel and axle, pulley, inclined plane, and screw (spiral inclined plane).

Does your student remember Big Jim in *Who Owns the Sun?* (Vol. 1). Big Jim uses a lever to pry up and move large rocks. Big Jim also uses an ax to cut down trees and the ax head is a wedge. You may not have talked about the wheel and axle which moved *Mr. Gumpy's Motor Car* (Vol. 2), or about the fact that places which are wheelchair accessible often make use of the inclined plane in place of steps, like in *Grandma's Walk* (Vol. 3), but you can mention these uses of simple machines now.

In *Roxaboxen*, we see children running around holding wheels and pretending to be driving. The question is, are these wheels a simple machine? Ask your student if the wheel can actually do any work or is there some part missing. For wheels to be a simple machine they need an axle to actually get any work done.

Science: Seasons

As the story of *Roxaboxen* is a reminiscing style of story, Alice McLerran chooses to tell the memory through the passing of the seasons. In this book we see the passing of the seasons of nature and also the different seasons of life from childhood to old age. Ask your student to name the seasons. Can he tell you what three months traditionally are included in each of the four seasons? If he doesn't know, just introduce this concept now.

Take a moment to discuss the seasons of nature. You could have your student fold an 8 1/2 by 11-inch piece of paper into half and then into half again to make four boxes. In each box have him write (and he may also want to illustrate) six natural elements of each of the four seasons. For instance, in the spring box one student might put: first flowers blooming, warm days/cool nights, heavy precipitation, new leaves on trees, birds' first nesting, peas and new potatoes from the garden. A winter box might include: bare tree branches, cold days and nights, snow, many birds have migrated, gray clouds, brown grass. Obviously the things observed and noted by your student will reflect what the seasons are like

where he lives, since fall in southern California is not the same as fall in Vermont.

Another way to study this topic is to take a single season and study it more thoroughly than you have before. One of the ideas you might bring up is the terms **autumnal** and **vernal equinoxes** (the first day of fall and spring) and of the **winter** and **summer solstices** (the first day of winter and summer) and their approximate dates.

If you have already done these types of lessons before and had a quick review, you may wish to introduce the idea that the seasons are reversed in the Southern Hemisphere. (The first day of the summer season is around Dec. 21.)

Science: Precious Stones and Desert Glass

Remind your student of the part in *Roxaboxen* where Frances makes her home surrounded by desert glass and it is called a house of jewels. Your student may be interested in the fact that blowing, moving dirt and sand can wear away rough edges of glass and leave rounded pieces of colored glass which sometimes *look* like precious stones or jewels.

When people speak about precious stones (which are called gemstones when they are cut and polished) they usually mean those which are the most rare and therefore the most expensive, such as diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires. Semi-precious stones might include topaz, opal, amethyst, etc.

What the children find in the story *Roxaboxen* is desert glass: ordinary pieces of bottles, etc., and pieces of glass that have been smoothed and polished by the grit, and sand over long periods of time. They may have the colors of some semi-precious stones

but they are just glass. These bits and pieces of glass are not exceptionally valuable except to those with imagination!

Go-Along Story: *My Great Aunt Arizona*, by Gloria Houston. The connection to *Roxaboxen* is only the name of the state—Arizona. The character in this go-along story is given her name by her brother who is living in Arizona and thinks it a beautiful place. This girl, who is named for the state, never lives there. But with the connection of the name Arizona it makes this a great time to read *My Great Aunt Arizona*, which is reminiscent of *Miss Rumphius* and *Island Boy* by Barbara Cooney.

Teacher's Notes

The *Five in a Row* lesson options for each unit in the manual are all you need to teach your child. The additional resource area provided below is simply a place to jot down relevant info you've found that you might want to reference.

ROXABOXEN

Date: _____

Student: _____

Five in a Row Lesson Topics Chosen:

Social Studies:

Language Arts:

Art:

Math:

Science:

Relevant Library Resources: Books, DVDs, Audio Books

Websites or Video Links:

30

Related Field Trip Opportunities:

Favorite Quote or Memory During Study:

