

the books of



educators guide

Grades PreK–3

About the Books of Judy Sierra

The rhythmic language of Judy Sierra generates smiles and giggles from young readers, proving that a love of books is contagious. Her characters, whether young or old, human or animal, from this country or others, take us on a journey with words that roll off our tongues, make our bodies move, and teach us lifelong lessons. Join Judy Sierra and her talented illustrators on this journey, and teach your students how much fun reading can be!

Host a Judy Sierra Author Study

Create a special connection with Judy Sierra by using this guide to conduct an author study with your students. Her books, while different in subject, teach students about the power of words. Explore poetry and rhyme using these activities, and watch your classroom come alive with learning. Discussion questions lead to class activities, with an enrichment piece for older or more advanced readers. By allowing your students to share in these literary treasures, you will see them appreciate the talents of Judy Sierra and experiment with words in a whole new way!



Photo © 2009 Christopher Briscoe

Here are a few tips to prepare for your author study:

- Keep Judy Sierra's books on display in the classroom so that students can read them during quiet times.
- Create a classroom bulletin board display with book covers, photos of the author, and biographical information. You can find Judy's author bio at www.randomhouse.com/teachers
- Ask students to keep a list of questions that they would like to ask Judy Sierra. At the end of the author study, encourage students to write her a letter.



Illustrations © 2009 Melissa Sweet



THE SLEEPY LITTLE ALPHABET

A Bedtime Story from Alphabet Town

Illustrated by Melissa Sweet

HC: 978-0-375-84002-9 • GLB: 978-0-375-94002-6

About the Book

What are the little letters in Alphabet Town doing at bedtime? Certainly not sleeping! Follow the capital letter parents as they guide their little ones through their bedtime rituals.



Illustration © 2009 Melissa Sweet.

Lesson 1

Discussion Question: Look at each page of the book together. What items do you see that relate to the letters on the page?

Class Activity (Letter Formation): Have students create their own Alphabet Town. Assign each student a letter, or letters, of the alphabet and have them write it as a capital and lowercase letter. They can decorate their letter page with items/scenes that start with that letter, referring to the book for help. When everyone is finished, ask students to show off their work by lining up in alphabetical order and singing the ABC song together! Post the Alphabet Town in the classroom to use as reference throughout the year.

Enrichment: Students can write their letters in cursive.

Lesson 2

Discussion Question: Re-read the book and make observations about the parents and children. What is different about them?

Class Activity (Letter Recognition): Ask students to draw their family using only the first letter of their last name (capital letters for adults and lowercase letters for children). They can dress the letters to look like the members of their family!

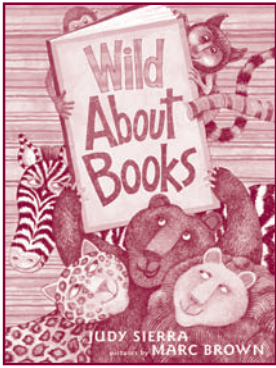
Enrichment: Students can write their letters in cursive.

Lesson 3

Discussion question: Turn to the A and B spread in the book. Which word on the page starts with the letter A? Which word on the page starts with the letter B?

Class Activity (Sight Words): On the board, write each letter of the alphabet. Go through the pages of the book, and have students find words that start with each letter, recording them on the board. As a class, add more words to the list and then post it in the room as a Word Wall. You can continue to add words throughout the year!

Enrichment: Ask students to choose one letter, and have them think of 10 words to add to the list.

