help Newt many times, and each time Newt wondered what he could do for Turtle. One day Bobcat flipped Turtle over and onto his back. Turtle was stuck and needed help. Turtle called Newt and Newt was finally able to help out his friend Turtle.

**Activity:** How I can help at home picture. Let each child draw and write a caption about how they can help out at home.

**Adaptation:** Let the child dictate the sentence to an adult.

**Criteria:** The book fits with the animals of the zoo and deals with friends helping each other out, a good message.

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**27. Chicken Chuck** by Bill Martin Jr.

**Summary:** A rooster named Chicken Chuck loved to eat, he had three square meals a day plus snacks. One day he ate a blue seed, which made a blue feather grow out of the top of his head. All of the barnyard animals complimented his blue feather and Chicken Chuck was quite proud. He became very bossy, making all of the animals do chores. The other animals saw a poster for a circus with a horse who had two blue feathers. They showed the ad to Chicken Chuck, who went to the circus himself to find out about the blue feathers. The other animals went with him. They ran into a monkey who yanked Chicken Chuck’s feather off, because it made him sneeze. The monkey put it into a box, where they keep the feathers to tie onto the horses heads. Seeing their excitement over the feathers, the monkey gave each animal a feather and two to Chicken Chuck. They returned to the farm happy.

**Activity:** Bring in a blue feather. Play follow the leader, whoever has the blue feather gets to lead.

**Adaptation:** Pass the blue feather around a sitting circle and imitate hand claps, fun phrases, or the kids’ names.

**Criteria:** The book is about some animals which may be found at a zoo.

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**28. The Story of Z** by Jean Modesitt.

**Summary:** Z is tired of being at the end of the alphabet. She feels like she is the least used letter. So, she decides to leave, and asks X and Y if they would like to join her. They stay and Z goes off alone. She tries to start a new alphabet with some letters that are not already in an alphabet, but that does not work well. Meanwhile, the English language has no Z, so words like ‘zipper’ became ‘ipper.’ One day Z meets a man trying to say ‘gadzooks!’ but all he can say is ‘gadooks.’ This makes her rejoin the alphabet and the other letters accept her back.

**Activity:** Missing Z! Come up with words that involve Z. Write the word with a Z on one side of a paper and write it without the Z on the other. Tape the side showing with out a Z to the wall or board. Have the kids guess what the real word is. Flip it over to reveal the answer.

**Adaptation:** Work in pairs, with the answers on the back, they can check their guesses.
Criteria: Z is a letter of the month and this shows that we need every letter to have our language.

29. Little Wolf and the Moon by Marjorie Dennis Murray.
Summary: Little Wolf looked up at the moon every night and wondered all sorts of questions; such as “How does the moon stay in the sky?” or “Why is the moon so large?” At night he also played with his siblings and watched other forest animals. Little Wolf felt small under the huge moon. At the same time the moon was gazing down and wondering about Little Wolf and why he played. One night Little Wolf knew: the moon lights up the sky so little wolves can look up at it and wonder.
Activity: Make a Question Box. Decorate the outside of a box and cut a slit in the top. Set out little pieces of paper and colored pencils. Let the children write or draw questions they have and put them into the box. When there are a few free minutes, as a transition, or at the beginning or end of a day, pull one out and talk about it. Let the children suggest answers, have the adult add clarification, and look up unknown answers.
Adaptation: This activity can involved multiple levels of children, as they can participate by writing, drawing, or in the discussion about the questions. Keep an eye out to see that all kids can participate. Also, if a child asks a question there is not enough time for, ask them to please write it down and put it in the Question Box, because it would be a great discussion.
Criteria: The book fits with the collection of animals that can be found at the zoo.

30. Tricky Tortoise by Mwenye Hadith.
Summary: Tortoise was always being walked on since he resembled a rock. When he asked Elephant to be more careful about stepping on him, Elephant said he was the most important animal as well as the biggest with the biggest head and need not pay attention to a small tortoise. The Tortoise asked the Elephant if he had ever seen his head, but the Elephant had not. Tortoise bet the Elephant that he could jump over the Elephant’s head. Elephant accepted, and the next day Tortoise stood on one side of the Elephant. He jumped and the Elephant turned his head, on the other side a tortoise was landing. The Elephant was humbled and from then on paid attention when he walked to not step on Tortoise. What the elephant did not know was that Tortoise had asked another of his tortoise friends to stand on the other side and jump with him, so he would be landing when the Elephant turned to look.
Activity: Rock pets. Since, Tortoise was often mistaken for a rock, let the children paint rocks to look like Tortoises.
Adaptation: This activity can be done hand-over-hand.
Criteria: The book fits with the “animals found at a zoo” category.

31. The Butterfly Alphabet by Jell B. Sandved.
August
Animal: Rare and often un-discussed animals
Color: Tan
Letter: S
Themes: Create and Discover, with a focus on science and math

1. *First Day Jitters* by Julie Danneberg.
   **Summary:** It is Sarah Jane Hartwell’s first day at a new school and she is pretty nervous. But, with a great deal of coaxing, she gets there. After meeting her class, she can tell that it is going to be an awesome year! (The reader does not find out until the last page that she is the teacher.)
   **Activity:** Talk about how the kids felt on the first day of school, or a new experience. Discuss how it is normal to be nervous in new situations, but that does not mean you should never do anything new.
   **Adaptation:** This activity can be used for multiple level learners.
   **Criteria:** A lot of kids have first day jitters, and it helps to know that they are not the only ones who feel that way, even the teachers nervous. Use this one for the first week of school.

2. *Gopher Up Your Sleeve* by Tony Johnson.
   **Summary:** This is a collection of humorous poetry written about not so common animals.
   **Activity:** Chose some of the language rich passages and help the children illustrate what they mean. Use a children’s dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopedia, the internet, etc. Let the children then chose an animal and write a poem about that animal, it need not rhyme.
   **Adaptation:** Work together on looking up the meanings as well as writing more poems.
   **Criteria:** It fits with rarely talked about animals, and the language is very rich.

3. *Armadillo Tatletale* by Helen Ketteman.
   **Summary:** The animals disliked armadillo for telling tales, so they banned him from the water hole. He could tell tales so well because his ears were huge and heard everything. However, since his ears were so long they got in the way constantly, when walking, drinking, and all sorts of other activities. One day he told an animal what the alligator had said about it. When the alligator found out she fixed his ears so that they were tiny! No longer did he eavesdrop and tell tales, but now he could also run fast and get to the fresh water at the water hole.
   **Activity:** Talk about eavesdropping, and how it fells on both sides. What it feels like to have someone listen in (not good) and how it feels to eavesdrop (hopefully guilty).
   **Adaptation:** This activity is important for all levels of learners.
Criteria: The armadillo is not often talked about in classes, and the book tells a good message about eavesdropping: do not do it.

   
   **Summary:** A boy learns from his grandfather about protecting the swamp and the alligators there. The boy takes over the responsibility of protecting the gators from the poachers, becoming the keeper of the swamp.
   
   **Activity:** Fancy Letter “S.” Let the kids draw and decorate a “S.” (Glue on suggestions: spaghetti, sparkles, sunflower seeds.)
   
   **Adaptation:** Draw the letter for the kids.
   
   **Criteria:** This book fits with the animals of the month and many aspects could be further discussed: from alligator information to learning about the environment of the swamp.

   
   **Summary:** Tortuga, a tortoise, is caught in a storm and blown to sea. Once she finally lands on an island, she lays her eggs. But birds attack her nest and she must flee for her life. After leaving, she searches the island for another tortoise. Unable to find one she ends up where she began, feeling lonely and sad. Then she hears something, it is baby tortoises, some of her eggs made it through the bird attack and are headed out to sea.
   
   **Activity:** Hide eggs around the room, made from construction paper, with facts about tortoises written on them. Let the children find them and bring them back to the “nest” (have the children sit in a circle, or on a blanket) and take turns reading and talking about the facts.
   
   **Adaptation:** Work in pairs or have the eggs on the children’s desks and let them bring them to the circle.
   
   **Criteria:** The animal fits with the less discussed animals; and the cycle of life, as well as the tortoise laying eggs and them hatching, are science concepts.

6. *Peter’s Place* by Sally Grindley.
   
   **Summary:** Peter plays and explores on a shore so much that some of the animals have come to know him and trust him. When an oil tanker crashes offshore, many animals are hurt and killed. But Peter helps a team of rescuers clean the shore. After much time, the beach begins to look more like Peter’s place used to, but underneath the sea, are still black scars (destruction caused by the oil spill).
   
   **Activity:** Discuss pollution and disasters. Explain that some can be prevented and some cannot. But both need people to help clean up.
   
   **Adaptation:** This activity can include pictures, other books, and internet resources to show examples and groups that help in such circumstances.
   
   **Criteria:** The book could be used to discuss pollution and environmental hazards, which is an issue in science, part of the month’s theme.

**Summary:** A boy cannot sleep one night while his mother is away. He goes outside to count stars. His father cannot sleep either, and goes outside only to find his son. They drive in search of some place to better see the stars. After finding a place and stopping, they end up falling asleep under the stars. They go home in the morning.

**Activity:** Use stamps (or cotton swabs) dipped in yellow paint to make stars on black paper. Let the children count their stars and their friends’ stars.

**Adaptation:** Pre-stamp stars in patterns (such as the Big Dipper or Orion) and write numbers next to the stars, let the children connect the stars.

**Criteria:** The book deals with discovery (a science concept) and the vast, uncountable, number of stars.

8. Crab Moon by Ruth Horwitz.

**Summary:** Daniel goes out on the beach at night with his mother to watch the horseshoe crabs lay their eggs. The next morning, Daniel finds a lost crab and helps him return to the sea. The back of the book has information about horseshoe crabs.

**Activity:** Horseshoe crab walk. Hide horseshoe crabs around the room and let the students find them and return them to the beach (a box lined with light brown construction paper). On the back of the crabs you can write facts and discuss them with the children as they find and return the crabs.

**Adaptation:** Work in pairs and make sure to include multisensory information about the crabs.

**Criteria:** The book deals with the life cycle of a seldom discussed animal, whose population numbers are decreasing rapidly.

9. Maria’s Comet by Deborah Hopkins.

**Summary:** Maria’s father is an astronomer, who sweeps the sky with his telescope. Maria sweeps the floors of her house and dreams of doing what her father does. She tells stories of exploration with her brother Andrew, until he goes off to explore the sea. Finally, she gets the courage to ask her father if she may go up on the roof with him. He lets her, and together they look at the stars and moon, and comets.

**Activity:** Everyone’s a star! Cut out large yellow stars (from two layers of construction paper or yellow poster board). On one side let the children draw a self-portrait and write their name, on the other have them draw a job they might like to do when they grow up and write a sentence about it.

**Adaptation:** Let the child dictate the sentence, use a photo for the child’s picture, cut out magazine pictures for the jobs.

**Criteria:** It relates to science, the month’s theme, and deals with discovery: scientific and self, in how Maria actualizes what she longs to do.

**Summary:** (This is a different version of The *Three Billy Goats Gruff.*) The three armadillo sisters Lilly, Jilly, and Dilly are very unique. One night they decide to go dancing. On their way, they meet a coyote, who wants to eat them. As they pass the coyote one at a time, each armadillo tells the coyote to wait for her sister, as she is bigger. When Dilly, the last armadillo comes along, she talks with the coyote, named Tallula. Dilly invites Tallula to come dancing with them. The four gals have a splendid night out together.

**Activity:** Discuss cause and effect. Talk about the cause of each sister asking the Tallula to wait, and the effect that she waited. Then talk about the final cause and effect, since Tallula waited and Dilly talked with her, they are now friends. Make up another scene, with the cause of “Since they went to the party…” Let the kids draw and write the effect.

**Adaptation:** Assist the children with writing and model a possible outcome (such as they dance the night away as friends).

**Criteria:** The book deals with an unusual animal in a humorous manner.


**Summary:** Private I. Guana gets a call from Liz, the lizard, about her missing husband, a chameleon named Leon. Private I. Guana makes posters and searches the town. After a long and unsuccessful day, he stops in at the Lizard Lounge to grab something to eat. He stays for the show and is very impressed by the lead singer. After the show he goes backstage to get an autograph from the lead singer. By mistake, he hands the singer a photo of Leon. The singer changes colors. The singer is Leon. He was trying to show his wife that he is not boring. Later, the wife watches his shows as head chef for the lizard lounge.

**Activity:** Become Word Detectives. Search for words (using a magnifying glass is fun) in the book that begin with “S,” the letter of the month, then look around the room for more “S” words. The kids can keep a list in a special notebook, or they can be added to the word wall.

**Adaptation:** Work in pairs and put out lots of relevant “S” words.

**Criteria:** The book is a fun mystery about a rarely discussed reptile.

12. *Hurricane!* by Patricia Lakin.

**Summary:** Every year, a girl and her father spend August in a cottage on the beach. On the radio, they hear that a hurricane is coming. The girl asks what they need to do. The father tells her about tying everything down or moving it inside. The next day they work hard getting everything ready. Rain begins to fall and the winds begin to blow. From inside, they watch the hurricane. After it passes, they go out to clean up, rebuild, and they even plant a new tree.

