

# Bark, George

## A CLEL Silver Bell Award Book for TALK

by Jules Feiffer  
ISBN-13: 978-0062051851  
HarperCollins, 1999



George, a puppy, can't seem to bark. Instead he makes all sorts of other animal sounds until his mother takes him to the vet to find out why. The animal noises in *Bark, George* are an effective way to explore language sounds with young children, and the silliness of this story and its simple structure create a highly enjoyable reading experience.

### Activity Ideas for *Bark, George*:

- Use die cut shapes, clip art images, stickers, or stamps to create several sets of farm animals from the book—cows, pigs, ducks, and cats. Have the children sort them into piles so all of the cows are together, all of the pigs, and so on. Noticing how objects are similar and different is a skill children will use when they are learning the different letter shapes of the alphabet.
- Play a guessing game with the children. Say, "I am thinking of an animal that goes 'Quack, quack'" and let them tell you who makes that sound. Let them have a turn to give you an animal sound to guess! Playing games with animal sounds helps to build the phonological awareness skills children will use to sound out words when they read.
- Make a George puppet out of a paper bag. Let children choose a color for George and use a crayon to scribble it all over the bag before you draw or glue on ears, nose, and eyes. Holding crayons and making marks are pre-writing skills that prepare children for writing letters and words.
- After reading the book together a few times, give the book to a child and ask them to turn the pages and tell you what happens on each page. Pretending to read a familiar story by looking at the pictures gives children a chance to start thinking of themselves as readers, which can motivate them to learn to read words.

---

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org/content/bell-awards>



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en\\_US](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en_US).

# Do You Know Which Ones Will Grow?

## A CLEL Silver Bell Award Book for TALK

by Susan Shea, Illus. by Tom Slaughter  
ISBN-13: 978-1609050627  
Blue Apple Books, 2011



This concept book invites children to make comparisons and determine whether objects are living or nonliving. The rhyming words and fold-out pages foster engagement with the text, while the question format encourages conversations between reader and children. By promoting critical thinking about categories and relationships, this book helps children build the general knowledge about the world that will help them understand what they read.

Activity Ideas for *Do You Know Which Ones Will Grow?*:

- Read other lift-the-flap books together, such as *Whose Toes Are Those?* by Sally Symes or *Where's Spot?* by Eric Hill. Before you lift each flap, ask your children to guess what they will see underneath. Making predictions is a powerful way to build comprehension skills.
- Fold a large piece of paper in half and unfold it again. On the top write, "Do you know which ones will grow?" On one half, write "Yes," on the other, write "No." Sort pictures of objects (use clip art images, puzzle pieces, feltboard shapes, magazine ads, stickers, die cuts, or other pictures; you could also use found objects like leaves and rocks from a walk outside) to the "Yes" side or the "No" side, helping children name the objects and asking them to talk about where they think each should go. The more children understand about the world around them, the easier it will be for them to understand and recognize ideas in the books they read.
- Sing, "This Is the Way We Plant the Seeds," to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush." Acting out songs and rhymes gives children another way to learn the meanings of new words.  
*This is the way we dig the garden...      This is the way we pull the weeds...*  
*This is the way we plant the seeds...      This is the way the seedling grows...*  
*This is the way we water the ground...      This is the way we smell the flower...*

---

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org/content/bell-awards>



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en\\_US](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en_US).

# Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!

## A CLEL Silver Bell Award Book for TALK

by Mo Willems  
ISBN-13: 978-0786819881  
Hyperion, 2003



The bus driver must leave and asks the reader to watch things while he is gone. He has one request: Don't let the Pigeon drive the bus! The Pigeon then tries to convince the reader to let him do just that. Speech bubbles and hand-drawn words of different sizes lets children see that print carries meaning along with the illustrations.