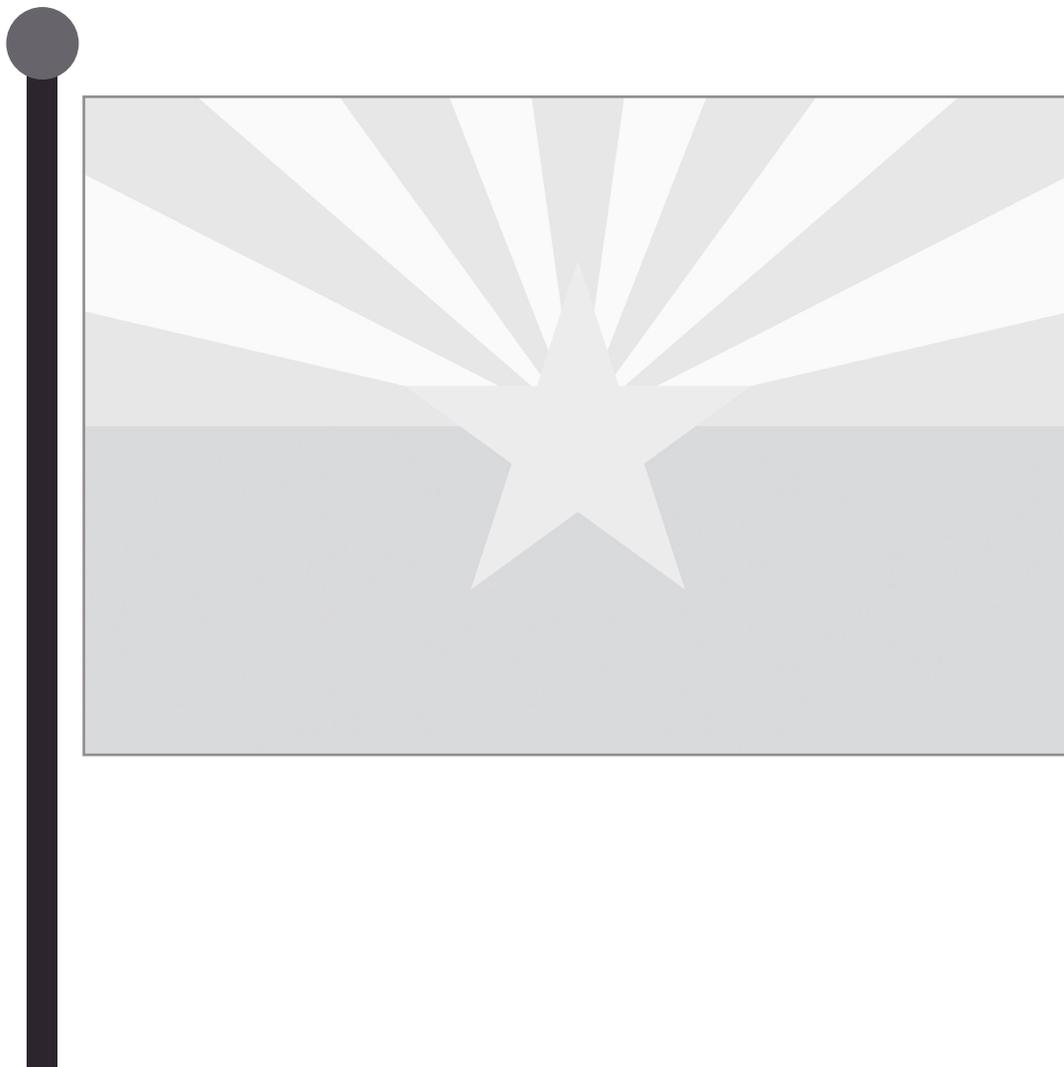
Name:

Date:

Geography: **Arizona Flag**

The flag of Arizona is divided in half horizontally. The top half looks like a setting sun, consisting of thirteen (these represent America's thirteen original colonies) alternating red and yellow rays (starting and ending with red). The bottom half of the flag is the same blue color as the blue in the United States flag. The middle of the flag has a copper colored star centered over the top and bottom half. The copper color represents Arizona's copper production which is the largest in the United States. Your student might also enjoy drawing and coloring the Fort Irene flag from the story! *For more information, see Parts of a Flag on page 266.*

Color in the Arizona flag below.



Name:

Date:

Social Studies: **Geography - Four Corners Monument**

Virtual

FIELD TRIP

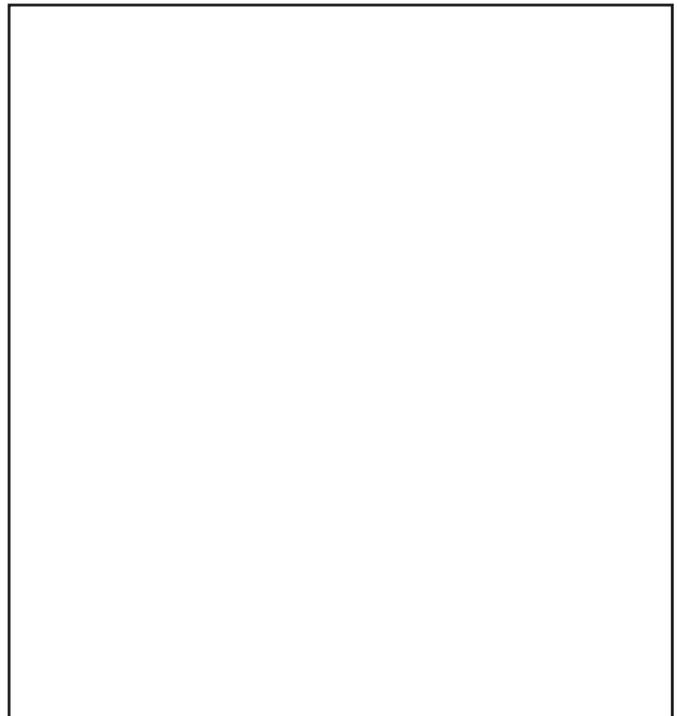
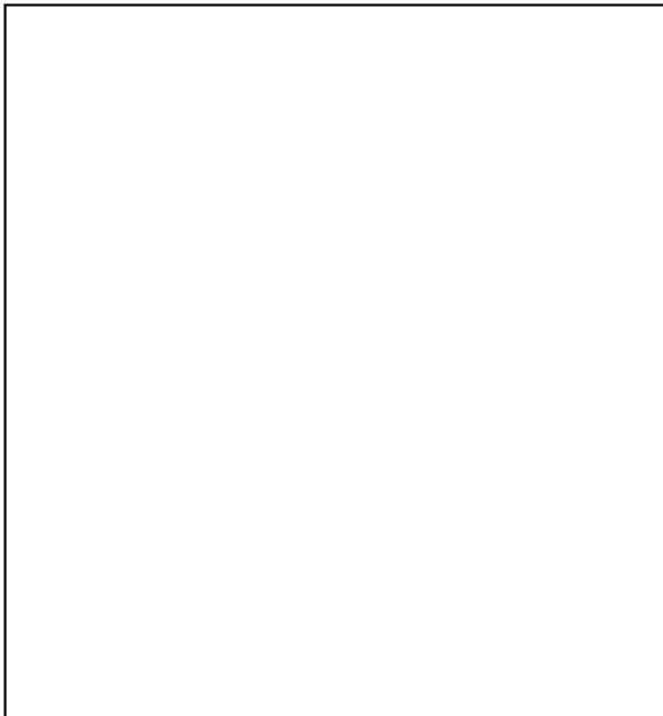
Four Corners Monument

Does your student know that Arizona is one of the “Four Corners” states? Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Utah have shared boundaries that all touch at a single point. Look at a map and discover how this works. A person can stand at one place and technically be in all four of these states at once!

This is a great opportunity to take a virtual field trip and explore the Four Corners Monument. Help your student search online for photos or use Google Earth to see the place where four states meet.

32

Print your photos and add them in the spaces below.



Name:

Date:

Science: **Desert - Biome**

Below you will find questions that can be used to learn more about desert biomes.

1. What causes a desert biome ecosystem to form?

2. What percentage of the Earth is made up of deserts?

3. What are the four major types of deserts?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

List any additional facts or information you have learned about desert biomes below.

Five in a Row Volumes 5-8

Sample Chapter Book Units

The Boxcar Children

&

The Saturdays

to include will become much easier the more letters she writes. Grandparents will love this and it will bless them greatly!

Chapter 12—James Henry and Henry James

Teacher Summary

Without telling the children, Dr. Moore invites Mr. Alden over to the house. The two men decide to let the children get to know their grandfather before introducing him. He slowly gets acquainted with Benny and then Violet. Henry, after hearing Mr. Alden say “my boy,” remembers he was the man who was at the free-for-all. Putting pieces together, he introduces himself to his grandfather. The moment of truth arrives for all the children and the happy family is finally reunited. When Violet is well, the four children, their grandfather, Dr. Moore and his mother all go and see the boxcar. After a final meal by the brook, the children and Watch set off to spend some time with their grandfather at his house.

What we will cover in this chapter:

Social Studies: Names and Your Lineage

Science: Grow a Vegetable in a Bottle

Language Arts: Writing and Discussion Question

Fine Arts: Design and Illustration - Grandfather’s House*

Life Skills: Moving

Life Skills: Going the Extra Mile

Life Skills: Seeing Past Differences

Social Studies: Names and Your Lineage

Draw your student’s attention to Henry’s name and Mr. Alden’s name (page 135). Henry James Alden was named after James Henry Alden. Many times people hand names down through generations. Sometimes a firstborn son will bear the same name as his father with a “Jr.” added at the end. Mothers and daughters can share names, as well.