**Activity:** Use the information in the back of the book to talk about hurricanes.

**Adaptation:** This discussion can be geared to the level of the children.

**Criteria:** Hurricanes are a part of nature, and fit in with the theme of science.

**Summary:** As rain fell on a city, town, and forest, different people experience it in different ways. A boy and his sister play in it in the forest. A school teacher paints a picture of how it looks out her window. A man recalls walking in the rain as a boy. An older man takes off his water-spotted spectacles and looks up at a bright, blurry world.

**Activity:** Let the children describe rain as they experience it. Encourage them to describe it using all of their senses. Adjectives that describe rain can be written to look like the word, for instance “drip” can be written in blue with little dots under it for the drips coming off, or soggy can be drawn with wavy-line letters.

**Adaptation:** Provide opportunities to play with water to help with the describing of rain, include a watering cam, a spray mist bottle, etc.

**Criteria:** Rain can be discussed from a scientific point of view.


**Summary:** Old Cricket’s wife asks him to fix the roof, but he does not want to. So, he makes up a story about a crick in his knee and goes off to see the doctor about it. Along the way, he sees other animals and has to continue his story, the animals give him things to heal him. Before reaching the doctor’s, a crow chases him. He escaped using the gifts he received from the other animals.

**Activity:** Out of construction paper let the children make sacks (like Old Cricket carried in the book). Have them draw on pictures of what their friends and family would give them if they were off to the doctor’s.

**Adaptation:** Use magazines to cut pictures out of.

**Criteria:** The book is about a not often discussed animal.

15. *Pigs on a Blanket: Fun with Math and Time* by Alex Axelrod.

**Summary:** The Pig family decided to go to the beach. Each had to get ready, then they had to wait on a train, needed directions, and had to wait 30 minutes before swimming. By the time they were ready to swim, it was time for the beach to close!

**Activity:** Using a large clock. Let the children move the hands as the story is being read, to demonstrate the times from the book while learning about time.

**Adaptation:** Demonstrate the times on the clock for the children to follow along with throughout the book.

**Criteria:** The story is funny and has lots of time (math) in it.


**Summary:** Jim and Andy are brothers and their Dad gives tours of autumn in New England. Jim and Andy make fun of the people, who think everything is just so beautiful. They are looking up at the sky one night and they see nature’s beauty.
Activity: Look for beauty in the day sky as well. Go outside and look up at the sky, come back in and let the children draw what they saw and write about why it was beautiful.

Adaptation: Assist the children with the writing.

Criteria: The book deals with nature, a big part of science, and shows that beauty is all around, as well as not to judge others because you might see or do things the same way as they do.


Summary: A porcupine named Cushion is lonely, so lonely that he wrote a song. He meets many potential wives, but after singing to them he has to keep looking. This continues until he meets Barbara, a hedgehog who has the same problem. She is lonely too. They turn out to make a good pair.

Activity: Discuss the feeling of being lonely, talk about when you were lonely and how you fixed it. Draw a picture, fold a piece of paper in half and on one side draw how you feel when you are lonely, and on the other side how you feel when you find someone to be with.

Adaptation: This activity works well for multiple levels of learners.

Criteria: Using a rarely discussed animal, the book shows that sometimes it just takes someone similar to yourself to understand you and be a good friend.


Summary: Icarus is a pig who knows that pigs do not fly, but it is his dream to fly. The town laughs at his idea, but he tries anyhow. He builds wings and takes flight. His flight goes well, until he gets too close to the sun and his wings begin to melt. When he crashes back to earth, the town animals consider him amazing. Icarus sets his sights higher after this adventure, now he wants to make it to the moon.

Activity: Learn about melting. Melt cheese in a microwave and then let the kids eat it by dipping chips or crackers into it (remember to use separate bowls for dipping).

Adaptation: Describe the process using as many senses as possible.

Criteria: The idea of having an idea and building something and trying it follows the general idea of the scientific method. Also, the book shows that you should go after your dreams no matter what others think.


Summary: A boy and his father are spending some time up north. The father falls asleep by the fire, but the boy stays awake because he is nervous. He hears a noise and checks outside. He peeks out the door and sees a wild cat, a lynx! It steps inside and grows, and grows, and grows, until its whiskers touch the walls. The boy climbs onto its back and they go out into the night. They explore through the mountains and even jump over the moon. The lynx jumps back to
earth, the boy climbs down off its back, and the lynx returns to its normal size. The boy goes back into the cabin, curls up and falls asleep by the fire.

**Activity:** Make a chart to compare a lynx to a house cat.
**Adaptation:** Use pictures.
**Criteria:** The book deals with a not often discussed animal.

20. *Mouse Tells the Time* by Nicola Moon.

**Summary:** One day Mouse asked Mr. Hedgehog how to tell time. Mr. Hedgehog told mouse how he uses the sky: if it is light: it is day, if it is dark: it is night. That was not enough for Mouse, so he asked Squirrel. Squirrel used shadows, the Rabbit twins used dandelions, and Grandma Mole used an hourglass. Mouse goes home and asks his mother, who tells him it is dinner time. But, she will show him how to use a clock tomorrow.

**Activity:** Throughout the day, make note of the time when you do activities. Talk about them in generic terms (such as early morning, after lunch, etc.) as well as exact times (9:36, 12:24, etc.)

**Adaptation:** Keep a list of the times by pictures of the activities for better comprehension.

**Criteria:** It relates to the math theme for the month, and shows that it is helpful to know the hour, not just day or night.


**Summary:** Wombat loves to dig and think. One day, he digs a deep hole and sits at the bottom thinking. When he comes out he cannot find his mother anywhere. He sets out to look for her. Along the way, he meets other animals who all seem able to do more things, which are more important too, than he can. Finally, he climbs a tall hill to look for his mother. At the top he sees fire coming. So he thinks, and he knows what to do. He digs a deep, deep hole. It is big enough to rescue all of the animals, as they cannot outrun or hide from the fire. When they are safe they thank him, and help him find his mother. The mother wombat hugs her son.

**Activity:** Let the class act out a version of the story. They can ask each other what the other can do, and then praise the ability with “That’s something!” (Instead of “that’s nothing!” as the book says.)

**Adaptation:** In a circle, let every child act out something they can do, and praise their ability.

**Criteria:** The book talks about a rare animal plus that they can do.


**Summary:** Albert and Henry worked hard to build a new invention. There was a big problem when it was finished: it made pollution. Albert had solutions, such as burying the pollution in the ground or putting it in the ocean. But each “solution”
brought along its own problems. In the end they turn the machine off because they cannot let the pollution destroy the environment.

**Activity:** Discuss pollution and how each of us can help. Draw reminder pictures to put up around the room or building, such as: Recycle, Reuse, etc.

**Second Activity:** Demonstrate how pollutants are absorbed into the ground and plants by dropping food coloring on sugar cubes or into the water a flower is in.

**Adaptation:** Work in pairs or small groups.

**Criteria:** The book can be used to introduce a serious science, and societal, problem: pollution.

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**Summary:** Noko, the porcupine, lives with his friend Takadu, the aardvark. Takadu is afraid of a Night Monster. Every night Noko has to read to him from *Farmer's Weekly* in order for him to fall asleep. One day Noko has a plan and puts it into action the night of a full moon. Noko pretends like he has been captured by the Night Monster. The Night Monster is actually some animals helping him. Takadu goes to help Noko and finds that it is all pretend. At first, Takadu is angry with Noko, but then he realizes how brave he was and that the Night Monster is not real.

**Activity:** Make Class Monsters. Have each child draw a monster that has at least three parts: a head, a middle body and a back end with a tail. Then ask them to cut the pictures and connect different parts to create scary, or at least goofy, looking creatures.

**Adaptation:** Let the children look through magazines and find pictures of animals that can be combined to form new creatures.

**Criteria:** The story’s real characters are not often talked about animals.

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24. *Aunt Minnie and the Twister* by Mary Skillings Prigger.

**Summary:** Aunt Minnie and her nine nieces and nephews live on a farm in Kansas. They all help with chores and live a busy, but simple life. Some of the younger ones are scared to go down into the cellar. But when Aunt Minnie rings the bell because she sees a twister coming, they all take shelter there. When it is over, they come up and find their house is now facing the opposite direction as before. So, there is even more work to be done, but they are still together.

**Activity:** Make your own tornado. Use a cleaned out 2-liter soda bottle, water, food coloring (optional), and salt (between 2-4 tablespoons); close bottle, and swirl.

**Adaptation:** Talk about how a tornado affects the land, people, and animals after it comes through.

**Criteria:** Tornadoes are a part of science and nature.

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25. *Sassafras* by Audrey Penn.
Summary: Sassafras is a little skunk who wants to play with the other forest animals. But, he is afraid that he will stink up the entire forest. He talks to Poppy, an older skunk, who explains that a skunk’s scent is its protection. All of the animals have a form of protection. Elsewhere, Gray Fox is new to the forest and feeling down. Sassafras befriends her and together they join the other animals in play.

Activity: Discuss a time when the children wanted to get involved but did not. (These could include examples such as making new friends, joining a team, etc.) Talk about how to become involved and role play the situations.

Adaptation: Model and suggest roles and situations.

Criteria: The book’s main character is a not often discussed animal, and it shoes that it is ok to be different, and everyone has a purpose.

26. Sydney’s Star by Peter H. Reynolds.

Summary: Sydney was an inventor. One day, she was observing the beauty of stars and decided to build a remote controlled star. It turned out nicely, and she took it to a science fair. During her demonstration, the star took off on its own. Sydney was sad and walked home alone along the shore. All of a sudden, Sydney saw her star guiding a ship. She was very pleased, especially to see her star sparkling in the sky helping.

Activity: Cut out a star from black paper. Draw designs (perhaps the letters of the month) with glue and sprinkle with glitter for a dazzling effect. Hang from strings on the ceiling to create a night sky indoors.

Adaptation: Assist the children with cutting the stars out.

Criteria: It fits with the science them as it deals with discovery and a science fair.

27. Epossumondas by Coleen Salley.

Summary: Epossumondas is a young opossum, who is loved deeply by his Aunt and Mother. They give him gifts and directions of how to take care of the gifts. But, Epossumoundas takes the directions literally and runs into trouble. It is a silly, story with a happy ending. (It is a folktale called a noodle-head story, in which mishaps occur but are not cause deliberately. There is information in the back of the book about this and other types of fairy tales.)

Activity: Fix the mishaps. Let the children work in pairs to fix the situations, one can draw what happened in the book, and the other can draw how it could have been prevented by not taking the directions literally. Then write sentences to go with the drawings, an adult may want to help.

Adaptation: Work as a group, find a scene in the book, talk about it; then talk about how it could have been prevented.

Criteria: The book’s characters are not often discussed animals.

28. Weslandia by Paul Fleischman.
**Summary:** Wesley did not fit in at school, and even his parents were concerned. The last week of school, his class learned about civilizations. As a summer project, Wesley created his own civilization in his backyard. He had a staple food, made clothes, created a language and an alphabet. Soon, the neighborhood kids became curious. So, Wesley let them be involved in little ways. It was one great summer, and by the beginning of school, he no longer had a shortage of friends.

**Activity:** Pick out the children's favorite aspects of our civilization. Let each child draw one characteristic, and discuss how all features come together to form our culture.

**Adaptation:** Suggest some categories and guide the children to pick their favorite from each, so all the attributes will be covered.

**Criteria:** The book looks at many of the components of a civilization, which relates to social studies or sciences.

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**Summary:** Ling Ling is the biggest and most beautiful panda at the zoo. Many people come to see her everyday. She loves her life and is looking forward to her friends coming for her birthday party. While waiting for the sloth to arrive, the Owl said that the black patches under Ling Ling's eyes made her look sad. Ling Ling was troubled and the next day painted the patches white. None of her friends would come by, because they thought a monster was living in her den. Ling Ling cried. The tears washed the paint off, and her friends came back. They were so glad to see her that Ling Ling realized they loved her just the way she was.

**Activity:** Discuss how each child is beautiful just the way they are. Let them share embarrassing moments when they did not feel beautiful or special, but in the end were still special and wonderful.

**Adaptation:** Model the activity.

**Criteria:** The panda is not often talked about, which fits with the month's animal component.

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30. *Camels Don't Ski* by Francesca Simon.

**Summary:** Calamity is a camel who thinks the desert is too hot and her loads to carry are always too heavy. So, she takes a holiday up north to go snow skiing. There she starts out having a wonderful time. But it is just too cold for her and the loads are even heavier with all of the snow on top. When she goes home, the sand is not too hot any longer and the loads are not too heavy either.

**Activity:** Use a thermometer to record the temperature (for about a week, indoors and/or outdoors), then show average desert and artic temperatures, then compare.

**Adaptation:** Measure specific temperatures all at once, such as in the freezer, by an oven, in the room, and outdoors.

**Criteria:** The book's main character is not often studied, and telling temperature is a fun science skill.
1. *What's Wrong With Timmy?* by Maria Shriver.

