

WASHINGTON CHILDREN'S CHOICE PICTURE BOOK AWARD

2026 ACTIVITY PACKET



The Bakery Dragon

Written and Illustrated By: Devin Elle Kurtz

Synopsis: Ember fears he'll never collect a respectable hoard of gold until a chance encounter with a baker causes his fortunes to turn.

Suggested Reading Date: September 26 (National Bakery Day); January 16 (National Appreciate a Dragon Day).

Activity Descriptions:

- Have students share what they treasure.
- Create a list of things you might cook if you had a pet dragon.
- Learn how bread is made. Perhaps sample different kinds of bread. (see videos below)
- Make your own dragon story. Where else could the dragon visit in the town?

Related Websites:

- Devin Elle Kurtz, Creator Website: <https://www.devinellekurtz.com/>
- Author's Activity Pages for The Bakery Dragon: <https://www.devinellekurtz.com/bakerydragonactivities>
- Author describes how she made the book (0:50): <https://youtu.be/FDQEyPWoiFs>
- Watch and Draw w/ Barnes And Noble. Interview w/ creator, drawing activity (22:10): <https://youtu.be/AJASPrkSnGg> (drawing starts about 10:35)
- Bread-How It's Made For Kids video (4:01) <https://youtu.be/1zUW6sqbM-U>
- Highlights: Every Wonder How Bread is Made video (2:17) <https://youtu.be/yzqsdUJbDOK>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Oscar and the Very Hungry Dragon* by Ute Krase
- *Dragon Snatcher, The* by M.P. Robertson
- *Knight Owl* by Christopher Denise
- *Snoring Beauty* by Bruce Hale
- *Truth About Dragons* by Julie Leung

Created By: Dave Sonnen

Buffalo Fluffalo

Written By: Bess Kalb

Illustrated By: Erin Kraan

Synopsis: A sweet and silly buffalo who tries to bluff and fluff his way into being bigger than he really is.

Suggested Reading Date: Beginning of the school year; 1st Weekend in November (National Bison Day); February 14 (Valentine's Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- Discuss what the animals did to try to be friends with Buffalo Fluffalo. Ask how Buffalo Fluffalo responded to the other animals before the rain and after the rain (cause and effect).
- Research the differences between Buffalo and Bison
- Glue cotton balls onto an image of a buffalo to make a Fluffalo Buffalo

Related Websites:

- Author's Website: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/authors/2175611/bess-kalb/>
- Illustrator's Website: <https://erinkraan.com/>
- Activity Guide from Emporia, created by students:
https://www.emporia.edu/documents/3788/Buffalo_Fluffalo_Activity_Guide.pdf
- How to Draw for Kids - Buffalo: <https://howtodrawforkids.com/how-to-draw-a-buffalo/>
- Youtube - Barnes and Noble Storytime Read by the Author:
<https://youtu.be/3Iqzi99kJi8?si=b2xes17YWgXK13Mg>
- SciShow Kids - Meet the American Bison:
https://youtu.be/2iVO5mkIn1c?si=YAGUFG5ahM_P8pdN

Text to Text Connections:

- *Chez Bob* by Bob Shea
- *Hug Me* by Simona Ciraolo
- *Perfectly Norman* by Tom Percival
- *Bad Seed* by Jory John and illustrated by Pete Oswald
- *I Am Enough* by Grace Byers and illustrated by Keturah A. Bobo
- *Grumpy Monkey* by Susan Lang and illustrated by Max Lang

Created By: Erin Quarterman

Built to Last

Written By: Minh Lê

Illustrated By: Dan Santat

Synopsis: Every creation two friends build together falls apart, except their friendship.

Suggested Reading Date: September (Beginning of School); Feb 17 (Acts of Kindness Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- Makerspace: Upcycling & Lo-Tech Makerspace. Gather household materials & challenge students to create something. <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/upcycling-low-tech-makerspace-mark-schreiber>
- Create a Find-A-Friend Bingo/Scavenger Hunt Activity (e.g. Find a friend who has a dog, likes basketball, etc.)
- Do a Kindness Note activity. Students write anonymous kind words and leave it on other students desks.