The author of this *Five in a Row* unit has a unique type of name heritage. The author’s grandmother was named *Billie Jane*. The author’s mother is named *Jane Claire*. The author’s name is *Becky Jane*, and her daughter is *Lily Jane*.

What is your student’s name? Is there a specific lineage attached? Where did the name come from? Is she named after a famous person? Have your student

do some research into her family's name. If the interest is there, this name information could be listed in the data gathered for the family tree (covered in chapter 11).

As a side note, share with your student some interesting facts about the names used in our book. The name "Alden" is a famous name belonging to a man named John Alden. Mr. John Alden sailed from Essex, England on the *Mayflower* to America. He married Priscilla Mullens and their courtship was described in the famous Henry Wadsworth Longfellow poem "The Courtship of Miles Standish." (If your student is interested, you might find that poem and read it together.) John Alden made it through the first winter at Plymouth (a winter which killed half of the Pilgrims) and served as assistant governor of the community until his death in 1687. You can visit his final homestead in Duxbury, Massachusetts. In *The Boxcar Children*, the fictional city of Greenfield shares its name with the famous home site of Henry Ford, inventor of the Model T automobile.

Learning about names and their origins can be enlightening. Encourage your student to begin paying attention to the names she hears and sees in her own family and community.

Science: Grow a Vegetable in a Bottle

Grandfather Alden had the most interesting thing in his garden—a cucumber in a bottle! Take this opportunity to explain to your student how a cucumber can be grown in a bottle. If there is interest, discuss the type of bottle you would need. A clear glass or plastic bottle would let the sunlight in and be ideal. Many vegetables can be grown this way and then picked when they fill their bottle. If you have a garden, try this with a cucumber, tomato or small squash.

If you are planning a special summer dinner or party, a fresh picked "bottle" encased vegetable makes a unique and interesting centerpiece. If you do not have access to a garden, try growing a cucumber or tomato plant in a pot indoors. Just wait until the vegetable blossom is starting to form fruit. Now stick it in the mouth of a bottle and watch it grow!

If you have not studied plants in a while, get a simple library book or good colorful reference book. Choose one topic and learn about the parts of a flower, or the parts of a leaf, or the parts of a fruit and how it grows. You might find a good book on vegetables, too!

Language Arts: Writing and Discussion Question

On page 142, Gertrude Chandler Warner leaves the reader with this sentence, "They did not know ... what good times they were going to have." What types of good times do you think they had?

Fine Arts: Design and Illustration - Grandfather's House*

Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny are going to see Grandfather's house (page 140). They probably tried to imagine what it would look like. Ask your student what she thinks it looks like?

If your student is interested in architecture, you might introduce her to floor plans. Print a few simple floor plans and show your student how the architect indicates stairs, doors, windows, porches, etc. If your student enjoys this, encourage her to try designing a floor plan of what she thinks Grandfather Alden's home will look like.

Teacher's Note: The final chapter of the book does not include any specific details on the style or look of Grandfather's house. Therefore, any design concept your student decides on could be correct.

Life Skills: Moving

On page 142, we see the children leaving their boxcar home and moving to their grandfather's house. Has your student ever had to move? Has she ever experienced a good friend moving away? Leaving our old home for a new one is often very sad.

Talk with your student about the feelings of loss and fear when we leave someplace familiar. It is sometimes difficult to adjust to a new neighborhood or town. New faces and experiences can be frightening, even for an adult. If your student has had this experience, you might have her write a short personal memoir on her feelings and how they were resolved. Learning to enjoy new experiences and the unknown is a part of growing up. Encourage your student to be open to new things!

Life Skills: Going the Extra Mile

Dr. Moore took good care of the children. He offered Henry a job, paid the children well, gave them cherries, vegetables, a hammer and nails, checked up on them in the woods, made sure they had enough food, took care of Violet when she was sick, made sure Grandfather Alden was a kind man, etc. Instead of just stopping at finding them a home, he invited them into his own home and cared for them.

Talk with your student about going the extra mile for someone. Caring for someone above and beyond the normal call of duty is a noble thing to do. Give your student examples of ways she can go the extra mile for her family or friends. For example, if she is hanging up her coat and she sees other family members' coats lying around, she might choose to hang them all up. If a new friend in the neighborhood is shy, she could include that person in an outing and introduce her to the other children. Let your student think of other ways, as well.