**Summary:** Eight year old Katie and her mother go to a park where Katie notices Timmy, who acts and looks different. Katie is unsure about interacting with him. Her mother introduces the children. They form a special relationship, and Katie finds that there is nothing wrong with Timmy. *Make sure to let the kids ask any questions they have after reading this book!*

**Activity:** Talk about being different, and those with disabilities. To help the children realize that everyone is unique: have them fold a piece of paper down the middle, on one half write or draw something that is difficult for them, on the other they should write or draw something that they are good at. As a group, share the abilities and “disabilities.”

**Adaptation:** This can be done with most kids, even if they cannot write or draw it well, they can talk about what they can and cannot do well.

**Criteria:** It is very important to understand that people are different and to accept others. This book deals with people with disabilities from a child’s perspective. It also shows that it is alright to ask questions.

2. *Dear Annie* by Judith Casey.

**Summary:** Grandpa begins writing letters to Annie when she is born, at first by sending them through Catherine (Annie’s mom.) Annie’s mom writes letters back telling what Annie is doing and they mail the letters together. As Annie grows up, she takes the letters to be mailed and eventually writes the letters herself too. For show-and-tell at school, Annie takes in her letters. The class likes the idea so much that they get pen pals.

**Activity:** Let the children choose someone special to write a letter to. They may want to add illustrations or something special. Help with the address and mailing of the letter.

**Adaptation:** Let the child dictate what they want to write, and write it out so the child can copy it or type it on a computer. Still encourage the child to add drawings.

**Criteria:** The book shows how a class learned from Annie about how special and fun letter writing can be, all because a grandpa loved and took the time to write to his granddaughter.


**Summary:** Jamaica and Brianna, her friend, have a substitute teacher, Mrs. Duval, for one week. Jamaica found the hidden object on the first day, read well,
and wanted to do everything perfectly. She cheated on the spelling test in order to do well. But she felt so guilty about it, that she went and told Mrs. Duval. The teacher explained that all of her students are special, and as long as they try their best it does not matter if they are perfect.

**Activity:** Like the Hidden Object Game in the book, hide vocabulary words from the story around the room. As the children find them, let them choose a prize and help them tell the class what the word is and what it means.

**Adaptation:** Photocopy a few pages from the book, and do a character search or object search, where the child circles the specified character or object.

**Criteria:** The book has an excellent message: you don’t have to be perfect, but it is best to be honest!

   **Summary:** This is a rhyming story of where parents and grandparents are from, nationalities.
   **Activity:** Encourage the children to ask their parents about their relatives and nationalities. Then, locate the countries on a map.
   **Adaptation:** Assist the children in finding the countries on a map.
   **Criteria:** The book is filled with rich language and the children are learning about their past from their parents and grandparents.

5. *Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf* by Lois Ehlert.
   **Summary:** A child describes the process his tree has taken from a seed to a full tree and why he likes it.
   **Activity:** Take a nature walk to find many different colored leaves.
   **Adaptation:** While collecting leaves and talking about their various colors, also talk about other qualities: such as how they feel, sound, and smell.
   **Criteria:** The book is filled with facts, pictures, and descriptive language to learn about trees. Also, the book fits in well with the current season.

   **Summary:** Lady Lupin teaches her puppies some proper etiquette, so they will be ready to go out into society. They practice everything from table manners to writing thank you notes.
   **Activity:** Have a min-dinner party. Help the children to set the table properly, eat politely, pass dishes, and request properly.
   **Second Activity:** Go through the book and look for the “L” words, there are many of them. Let each child search a page or two.
   **Adaptation:** Assist the children in finding the “L” words.
   **Criteria:** The book is filled with “L” words, and Lady Lupin’s puppies (hopefully as well as the kids) learn about manners.

**Summary:** Tanya loved listening to her Grandmother telling her stories from the patchwork quilt's fabric. When Grandmother becomes ill, Tanya finishes the quilt they had begun. As Grandmother gets better, she joins back in on the quilt and sews in the last patch. On the last square, she stitched a message to Tanya that the quilt is with love from Grandma and Mamma.

**Activity:** Fancy letter “Q.” Talk about “Q” as in “quilt.” Glue scraps of paper (or fabric) in the shape of a “Q.”

**Adaptation:** Pre-outline the letter “Q.”

**Criteria:** The book deals with the theme of learning from each other, Mamma learns the importance of the quilt and Tanya learns stories from the past. Plus, it has a word with the letter of the month as a main element of the story.

8. *My Mother's Pearls* by Catherine Myler Fruisen.

**Summary:** A young girl loves getting dressed up with her mother, especially when her mother wears the family pearls. The mother tells the stories of how the pearls have been passed down from mother to daughter through the family.

**Activity:** Act out a tangible pass down. Allow the kids to line up and pass an object down the line, each can tell something about the object: perhaps an adjective about it (shiny, new, etc.) or something they would do with it.

**Adaptation:** This can be done with most kids, choose an object they can describe or know about.

**Criteria:** The book shows how a young girl learns about her family history from her mother.


**Summary:** A boy goes out with his father on the fishing boat. The boy learns to fish, just as his father did from the boy's grandfather. The boy wishes he could meet his grandfather someday. His grandfather sailed to the new land where they live now, 20 years ago. After raising his family in America, went back to his home in Asia.

**Activity:** Fish Bowl Math. Print numerals or sets of dots on small plastic fish with magnets. Place the fish in a clean bowl or container. The children can use a small stick with a string and a magnet attached to pull out a fish and count the dots or say the numeral. (For a more advanced game, pull out two or more fish and add them together.)

**Adaptation:** Take the fish out with hand, or use lower numbers/dots.

**Criteria:** The book shows a boy learning many things from his father: from how to fish to their family's history.


**Summary:** Jackie has an Uncle Roy, who can do magic. She always likes it when he comes over. One time he does not come to grandma's house. She lies
down and takes a nap in the coat room. When she wakes up, she sees Uncle Magic’s rabbit lying next to her. But when she picks it up, it is only a piece of cloth. Uncle Magic shows up and teaches her that the magic is in her, she just has to believe in it.

**Activity:** Discuss believing in yourself. Let each child share something they are good at. Make a group list of the talents of the children. These can be written one to a page and turned into a book, let the kids illustrate their own.

**Adaptation:** Use a sentence starter, such as “I am good at____.”

**Criteria:** The girl in the book learned from her uncle that sometimes you make things true by believing in them.

11. *Andrew Jessup* by Nette Hutton.

**Summary:** Last year, Andrew Jessup lived next door. He and the narrator, who was also his best friend, did lots of fun things together: they washed the dog, looked at stamp collections, and went to the zoo. Now, Andrew has moved out and Madeleine Havenblower has moved in. She does not start out doing the same things, but in time she becomes the narrator’s new best friend. Andrew Jessup is still the far away best friend though.

**Activity:** Write a sentence and draw a picture of what you would do if you moved into Andrew Jessup’s old house to show that you would be a good friend. (Great for talking about the social skills needed for friendships.)

**Adaptation:** Assist with the sentence writing.

**Criteria:** The book deals with the theme of learning from each other in how the girl learns her new neighbor has good traits too, just like Andrew Jessup did.


**Summary:** One evening, Sophie tells her Grandmother that she does not like the wind. Grandmother explains that the wind is just an old lady doing her job. The next morning they take a walk. As they go along, they pick up grass, a feather, and a shell. At the top of a hill, Grandma shows Sophie how to build a Blow Away Soon. This time Sophie does not mind the wind blowing. Even though the wind blows away some things, she can keep those that are important, like her Grandmother.

**Activity:** Make a Blow Away Soon and Keep picture. Fold a large piece of paper in half, on the left side write “Blow Away Soon” and on the right side “Keep.” Let the children draw pictures of what can blow away and what they want to keep. Maybe have sticks, grass, and some feathers that the students can glue onto the Blow Away side, like in the book.

**Adaptation:** Provide magazines, newspapers, and a computer to get pictures from.

**Criteria:** The book shows a granddaughter learning from her beloved grandmother.
13. *Quinnie Blue* by Dinah Johnson.

**Summary:** Hattie Lottie Annie Quinnie Blue is named after her grandmother. The family history has been passed down through the years, and now the young Quinnie Blue is asking her grandmother all about her life. The young girl is glad she was named after her grandmother.

**Activity:** Make an “All About Me” poster. Let the children use a large piece of paper to draw a self-portrait, write their names, and write and/or draw some things they do that they would tell their grandchildren some day.

**Adaptation:** Assist the children in writing, or let them type out the sentences on a computer.

**Criteria:** It talks about a young girl learning about her family’s past.


**Summary:** When Billy’s mother tells him she is leaving him in his grandma’s hands, he sees old, rough, hands. At first, he misses his mother and is not excited about living in the country, doing chores with his grandma. But, she takes good care of him and they form a deep bond. When Billy’s mother comes back, he has a hard time leaving grandma.

**Activity:** Trace the children’s hands. On one hand have them draw something they like to do with their grandmother, a relative, or a friend. On the other hand, write a sentence about the picture.

**Adaptation:** Let the child dictate and then copy, by hand or on computer, the sentence(s).

**Criteria:** Billy learns what it is like to be loved and cared for, by his grandma.

15. *Papa’s Stories* by Dolores Johnson.

**Summary:** Every evening before dinner time, Kari picked out a book and her Papa read it to her. Some nights, Mama would sit with them too. Each time Papa reads a story, it changes a little bit, that is the part Kari loves the most. Until she tells a friend, the friend makes fun of her. Papa can not read, he is just making up the stories. Kari asks her mother about it, and she tells Kari to ask her Papa about it, because he really does love her. That night, he tells her that he did not learn to read as a child. But he has since then, since he wanted to be able to read stories to her. Kari loves him so much and after he reads the story to her word for word, she asks him to “read” it his way.

**Activity:** Make up stories from favorite books. Let the children bring books they love and tell the story, not read it word for word. This will help with story comprehension as well as a being a fun response to the reading.

**Adaptation:** Let the children take turns talking about pages from this book after re-reading it.

**Criteria:** Kari’s dad learns to read for her, demonstrating kindness.

**Summary:** Ella’s Grandma has the loudest, happiest laugh; yet, Ella is always serious. One day, Grandma slips Ella a key and tells her to bundle up (it is winter), and go to the Summer House out back. There, Ella discovers happiness.

**Activity:** What Makes You Smile House: Fold a large piece of construction paper in half, open it and fold the two sides in to meet the middle. Then cut off the top two outer points to make the shape of a roof of a house. Let the children color the front to look like a house (perhaps theirs) and inside have them draw things that make them smile. They can write sentences about the inside illustrations.

**Adaptation:** Use stamps of flowers, or other items (flowers would closely relate with the story as it the summer house is a greenhouse) inside.

**Criteria:** In a season where the warmth of summer is quickly leaving, this brings about a warm smile, and the grandmother is showing her granddaughter kindness by helping her find happiness.


**Summary:** Maggie fishes with her Great Uncle Ezra. She hopes to catch a bigger fish than her brother. While fishing, she is always a bit fearful of Thatch, the old bear in the woods. When she finally catches a whopper of a fish, she must throw it to Thatch to rescue her Uncle. But he will always remember her bravery, and the size of that fish!

**Activity:** Rhyming with Fish: Use magnetic letters to spell out fish, talk about the beginning sound of “F.” Demonstrate by removing the letter “f” how to change the word, show many examples (wish, dish, swish, etc.) Draw an outline of a fish on many colors of construction paper. Let each child pick a color and cut the fish out. Somewhere on the fish, write “fish,” then let the children come up with words that rhyme with “fish” and write them all over the fish. (The children can always flip the fish over and pick another word and write as many words as they can that rhyme with that.)

**Adaptation:** Let the children copy the word “fish” and any words that rhyme with it that the group thought of. They are still getting exposure to rhyming words.

**Criteria:** Through the bond of love, a great-niece shows kindness for her Great Uncle when she saves him.


**Summary:** Walter’s father tells him again to stop jumping on the bed and go to sleep. That night he dreams about his bed falling through his ceiling and many other ceilings, taking the people living under him with it, and crashing into the basement. In his dream, this all happens because he had been jumping too much on the bed.
Activity: Fancy letter “Y,” for how Walter’s father communicated with him: yelled. Let each child draw a large “L” and decorate it with things that begin with “L” (such as lima beans, licorice, lady bug stickers, etc.)
Adaptation: Draw the letter for the children.
Criteria: Even if it is all a dream, Walter learns for himself one reason why it is not a good idea to jump on the bed. (This fits in with the month’s theme of learning.)

19. *You’re a Good Sport Miss Malarkey* by Judy Finchler and Kevin O’Malley.
**Summary:** Miss Malarkey takes over an elementary soccer team. Even though she sees the good in all of the kids and knows that winning is not everything, the parents do not. They cause so many problems a game has to be cancelled. The league changes its name to SILENT (Soccer Instruction League, Elementary Neighborhood Teams.) The only one yelling after that is Miss Malarkey, and she is yelling “Have Fun!”
**Activity:** Play soccer!
**Adaptation:** Let the children kick a soccer ball around, or pass it with their hands to get the idea.
**Criteria:** The book demonstrates that winning is not everything and we must be kind to one another.