Related Websites:

- Author's Website: <https://minhlebooks.com>
- Illustrator's Website: <https://dansantat.tumblr.com>
- Teaching Expertise Friendship Activity ideas: <https://www.teachingexpertise.com/sel/find-a-friend-activity-for-kids/>
- Random House Activity Sheets: <https://randomhouse.app.box.com/s/92t76qfeom9nppkrd4q13l1i7jz5joyt>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Friends are Friends, Forever* by Dane Liu
- *Don't Hug Doug (He Doesn't Like It)* by Carrie Finison
- *Someone Builds the Dream* by Lisa Wheeler

Created By: Roman Maunupau

Cookie Time

Written and Illustrated By: Jessie Sima

Synopsis: Eager to eat their cookies, siblings Kat and Ari decide to build a time machine, but they soon discover some things are worth waiting for.

Suggested Reading Date: Before a break or fun activity; Anytime.

Activity Descriptions:

- Makerspace: Get cardboard boxes and have kids (individually or in groups) create their own time machines.
- Draw a picture of yourself in a time that you'd choose to visit if you had your own time machine.
- Discuss what it means to wait for good things instead of rushing them.
- Discuss the scientific process, especially having a constant and variable. Make a batch of cookies with one change (ex: white vs brown sugar, wheat vs gluten-free flour) and compare how they come out. Or grow bean seeds and change one variable (growing medium, light level, etc.).

Related Websites:

- Author Website: <https://www.jessiesima.com/>
- Free printable activities: https://d28hgpr8am2if.cloudfront.net/tagged_assets/19140694/9781665936743_as_cookie%20time.pdf
- Jessie Sima Reading Cookie Time: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80-0LyIQ9q4>
- Reading Guide: <https://www.rif.org/sites/default/files/documents/2024/08/22/RAG%20Cookie%20Time.pdf>
- Podcast interview with Jessie Sima: <https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/books-kids-amp/jessie-sima-cookie-time-WOtLxsn2EyR/>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Bilal Cooks Daal* by Aisha Saeed
- *Ice Cream Face* by Heidi Woodward Sheffield
- *Masala Chai, Fast and Slow* by Rajani LaRocca
- *Oh No! Not Again!* by Mac Barnett
- *It's Not a Bed, It's a Time Machine* by Mickey Rapkin
- *T Rex Time Machine* by Jared Chapman

Created By: Amelia Lincoln Ecevedo

A Crocodile Should Never Skip Breakfast

Written and Illustrated By: Colleen Larmour

Synopsis: Croc is going to have to work on an empty stomach, with loads of animals on his back. Will he ever make it to lunch?

Suggested Reading Date: November 5 (National Donut Day); November 9 (National Patience Day); June 17 (World Croc Day).

Activity Descriptions:

- Graphing. Create a chart of food students eat for breakfast. (Watch the breakfast video below)
- SEL. Discuss how people feel when they are hungry. How do you feel?
- Research Crocodiles using databases and nonfiction books. What do they eat?
- Career: Investigate Washington State Ferry jobs. What positions are needed? What experience do you need? Etc. Search "Washington State Ferries Jobs" for videos or see below.

Related Websites:

- Colleen Larmour, author website: <https://colleenlarmour.com/>
- Kids Try Breakfast from around the world (5:07): <https://youtu.be/m5kGVV8AA0I>
- King5, Video: Process of becoming a WSF captain (3:25) https://youtu.be/DWpi_Q_LsPc
- WSF Recruitment Campaign Video (1:02) <https://youtu.be/h3nxf0R895k>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Mrs. Chicken and the Hungry Crocodile* by Won-Ldy Paye & Margaret Lippert
- *Chez Bob* by Bob Shea
- *If You Ever Want to Bring an Alligator to School, Don't* by Elise Parsley
- *Counting Crocodiles* by Judy Sierra

Created By: Dave Sonnen

A Flicker of Hope: A Story of Migration

Written By: Cynthia Harmony

Illustrated By: Devon Holzwarth

Synopsis: The story of a girl waiting for her Papa to return when the monarch butterflies fly south to their home in Mexico.

Suggested Reading Date: Last week of October (Dia De Los Muertos); March 14 (Butterfly Day); March (National Agriculture Month)

Activity Descriptions:

- Makerspace: Dia De Los Muertos Crafts: <https://growingupbilingual.com/25-easy-day-dead-diy-crafts/>
- Map the migration route of monarchs: <https://butterfly.nwf.org/>
- Create a food garden: <https://kidsgardening.org/seeds-of-success-toolkit/>

Related Websites:

- Author's Website: <https://www.cynthiaharmony.com/>
- Illustrators Website: <https://www.devonholzwarth.com/>
- National Geographic Kids – Learn about butterflies or just watch the short Amazing Animals Monarch Butterflies video found below the text:
<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/facts/monarch-butterfly>
- Wild Kratts Episode about Migrating Butterflies - 26 min video with Venn Diagram printable: <https://kcts9.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/2535c4cf-56a5-48eb-89f1-99b9f6e687df/2535c4cf-56a5-48eb-89f1-99b9f6e687df/>
- American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture - Learning Resources:
<https://www.agfoundation.org/resources/search?search=&limit=12&catCost%5B0%5D=5997&page=1>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Tomás and the Library Lady* by Pat Mora & Raul Colón
- *My Two Border Towns* by David Bowles & Erika Meza
- *Butterflies are Pretty...Gross* by Rosemary Mosco & Jacob Souva

Created By: Roman Maunupau

I Know How to Draw an Owl

Written By: Hilary Horder Hippely
Illustrated By: Matt James

Synopsis: Belle draws the best owl in class, but she doesn't say why: she sees them at night while her mother and her sleep in their car.

Suggested Reading Date: November (National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, week prior to Thanksgiving); February (Canned Food Month)

Activity Descriptions:

- Help students become more aware of what their home means to them. Link what their home means to them to how they might feel if they did not have a home.
- Explain what "acts of kindness" mean and create a list for students to spread kindness.
- Ask the students how they can welcome new students to their classroom and school.
- Help students to realize that despite differences, people experience many of the same feelings.
- Conclude discussions of houselessness with ideas about how students and communities can help people who don't have a home, such as a canned food or clothing drive that benefits local food banks and shelters.
- Have students do owl research in books or in your online databases.
- Create owl puppets.
- Makerspace: Create a collage owl with torn construction paper or cardboard owls.

Related Websites:

- Author website, Hilary Horder Hippely: <https://www.hilaryhorderhippely.com/>
- Illustrator website, Matt James: <https://www.mattjamesillustration.ca/>
- 2-3, How to draw an owl: https://youtu.be/wsDQNYAOitU?si=vn3uy6vIUOK9E_cZ
- K-1, How to draw an owl: <https://youtu.be/J4KCCwd2wF4?si=IAcNYyaBkF8xBs6d>

Text to Text Connections:

- *I See You* by Michael Genhart
- *Still a Family* by Brenda Reeves Sturgis
- *Home* by Tonya Lippert
- *Mutt Dog* by Stephen Michael King
- *Owl Sees Owl* by Laura Godwin

Created By: Jerilyn Gerhardstein

I'm Sorry You Got Mad

Written By: Kyle Lukoff

Illustrated By: Julie Kwon

Synopsis: When Jack is asked by his teacher to write (and re-write) an apology letter to Zoe for knocking down her castle, he learns that repairing hurt means more than saying "I'm sorry." Told through a series of letters, funny and relatable illustrations provide a deeper layer of context.

Suggested Reading Date: September or October (Beginning of School Year)

Activity Descriptions:

- Discuss: Share the three-part apology: Acknowledge, Apologize, Act.
- Write: Invite students to write posters that teach the three-part apology, that can be displayed near a peace table or other conflict resolution spot in the classroom or library.
- Create: Invite students to make a comic featuring a conflict they have experienced at school. Draw the conflict and the resolution, using the three part apology above.
- Role play: Invite to role play conflicts they've experienced at school, then act out the repair process.

Related Websites:

- Author website: <https://www.kylelukoff.com/>
- Illustrator website: <http://www.juliekwonart.com/im-sorry-you-got-mad>
- I'm Sorry You Got Mad Comic Template:
https://wala.memberclicks.net/assets/Book_Award/WCCPBA/I%27m%20Sorry%20You%20Got%20Mad%20Activity%20Page.pdf

Text to Text Connections:

- *I'm Sorry* by Michael Ian Black and Debbie Ridpath Ohi
- *How to Apologize* by David LaRochelle and Mike Wohnoutka

Created By: Abigail Levin

Jump for Joy

Written By: Karen Gray Ruelle

Illustrated By: Hadley Hooper

Synopsis: A child named Joy wants a dog and a dog named Jump wants a child, until they find each other.