Instead of just doing what we are obligated to do, a person of good character does whatever she sees is needed. Dr. Moore exemplifies this character quality. Encourage your student to cultivate it also!

Life Skills: Seeing Past Differences

Draw your student's attention to the interesting exchange between Mary, the maid, and Dr. Moore on page 130. Mary is nervous to cook for Mr. Alden because he is "a very rich man." Explore with your student reasons people are sometimes intimidated by differences in others. Whether it be social standing, money, level of education, race or religion, people are often nervous about being with someone who is different. Mary didn't know what she could fix for Mr. Alden that would be special or fancy enough. Mary didn't understand that when we do things in a way that makes us true to ourselves (cherry dumplings and chicken were *her* specialty!), others can appreciate it! People are not impressed when we try to be something we're not. Encourage your student to look past differences in people and instead, look for what makes that person unique. This is a sign of real maturity!

Chapter 13—A New Home for the Boxcar

Teacher Summary

The children see their grandfather's mansion for the first time. He has each of their rooms redone to suit them—Violet's room with violets everywhere, Benny's room with toys and a train set, and Jessie's room even has a bed for Watch. The children learn to love their grandfather and his home, but as time goes on they begin to miss the boxcar and their old things. Mr. Alden comes up with a plan. With the children away, he has the boxcar brought to his home and placed in the back garden. Complete with the old stump, everything is just as it was in the woods. The children are delighted and they all live happily ever after.

What we will cover in this chapter:

Social Studies: A Rail Car in Your Backyard*

Language Arts: Writing and Discussion Question

Fine Arts: A Portrait of the Aldens

Life Skills: Making Friends - Learning About Their Interests

Social Studies: A Rail Car in Your Backyard*

Wasn't it wonderful of Mr. Alden to move the boxcar into his garden? Surprisingly enough, today it is not that unusual for someone to have a rail car in their backyard! Extremely dedicated railroad enthusiasts enjoy collecting old rail cars and renovating them. Many people house the cars in their backyards or as an attached room on their house. Some restore the cars to their original condition, and others renovate them into guest houses, offices or entertainment rooms. Boxcars are collected as well as dining cars, passenger cars, engines and cabooses! People have also renovated old rail cars to be used as restaurants, vacation lodging and retail stores.

Ask your student if she thinks it would be fun to have a boxcar in the backyard. Check and see if there are any railroad associations or clubs in your city. You might even be able to arrange a visit to a train museum or restoration area and go inside different rail cars or the locomotive (engine).

Teacher's Note: Student rail enthusiasts can find the routes of major railroads past or present and enjoy mapping them out. There are also many great videos of trains, old and new.