**Summary:** A little girl gets the Hiccups. She tries suggestions from her whole family. Grandma suggests a rhyme, her mom suggests a bag over her head, her dad suggests for her to stand on her cranium, etc. Finally, grandma has them all say a rhyme three times. The girl’s Hiccups are gone after they do so! But now the rest of the family has them.
**Activity:** Learn the rhyme (to cure Hiccups, if anyone in the group gets them).
**Adaptation:** Learn how to sign the rhyme, signs will need to be made up in order to avoid spelling out “Hiccup” and “Snickup” every time.
**Criteria:** Each individual in the book wants to share their knowledge with the little girl, so the book fits with the theme of learning from each other.

**Summary:** Lauren McGill loves pickles! Her room is decorated with them and she even dresses to look like one. When her class goes to a pickle factory, an experiment has gone wrong and it is raining pickles. Luckily, Lauren knows how to package them and teaches her class how to. She saved the day. But now that everyone likes pickles, she is not so interested in them. The next day, she feels sick and stays home from school. Her class comes by and awards her a Pickle Queen Plaque. She decides to give back to the community by putting together a Pickle Museum with all of her old pickle memorabilia.
Activity: Have a pickle party and try a variety of pickles. Talk about their color, taste, texture, and smell.
Adaptation: Everyone can take part in a pickle party in some way.
Criteria: The book deals with learning, the classmates learn about pickle packing and Lauren learns about giving back.

22. *Princess Alopecia* by Yaacov Peterseil.

Summary: Princess Alopecia is not really a princess, but her mother and father call her that. She has such long and beautiful hair that she always gets the lead role of Rapunzel in Follicle Town’s annual play. One morning she wakes up and finds a piece of hair on her pillow, and a tiny bald spot. She is too embarrassed to tell anyone. But, after the same thing happens the next night, she shows her mother. Mother suggests that Alo, her nickname, wears a hat to school and makes an appointment with a doctor. The doctor cannot fix the problem and is not sure why she is losing her hair. Alo’s mother talks to Mrs. Kinder, Alo’s teacher, and Mrs. Kinder talks to the class. When Alo gets to school, all of her classmates are wearing hats just like she is. They give her a box with all of their hair made into a wig. She can still be the star of the play and let down “her” hair, knowing her friends care about her!

Activity: Discuss the book and what Alopecia is. The book gives information about the disease and dealing with issues you did not have a choice in.
Adaptation: This activity would be valuable for all children.
Criteria: Not only is it possible you or a child will meet someone with Alopecia, but the book is also about changes you cannot control and how to react to them.

23. *Ordinary Mary’s Extraordinary Deed* by Emily Pearson.

Summary: Ordinary Mary was just that: ordinary. But, she changed the world. One ordinary day she saw some berries growing. She picked a huge bowl full of them and left them on Mrs. Bishop’s porch. Mrs. Bishop made blueberry muffins with them, and gave five people each a plate of muffins. From there, the kindness spiraled onward, as each muffin recipient continued the chain.

Activity: Make blueberry muffins to give to teachers, staff, neighbors, whoever is around that could use some kindness.

Adaptation: Due to the varying levels of participation, this activity will work for most levels of learners by directing questions or tasks to appropriate children.
Criteria: The book deals with kindness and passing it on.

24. *Because Brian Hugged His Mother* by David L. Rice.

Summary: Brian woke up in a great mood. He ran into the kitchen and hugged his mother. That hug put her in a good mood too. So, she made her children’s favorite breakfast. Joanna, Brian’s sister, felt loved, so she helped her teacher. He felt cared about and let his class make a Birthday banner for the Principal.
From that point, the good mood just kept on going. This went full circle when Brian’s dad spent an extra hour before bed reading to Brian.

**Activity:** Make a Plot chart, in a circle, to show the order of events, and how the kindness came back around. Draw a huge circle and help the children fill in points on the circle with events from the story.

**Adaptation:** Have pictures with captions premade and let the children work together to put them in the correct order.

**Criteria:** The book demonstrates that kindness can be passed to many people by simple deeds of thoughtfulness.


**Summary:** Ned realized that show-and-tell was tomorrow and he had nothing cool to show. So, he built “Ned’s Mix-Up Ray,” which makes normal stuff weird. He changes a lot of things and people, such as his Aunt into a tuna fish and the bus into a sub. The Mix-Up ray is causing quite a few problems. So, Ned invents an Un-Mix-Up Spray and restores life to normal.

**Activity:** Before reading the book, let the children bring in something for show-and-tell.

**Adaptation:** Let the children find items in the room to show-and-tell about.

**Criteria:** The main character learns to be careful because everything has consequences.

26. *Mr. Lincoln’s Way* by Patricia Polacco.

**Summary:** Mr. Lincoln is the coolest principal ever! Everyone liked him, that is everyone except Eugene Esterhaue, or “Mean Gene,” as the kids called him. Mean Gene was a bully. But Mr. Lincoln believed in him. Noticing that Gene was interested in birds, Mr. Lincoln began talking with him about them. After talking, Mr. Lincoln learned that Gene’s home life was not good, but he had a great Grandfather. Together, Mr. Lincoln and Gene, worked on the school’s atrium. As they did, Mean Gene stopped being so mean all of the time. They work out the stereotypes Eugene’s father has passed onto Gene.

**Activity:** You Can’t Judge By the Outside… Ask the children to draw a bear and then a cat. Then show many types of cats (from a house cat to a cheetah,) and many bears (from a panda to a polar bear.) Talk about not judging by name, race, or skin color.

**Adaptation:** This activity can be done with many levels of learners.

**Criteria:** Both of the characters learn from each other, and the book addresses the problem of stereotypes.

27. *The Seed* by Isabel Pin.

**Summary:** In a land far away lived two rival tribes: The Scarabs and The Chafers. One day an object fell from the sky and landed on the border between the two territories. Both tribes wanted it and began to devise war plans of how to get it. By the time their armies were ready the object had buried itself in the
ground, grown roots, and grown into a cherry tree. Its fruit leaned over both sides. Peace and harmony began between the two tribes.

**Activity:** Fancy letter “Y,” for the time it took the seed to grow and the conflict to stop: a year. Let the children draw large “Ys” and decorate them with items that begin with “Y,” such as yarn, yo-yo stickers, etc.

**Adaptation:** Draw the letter for the children.

**Criteria:** The book is about getting along, which is something we all need to learn how to do, and it can be done through kindness.


**Summary:** A Queen ruled over the land of Far and Wide. All that she saw was beautiful, but she wanted it to be perfect. One day she ordered everything to be thrown out of the castle if it was not perfect. In the moat lived a curious frog named William. With all of the junk being thrown into his moat, hardly anything could live. So, William takes the last Water Lilly as a gift for the Queen. In return, he asks an answer to one question: Why must everything be perfect? When shown the moat, the Queen realizes her error. She changes her ways and Knights William the frog.

**Activity:** Talk about what “perfect” means and discuss some things that are not perfect but are still great: such as each person, find a tree that has a dead limb, or a new car with a scratch in the paint (chose things the kids are interested in). Let each child make a portrait with the slogan “I’m the perfect ME!”

**Adaptation:** Assist the children in writing.

**Criteria:** Queen begins with the letter of the month, and she learns about her destruction.

29. *The Care and Feeding of Fish* by Sarajo Frieden.

**Summary:** Loulou’s life is rather dull. So, she pretends to be like her exciting great-aunt Éclair. On her seventh birthday she receives a package from her aunt. Inside is a fish, and a manual of how to care for it. The manual explains that step one is to disregard all previous notions of how to care for a fish. This fish is not an ordinary type, it is the walking-, talking-, opera-singing-type. Loulou and the fish have grand adventures in town, until the fish, Harold, disappears. Loulou later receives an invitation to Harold’s going away party. Loulou is sad, but Harold gets her a present. It is a fish, the plain-old-regular type... or is it?

**Activity:** Write a manual for how to take care of a class pet, or a pretend pet (use a real animal though that the kids know about). This can be done as a book or in steps on a large piece of paper. Let the children illustrate their How-To’s.

**Adaptation:** Work with the children in ideas and writing, encourage them to work together and use other resources such as computers and books.

**Criteria:** Loulou learns from her great-aunt and the fish about finding your own excitement, or at least happiness, in life.
30. The Great Alphabet Fight and the Hour Peace Was Made by Steven Jensen.
October
Animal: Bat
Color: Black
Letters: H, J
Themes: Halloween, Opposites

1. *Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon.
   **Summary:** One night while Stellaluna and her mother are flying, an owl attacks them and they are separated. Stellaluna is raised by birds and adopts their mannerisms. One day she and the birds are out flying, when it turns dark, they go home but Stellaluna continues flying. She meets other bats and eventually reunites with her mother.
   **Activity:** Talk about night and day as opposites. Make a chart to compare them, Night and its characteristics on one side and Day and its characteristics on the other.
   **Adaptation:** Incorporate pictures into the chart.
   **Criteria:** The book deals with night and day, and has a good message: You can still be friends with others who are different from you.

   **Summary:** The story tells of gargoyles that come to life at night. They fly over the town. They laugh and play in the fountain. The only person to notice is not believed by anyone else. During the day, they go back to their high perches and stare blankly down.
   **Activity:** Discuss the difference in the gargoyles between the opposites of night and day. Then make masks. Use paper plates as the base, and glue on yarn, pipe cleaners, feathers, etc. Cut out the eyes and mouth. Let the children make their “Night Identity.”
   **Adaptation:** Have pre-cut materials ready for the children, use hand-over-hand assistance if required.
   **Criteria:** The gargoyles exhibit such differences between night and day that a distinction can clearly be made.

3. *Corduroy's Best Halloween Ever!* by Dan Freeman.
   **Summary:** Corduroy and his friends are getting ready for Halloween. Corduroy even makes his own costume. Puppy arrives an hour before the party with a ruined costume. Corduroy lets Puppy use his costume. And just as they are leaving to go trick-or-treating, Corduroy spots what he can use for a costume: the tablecloth will make him look like a ghost.
   **Activity:** Play a game of Ghost, Ghost, Witch. Like you would play Duck, Duck, Goose.
Adaptation: Sit in a circle, instead of chasing when “it” have the child do a hand clap, or hand clap pattern, then say another child’s name. For example: Clap and say “ghost, ghost, name of child is the new witch.”
Criteria: It is a sweet Halloween book that shows how sharing can help out a friend.

Summary: Cackle Cook is making Monster Stew, but she is out of all of the ingredients. So, she sends her pet monster out to get them. He grumbles about it, but goes. The ingredients are alphabetical from ape hair to zombie clump.
Activity: Come up with a silly class recipe, there is an example in the book.
Second Activity: List silly ingredients on index cards, and let the students put them in alphabetical order.
Adaptation for Second Activity: Let the students use a Cheat Sheet with the alphabet written on it, any practice helps!
Criteria: It is a fun Halloween book with detailed pictures and alphabetical ingredients.

5. Hilda and the Mad Scientist by Addie Adam.
Summary: Hilda has big muscles, big feet, and a big heart. Her motto is “I go where I'm needed and stay until I'm not.” She goes to help a mad scientist with rheumatism. All his efforts fail to scare her away. He tries to make a monster to scare her. But she has cleaned his laboratory, and the monster turns out like her.
Activity: Fancy letter “H.” Let each child draw a large “H” and decorate it with items that begin with the letter “H,” such as hand prints, happy faces, etc.
Adaptation: Draw the letter for the children.
Criteria: This Halloween book is unique and shows the power of kindness.

Summary: Pumpkinhead sets out to see if everyone everywhere else looks like the people of his town, Pumpkin Town. He rests and some squirrels play a trick on him, they turn the sign around, so he heads back to Pumpkin Town. Least to say, Pumpkinhead believes everyone is the same everywhere.
Activity: Have the children paint a pumpkin to look like themselves.
Adaptation: They can work together, get help from an adult, or use a sponge (as it has a larger surface and is easier to hold for some children).
Criteria: The book is amusing and presents a good question: even though we are all unique, are we all similar in some way?

Summary: Hank the Clank is lonely living in the graveyard alone. People always run when he says hello. So, he sets out for a friend. The skeleton, the headless
ghost, and the witch can not help, so they look together. One day, they decide to scare people and see an old lady. She offers them a place to live, her house, where people can take scary tours.

Activity: Look for all of the “H” words in the book. Let each child search a page or a few pages. Write the words on strips of paper and make a “Hank the Clank H-Chain.”

Adaptation: Look for the words as a class.

Criteria: It is a fun Halloween tale.

8. Dragon Scales and Willow Leaves by Terryl Givens.

Summary: Jonathan and Rachel were twins who saw things differently. When they walked through the woods together, it is an imaginative adventure for Jonathan and a scientific nature study for Rachel.

Activity: For the classroom, make up scientific and imaginative descriptions of items. Let the children work in pairs to match them up.