Suggested Reading Date: August 26 (National Dog Show); February (Westminster Dog Show); April 30 (National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- What is joy? How do you show this emotion? Strike a pose that expresses joy. Jump.
- Joy makes dogs out of snow, sand, and other materials. What materials have you used to make art? What else could you try to use?
- Describe the perfect pet.
- What is the longest you've waited? Make an illustrated timeline of your wait.
- How does the book represent the seasons?
- Does your name have meaning, like 'jump' or 'joy'?
- Rewrite a story using 2 narrative perspectives, like Joy's and Jump's.
- Bring in dogs for kids to meet: <https://www.marinhumane.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Jumping-for-Joy-Week-4-Lesson-Plan.pdf>
- Makerspace: Make an animal out of transient materials (leaves, pine needles, sand, rubber bands, etc.) or collage with other media to illustrate a season.
- Makerspace: Gather lots of magazines you can cut up. After looking at the cover, see if students can "write" their names using pictures of things that look like letters.

Related Websites:

- Author's website: <https://karenruelle.com/>
- Jump for Joy Book Trailer - Penguin Random House Publishers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvmjz6BwBbE>
- Jump for Joy Coloring Page: <https://astrapublishinghouse.com/resources/jump-for-joy-coloring-page/>
- National Dog Day Video: <https://vimeo.com/445462691>
- Snow Sculptures - Smithsonian Magazine: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/snow-carvers-create-massive-sculptures-wisconsin-180958082/>
- Sand sculptures: <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/wacky-weekend/article/sand-sculptures?scrlbrkr=f0c9db01>
- Constellations: Connect the Dots in the Sky! - SciShow Kids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sZ15SUeS9w>

Text to Text Connections:

- Any dog books in your collection
- *Rescue and Jessica* by Jessica Kensky and Patrick Downes

Created By: Jodie Purcell

Log Life

Written and Illustrated By: Amy Hevron

Synopsis: Discover the ecosystem of a nurse log and its 1,000 year lifecycle, as it becomes a home for many different organisms and forest critters.

Suggested Reading Date: March 21 (International Day of Forests)

Activity Descriptions:

- Illustrate food webs that can be found on nurse logs, such as fungi, snails, and salamanders.
- Mammals and amphibians live in nurse logs. What are the predators for these critters?
- Douglas Fir trees in the Pacific Northwest can live up to 1,000 years and take centuries to decompose! Create a timeline with illustrations of the process.
- Create a diorama of a nurse log in the rainforest with found materials in nature.
- Create a poster of the roles of decomposers, producers, and consumers on the nurse log
- Makerspace: Create a miniature rainforest in "eco-bottles."

Related Websites:

- Author Website, Amy Hevron: <https://amyhevron.com/>
- *Log Life* read by Amy Hevron: <https://youtu.be/NRIIn6nXV8?si=afOVUmwf7c8itX0D>
- Quinault Rainforest Loop - Washington Trails Association: <https://www.wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/quinault-rainforest-nature-loop>
- Nature - National Park Service, Olympic National Park: <https://www.nps.gov/olym/learn/nature/index.htm#:~:text=Diversity%20is%20the%20hallmark%20of,old%2Dgrowth%20temperate%20rain%20forest>
- Ecosystem Processes Related to Wood Decay by Bruce Marcot: https://www.fs.usda.gov/pnw/pubs/pnw_rn576.pdf
- Earth Science Picture of the Day - Student links for ecology of a nurse log in the Hoh Rainforest: <https://epod.usra.edu/blog/2019/07/nurse-logs.html>
- Northwest Travel Magazine, Olympic Rainforest: https://www.nwtravelmag.com/outdoor-adventures/the-eternal-rainforests-in-washington-s-olympic-peninsula/article_7c0cc91e-54ec-591e-9029-bb131c1a5393.html

Text to Text Connections:

- *A Log's Life* by Wendy Pfeffer
- *Can You Hug a Forest?* by Frances Gilbert
- *Forest Explorer: a life-size field guide* by Nic Bishop
- *Forest Magic: a guidebook for little woodland explorers* by Sarah Grindler
- *When a Tree Falls: nurse logs and their incredible forest power* by Kirsten Pendreigh

Created By: Jerilyn Gerhardstein

The Man Who Didn't Like Animals

Written By: Deborah Underwood

Illustrated By: LeUyen Pham

Synopsis: Once, a man who loved his tidy home and didn't like animals was visited by a cat who was then followed by more and more animals until he needed a bigger, different space.