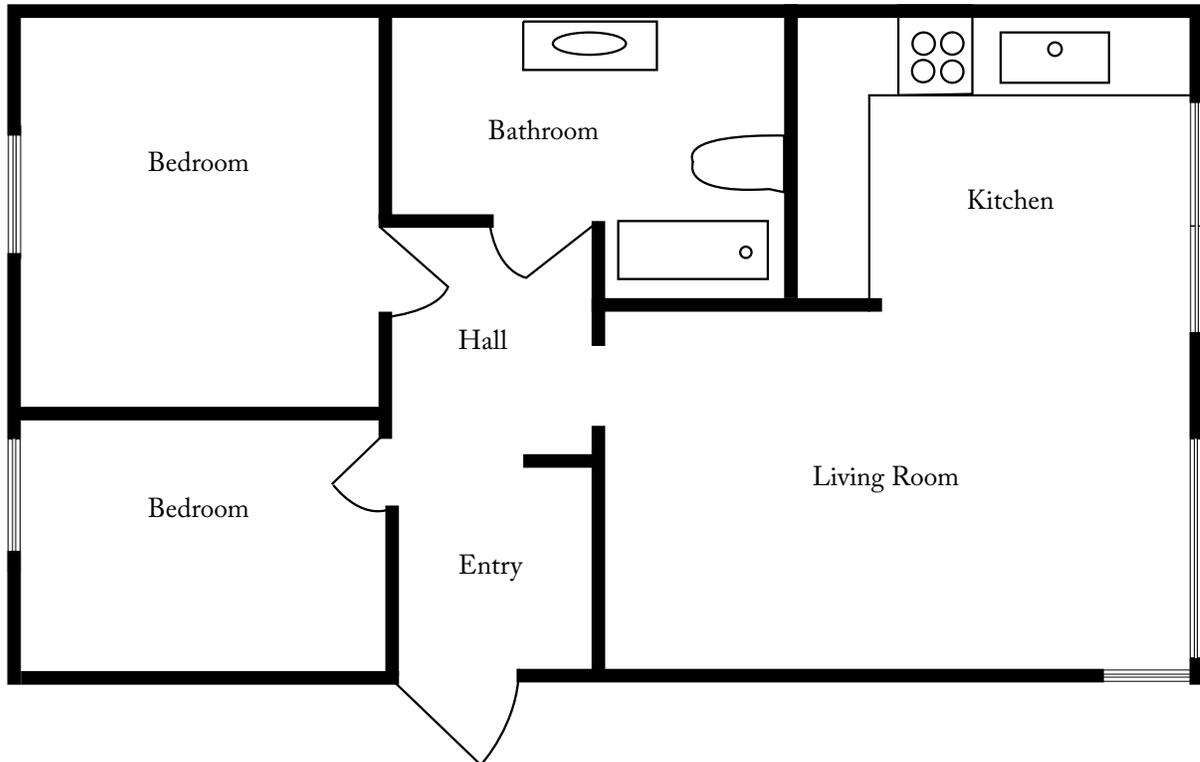
The Boxcar Children - Chapter 12

Name:

Date:

Fine Arts: **Floor Plan**

After finishing the **Fine Arts: Design and Illustration - Grandfather's House** lesson, answer the questions below based on the floor plan provided.



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1. How many rooms are in this floor plan? _____
(not including the Hall and Entry)

2. Where is the front door? Label or color it in.

3. Where are the windows? Label or color them in.

4. What are the three items drawn in the bathroom?

5. What are the two items drawn in the kitchen?

6. Draw additional fixtures or furniture in the house if you'd like.

The Saturdays

Chapter 6—Saturday Six

Teacher Summary

The members of the I.S.A.A.C. decide, after Oliver’s incident at the circus, that their adventures from now on will be as a group. Their first Saturday adopting the new plan takes them to the Central Park Lake. Mona packs a delicious lunch and the four children rent a rowboat. Unfortunately, Randy falls in the water and the rest of the afternoon is spent trying to get home and conceal the wet evidence from Cuffy.

Later on that night, Rush checks the furnace. He accidentally leaves the door open and the house fills with coal gas. Severe tragedy could have occurred, but Isaac, the dog, smelled the gas and alerted everyone in the house. The Melendys are safe.

What we will cover in this chapter:

Science: Algae

Science: Water Pollution

Science: Safety - Carbon Monoxide

Language Arts: Shakespeare’s Plays*

Language Arts: Developing Consistent Characters

Language Arts: Writing and Discussion Question

Language Arts: Vocabulary

Science: Algae

Although our author doesn’t describe the Central Park Lake as “green with algae,” Enright does use words such as “dark, thick green.” That lake almost certainly had algae surrounding the edge of it and floating through its little ripples. Algae is a fascinating life form your student can study and learn about!

Algae [AL jee] are small living organisms that live in

all oceans, lakes, rivers, ponds and even mud. Explain to your student that there are all types of algae. Some algae have only one cell, and require a microscope to see them. Others have many cells and are quite large (like seaweed).

Ask your student why she thinks algae look green? It might help to talk about photosynthesis and the leaves on trees and plants. Algae look green for the same reason—chlorophyll. Chlorophyll is the green coloring in plants and is their food source—made up of sugars. All algae contain chlorophyll.

There are several kinds of algae: blue-green algae, brown algae, green algae and even red algae (which is found in subtropical areas where coral is found).

Algae can grow too rapidly in certain ponds and lakes and become thick. As it grows larger and larger, it requires more and more oxygen from the water. If algae grows too much, it can kill fish and other living organisms. If kept in the proper balance, however, algae can provide food for fish and animals. It can also help purify the air and water through photosynthesis.

If you are able, try to locate a little bit of algae and let your student look at it (look at it through a magnifying glass, too). Hold it in your fingers. What can you both see? Try to get algae from a few different locations. What is different about each sample? If you have access to a microscope, put some algae on a slide and look at the amazing forms in the drop of water!

Science: Water Pollution

Randy thinks she sees something in the water—a shell, or maybe an old tin can. Unfortunately, many things can be found in our waterways, lakes and oceans. Water pollution is a serious problem in to-

day's world. Talk with your student about water pollution and ways we can keep from contributing to it.

Water pollution happens when water is contaminated by substances such as human/animal waste, chemicals, metals and oils. Polluted water can be deceiving. Even when it looks clean, it can still contain dangerous, life-threatening materials, germs and chemicals. Governments all over the world, including the United States, have spent billions of dollars working on water pollution research and education.