Adaptation: Match pictures to words or use an adult’s assistance.

Criteria: Although not opposites, the book shows different views: how two people can look at the same thing and experience it two completely different ways.


Summary: Bella is a first-rate witch who would prefer to be a princess. But, witches have been banned from turning themselves into princesses, because their population is dwindling. So, Bella searches for a prince to marry, so she can sort of be a princess. She finds an ad in the newspaper. After flying to the interview, she meets the prince, Franklyn of Styne. It is love at first sight!

Activity: Talk about the sequence of the story, make a plot chart. It can be done as a map, tracing the pretend route the witch took to get to her prince.

Adaptation: Refer to the book while picking out important sequential events from the story.

Criteria: The book has a Halloween quality about it, and it portrays that is best to be yourself.


Summary: One night while all the toys are in bed asleep, Little Bear hears a noise. One by one, all the stuffed animals are up and trying to discover what the noise is. They find out it is Hoot, the owl. His nest has fallen. After helping him put it back on top of the cupboard, they have a midnight feast. Then, they all return to bed. Except for Hoot, owls sleep during the day and are awake at night.

Activity: Find H-words in the story. Make an owl out of construction paper and give him a name-tag with “Hoot” on it. Underline the “H” and write the h-words all over it.

Adaptation: Find the words as a class, and have the owls pre-ready to write on.
Criteria: The book deals with opposite sleeping habits.

11. *Possum's Harvest Moon* by Anne Hunter.

**Summary:** Possum invites all of the animals to a party under a great harvest moon. Each has a reason why they cannot come, mostly variations of the need to go into hibernation for the winter. But, when the animals see the moon, they rush from all directions to the Possum's Soiree. All have a wonderful time then head off to hibernate.

**Activity:** Have a Halloween (or autumn) Soiree. Let the children pick books to be read and reread, have a snack, etc.

**Adaptation:** This activity can be participated in by many levels of learners.

Criteria: The book deals with autumn ending and an approaching winter, as is the current seasonal situation.


**Summary:** A little goblin went walking through the woods, taking rocks to his grandmother. He hopped and played, until he saw something scary: a mouse! Both screamed and ran away. This was just the first scare for the little goblin. He also ran into a squirrel, a bird, and a butterfly. He told his grandmother all about the frightful journey to her house, and gave her the presents. After they had milk and cookies, grandmother walked Little Goblin home.

**Activity:** Learn about sequencing numbers. Prepare some premade pictures of the animals for the activity. Go through the book and let the children line up and hold the animals in the order Little Goblin met them. On the backs, write the number (first, second, etc.).

**Adaptation:** Introduce the activity by having milk and different types of cookies, eat them in a specific order (for example: all eat the chocolate chip cookie first and the oatmeal cookie second, etc.).

Criteria: It is a fun, scary, but not too scary, book that has a Halloween air about it.


**Summary:** Cinder was a city cat who knew how to take care of herself. One night while escaping trouble, she runs into the back of a truck that takes her to a completely different place. There she is chased away from three big cats' (Silver Tiger, Marmaduke, and Doremi) territory. One day, Cinder was escaping a huge, red truck coming down the road. She was about to jump into the yard of three big dogs, when the three cats yelled for her to stop. Then they invited her to be their friend. After that day, the four cats spent their days together and looked out for each other.

**Activity:** Make different cats out of tagboard, or another stiff material. Give the children paper clips, and have them measure the cats' lengths.
**Adaptation:** Draw dashed or solid lines for the children to place the paper clips on as a guide.

**Criteria:** It is about a black cat, which is often associated with Halloween, and has a message of acceptance.


**Summary:** A buffalo meets a snail. Buffalo explain that buffalos are big. He then goes on to tell some of the things that buffalos do: like cake their fur with mud and stomp their hooves. Snail feels like snails can not do anything. But then the snail tells what snails can do and Buffalo is impressed. When a reindeer comes and criticizes Buffalo for talking with an almost slug, Buffalo defends the snail.

**Activity:** Make a Big Buffalo and a small snail out of paper. Write the characteristics of each on the corresponding animal. Discuss the opposite characteristics.

**Adaptation:** Have some characteristics written on post-it notes and let the children stick them on the animal that they apply to.

**Criteria:** The book deals not only with opposites, but how opposites can get along.


**Summary:** There once was an emperor who loved fine clothes more than anything and spent all of his time day dreaming or showing off his latest outfit. Two men came to town claiming that they had magical cloth. When it was worn by anyone unfit, it would be invisible. The emperor requested them to make him an outfit out of that cloth, because as emperor he knew he was worthy. After much anticipation, the clothes were ready. Although they were merely a story created by the men, the king imagined he was worthy and therefore saw clothes that were not really there. Least to say, the crowds did not know how to respond to a king walking down the street nakedly.

**Activity:** Make a list of the emperor's characteristics. This can be done on a bolt of cloth, made from construction paper.

**Adaptation:** Have lots of adjectives and phrases ready so you can let the children choose those that apply to this emperor.

**Criteria:** It works well for opposites along with *The Emperor's Old Clothes*.


**Summary:** There once was a simple farmer named Henry. Coming home from the market one day, he stumbled upon item after item of fancy clothing. He put each on because it was silky, magnificent, or dashing. But when he got back to the farm, the animals mocked him and the clothes got dirty. So, Henry took them off and just wore his simple clothes. He led his life simply, but happily.

**Activity:** On another "bolt" of fabric, list the characteristics of the farmer.
Adaptation: Have lots of adjectives and phrases ready so you can let the children choose those that apply to this emperor.
Criteria: It works well for opposites along with The Emperor’s New Clothes.

17. *Porkenstein* by Kathryn Lasky.
Summary: Dr. Smart Pig was a famous inventor. He was lonely though, because he did not have any friends. Tomorrow would be Halloween, and since it was no fun without friends, he decided to invent some. He made a pig-fish, and a pig-bat before he finally succeeded. The only problem with his Porkenstein was that it was always hungry. Dr. Smart could not feed it enough, and this became a serious problem. But, when a wolf came to the door, Porkenstein ate it. Dr. Smart realized that he had a friend!
Activity: Discuss some important qualities in a friend, and how to be a good friend. List the qualities the group comes up with and let the children illustrate the qualities.
Adaptation: Let the children work in pairs or small groups to illustrate the pictures, and/or act out the qualities before drawing them.
Criteria: The book relates to the Halloween theme for the month.

18. *Little Beaver and the Echo* by Amy MacDonald.
Summary: Little Beaver has no brothers, sisters, or friends. One day he cries out across the lake and hears crying from the other side. So, he asks what is wrong and the other side asks the same thing back. He calls out that he is lonely and has no friends, as does the other side of the lake. Little Beaver goes across to find this lonely voice and become friends. He set off in his boat. Along the way, he met other animals in need of a friend, so they joined the Little Beaver. Finally, Little Beaver met a wise old Beaver, who explained that the voice is actually an echo. The Echo is always on the other side of the lake and always feels the same way as you do. If you are sad so is the echo, and so on. Little Beaver is happy with his friends he met along the way, and so it the echo.
Activity: Line up in two lines facing each other. Pair the children up and let them be each other’s echoes. Take turns calling information about the story and echoing it in return.
Adaptation: Sign the information about the story as opposed to saying it.
Criteria: Echo is always on the Opposite side of the lake.

19. *Boogie Bones* by Elizabeth Loredo.
Summary: Boogie Bones loved to dance, but he longed for the world outside of the graveyard. He found a poster announcing a dance contest. With the help of his skeleton friends, he dresses in a tuxedo, mustache, shoes, hat, and gloves to go to the dance. Upon entering, he is sad because he does not have a partner. But he finds one in the crowd and is soon deemed the best dancer there. He boogies so
much that his hair and costume fall off. Most people are alarmed. All except one
girl, who walks straight up to him and they dance the night away.

**Activity:** Fancy Letter “J,” for jitterbug, a dance Boogie Bones may have danced
to. Let each child draw a large “J” and decorate it with items that begin with the
letter “J,” such as jelly beans, jack-o-lantern stickers, etc.

**Adaptation:** Draw the letter for the children.

**Criteria:** The book deals with characters that are often associated with
Halloween.


**Summary:** As the sun goes down, Lily goes out to collect messages from her
back yard friends. In her notebook, she translates the zig zag tracks of ants, the
cracks on a rock, and even the blinks of the fireflies. Then she puts the notebook
back in her bag and goes home.

**Activity:** Pretend to be a plant or animal and write a short passage “A Day In the
Life of a ______.” Illustrate.

**Adaptation:** Use a computer to type, have the child dictate the message.

**Criteria:** The book deals with the differences of night.


**Summary:** Something is going on when Sarah goes down for breakfast. She and
Grandma meet Grandpa in the barn, where he has lots of old fancy clothes. It is
time to make scarecrows. They braid yarn for the hair and make heads out of
pillow cases. All of the scarecrows on surrounding farms are dressed up too. It is
a tradition. One year, there was a fancy ball in town to celebrate the city. As the
people were going to the dance crows came to attack the fields. So the people
danced in the fields, and they had a wonderful crop that year. Ever since, the
people have made scarecrows out of fancy clothes.

**Activity:** Make dressed up scarecrows. Use Popsicle sticks, straw, cardboard,
and fabric scraps for materials.

**Adaptation:** Pre-cut the pieces and let the children assemble their scarecrows.

**Criteria:** The book has a fall essence about it, and that is the present season.

22. *Cat’s Knees and Bee’s Whiskers* by Nitingale.

**Summary:** Baldrick was a black cat training to be Lobelia Gnomeclencher
Witch’s cat. Learning to ride on a broomstick is not easy; neither was studying
to pass the Silver Cauldron exam in spells and incantations. He also had to do all
of the housework and cooking. Baldrick loved mice, stalking them, chasing them,
and catching them. When Lobelia began a moon spell (and since the moon is
made of cheese, there had to be mice there), Baldrick tried to get there too, and
ended up using a spell which turned him into a very odd mixture of creatures.
Lobelia rescued him and since he grabbed a piece of moon rock, he was awarded
the first place Silver Cauldron medal.
**Activity:** Bring in cheese (enough for all of the students to have their own piece) and rocks, make a compare and contrast chart, as a group.

**Adaptation:** Include all the senses (if possible).

**Criteria:** It is a fun Halloween book.

### 23. *It's Vladimir!* by Deborah Noyes.

**Summary:** Vladimir is a vampire, who lives alone in a castle. His family and friends all left because of his terrible tantrums. He always demanded his bat wings. But it was not time then, and has not yet been when his cousin, Veronica, visits yearly. One night he is so upset and lonely that he takes matters into his own hands. He packs a bag and sets out into the forest. After a long, lonely night with no success in asking animals where they got their wings, he sits down and cries. A wolf comes up to him, and leads him to a safe cave, because vampires melt in sunlight and morning was approaching. He falls asleep and when he wakes, he finds the wolf is Veronica! When he looks up the ceiling is covered with bats, his family to be precise! Vladimir is taught the spell to turn into a bat, and invited to fly into the night with them.

**Activity:** Talk about the opposite behaviors Vladimir exhibits throughout the book. In the beginning he is angry, in the end he's happy; in the beginning he can not fly, in the end he can fly; etc.

**Adaptation:** Reread and talk about the pictures to demonstrate the opposite characteristics.

**Criteria:** The book has a Halloween feel about it and is about the animal of the month.


**Summary:** This book has 10 suggestions for happily living with a monster. Some examples include: how to pick out the right one, what to name him, and how to play with him.

**Activity:** Make a How-To-Be-A-Student manual with silly suggestions. For example: Never wear matching socks. Or, Always bring a marble, you never know when you will need one.

**Adaptation:** Do this activity as a class and help the children to illustrate the suggestions.

**Criteria:** Highly amusing book with good illustrations that fits with the Halloween theme by dealing with monsters.


**Summary:** A boy knows his mother is a monster as does everyone in the town. But she has a gentle touch and teaches him some spells and monster stuff. One day she asks him to go into town and get a dessert with strawberries. He gets picked on by three bullies. But the bullies make a mistake by insulting his mama. He breaks free and scares them off. His mama knows he needs help and comes to
his aid. Mama brings the bullies and her son home where they have a dessert with strawberries. The boy keeps his love and faith in his mama and the bullies learn that different can still be good.

Activity: Make and eat strawberry shortcake.

Adaptation: Due to the varying levels of participation, this activity will work for most levels of learners by directing questions or tasks to appropriate children.

Criteria: The book shows that it is what is on the inside that counts.


Summary: This story is similar to “The House That Jack Built.” Except, Drac builds it and it has a Halloween theme to it. A bat takes the readers on a tour, introducing all of the guests/monsters at Drac’s House.

Activity: While reading look for the clues that predict what the next character will be.

Adaptation: This can be done with multiple levels of learners.

Criteria: This book has a Halloween sense about it.

27. *Meaner Than Meanest* by Kevin Somers.

Summary: In a wooded swamp was an old hovel where a mean old hag lived. She was the second meanest creature in the world. The meanest creature was Hiss, her cat. With Halloween approaching, she decided to make an even meaner creature. When it was finally created, a sweet little girl named Daisy was created. The old hag tried to hate Daisy. But, Daisy finally found a way to break through to the old hag’s heart.