Suggested Reading Date: October 12 (National Farmer's Day); April 11 (National Pet Day); May (National Pet Month)

Activity Descriptions:

- Suggestion: Do NOT read the sentence on the cover that says this is the story of Old MacDonald – let the students figure it out.
- Ask who has a pet. Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of pet ownership.
- Have children name their favorite songs or nursery rhymes ("Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," etc). Sing some of them, including "Old Macdonald" after reading the story.
- Use the book as a jumping off point for research on nursery rhymes or songs.
- Make a pet care guidebook (Research animal adoption, specific things certain animals need, etc)
- Discuss Prequels - this is a prequel to a well-known song. Choose another nursery rhyme or song and make up what happened before, or have children share any origin stories.
- Illustrations Study: Notice how the house changes, pictures on walls, etc.
- Review animal sounds.
- Discuss changed opinions: "Have you changed your opinions about (food, or a book, a place)?"
- Does this book have a good title? Does it fit the ending? What would you title this book?
- Makerspace: Design a space with blocks or other materials that could safely hold several different animals.

Related Websites:

- Author Website: <https://www.deborahunderwoodbooks.com/>
- Activity Guide: <https://b0f646cfbd7462424f7a-f9758a43fb7c33cc8adda0fd36101899.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/activity-guides/AG-9780358567134.pdf>
- Interview with the illustrator, LeUyen Pham (use first minute): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVIY81Yv1H4>
- "Old Macdonald Had a Farm" Song "No Copyright Music": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaQk_sds7Ek-

Text to Text Connections:

- *Jabari Jumps* by Gaia Cornwall
- *Not a Box* by Antoinette Portis
- *A Creature of Habit* by Jennifer E. Smith
- *Mercy Watson* series by Kate DiCamillo

Created By: Jodie Purcell

The Midnight Panther

Written and Illustrated By: Poonam Mistry

Synopsis: Panther loves the rainforest, but sometimes he feels as though he doesn't belong in the same way the other animals do--especially the other big cats. Panther desperately wishes he had the same bold qualities as Tiger, Lion, and Leopard. Through some adventures, Panther finally discovers his own strength and beauty among the stars in the night sky.

Suggested Reading Date: October 29 (National Cat Day); November 29 (International Jaguar Day); February 13 (Self-Love Day); May 3 (International Leopard Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- Discuss: Read the dedication at the beginning of the book: "to everyone who was ever made to feel different." At the end of the book, discuss the dedication. What does the dedication mean? What does it mean to feel like you belong?
- Create a display: Use gold and silver paper and have students write what makes them unique to display in the library; alternately, use black paper and have the students write their words with gold or silver markers.
- Art Style: Learn about Kalumkari Art - <https://www.childrensmuseumofindia.com/post/kalamkari-art>
- Watch a tutorial to learn about the Kalumkari Art Style (perhaps making a bookmark using the simple video tutorial): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSyO7fDM-pg>
- Research the similarities and differences in Big Cats: <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/big-cat-week>
- Learn about the genetics of Black Panthers: <https://www.britannica.com/animal/black-panther-mammal>

Related Websites:

- Author Website: <https://www.poonam-mistry.com/>
- Research and Discussion Questions from The Carnegies Award (formerly Greenaway): https://yotocarnegies.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/The_Midnight_Panther_Shortlist_Pack1.pdf
- SciShow Kids: Roar! Meet the Big Cats! - https://youtu.be/8cQmky_wQao?si=pYrdNCHsx395_8m

Text to Text Connections:

- *I Am a Cat* by Galia Bernstein
- *A Boy and a Jaguar* by Alan Rabinowitz and illustrated by Catia Chien
- *Eyes That Kiss in the Corners* by Joanna Ho and illustrated by Dung Ho
- *Flat Cat* by Tara Lazar
- *Big* by Vashti Harrison

Created By: Erin Quarterman

My Friend Andy

Written and Illustrated By: Emma Chinnery

Synopsis: The big city is a scary place for Fluffy, the little lost dog--until she makes a friend who will help her in this carefully observed story that challenges readers to re-evaluate their perceptions of homelessness.

Suggested Reading Date: October 10 (World Homeless Day); December 21 (National Homeless Persons' Remembrance Day); August - 3rd Saturday (International Homeless Animals' Day); November – The week before Thanksgiving (Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week)

Activity Descriptions:

- Discuss how Andy and his dad helped Fluffy and how Fluffy's owners showed their appreciation.
- Discuss what Fluffy's owners did when Fluffy went missing.
- Tips for talking to kids about homelessness:
<https://www.humankindwichita.org/teaching-kids-about-homelessness/>
[https://blanchethouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UnderstandingHomlessnessForKids- BlanchetHouse-1-1.pdf](https://blanchethouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UnderstandingHomlessnessForKids-BlanchetHouse-1-1.pdf)
- Makerspace: Have students create cards or care packages to give to the homeless (or deliver to a homeless shelter).