Remind your student of the four main sources of water pollution: (1) industrial wastes, (2) sewage, (3) agricultural wastes and (4) plastics.

Industrial wastes include chemicals, oil, fuel, etc., that are released from factories and businesses into the water systems. **Sewage** includes the water we flush from our toilets and the water used for laundering and bathing. Globally, about 80% of wastewater flows mostly untreated into oceans and waterways. **Agricultural waste** occurs when melted snow and rain wash the chemicals used in farming away from the fields and into the waterways. And finally, if your student did the pollution lesson in Chapter 5 of *Thomas Edison* earlier in this volume, she'll remember that **discarded plastics** are polluting our oceans and harming marine wildlife.

Water pollution can cause death and disease among people and animals. It also can cause foul odors and floating debris that make the waters ugly and unpleasant. Just like Randy thought she might see a tin can, people find old clothes, soda cans, plastic bags and bottles, and more every day on America's beaches. Littering is a terrible act. Not only does it make our water sources poor looking, but many kinds of litter can choke, entrap and kill fish, dolphins, seals and many other creatures.

If your student is interested (and she can keep her nose pinched shut!), most sewage and water treatment plants offer tours. Your student can learn firsthand what goes into keeping her water clean. You may also wish to locate a few books on the topic, or look online for information about drinking water and how it is made safe.

Science: Safety—Carbon Monoxide

Poor Rush! He thought he was supposed to leave the furnace door open, but unfortunately, he nearly caused a very serious accident by doing so. Through-

out the end of this chapter, the Melendys refer to the poisonous gas as “coal gas.” Explain to your student, that we now know this is a dangerous gaseous mixture of hydrogen, methane, and carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is colorless, tasteless and odorless. It is also potentially fatal.

Teacher’s Note: The Melendys smelled the coal gas. Because carbon monoxide is odorless, they probably smelled the bits of burning coal.

Carbon monoxide (chemical formula is CO) is dangerous because it is not easily detected by people. People have often died of CO poisoning during their sleep, without ever realizing they are being poisoned. If people are not asleep, they may feel many of the symptoms Rush and the kids experienced—light-headedness, headaches, hunger and even tunnel vision. This last symptom may account for the odd “dream-like” sequences Rush and Randy thought they saw.

To be safe, it’s important (and easy!) to install CO detectors in homes. We now know that just a smoke detector isn’t enough. CO detectors are your best bet to fight against this invisible enemy. Look with your student at CO detectors in any discount or hardware store. Find one that is within the right price range and let your student install it. If you already have CO detectors in your home, show them to your student and explain how they work. Learning about the dangers of CO, the symptoms it causes and ways to alert yourself, all help keep you safe and happy!

Language Arts: Shakespeare’s Plays*

The Melendy children are intelligent and literate children. They frequently use advanced vocabulary words in their everyday speech. They know about sci-



William Shakespeare

ence and the arts, as well as history. Mona, in particular, is well versed in Shakespeare. Your student has undoubtedly noticed many references to the Bard and his writings throughout our story.

Here again, in chapter 6, we see Mona quoting lines from *Macbeth*. Your student may have already learned some things about William Shakespeare and his writings. This topic and his plays are far too broad for any one lesson, but it is recommended that you explore at least one of his plays with your student.

Shakespeare wrote some of the most haunting, beautiful and memorable works in literary history. Your student should know that his plays fall into three categories: comedies, tragedies and histories. Try to locate more simple versions of these works, if your student is younger. If she is ready, he may wish to tackle portions of the original. If she finds it difficult, some excellent and helpful books are: *Tales from Shakespeare* by Charles and Mary Lamb (classic retellings); *Tales from Shakespeare* by Marcia Williams (in comic format); and *No Fear Shakespeare* (this series has the original words on one page and the “plain English” version on the opposite page).

Reading and learning Shakespeare can enrich and deepen your student’s life, as well as her education.

Language Arts: Developing Consistent Characters

Your student can learn a great deal about writing fiction by reading great authors. Elizabeth Enright, our author for this study, is certainly great. One of her best skills is her ability to create deep, rounded, consistent characters.

Talk with your student about what we mean when we say “round characters.” A flat character is a one-dimensional character. We see that person in one scene, perhaps, doing one action. For example, in *The Saturdays* a flat character would be the policeman who helped Oliver find his way home. We hardly know anything about this man except a general description. Every story includes some flat characters, but an author never wants all of her characters to be this thin.