Activity: Discuss the importance of kindness, even to those who are not always kind to you. Talk about and act out ways to be kind, especially in situations when someone is not being kind to you.

Adaptation: Model some situations and present the kids with scenarios to talk about.

Criteria: It is a Halloween book, with a positive message to continue trying even in the face of meanness.

28. *Alice and Greta’s Color Magic* by Steven J. Simmons.

Summary: Alice is a good witch, who does nice spells. Greta is not so nice. Greta casts a spell to remove all of the colors. She misses her yucky green, but when she tries to bring it back it isn’t so easy. When Alice and Greta work together, they are able to bring back the colors.

Activity: We Need Each Color, Just Like We Need Each Person. Have each child make a rainbow, leaving out one color. Then as a group, make one large rainbow with all of the colors. This would make a great bulletin board.

Adaptation: Provide multiple types of supplies to make the rainbows, such as paint, construction paper, felt, markers, crayons, and any other materials the children work well with.
Criteria: The book has a Halloween feel about it since it deals with witches. Also, opposite colors can be talked about.

29. *Apple Picking Time* by Michele Benoit Slawson.

**Summary:** Anna picks apples in season with her family, they do it every year. This year, Anna hopes to fill her bin. If she does, the owner, Dave, will punch a half-moon on her ticket and she will get paid. She has not filled her bin by the time they stop for lunch; nor by the time her Grandpa and Grandma leave. But, she finally fills it and gets to call out “full!” Her mother and father are very proud of her.

**Activity:** the book has an Apple Crisp recipe to make and a Purple Ticket Arithmetic game and facts to play at the end of the book.

**Adaptation:** Due to the varying levels of participation, this activity will work for most levels of learners by directing questions or tasks to appropriate children.

**Criteria:** It is autumn, and the book is set in autumn.


**Summary:** Jasper’s father said he would grant him one reasonable wish for his seventh birthday. He asked for a horse and buggy ride through Central Park, with a Princess whom he could sing to. Instead, his father bought him a wooden rocking horse. That night, his mother tucked him in and whispered to jasper that Glory, the horse, was magic. That night Jasper rode Glory through the park and met a lovely Princess, who he sang to. Was it all in his dreams?

**Activity:** Let the children describe their wish if they could wish for anything on their birthday. Encourage them to use their imaginations. They can then illustrate their wishes and tell the group about their wishes.

**Adaptation:** This can be done by many levels of learners.

**Criteria:** The book deals with night and day, and the not so scary side of night.

31. *Z is for Zombie* by Merribly Kutner.
November
Animal: Moose
Color: Brown
Letter: M
Theme: Tradition and Culture

1. *If You Give a Moose a Muffin* by Laura Joffe Numeroff.
   **Summary:** If you give a moose a muffin, he is sure to ask for something else and a sequence of requests will ensue. A mess is created and the requests come full circle to asking for a muffin again.
   **Activity:** Make a class book. Let the students choose other things for the moose to ask for, assist in writing and let the kids illustrate the book.
   **Adaptation:** This activity has multiple levels of participation. Children could also work in groups or pairs, with one contributing more ideas and the other doing more written or drawing work, depending upon ability.
   Second **Activity:** Go through the book locating the many M-words.
   **Criteria:** The book is about the animal of the month, has many M’s and is just a fun book.

2. *Turkey Pox* by Laurie Halse Anderson.
   **Summary:** Charity has chicken pox. Her family is prevented from going over to grandma’s house by a terrible snow storm outside. But, Nana (grandma) finds a way to bring Thanksgiving to them. She even has a surprise for Charity: she covered the turkey in turkey pox!
   **Activity:** Make turkeys by tracing the children’s hands and coloring the fingers to look like feathers. Punch holes in red paper and glue on to give the turkey the pox.
   **Adaptation:** Use red markers to draw on the turkey pox.
   **Criteria:** It is a unique Thanksgiving book.

   **Summary:** There is a special pond in the mountains that is Beaver’s, “every inch of depth, every ripple in the water.” But it is also for herons, ducks, a moose and another moose and her calf. Even though the beaver thinks it is his, it is all of the animals’.
   **Activity:** Discuss the habitat in and around the pond; then use construction paper to create a wall pond. Let the children make the animals out of construction paper also. Then they can retell the story using the setting they have created.
   **Adaptation:** Have the animals and the environment made, go through the book and help the children move the animals with the story, or locate aspects of the story on the created pond.
   **Criteria:** The book tells a story while the kids can learn about the environment, all while dealing with the animal of the month.

**Summary:** Throughout all the tall, dark forests up north, there was never a moose more mucky, yucky, or smelly, than Mucky. He wallowed in the smelliest parts of the swamp. One day the biggest wolf decided to eat him, because he was the biggest moose. But Mucky’s smell saved him.

**Activity:** Fancy letter “M.” Let each child draw a large “M,” and decorate it with items that begin with the letter “M,” such as M&Ms, macaroni, mitten or moose stickers, etc.

**Adaptation:** Draw the letter for the children.

**Criteria:** The main character is a moose, the month’s animal. It also has some fun repeated phrases that the kids can say along with the reader.

5. *Buffalo Dreams* by Kim Doner.

**Summary:** Sarah Bearpaw has heard the legend of a white buffalo, so when one is born, her family travels to see it. They take gifts and learn that it is a wild creature, not a pet. Sarah saves her younger brother and learns about the magic inside herself.

**Activity:** On paper draw a dream catcher (the gift Sarah gives to the buffalo). Have the children draw a circle with crossing lines and provide leaves, feathers, and other items to glue onto it. Encourage the children to write or tell why the items they chose are important to themselves or the environment, since the dream catcher holds meaning and is not merely a decoration for Sarah’s culture.

**Adaptation:** Have leaf stamps and crayons or markers to decorate the dream catcher with.

**Criteria:** This book looks into one family’s culture by exploring the legend of the white buffalo and dream catchers. The book’s plot also flows well and could be used to explore sequence or order of events.

6. *How to Speak Moo!* by Deborah Fajerman.

**Summary:** Cows may only say one word—Moo, but it can be said many ways to mean many things.

**Activity:** Talk about the M sound. Cut out cows as flash cards and help the children write M words on the cow cards.

**Adaptation:** Assist the children in coming up with M words, and add pictures to the word cards.

**Criteria:** The book has many M sounds at the beginning of words.

7. *The Crimson Ribbon* by Hilary Horder Hippely.

**Summary:** Nell’s mother takes her to the attic and they look through keepsakes. Mom tells of ribbons and how her aunts used to put them in her hair. After mom goes down stairs, Nell imagines that the empty house across the street has two older ladies who love her and tell stories to her over tea. Of course they also put a
crimson ribbon in her hair, and they tell her that crimson is the color for imagination.

Activity: Ribbon sorting. Lay out many different ribbons (some satin, striped, fancy edged, etc.) and let the children put them into groups, suggest groups, and/or put them in groups and let the children figure out the characteristic the groups share.

Adaptation: Work together, or decide groups and then put in a starter ribbon to aid the children.

Criteria: The book is set in November and can be used at the end of the month to introduce next month's color: red.


Summary: Great Bear stays sleeping in his cave when all the other bears have gone out, since it is now spring. In a village below, a boy called Short Tail goes off in search of why the Great Bear has not come out. He lies down and dreams that he finds Great Bear and wakes him. He dreams that since he woke him so respectfully, Great Bear invites him to watch the Bear Dance. When the boy wakes, he tells his people about the dream, and they dance the Bear Dance. (This story is based off of the Ute Bear Dance of the Utes from Colorado and Utah.)

Activity: Discuss the tradition of respect for animals of the Utes. Talk about how we can show animals respect or kindness, by being gentle and caring for pets, by placing food outdoors in winter for wild animals, etc.

Adaptation: This discussion can be approached on whichever level the children will understand it best.

Criteria: This book shows a tradition held by one group of Native American people.


Summary: Lena is seven and is going to paint a picture of herself. She is going to use a brown crayon. But her mother tells her how each person's skin is a beautifully unique shade and describes the differences of many people's skin tones.

Activity: Have the children describe their own skin color with nouns, like in the book (such as chocolate and coffee.) Then set out paints and let the children mix colors to make their skin color.

Adaptation: Premix some colors, and let the students blend any paints to make their self-portrait.

Criteria: With many cultures come many skin colors, and this book looks at their beauty.


Summary: Desta's father needs to make a trip to his homeland, Ethiopia, because his mother who still lives there is ill. Desta worries that maybe he won't come
back since he talks so fondly of his homeland. Her father tells her about it and that he will come back, with even more stories of life there to tell her.

**Activity:** Find Ethiopia on a map and research some information about it, this is a great time to go online with the kids.

**Adaptation:** This activity can be done with students of many learning levels.

**Criteria:** The book tells some about another culture’s life.

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**Summary:** Henry Pepin lived with his family way up north in a cabin in the woods. His Grandpa Pepin often came by and told him magical stories. One was about a fiddler who made the northern lights come alive with his fiddling. Henry asked if the story was true, and Grandpa took Henry on a night adventure to find out. They went far, but tired and had to return home. A strange visitor knocked on their door and Grandpa offered him to come in a rest. Later, he played his fiddle and people danced and the northern lights shown across the sky.

**Activity:** Paint northern lights. Set up an easel, dip the paint brush in water then in wet water colors and make arched lines across the top of the paper. Let the drips blur down to create the light effect. Use a few colors.

**Adaptation:** Let the students work in pairs, where one chooses the colors and the other paints.

**Criteria:** The book is a fun winter book about one family’s story telling tradition.

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**Summary:** The people of Sudanese village got a new well, before they filled trees after rains and used buckets to carry water from the river. With the new well people do not have to. But, Fatima’s Grandmother still does the work of filling her tree. People mock her, but when the pump breaks she has the only water. She is kind and shares her water.

**Activity:** Use this to test volume, find different sized and shaped containers that hold the same amount of liquid. Experiment with pouring from one container to another.

**Adaptation:** This activity can be done with multiple levels of learners.

**Criteria:** The book tells of an Arabic tradition.

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**Summary:** As a pioneer family go through the course of a day, they share riddles with each other. The riddles often involve the origins of things. They do activities like those who were settlers living on the frontier; such as hunting, making a fire to cook food on, and cleaning.

**Activity:** Guess the riddles as reading. Go through the book and pick out what has changed from pioneer time to present day.

**Adaptation:** Prepare pictures and/or statements about life then and life now and have the children decide if it is then or now.
Criteria: It tells of traditional pioneer life.


Summary: This is a poem about a girl with a very unique grandmother. Her grandmother is a hippie who has not cut her hair since 1969. Together, they grow vegetables and make whole grain honey bread, which they eat barefoot and outside. At night they sing “Amazing Grace” and there are flower posters all over Grandmother’s house.

Activity: Make and eat whole grain honey bread.

Second Activity: Use neon paint or markers to create peace signs and flowers.

Adaptation: Buy or premake the bread.

Criteria: This book takes a light-hearted approach to part of American culture.

15. Tree of Hope by Amy Littlesugar.

Summary: Florrie’s daddy used to be an actor in Harlem. But when the Depression began, he had to find another job. He worked at an all-night bakery and Momma cleaned at a beauty shop. There was a tree by the theatre that the people called the Tree of Hope. Florrie and her Daddy used to wish on that tree. As times began to get better, the theatre did a Shakespearean play. Daddy tried out and got a role. They did Macbeth the Harlem way. The tree of hope was covered with ribbons and balloon, each a wish come true or one still being hoped for.

Activity: Let each child write something he wishes for and tie it to a balloon or ribbon, which he can place on a paper tree in the room or outdoors on a real tree. (To keep anonymous, the children do not need to write their names on their wishes.)

Adaptation: Draw a picture wish or type one out on a computer.

Criteria: The book takes a look at Harlem culture during the Depression.

16. Amelia’s Road by Linda Jacobs Altman.

Summary: Amelia’s family travels with the seasons because her parents’ work is crop picking. She hates roads. Last year her teacher did not even bother to learn her name. But this year is different; her teacher makes her feel special. One day she comes upon a road that is more like a foot path. She likes playing and spending time there. When it is time to leave again, she leaves a box of Amelia-stuff buried under the tree at the end of that road.

Activity: Make a time capsule. Let each child choose and item or two to put in a box and plan a date to open it, such as the end of the year.

Adaptation: Open the time capsule sooner, such as at the end of the month or week.

Criteria: The book shows a young girl with a different life style, because of her family’s culture: the American migrant worker.
17. The Sleeping Porch by Karen Ackerman.

**Summary:** Jonathon and his family have outgrown their apartment. They find a house to move into. One night, a huge thunderstorm comes and they find that the roof leaks. Since everything is wet indoors, they sleep on the porch, which starts a tradition. From time to time, the family spends the night out on the sleeping porch.