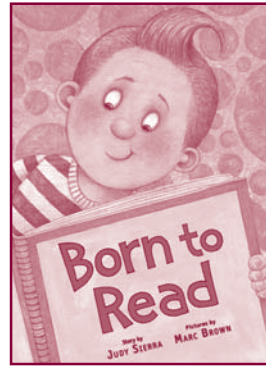


WILD ABOUT BOOKS

Illustrated by Marc Brown

HC: 978-0-375-82538-5
GLB: 978-0-375-92538-2

- An ALA–ALSC Notable Children’s Book
- An Irma S. and James H. Black Award Honor Book
- A National Parenting Publications Award Winner
- An E. B. White Read Aloud Award Winner
- A Book Sense Book of the Year



BORN TO READ

Illustrated by Marc Brown

HC: 978-0-375-84687-8
GLB: 978-0-375-94687-5

About the Book

The librarian and her bookmobile have made a wrong turn, and stumbled into the zoo. But what are books, the animals wonder. They soon find out and learn that there is a perfect book for everyone. The zoo will never be the same again.

Discussion Question: Can animals really read?

Class Activity (Memory/Recall Skills): Reread the story, asking students to pay close attention to the animals’ activities. Create a Memory-like game that matches the animal to its favorite book or activity. Students can play in pairs and test their memory skills. Model good reading practices by going back to the story to check their matches.

Enrichment: Discuss different genres of books. What is their favorite and why?

About the Book

Sam was born to read. He reads everywhere, all of the time, about everything. Just watch what Sam can do with his books as he saves the town and changes his life.

Discussion Question: What does Sam want to be when he grows up?

Class Activity (Career Day): Present the students with the following sentences: I was born to read. What will I grow up to be? Designate a day for your students to come to class dressed as what they want to be when they grow up. Allow them to also bring their favorite book from home to share with the class, to prove that they were born to read and can grow up to be anything!

Enrichment: Keep track of the class’s favorite books on a book chart. Students can refer to this whenever they are looking for a new book.

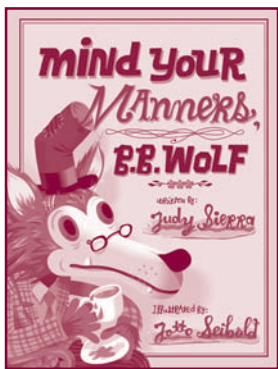
Using these companion books together

Discussion Question: What do Sam and the zoo animals have in common? What do they both love to do?

Class Activity (Art): Ask students to imagine what Sam would do if he lived in the zoo with the animals. Who would he like to spend his time with and why? In the style of illustrator Marc Brown, have students paint a zoo scene that includes a group of animals and Sam together. Be sure all of the characters are reading books!

Enrichment: Students can reverse the activity and paint a scene of the zoo animals coming to live with Sam!





MIND YOUR MANNERS, B. B. WOLF

Illustrated by
J. Otto Seibold

HC: 978-0-375-83532-2
GLB: 978-0-375-93532-9

- A New York Public Library 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing Book
- A National Parenting Publications Honor

About the Book

B. B. Wolf has been invited to a tea party, but doesn't know anything about tea or parties. With the help of his alligator friend, he quickly learns which manners are important. He just has to remember to use them!

Discussion Question: What are manners?

Class Activity (Etiquette): Go through the book as a class and list the good manners followed by B. B. Wolf. Ask the class to expand by adding good manners that they have learned from home or school. Then have a class tea party and allow the students to show off what they have learned!

Enrichment: Create a class etiquette book containing good manners to be used at home and at school.



THELONIUS MONSTER'S SKY-HIGH FLY PIE

Illustrated by
Edward Koren

HC: 978-0-375-83218-5

- An ALA-ALSC Notable Children's Book

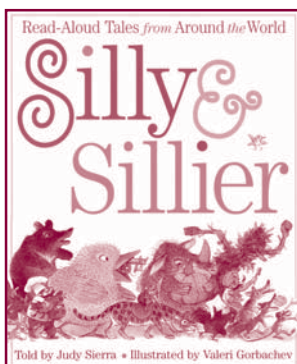
About the Book

Thelonus Monster has a taste for flies! But he needs the advice of a spider to learn how to catch them. What he creates turns out to be an exciting and delicious treat for Thelonus and his friends.

Discussion Question: What is a recipe? Why is a recipe important? Show the class examples of recipes.

Class Activity (How-to Writing): Create a class recipe for a fly pie. Go through the book together and discuss the ingredients and each step of the process. Then have students write these steps as a recipe to bring home for dinner!