Enright uses excellent descriptions and situations to help create consistent characters. We know all about Mona, don't we? We feel like Rush is a good friend. Ask your student to list the names of the four children on a piece of paper. Now, encourage her to list attributes, likes and dislikes, activities he/she enjoys, etc., about each of the children. Her list might look something like this:

Mona: the oldest (13), thick, blond hair (was long, got it cut), dramatic, loves Shakespeare, wants to be an actress, enjoys getting dressed up and feeling beautiful, reads a lot

Rush: age 12, curly, dark hair, a little bit of a tease, loves music and playing the piano, has a dog named Isaac, wants to be a great pianist and an engineer when he gets older

Miranda: age 10 1/2, curly, brown hair, loves ballet, likes to draw and paint, will try anything—very adventurous, enjoys hearing a good story, fiercely loyal

Oliver: youngest, age 6, mature for his age, calm, quiet, very industrious, enjoys art work, wants to be a train engineer, loves the circus, finds joy in small things, doesn't complain very often

Enright is a master at creating great characters. We aren't surprised when, in chapter 6, Mona breaks into quotations from *Macbeth*. We know that's just Mona. And we aren't surprised at Randy, either, when she gets a little distracted daydreaming and falls into the lake.

Encourage your student to work on creating round characters in her stories through plot and description. Even short stories can have excellent characters if they are given enough to do and we are told enough about them.

Language Arts: Writing and Discussion Question

We never find out what the older man is doing, rowing furiously around in the lake. What do you think he was doing? Write about it.

Language Arts: Vocabulary

campaign A military course of action.

adroitly Ingenious, clever, using one's mind.

laboriously With great effort.

teeming Full of, alive with.

vanquished Removed forever, eliminated.

Chapter 7—Saturday Seven

Teacher Summary

Unfortunately, after the furnace incident, Father decides the Melendy family needs a new oil furnace—one that won't have the same problems and won't cause coal gas poisoning. Father tells everyone how much money the new furnace will cost. They won't be able to afford their country home this year, and will have to stay in the city. The children are disappointed, but they decide to make the best of it.

Later on, Mrs. Oliphant calls up and invites the chil-

dren for tea at the zoo. While at tea, Randy slips to Mrs. Oliphant that they don't have much money and they can't go to the country all summer. The old woman quickly offers up an idea. She owns a lighthouse at the shore and would love for all the Melendys to come and stay with her. The children are thrilled and quickly go home to ask their father.

What we will cover in this chapter:

Social Studies: Geography - Venice, Italy*

Social Studies: History - 1920s in the United States

Science: How Your Body Keeps Cool

Science: Bird Songs

Science: Heat and Absorption

Language Arts: Henry Wadsworth

Longfellow's "The Song of Hiawatha"

Language Arts: Writing and Discussion Question

Language Arts: Vocabulary

Life Skills: Dealing with Embarrassment

Social Studies: Geography - Venice, Italy*

Mona admires Mrs. Oliphant's bracelet, and the old woman tells her it came from Venice. Did your student study *Papa Piccolo* in FIAR Vol. 1? If you have this book available, take a look at it again to remind her about this famous city. Then locate Venice on a map with your student. It is found on the northern shores of the Adriatic Sea, just off the mainland of Italy. Venice is a highly unusual city. Explain to your student that most of Venice (part of the city does lay on the mainland) consists of tiny islands—nearly 120! And instead of streets, Venice has canals of water. People don't drive through town in cars. They float through town in small boats!

Unfortunately, because of this odd water aspect, Venice has been threatened by many floods. Today, there

The Saturdays - Chapter 6

Name: _____

Date: _____

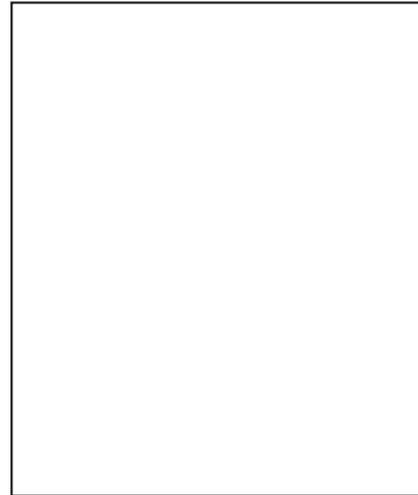
Language Arts: **Biography - Who Am I?**

After doing the **Language Arts: Shakespeare's Plays** lesson, research William Shakespeare and learn more about this famous playwright.

Print and paste an image of William Shakespeare into the frame. Write information gathered through your research into the lines below.

Additional go-along book recommendations include:

Shakespeare's Seasons by Miriam Weiner
A Stage Full of Shakespeare Stories
by Angela McAllister



Name: _____

Lived: _____

Known for: _____

Connections to story: _____