Related Websites:

- Author's Website: <https://www.emmachinnery.com/>
- Coloring Page: <https://storage.googleapis.com/lr-assets/kids/kids-zone/activities/2024/1708520603-my-friend-andy-colouring-in-sheet.pdf>
- Stray Puppy Gets Rescued: https://youtu.be/V_t6rD6Pelo
- National Alliance to End Homelessness - Parents & Kids Talk about Homelessness: <https://youtu.be/CX4TzWdDAFY>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Can I Be Your Dog?* by Tory Cummings
- *Mutt Dog* by Stephen Michael King
- *Maddi's Fridge* by Lois Brandt
- *Alfie* by Thyra Heder

Created By: Alicia Rogers

Narwhal: Unicorn of the Arctic

Written By: Candace Fleming

Illustrated By: Deena So'Oteh

Synopsis: When winter ice covers the Arctic Ocean, a narwhal pokes his head through a patch of open water, his tusk, a six-foot long tooth, pointed to the sky. Join this mammal as he jousts with another narwhal, floats with his pod, and uses echolocation to find his prey. When warmer weather arrives, he will migrate towards summer ground. But he must be careful! Predators, orcas, and polar bears will be hungry and looking for a meal ... How will the narwhal escape? Will he be able to return to the winter bay?

Suggested Reading Date: National Narwhal Day (April 22); World Aquatic Day (April 3)

Activity Descriptions:

- Introduce/review onomatopoeia (sound words) throughout the book
- Research narwhals using a database, non-fiction book, or website like National Geographic
- Discuss animal adaptations & predators
- Makerspace:
 - Make a narwhal out of Legos;
 - Design a habitat using different types of resources, i.e. Keva planks, Legos, blocks, etc.

Related Websites:

- Author website: <https://candacefleming.com/>
- Illustrator website: <https://deenasooteh.com/books>
- National Geographic Narwhals: <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/narwhal/>;
- Interview with the author from "School Library Journal:" <https://afuse8production.slj.com/2024/09/26/heck-yeah-collapsible-ribs-a-talk-with-candace-fleming-about-her-incredible-new-title-narwhal-unicorn-of-the-arctic/>
- World Wildlife Federation - Narwhals: <https://wwf.ca/species/narwhals/>
- Narwhal Activities: <https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/stem-narwhal-activities-ocean/>
- Natural Museum of History of Natural History - Video on Animal Adaptations: <https://naturalhistory.si.edu/education/teaching-resources/life-science/explore-animal-adaptations>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Not a Monster* by Claudia Guadalupe Lopez
- *Narwhal and Jelly* by Ben Clanton
- *Buffalo Fluffalo* by Bess Kalb
- *Knight Owl and Early Bird* by Christopher Denise

Created By: Jolyn Danielson

Parrotfish Has a Superpower

Written By: Jill Esbaum

Illustrated By: Bob Shea

Synopsis: A funny and fictional introduction to factual information about the parrotfish and its incredible somewhat-squirmy superpower.

Suggested Reading Date: November 21 (International Fish Day); April 22 (Earth Day); June 1 (Reef Awareness Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- Use the “True or False?” page at the end of the text to have kids engage in learning a little more about the parrotfish.
- Discuss fiction and nonfiction - what makes this fictional? What are some facts that are shared?
- Fill out a note taking sheet about parrotfish.
- Use this book as a jump off to explore databases or select websites.
- Practice questioning by asking kids what the book makes them wonder?
- Share a video listed below to learn more.
- Makerspace: Collection of activities including, notetakers, an “unplugged” coding activity, and puzzles are available in the Book Links’ Classroom Companion linked below.

Related Websites:

- Jill Esbaum author website: <https://www.jillesbaum.com/>
- Bob Shea illustrator website: <https://www.bobshea.com/>
- Johnathan Bird’s Blue World Extra - video on parrotfish poop: https://youtu.be/BDr4Gs_GxsA?si=nm5gCsefGNU8u9aZ
- PBS Gross Science - sand creation and other facts: <https://youtu.be/1SfxgY1dIM4?si=6w-l1Cat6KHCA7j2>
- Book Links’ Classroom Companion - a rich collection of classroom support materials and activities for the book: https://www.thebooklinksllc.com/files/ugd/1dff02_84d6b1fc23a34ab08c4450e730cd0cab.pdf

Text to Text Connections:

- *Mysterious Sea Bunny* by Peter Raymundo
- *Agatha May and the Anglerfish* by Nora Morrison & Jessie Anne Foley
- *Butterflies are Pretty Gross* by Rosemary Mosco
- *Nugget and Fang* by Tami Sauer

Created By: Paula Wittmann

Tate's Wild Rescue

Written By: Jenny Turnbull

Illustrated By: Izzy Burton

Synopsis: When Tate sends letters to a variety of wild animals offering to be their best friend and protector, none of them accept her proposal, but just as she is about to give up, she receives a letter of her own.