**Activity:** Discuss traditions. Let each child tell the group about a family tradition they have.

**Adaptation:** Let the children talk about a tradition, or routine, the group/class does.

**Criteria:** The book deals with a family tradition. It also demonstrates a family making the best out of a situation.


**Summary:** Stefan loves pancakes, especially his grandma’s delicious Swedish ones. But, he lives in Jordan now and she lives in Sweden. A big box is able to transport a shipment of them, along with two special people to carry it.

**Activity:** Make and eat pancakes.

**Adaptation:** This activity can be participated in by multiple levels of learners.

**Criteria:** This book takes a look into cultures and how to bridge distances.

19. The Stars in My Geddoh’s Sky by Claire Sidholm Matze.

**Summary:** Alex’s grandfather, Geddoh in Arabic, visits him in the United States. He lives in the Middle East. Geddoh shares many things about his homeland, and even brings Alex a camel saddle as a gift. When it is time for Geddoh to return home, Alex does not want him to go. Geddoh explains that he misses his homeland, but when they look up at the sky they will be looking at the same stars.

**Activity:** Discussion about what the children like best about living where they do, what they would miss if they had to leave.

**Adaptation:** Model what you would miss and offer suggestions.

**Criteria:** The book has traditions and words from a Middle Eastern culture.


**Summary:** Valentina is the youngest in her family. They have just moved here from Russia. Papa used to be a farmer and sang in Russian, here he is too tired to sing and works long hours as a brick maker. The family has a dream jar where they put any spare change. The dream is to buy a shop that will sell everything. Everyone can earn money except Valentina, she is too little. One day she helps translate a message written in English for a Russian neighbor, and finds a job as a teacher. Eventually, the dream jar has enough money to buy a store. Now the dream jar has a new dream: to help Valentina become a teacher.
Activity: Start a Dream Jar for the group/class. Use buttons, beans, or an object; reward the group or individual students when they do something well. When the jar is full they can choose a fun activity such as a movie and popcorn afternoon or extra play time, or extra book readings!

Adaptation: Use a smaller jar and rewards that are closely related to the good act to help the students connect the reward better to the good deed.

Criteria: The book shares some of the difficulties for immigrants after coming to America.


Summary: Each New Year’s Eve, Marisa’s family gets together for dumpling soup. Grandma says that the difference in the family members is “spice,” they are Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Hawaiian, and Haole (Hawaiian for white people.) Since Marisa is seven this year she gets to help make the dumplings for the soup. Her dumplings do not look as perfect as her aunts’ and grandmother’s do. But when the time comes to eat them, everyone loves hers.

Activity: Make and eat dumplings.

Adaptation: Pre-make or buy dumplings.

Criteria: This book shows one Hawaiian family’s tradition.


Summary: On Zeesie’s seventh birthday, she gets to go with her family to a Package Party on DeLancey Street. She has a whole dollar to spend there too. At the party, families bring food and wrap it prettily; then they auction it off for a fund-raising feast. When Zeesie’s father goes into a special room, Zeesie is curious. But her father says she is not allowed, it is a special room to give money if you need it or take money if you need it. She sneaks in and realizes that it is not for her to be there. But, she knows how to make the most of it, she leaves her birthday dollar in the room.

Activity: Discuss the importance of listening and doing what trusted adults ask you to do. Zeesie ended up doing good, but she disobeyed her father and now knows more than she is supposed to at her age.

Adaptation: Use examples and scenarios that relate the children’s lives.


23. The Prairie Train by Antoine O. Flatharta.

Summary: When trains were new to America, there was a train that wished it was a boat. Conor and his family were also new to America. They were taking the Prairie Train out to the West Coast from New York. Conor’s Grandfather carved him a boat and along the way he accidentally dropped it out the window. The Prairie Train feels Conor’s sadness and lulls him to sleep. That night he dreams that the train is a boat and when he wakes his spirits are raised.
Activity: Sequencing activity. Cut out varied size sets of trains and boats. Let the kids order from smallest to largest or visa versa.

Adaptation: Use actually boats and trains.
Criteria: The book tells the tradition of immigrants journeying across America.

24. Tea with Milk by Allen Say.
Summary: Masako grew up near San Francisco. Her parents called her Ma-chan and spoke to her in Japanese. Her friends called her May and spoke to her in English. After she graduated from high school her family moved back to Japan. They chose a husband and a life for her. She longed for America. In time though, she found a way to belong and still be herself.
Activity: Draw a picture and talk about what the kids like about America.
Adaptation: Start off with the prompt: “I like that in America...” Find magazine pictures to help.
Criteria: The book deals with fitting into a different culture than you are raised in.

25. When Jo Louis Won the Title by Belinda Rochelle.
Summary: Jo Louis sat waiting for her grandpa on the top step with a sad face. When he saw her he picked her up, spun her around, sat down with her and noticed the expression on her face. He asked what was wrong. She told him that tomorrow will be the first day of school and she is not looking forward to being the new girl. Then grandpa asked what was really wrong, and without her even having to say a word, grandpa began the story of where her name came from. By the end she is proud of her name. The next day when she introduces herself at school, a classmate thinks it is the coolest name ever.
Activity: Finger-Print Names. In pencil lightly write the child’s name (largely.) Then let the child dip their thumb or index finger in paint and dot it along their name.
Adaptation: Use a name stamp or work with the children hand-over-hand.
Criteria: The book talks about a family’s name tradition.

26. Lost Moose by Jan Slepian.
Summary: A mother moose and her baby are swimming to a different island when a storm breaks out and separates them. The baby moose lands on a shore of a tourist island. A boy, James, discovers the moose and thinks it is one of Santa’s reindeer’s in training. He decides to watch over it until Santa comes. The moose’s mother comes as James’ mother does. The moms take their children and go home.
Activity: Memory game with baby animals and their mothers.
Adaptation: Let the children work in teams or pairs and use less cards.
Criteria: The book deals with the animal of the month.
December
Animal: Reindeer
Color: Red
Letter: R
Theme: Sizes and Comparisons, Winter

   Summary: A young boy and his mother bake a gingerbread baby. It escapes from the oven. A chase follows. The boy finds a way to catch the gingerbread baby that does not involve chasing it.
   Activity: Make gingerbread placemats. Have the children cut out and decorate a gingerbread boy and girl, then decorate them. Glue the boy and girl onto a larger sheet of construction paper and laminate. (Test by eating a gingerbread cookie on it ☺.)
   Adaptation: Precut the gingerbread boy and girl, and let the children color them.
   Criteria: It is a neat winter book that deals with reading and following directions.

2. The Mitten Tree by Candace Christiansen.
   Summary: Sarah enjoyed watching children, but they never smiled or waved as she walked past. One day it snowed and she watched them play in the snow. All had mittens except one child. She made him a pair and hung them on a tree by where the children play the following morning. He found them and was able to play. She began making mittens and placing them on the tree for the children. One day she used all of her yarn and covered the tree with mittens, enough for each child to have new mittens. That day she found a whole basket of yarn on her doorstep.
   Activity: Match the mittens. Make several pairs of mittens out of tagboard or construction paper with different designs. They can be hung on clotheslines (yarn) with clothespins or stuck in pairs on a large tree, also made from construction paper. Let the children pull them off and find the matches.
   Adaptation: Use fewer pairs of mittens with wide variances in patterns.
   Criteria: This is a fun winter book, and the mittens need to be compared to be matched.

3. The Biggest, Best Snowman by Margery Cuyler.
   Summary: Little Nell's big family says she is too small to do anything. But with the confidence and help of her animal friends, she made the biggest, best snowman ever.
   Activity: Make cotton ball snowmen. Cut out a snowman from white construction paper. Provide the children with cotton balls to glue on.
   Adaptation: Have the snowman cut out and glue on, so the child can place the cotton balls on the paper.
**Criteria:** This book shows that size does not matter; little people can accomplish big things.

   **Summary:** A young girl and her father take corn and apples out to feed the deer in the winter, when the animals have trouble finding their own food. The girl watches them and during the day the deer come around her house.
   **Activity:** Compare and contrast how wild animals (such as deer, rabbits, and squirrels) find their food versus how people find their food. Organize the information in a pyramid (like the food pyramid) but divide it into three categories: Wild Animals, Both, and People.
   **Adaptation:** Include illustrations.
   **Criteria:** The book fits with the deer, close to a reindeer, and fits in with winter. The text is simple enough that the children could pick out words they know.

   **Summary:** Leonhard Seppala raised and led sled dogs. When Togo was born, he was too small, too independent, and too wild to be a sled dog; or so Seppala thought. Togo showed not only could he be a great sled dog, he could also lead the team. Because of Togo’s lead, Seppala got serum to Nome in time to prevent an epidemic of Diptheria.
   **Activity:** Discuss team work. Talk about different ways to get along, the different roles, and how to encourage each other. Practice team work throughout the week then evaluate what went well and what can be done better.
   **Adaptation:** Evaluate a following activity, tell the children what you are going to look for them to be doing or saying and give specific examples.
   **Criteria:** The book compares Togo to other dogs, and also presents a good message about strength being in a dog, or person.

   **Summary:** Bialosky wants to surprise his friends by doing all the Christmas preparations by himself. So, he finds and decorates a tree, makes food, and wraps the presents. There is something he forgot though. But there is a knock on his door, and he remembers: his friends! He had forgotten to invite them in all the hustle and bustle of his preparations, but they had not forgotten him.
   **Activity:** Let the kids make their own wrapping paper by stamping tissue paper with red and green festive stamps.
   **Adaptation:** The activity can be done by many levels of learners.
   **Criteria:** The book fits well with the holiday season.
7. *Merry Christmas Mom and Dad* by Mercer Mayer.  
**Summary:** Little Critter wants to help with everything for Christmas. But no matter what activity he tries, some part does not go quite right. Through it all, his parents love him and are proud of him.  
**Activity:** Make and eat holiday cookies.  
**Adaptation:** Just decorate the cookies, or have completely pre-made and just eat.  
**Criteria:** This holiday book shows that it is OK even if what you are helping with does not go well.

**Summary:** Annie and her dog played in the snow all day. When it was time to go inside, she could not find her mitten any place. She looked all around and tried to imagine where it could be. Finally, her mother called her in for some hot chocolate. It began to rain, which melted the snow. The snow melted from the snowman, revealing a red heart: Annie’s mitten!  
**Activity:** Make a construction paper snowman, from three circles of white, with a construction paper mitten for its heart.  
**Adaptation:** Have the pieces drawn or cut out and let the children assemble them.  
**Criteria:** This winter book can be used to look at how a small mitten brings big joy to a family (a less-concrete look at size comparisons.)

**Summary:** An old man lives in a huge city where people are too busy for everything. One night, he recalls Christmas past and cuts out some gold paper stars. He was going to hang them in his window, but sees the decorations other people have in their windows and feels they won’t fit in. So, he takes them out to the country. When the city’s lights go out, the people see the light reflecting off the stars the man has decorated a tree with. They go out into the country and stand around the tree of light holding hands and singing carols.  
**Activity:** Create a gold star tree. Make a large construction paper tree and let the children cut out gold stars from shiny wrapping paper. On the front of the stars, the children can glue a picture of themselves. On the back of the stars, the children can write or draw what they like about winter or the holiday season.  
**Adaptation:** Have the stars cut out and help the children write their messages on the back.  
**Criteria:** This Christmas book brings hope and joy into the holiday, something every season needs.

**Summary:** Shelly, the little turtle, does not want to sleep through winter. But when she goes exploring, the other animals tell her why it is ridiculous for a turtle to be outside in the winder. She slips on some ice and snow, and slides all the
way back to the warmth of her family and home. She decides it is good to sleep in warmth and safety during winter.

**Activity:** Compare and contrast how a turtle lives in winter with how people live in winter (turtles sleep, people don’t... both have shelters, but of different kinds, etc.). Consider using a chart or Venn-diagram.

**Adaptation:** Prepare statements about turtles’ and people’s winter habits, then help the children place them in the correct category, go back through the book for additional assistance.

**Criteria:** Great winter book for comparisons, and lots of R words.


**Summary:** Newton finds a red crayon on the sidewalk. He notices that it is redder than a normal crayon. So, he takes it inside and begins to draw with it. Every picture he draws becomes real and jumps off of the page. For each picture, Newton’s mother tells him that he cannot play with it in the house. For the last picture, he draws a plane and flies it right out of the house!

**Activity:** Give the children red crayons and suggest they draw something they would like to become real. After they have time to draw, give them time to think of why they chose this object and what they would do with it if it were real. Let them share their drawings and stories with the group.

**Adaptation:** As a group, talk about red things and make a list before they begin to draw. Model an object, reason, and story of how you would use it.

**Criteria:** It is an imaginative book about red, the color of the month.

12. *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go* by Daniel M. Joseph and Lydia J. Mendel.

**Summary:** David lives in Maine, but this Christmas his family is visiting the Grandparents in Florida. He packed his own suitcase, got on a plane, and landed at his Grandparents’. The next morning, he got up, put on his snow gear, and headed outside to build a snowman for his Grandparents. As he searched for snow, he took off layer after layer of warm clothing. Grandma saw the clothing in the yard and had a trail to follow to find him. When she found him she also found a snowman, well, actually a sand snowman.