Enrichment: Make a fly pie in class using sugar cookie mix.



SILLY & SILLIER Read-Along Tales from Around the World

Illustrated by
Valeri Gorbachev

HC: 978-0-375-80609-4
GLB: 978-0-375-90609-1

About the Book

Immerse yourself in these international stories about friendship, justice, cleverness, and persistence. Each story has a lesson to be learned—one that gives perspective on other countries and cultures.

Discussion Question: Use a map or globe to engage students in discussion about our planet—continents, countries, and bodies of water.

Class Activity (Geography): Before reading each story, locate the country that it is from on a map or globe. Be sure to show its location relative to where you live. Then read each story aloud to the class and determine what lesson is learned by the characters. Keep track of the lessons and the countries they are from on a bulletin board entitled "Lessons from Around the World."

Enrichment: Allow students to browse the library for more books and stories from the country of their choice.





TASTY BABY BELLY BUTTONS

Illustrated by Meilo So

HC: 978-0-679-89369-1

- An ALA-ALSC Notable Children's Book
- An Irma S. and James H. Black Award
- Parents' Choice Silver Honor

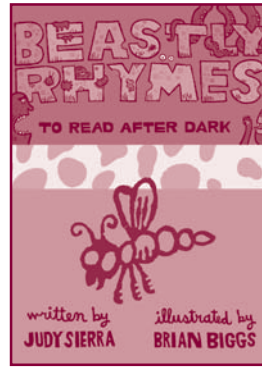
About the Book

This Japanese tale tells of the Oni, giants who steal babies and eat their belly buttons. We follow Uriko-hime and her trusty companions on their adventures, as they stop the Oni and safely return the babies and stolen treasures to their families.

Discussion Question: Discuss the role of each character in the story: Uriko, the Oni, the dog, monkey, and pheasant.

Class Activity (Drama): Ask each student to choose one character from the book to which they can personally relate. Have them make a paper mask of that character. Then reread the story aloud and let the students act out the scenes according to their character mask.

Enrichment: Ask students to add another scene to the story and act it out in front of the class.



BEASTLY RHYMES TO READ AFTER DARK

Illustrated by Brian Biggs

HC: 978-0-375-83747-0

GLB: 978-0-375-93747-7

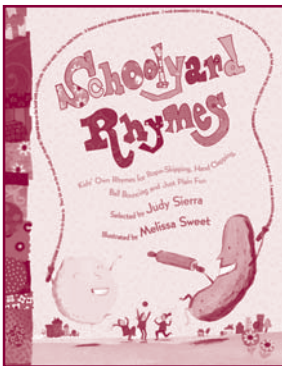
About the Book

The beasts in this book are not ones you would like to meet. They live in toilets and snoop around in the dark, but their rhymes will certainly make you giggle with fright!

Discussion Question: Which of the animals in the book are real and which are imaginary?

Class Activity (Acrostic Poetry): Have students look at the last page of the book, the monster in "Monster Reservoir." Ask each student to create an imaginary name for this beast and write that name vertically on a piece of paper. Next to each letter of the name, they can write a word or phrase that describes the monster. Students can then present their imaginary beasts to the class.

Enrichment: Ask students to use words and phrases that rhyme.



SCHOOLYARD RHYMES

Illustrated by Melissa Sweet

HC: 978-0-375-82516-3

About the Book

All of those silly songs and rhymes that children grow up with are put on paper in this book. Some use a jump rope and others use hand clapping, but all are fun to sing together!

Discussion Question: What is a rhyme?

Class Activity (Rhyming): Play with some of these rhymes as a class. Take out a jump rope or ask students to demonstrate hand clapping. Then ask your students to become playground poets! As a class, younger children can choose their favorite rhyme and teach it to other students at a school assembly. Older children can ask someone at home for a rhyme from their childhood and then teach it to the class.

Enrichment: Each student can choose a rhyme from the book and create a new line or verse to share with the class.