

Parent Guide to SeeSaw

Grades K–1 Your resource for advice, ideas, and more for your beginning reader

May
2009

Get your
Parent Guide to SeeSaw
Every Month
at www.scholastic.com/read.

Editors' Picks of the Month

Look for these titles in your SeeSaw
May Book Club flyer.

There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Shell!

by Lucille Colandro

Who It's For:

Everyone who likes to laugh; kids who like
rhyme and repetition.

Why We Chose It:

With rollicking, rhyming text
and funny illustrations, this
lively, sun-soaked version
of the classic song has
tremendous appeal.

What Parents Say:

"Colandro's done lots of 'old
lady' books—and Scholastic
Book Clubs has helped us get
them all!"



Seashore

by Lucy Bowman

Who It's For:

Beginning readers who are curious
about the world around them.

Why We Chose It:

This informative book answers
many questions about the
plants, animals, and weather
patterns found at the shore.

What Parents Say:

"The bright pictures and clear
text allow my child to 'read
for information.'"



Russell and the Lost Treasure

by Rob Scotton

Who It's For:

Fans of *Russell the Sheep*;
parents who like to read
aloud.

Why We Chose It:

We loved the wonderful
artwork and strong story
about our favorite sheep!

What Parents Say:

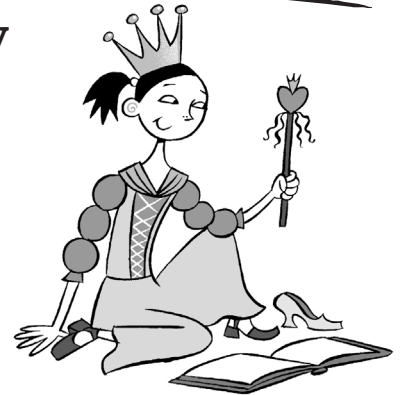
"It's fun to read this aloud—and the
details in the pictures are hilarious!"



Get Creative With Literacy

Artistic activities do more than stretch your child's
imagination — they give her a chance to flex skills
she will need as a strong reader. Try these creative
literacy boosts together:

- **Introduce visual arts.** We often think that
reading is only about printed words, but a
key to understanding text is being able to
visualize it. Have your child draw, paint, or
mold from clay scenes from a story you've read
with her. Specifically, ask her to create a scene
not illustrated in the book. This will help her
develop visualization skills. Does she
depict the character/setting as the author
describes? Can she explain the scene
she's depicted as well as what happens
before and after? Encourage her to
imagine details (wardrobe, weather, etc.)
that the author doesn't describe.
- **Get dramatic.** Give your budding
thespian simple costumes and props,
and let him act out a fairy tale or
nursery rhyme. He may only be able to
remember a few lines by heart, so instead of using a script, invite him to make
up lines as he goes along. This helps him learn the conventions of conversation
and expands vocabulary. Acting out a story also teaches story sequence, which is
an important foundation for reading comprehension.
- **Put it to music.** Like poetry, songs let your child test the boundaries of language
and self-expression. Build her sense of rhythm and boost vocabulary by putting
new lyrics to a familiar song, such as "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Read books
about music or musicians, such as *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop*, and let her use
homemade instruments to imitate the music described in the story.



Parent to Parent

May 16 is Biographer's Day. Read
the Caldecott Award-winning
biography *Snowflake Bentley*
with your child.

Ask an Expert

**Can you please explain why
storybooks (as opposed to
textbooks or reading primers)
should be used for a school
literacy program?**

Storybooks introduce children to real literature, rich and diverse stories and characters,
and different genres. Even though many of these books contain words and complexity
that might be considered above their age or reading level, many children learn how to
read these books easily because they are motivated by the content.

These books also introduce young readers to the wonderful world of words. You
have probably heard your child delight in finding and using a new, big word (such as
tyrannosaurus) over and over again. Many children can read dinosaur words before they
can read color words. Why? Because they are fascinated with dinosaurs!