### Activity Ideas for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*:

- Ask the children to draw a picture of the Pigeon. Ask them what the Pigeon is saying in their picture, then draw a speech bubble on the page and write those words inside it. Read the words back to the children, pointing to each word as you read. This helps children learn that the marks we make on the page stand for the words we say out loud.
- Talk about how the Pigeon feels during different parts of the story. Is he hopeful? Angry? Frustrated? Sad? Excited? Talking about abstract concepts like emotions gives children a chance to learn vocabulary words for ideas that they can't see or touch.
- Act out the book with the children. Take turns being the Pigeon, the Driver, and the Readers (or Audience). Can the Pigeon think of new ways to try to convince his listeners to let him drive the bus? What would happen if the Pigeon didn't want to drive the bus after all? What would happen if the Driver never came back? Giving children ways to actively participate in sharing stories and books can increase their interest in reading.
- Choose different animals and different types of vehicles and have the children make up titles for new books, such as, "Don't Let the Gorilla Drive the Tractor," or "Don't Let the Dolphin Fly the Plane." Hearing and saying simple sentences over and over will help them recognize those sentence patterns more easily when they are reading.

---

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org/content/bell-awards>



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en\\_US](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en_US).

# Say Hello

## A CLEL Silver Bell Award Book for TALK

by Rachel Isadora  
ISBN-13: 978-0399252303  
Putnam Juvenile, 2010



A family walks through their neighborhood, sharing greetings with their friends in many different languages. *Say Hello* shares the type of day-to-day oral language exposure that helps lay the foundation for children's written language skills, while celebrating multiple-language environments.

### Activity Ideas for *Say Hello*:

- Have children paint or draw pictures (or print photos) of their friends and family, including themselves. Ask for each person's name and write (or help the children write) them on each picture. Point out the letters that make up each name. Often the first letters a child learns to recognize are the letters in his or her own name.
- Build a neighborhood out of blocks. Ask the children to tell you who lives there: friends, family, pets, shopkeepers? Pretend you are going on an errand and visit everyone in the neighborhood. What might you say to them? Asking questions allows children the chance to practice saying the words they know. The more familiar they are with many words and their meanings, the easier it will be to read those words on the page.
- Talk about different ways to say hello (such as, hi, how are you, good morning) and different ways to say good-bye (so long, bye-bye). Find out if the children know the rhyme "See you later, alligator." Can you create a list of other animal rhymes? Rhyming games are a fun way to build awareness of the rhythm of language.  
*In a while, crocodile                      See you soon, baboon                      Goodbye, butterfly*  
*Hang loose, grey goose                      Mañana, iguana                      Toodle-loo, kangaroo*
- Sing and listen to songs in all the languages your children know or are learning. The rhymes in songs help children learn to hear the separate sounds in words, and these types of skills, gained in one language, can support early literacy development in another.

---

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org/content/bell-awards>



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en\\_US](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en_US).

# Tell Me the Day Backwards

## A CLEL Silver Bell Award Book for TALK

by Albert Lamb, illus. by David McPhail  
ISBN-13: 978-0763650551  
Candlewick Press, 2011



Mamma Bear asks Timmy to share a bedtime story of their day together, starting with brushing his teeth and going backwards through the day. *Tell Me the Day Backwards* demonstrates how asking children open-ended questions can prompt the use of words and language. Also, recounting what happens is one way to practice putting events in sequence, which is a comprehension skill.

### Activity Ideas for *Tell Me the Day Backwards*:

- Read the story a few times together, then look at the map of Timmy's adventures on the inside cover of the book. Ask children to describe what happened to Timmy at each spot on the map, or try describing the whole day both backwards or forwards! Retelling stories builds comprehension skills, and the better children understand a story, the more motivated they will be to keep reading or listening.
- Play a game after you read the story once or twice: pick up the book and start reading the last page first. Do the children notice you are not starting at the beginning? Try holding the book upside down and see if they notice that. If they don't catch you, turn the book around and explain the right way to read. Knowing the parts of a book and how we read (for example, in English: left to right, top to bottom) is one way children get ready to learn to read themselves.
- Talk to your children about the routines in their day, either at home or at school. Draw pictures that show the different events and write short captions or labels such as: "Get Dressed," "Eat Breakfast," "Brush Teeth." Making the connection between spoken words and written words is a first step to understanding that print carries meaning.
- Sing a cumulative song that adds new phrases with every verse, such as "There's a Hole in the Middle of the Road," or "The Green Grass Grew All Around;" or counting songs like "The Ants Go Marching One by One," or "Over in the Meadow." Working to remember the right order for all the verses allows children to practice their comprehension and memory skills.

---

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org/content/bell-awards>



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en\\_US](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en_US).