**Activity:** Let the children spread glue on paper in the shape of a snowman and sprinkle sand on to make a sand snowman.

**Adaptation:** Draw an outline for the children to trace with glue, or put the glue on for the children.

**Criteria:** It takes a humorous look at one holiday and some traditions associated with it.


**Summary:** Miss Rosemary lives on a farm, with Gertrude the cow and George the pig. George took the car and went driving into town, where the sheriff stopped him. Miss Rosemary wished that George would just act like the pig he
was. She had a plan: she talked Gertrude into showing George how much fun it is to be a pig by acting like a pig. It worked for George, but then Gertrude continued acting like a pig.

**Activity:** Make lists with normal pig character traits and normal cow traits, then compare and contrast the two.

**Adaptation:** Prepare the traits, leaving room for more that the children come up with, and let the children decide which animal it applies to.

**Criteria:** The book deals briefly with the month’s color, while offering lots of opportunities to compare and contrast.

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**Summary:** Molly and Mathew see the first snow beginning to fall before they go to bed one night. The next day school is cancelled and they play out in the snow. They rolled three snowballs and placed the side by side, creating giant snow-horses. That night, they snuck outside and got on their snow horses, which came to life. They rode and played through the night. Before the sun came up they went home and crawled into their warm beds.

**Activity:** Let the children make their own snow animals. On dark paper, let them draw any animal(s) they choose with white crayons. Then prepare crystals to brush over the drawings for a frosty effect. (Mix 1 part Epsom salts with 1 part boiling water. Let the mixture cool.) (Herr, J.) Talk about how you use different sizes of snowballs to make a snowman and let the children decide what size snowballs they would use for their animals.

**Adaptation:** Use stencils and white colored pencils to draw the animals, still “frost” the pictures.

**Criteria:** This winter book can be used to compare.

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15. *The Boll Weevil Ball* by Kelly Murphy.

**Summary:** Redd was a small Beetle; perhaps the smallest ever. In the mail one day, he received an invitation for his family to attend the Boll Weevil Ball that night. He was too small to wear any of his brothers’ clothes. But he jumped through lavender fields, brushed his teeth, and got ready. When it was time to go, his family flew off, leaving Redd who did not know how to fly. He got a ride on a cricket hopping by. At the party, no one noticed him. Sad and lonely, he went and sat alone on a branch and watched the party. Then he saw another small bug waving hello at him. Her name was Lily and she asked him to dance. He accepted and soon she lifted him above the dance floor with her wings and they danced the night away above the crowd.

**Activity:** Fancy letter “R,” for Redd. Let each child draw a large letter “R,” and decorate it with items that begin with “R,” such as rainbow stickers.

**Adaptation:** Draw the letter for the children.

**Criteria:** The book shows that even if you feel small and unnoticed sometimes, you are still cared about and special.

Summary: One day a boy’s friend came over with his two goldfish. They boy thought they were neat and asked his friend if he would trade for them. They finally agreed on the boy’s Dad for the friend’s goldfish. When the mother returned home, she told the boy to go get his father back. The boy set out, taking his sister along. They had to search all over town, because the friend had traded with someone else who had traded with someone else, and so on and so forth. Finally, the boy got his Dad back and promised never to trade his Dad again.

Activity: Play “Go Fish.” This trading game can be done with size words and pictures, or other words/concepts the students are learning about or interested in.

Adaptation: Let the children work together in partners.

Criteria: This book can be used to compare the attributes of the items traded.

17. Rainbow Wings by Joanne Ryder.

Summary: A dreamy, cloud cart had wings that children could try on. It had many different animal wings and told how each is used. The animal wings range from owls and bats to humming birds and dragonflies. The back of the book has factual information about the animals mentioned and how they use their wings.

Activity: Make lists about the different wings. Write in black and then use marks (one color for one animal’s wing) to note similarities. (For example, use a star in brown for owls and orange for penguins. Put an orange and a brown star by the characteristic “has feathers.”)

Second Activity: Let each child choose which wings they would like and draw a picture of them using them, they may want to glue a picture of their face on, or just draw it. Give them time to make up an imaginary story about how they would use their wings; then let them share the stories with the class.

Adaptation: Find pictures of the animals mentioned, or others with wings, and let the children draw their own face and glue it over the animals. Encourage them to tell the story, and model telling a story.

Criteria: This book deals with comparisons.

18. S. S. Gigantic Across the Atlantic by Peter Selgin.

Summary: There once was a small boy whom everyone called Pip-Squeak. He got a job aboard the S. S. Gigantic as a lookout. The captain was Captain Bragg and he believed that the ship was the biggest, best, strongest ship ever and nothing could ever happen to it. The ship even broke a huge iceberg into tiny ice cubes. But, a tack popped the boat and it is still sinking today (since it was so large). Thankfully, everyone aboard was rescued by the tiny, insignificant lifeboats, which may not be so insignificant after all.

Activity: Categorize size words. Use a chart and put those that mean big on one side and those that mean small on the other. Come up with nouns to match the words.

Adaptation: Prepare the size words and examples of objects those sizes; then let the children group them.
Criteria: The book deals with sizes of nouns, as well as a small boy making a big
difference.


Summary: Benjamin has an old pair of his Dad's shoes that he calls his "big
shoes" and likes to play in. Since Kindergarten is going to begin soon, his mother
gets him new pants and new shirts. Ben wants to wear his "big shoes" to school,
but his Mom wants him to wear regular shoes. So, one day Mom takes him to see
his classroom and meet his teacher. The teacher shows him around and Ben
realizes that there is a lot he can not do with his big shoes. On the first day of
school he wears his regular shoes and has a wonderful time.

Activity: Let the students try on "big shoes" and do things they normally would.
Afterwards, make a list of things they can do normally that they can still do with
"big shoes" and things they can not do with the "big shoes" on.

Adaptation: This activity can be done by many levels of learners, or the adult can
demonstrate and the children can mention the things that are difficult and those
that are not.

Criteria: This book deals with size comparisons.

20. Too Quiet for These Old Bones by Tres Seymour.

Summary: Four grandchildren go to Granny's house for the day. Mom tells them
not to make a sound. But when Mom leaves, Granny says the house is too quiet.
So, together she and the grandkids make a huge noise all day long. When Mom
comes back she quickly quiets the children.

Activity: Make a chart with three columns: Loud, Quiet, and Find-Out! Help the
children come up with lots of examples of loud and quiet if any kids disagree on
a sound, put it in the Find Out! column and go find out.

Adaptation: Take a walk through the building and outside, help the children pick
out sounds, write them down and then place them in the correct categories. OR
Find out the decibel amounts of sounds, and rank them by their numerical values.

Criteria: A comparison book that goes beyond tangible differences and large and
small.

21. A Bad Case of the Stripes by David Shannon.

Summary: Camilla Cream loved lima beans, but did not eat them because other
kids did not like them. She wanted everyone to like her. On the first day of
school she could not decide what to wear. When she looked in the mirror, she
was covered with stripes. The doctor thought about telling her to stay home, but
since she had no other symptoms, suggested she went to school. At school when
a kid made a joke about her being a different color she turned that color. The
same thing happened when doctors and specialists mentioned other colors or
patterns. Finally, an old woman came by and offered her lima beans. At first she
refused, but she already didn’t fit in, so she ate some. As she ate them, she returned to normal.

**Activity:** Silly Self Portraits. Provide the kids with markers, paints, and any decorative materials around (such as pipe cleaners, glitter, scraps of felt, etc.) and let them make self-portraits that are silly. Then compare the children’s pictures and look for differences in color, materials, etc. Make sure to keep all the kids positive about each other’s work.

**Adaptation:** Model the activity and guide the children step by step through it, allowing them to still choose their own materials.

**Criteria:** This book looks at diversity in a positive manner. Camilla Cream’s saving action is doing something different.

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**Summary:** Once there was a princess called Roselupin. Her father thought the world was dangerous and kept her locked in a tower for safety. She longed for the outside world and spent her days looking out the window. For her seventh birthday, a gold box was left outside of the castle for her. Her father gave it to her, and inside she found balls of yarn. She knit a red wolf suit. When she put it on, she became a wolf and escaped outside. She grew to gigantic proportions and took off through the forest. But, a string snagged and her suit began to come off bit by bit. When she fell asleep, she was found as herself again and taken back to the castle. Her previously worried sick father was now delighted. He was also pleased when she knitted brown moose pajamas for him (hoping they would make him meek and mild enough to let her out of the tower).

**Activity:** What animal and why? Let each child draw an animal they would make a suit for so they could turn into. Then let them tell why they chose that animal and what they would do as it.

**Adaptation:** Model the activity and suggest some animals.

**Criteria:** The book uses the color of the month.

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**Summary:** Albert and the other frogs had always lived in their pond. But it became too dirty to stay, so they set off in search of a clean pond. They took with them their favorite jumping pole and a jar to transport the tadpoles in. They came to a river, but it was too fast. Then they found a sewer, but there were rats there. The frogs also tried a dinning room, but they were almost stepped on there. After a night’s rest, they found a new, clean, pond.

**Activity:** Discus plot and make a plot chart. Cut out lily pads and discus with the children how the plot “hops” along from point to point. Then let the children work together to draw pictures of the events in order on the lily pads. Later, the children can shuffle the lily pads and try to put them back in the correct order.

**Adaptation:** Let the children work in groups or pairs.

**Criteria:** By comparing the places the frogs tried to live, the book fits in with the month’s theme.

**Summary:** Gregory describes what his perfect parents would be like. They would let him do anything from eating every color of ice cream to bringing home pets from the Amazon. In the end, though, they would tuck him into bed, just as his real parents do.

**Activity:** Cut out ice cream scoops to put on a giant ice cream cone. Let each child write something(s) his perfect parents would do.

**Adaptation:** Draw instead of write, the adult can add a sentence so the child sees the text to go with his picture.

**Criteria:** Many kids want to do something their parents do not allow from time to time. This is a book with that same line of thinking. It fits with the month in wanting something, since it is the Holiday season in which wish lists are often exchanged.

25. **Hugo and the Bully Frogs** by Francesca Simon.

**Summary:** Hugo is always being bullied by Popeyes (a bigger, mean) frog. Duck tries to teach him to stand up for himself by croaking “No Pushing!” He squeaks it out quietly at first, until Duck tells him to quack it. Frog quacks it and scares off Popeyes with how loud he is.

**Activity:** Discuss standing up for yourself. Talk about when you should stand up for yourself and times when it is ok to walk away or not make a big deal. Give examples and let the children come up with their own examples.

**Adaptation:** This activity can be done with multiple levels of learners.

**Criteria:** This book fits with the size theme of the month, it does not matter how small you are, you can always stand up for yourself.

26. **Leo the Late Bloomer** by Robert Kraus.

**Summary:** Leo cannot do any of the things his siblings can do. His father worries that he will never be able to do them. But his mother keeps saying to wait, Leo will catch on, he is just a late bloomer. Sure enough, Leo begins to bloom one day, and pretty soon he can do all the things the other Lions can.

**Activity:** Let each child make a flower out of construction paper. On the petals, they can write things they can do.

**Adaptation:** Draw on the flower petals.

**Criteria:** The book fits in with the theme of comparisons, as Leo’s relatives and friends compared him to other lions his age.

27. **I Was So Silly** by Mary Ann Hoberman and Nadine Bernard Wescott.

**Summary:** This book has pictures and text written by kids on what they used to do (when they were little kids) and that they now think is silly.
Activity: Let the children draw pictures about some things they used to do that were silly, then let them share with the class/group.
Adaptation: This activity can be done with multiple levels of learners.
Criteria: The book compares what used to be ok to how it is now silly.

   Summary: Three white mice have adventures with the three primary colors and what happens when their footprints mix the colors.
   Activity: Let the kids make hand prints and mix the colors, like the mice did.
   Adaptation: This activity can be done by many levels of learners.
   Criteria: The book looks at red as well as the other colors.

29. *Mr. Willowby’s Christmas Tree* by Robert Barry.
   Summary: Mr. Willowby finds the perfect Christmas tree. However, when he brings it home, the top hits the ceiling and leans over. He must find a way to make it fit. He does by cutting the top off, and by doing so gaining another Christmas Tree.
   Activity: Make Christmas trees, perhaps with the tops cut off. The children can draw ornaments on and write the character traits of Mr. Willowby in the ornaments.
   Adaptation: Let the children draw pictures from the story to represent the character traits or dictate them to an adult.
   Criteria: This book fits well with the holiday season.

30. *You Read to Me, I’ll Read to You: Very Short Stories to Read Together* by Mary Ann Hoberman.
   Summary: This book has short stories with text in three columns, one for the adult, one for the child, and one to read together. The texts are color coded, and written using lots of rhyme and rhythm. The stories are about many topics: birthdays, parties, bears, friends, etc.
   Activity: Read the stories together!
   Adaptation: Sign, echo, repeat, but somehow read the stories together!
   Criteria: This book gives the children a sense of accomplishment and makes reading fun and easy (or easier than usual).

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