Literature also can introduce children to many different kinds of books. Children enjoy
nonfiction as well as fiction and poetry. Perhaps best of all, books introduce children to
the art of different authors and illustrators. This helps children learn the craft of writing
and illustrating and encourages them to become not only readers but also writers.

Meet Our Expert: Ellen Booth Church is a columnist and consultant for Scholastic's *Parent
& Child Magazine*.

Messy Is Good!

Five ways to encourage your preschooler's innate creativity

1. Lower your standards of cleanliness and order. For the most part, kids aren't neat. Give them an area where they can make a mess and don't have to clean up right away. (Think garage, basement, outdoors.)
2. Encourage each creative effort regardless of outcome. Never criticize your child's art. Do not impose "sense" on her pictures. At the same time, don't give false praise. "Tell me about that" is always a good starting point.
3. Be a family that reads and tells stories. Encourage kids to make drawings to go with their stories and stories to go with their drawings.
4. Provide toys that encourage open-ended play and individual expression.
5. Use nontraditional materials to make a work of art. Pour birdseed in your driveway, and let the kids manipulate it. Fill the wading pool with sand. Give kids empty toilet paper and paper-towel rolls and a roll of masking tape, and see what they create.

Portable "Best-Of" Binder

Make a traveling exhibition of your child's most prized works.

What you need:

- three-ring binder
- plastic sheet protectors
- sequins, craft foam, glitter, beads, pipe cleaners, and other craft materials
- glue

What to do:

1. With your child, discuss the subjects he's learning about in school. Explore what he likes about reading, writing, math, social studies, science, art, and music.
2. Make special sleeves that will frame the best examples of his schoolwork. Design subject-specific frames that will highlight what makes each subject enjoyable. Decorate the sheet protectors with sequins, craft foam, and other craft materials. Make sure to specify what subject the frame is celebrating (Best of Math Class, Best of Art Class). Don't forget to decorate the cover of the notebook too!
3. Whenever your child brings home a noteworthy test, quiz, report, drawing, or other paper, have him put it into the binder. You can collect many in one sleeve or make a separate frame for every paper.
4. Periodically take time to look over the binder and admire the hard work that went into both the schoolwork and the frame that surrounds it.

Daily Reading Fun

As May flowers start to bloom, take your child on a nature walk. Bring along art supplies so she can make a painting or drawing of the bugs, trees, birds, and spring flowers you encounter. Then, using a kid-friendly field guide, help her identify the flora and fauna she spotted.

Find More Titles in Kids' Favorite Series

Now, you and your child can find more titles in your favorite book series online – at the Scholastic Book Clubs Series Headquarters. From Clifford to the Magic School Bus and beyond, the Series Headquarters puts all kids' best-loved characters all in one place – and all at low Scholastic Book Clubs pricing. And books are delivered right to the classroom, just like always! Visit www.scholastic.com/serieshq.

Kids Read for Kids in Need

Scholastic Book Clubs' ClassroomsCare is a philanthropic literacy campaign designed to teach children the joys and importance of reading and giving. Students in classrooms across America are encouraged to read 100 books in order to trigger a 1 MILLION BOOK donation by ClassroomsCare! Since 2001, ClassroomsCare has donated 7 MILLION books through Literacy Partners such as Save the Children, Reach Out and Read, and First Book, among others.

This year, for the first time, participating teachers and students will be able to choose where the books they "earn" go. They will have dozens of charities serving many different populations to choose from. This shift in the donation process is aimed at strengthening the connection between the kids who are reading and the kids who are receiving the books.

You can visit www.scholastic.com/classroomscare to see how a child you know could make a difference by reading. You can also access resources and curriculum aimed at the ClassroomsCare message -- kids have the power to make a difference and there is nothing more worthwhile than helping others, especially when you are offering the gift of reading.

Did You Know?

When you order, your child's class gets FREE books and resources!

Find out more about leveled reading at www.scholastic.com/yourreader.

About Your Parent Guide to SeeSaw

Your Parent Guide to SeeSaw is produced by the editorial staff at Scholastic.com/parents. For information on how to foster reading at home, age-appropriate booklists, and more, visit www.scholastic.com/read.