Suggested Reading Date: October 4 (World Animal Day); October 7 (World Habitat Day); April (National Letter Writing Month); April 11 (National Pet Day); May 20 (National Rescue Dog Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- Author/Illustrator Resource Kit: <https://jennyturnbull.com/for-parents-and-educators/>
- Become a Wildlife Warrior: <https://wildlifewarriors.org.au/get-involved/>
- Research animals and their habitats
- Adopt an animal: <https://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/>
- Write about how to take care of an animal
- Makerspace: Design a habitat for an animal using Legos, Keva planks, etc.

Related Websites:

- Author Website: <https://jennyturnbull.com/>
- Illustrator Website: <https://izzyburton.co.uk/>
- The Humane Society - <https://www.thehumanesociety.org/>
- American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals - <https://www.asPCA.org/>
- World Wildlife Fund - <https://www.worldwildlife.org/>
- Kids National Geographic - <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Can I Be Your Dog* by Troy Cummings
- *Shelter Pet Squad* by Peggy Lord
- *Lost Cat* by Roger Mader
- *Mutt Dog* by Stephen Michael King
- *Nubs* by Major Brian Dennis, Kirby Larson, & Mary Nethery
- *Two Bobbies* by Kirby Larson and Mary Nethery
- *Ivan, The Remarkable Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla* by Katherine Applegate

Created By: Jolyn Danielson

The Teeny-Weeny Unicorn

Written and Illustrated By: Shawn Harris

Synopsis: A teeny-weeny unicorn feels like he is belittled by his brothers and sisters because of his size and runs away from home but after meeting a gnome he starts to wonder if he might just be the right size after all.

Suggested Reading Date: April 9 (National Unicorn Day); May 20 (World Metrology Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- Create a list of character traits for the teeny-weeny unicorn and/or the gnome.
- Have kids share a time that they were too little to do something.
- Look at size comparisons of things such as animals - this is a great time to share books of infographics.
- The gnome uses some funny sayings such as, "Sorry doesn't feed the bullfrog" and "That's the knock on it." Discuss what they mean and share other sayings and idioms.
- Booktalk or highlight books with mythical creatures.
- Makerspace: Bring out the rulers and/or scales and practice measuring things.
- Makerspace: Have kids experiment with using chalk pastels.

Related Websites:

- Author website: <https://www.shawnharris.info/>
- Making the Teeny-Weeny Unicorn - Shawn Harris:
<https://youtu.be/kCP8cbeVHo?si=OA1MEcc6yCLYRW4->
- Animal Size Comparison Video - Global Data:
<https://youtu.be/mRfJls03IT4?si=eIx9T2hZF1vj9LyB>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Unicorns are the Worst* by Alex Willan
- *You Don't Want a Unicorn* by Ame Dykeman
- *Animals by the Numbers* by Steve Jenkins
- *The Teeny-Weeny Unicorns Great Big Wish* by Shawn Harris

Created By: Paula Wittmann

The Together Tree

Written By: Aisha Saeed

Illustrated By: LeUyen Pham

Synopsis: At his new school, quiet Rumi feels small and unwelcome, and a few kids bully him for being different and wearing bright shoes. He finds refuge beneath the old willow tree by the playground and builds his own world of hope and dreams of belonging. One day, when Rumi is made a target again, one of his classmates bravely steps in to defend him. In that moment of solidarity, Rumi's class finally realizes that all are welcome, and they create a space they can all play in--together.

Suggested Reading Date: September (Beginning of School Year); October 10 (World Inclusion Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- Makerspace: Create a space on the playground for kids to sit if they are looking for playmates, like a Buddy Bench. After the spot goes in, be sure to check on it at recess and invite kids there to play with you!
- Make signs with welcoming and inclusive phrases to hang in the classroom or hallway.
- Practice what to say if you see someone being unkind.
- As a class, brainstorm some words that encourage kind behavior (kindness, empathy, inclusion, etc.) Take sidewalk chalk out to the playground and write them in large block letters, and have kids work together to fill them in.

Related Websites:

- Author website: <https://aishasaeed.com/the-together-tree/>
- Interview with Aisha Saeed: <https://www.kidlitincolor.com/blog/interview-with-nyt-bestselling-author-aisha-saeed>
- A Guide to Using Books About Feelings and Emotions: https://d28hqpri8am2if.cloudfront.net/tagged_assets/21185790/9781534462960_cg_a%20guide%20to%20using%20books%20about%20feelings%20and%20emotions.pdf

Text to Text Connections:

- *The Arabic Quilt* by Aya Khalil
- *Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *I Walk With Vanessa* by Kerascoët
- *The Big Umbrella* by Amy June Bates
- *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig
- *Tomorrow I'll Be Kind* by Jessica Hische
- *Every Little Kindness* by Marta Bartolj
- *One* by Kathryn Otoshi

Created By: Amelia Lincoln Ecevedo

Ursula Upside Down

Written and Illustrated By: Corey R. Tabor

Synopsis: Ursula is a happy catfish, swimming through a shimmering river with weeds waving above and a sky full of scrumptious bugs below. Then one question turns her world upside down. Is left right? Is right wrong? Which way even is up?

Suggested Reading Date: January 31 (Upside Down Day, aka Backward Day); June 25 (National Catfish Day)

Activity Descriptions:

- Have students draw a scene from the book as Ursula sees it—upside down!
- Have students reenact scenes from the story or come up with their own “upside down” adventures for Ursula.
- Ask: "Would you rather swim upside down like Ursula or float right-side up?"
- Research other animals that spend time upside down (bats, monkeys, snakes, etc.)
- Discuss gravity and how we know that our right side up is right.
- Make a chart of how Ursula feels at different points in the story. Discuss what might make her feel that way and how others reacted to her.
- Give students mirrors and ask them to draw or write something while only looking in the mirror—just like Ursula seeing things upside down!
- Makerspace: Make a fish out of a plastic bottle and use some type of weight to make it swim upside down, or make a fish out of a paper plate and hang it upside down.

Related Websites:

- Author’s Website: <https://www.coreyrtabor.com/>
- Book Trailer: <https://youtu.be/nvIHBsqqucE>
- Author Interview: <https://afuse8production.slj.com/2024/05/09/the-constant-change-of-perspectives-a-qa-with-corey-tabor/>
- Upside-Down Catfish Doesn't Care What You Think - PBS Deep Look: <https://youtu.be/eurCBOJMrsE>
- Upside Down Catfish Facts - Animal Fact Files Video: <https://youtu.be/4DeN7GJdM0c>
- Publisher Activity Sheet: <https://b0f646cfbd7462424f7a-f9758a43fb7c33cc8adda0fd36101899.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/activity-guides/AG-9780063275560.pdf>

Text to Text Connections:

- *Not a Monster* by Claudia Guadalupe Martinez
- *Except Antarctica* by Todd Sturgell
- *Creature Features* by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page
- *Cyril and Pat* by Emily Gravett

Created By: Alicia Rogers

We Are Definitely Human

Written & Illustrated by X. Fang

Synopsis: This story revolves around three strangers who show up unexpectedly to Mr. Li's farm with "car trouble." Are they aliens? Are they from "Europe?" Despite their unusual appearance and strange behavior, they're treated with kindness by the local community.

Suggested Reading Date: November 13 (World Kindness Day); February 10 (Extraterrestrial Culture Day)

Activity Descriptions

- Discuss: What are some ways that Mr. and Mrs. Li and the townspeople made the visitors feel welcome? Discuss how this story's message of acceptance can be applied to various social situations.
- Write: Have students invent their own "definitely human" characters engaging in "normal" human activities. Describe the things they are doing.
- Draw: Invite students to draw portraits of the visitors, what they imagine their home to be like, or what activities they imagine them doing
- Create: Challenge students to design a spaceship using paper plates, clay and/or other materials

Related Websites

- Author Website: <https://www.xfang.studio/>
- Extraterrestrial Culture Day: <https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/extraterrestrial-culture-day/>
- World Kindness Day: <https://worldkindness.org/creative-and-impactful-world-kindness-day-activities-for-students/>

Text to Text Connections

- *How to Welcome an Alien* by Rebecca Klemptner
- *Your Alien, Your Alien Returns* by Tammi Sauer
- *Life on Mars* by Jon Agee
- *The Alien Next Door* series by A.I. Newton

Created By: Abigail Levin