
Morris is keenly aware of how easily facts and figures can confuse, and he takes deliberate steps to include both clear diagrams and a full range of photos to successfully support the message of each chapter of this book. The glossary is clear and concise, and the entire text offers countless opportunities for teachers to elaborate on topics, promote discussion, demonstrate concepts, and assign projects which can make learning enjoyable on many levels.

By pointing to recent and longest history, acknowledging the legacy of earthquakes—water shortages, homelessness, mudslides, new volcanoes, and tsunamis—and by incorporating what is being done by countries to prepare for earthquakes, Morris reinforces learning so students can work with the planet rather than trying to conquer it.

This well-written book should be of great help to teachers and students at many grade levels. The author is successful in presenting the whole picture through carefully-thought-out, progressive chapters, with support from many specific facts and examples.


Morris makes it fun and easy to learn facts and better understand the working parts of a volcano. The photos and diagrams are easy to follow and understand. The glossary is clear and simple. From the past to the present the text gives much information on different types of volcanoes, lava flows, ash, and rock. Teachers and students can learn the many different ways a volcano continues to change the world. We get many resources from volcanoes, such as the energy from beneath the Earth’s surface, and volcanic rocks (granite, pumice, and gem stones imbedded in igneous rock).

It is a well-written book with facts and photos. Teachers and students alike will enjoy this book. Students in grades 3 and 4 can use this as a tool in reporting on volcanoes.

Denise Pritchett, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

A Second Review:

As is his style, Morris gives the reader what he/she needs to know about each topic in the first sentence of each section. The glossary and concise definitions in the text are accurate and uncomplicated. Although obviously well-researched, this book can be confusing at times. The chapter on types of volcanoes offers excellent diagrams, but is accompanied by awkward text. This book also lacks the easily-followed progression and flow of the author’s Earthquakes. The broad subject of volcanoes might be more difficult to present in a simple manner.

The target audience for this book is more narrow than that for Earthquakes. Teachers will be able to find the facts they need, but might need to adjust their presentation to the level of their students.


Birds That Don’t Fly is an interesting book about birds that do not fly, giving background information about them, and tells what they eat, where they live, and physical characteristics about them. An index, a glossary, and a table of contents are included.

This is a great book to use to use in teaching about different types of birds. Not only does it explain why these birds cannot fly, it also gives many important details about each bird. The pictures and illustrations help one to recognize these birds.

Laura Martin, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

Well-designed graphics and layout offer information "bytes" in a style targeted for a sophisticated middle-school student interested in learning more than the fundamentals of volcanoes.

Statistics and intensity indices are offered, but often lack continuity and connection to the reader. For example, a reference to Mary Shelley's writing Frankenstein as a "most likely" result of weather due to a volcanic eruption in a previous year seemed out of place and disrupted the tone and rhythm of the book.

Strong units include Deep Secrets about deep underwater volcanic activity, including mention of the sulfur-eating bacteria and tube worms of that environment, and How to Build an Island, describing the sequence of events, from barren landscape to emerging ecosystem, that take place after a volcanic eruption.

This book succeeds in presenting past, present, and future scenarios in which the reader can engage, and correctly reminds the readers of their responsibilities as stewards of the planet. It encourages discussion and consideration of other views.


As with all A-Z Resource guides in this series, the volume on earthquakes provides the teacher (new and experienced) with comprehensive, well-researched facts presented in an easy-to-reference format. Websites mentioned were checked out and were valuable and represented fairly. Suggested experiments and demonstrations required no extraordinary supplies, and references to National Science Education Standards are clearly indicated.

The strength of this series is evident in the amount of work that has gone into references, cross-references, and research and presentation design. These would be excellent books to include in home libraries as an aid to parenting and an enhancement to family activity and interaction.


This student resource book accompanies Earthquakes and contains a wealth of valuable information for the curious student. Graphic layout and presentation will hold student interest, and the material content will provide invitation for discussion and exercises in thinking "outside the box."

The introduction of real life connections—the Timeline and Solve-It-Yourself Mystery chapters in particular, are especially valuable for the older student. There is just enough "glamour" to have students give serious thought to further investigation of this subject and possible consideration of this area of study as a career.


Pigs on the Move is a fun, easy-reading book recommended for ages 4-9, but is appropriate for people of all ages. This is a story about a family of pigs that miss their holiday flight and have to take an alternate flight with a delivery company. The pigs fly through different time zones while the plane drops off packages throughout the country.

This book is useful for work with time and math. The concept of different time zones is dealt with in a simple, easy-to-understand manner. The illustrator cleverly includes different types of clocks on each page with the current time. Following the story, there is a helpful, informational explanation of why there are different time zones and the author also includes formulas for the time traveled and distance traveled. In addition, there is a helpful map of the US which includes the time zones, geographical locations, and state names.

The entertaining story line would be particularly beneficial to use in an elementary classroom as an introduction to time and math. The factual information following the exciting story will give students the idea that time as a whole is fun and applies to their lives, especially if fun travel ideas are included.

—Stephanie Trele, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


This is a simple, easy-to-follow book on the math concept of calendar time. A young girl keeps a journal about the first year of life of a kitten that belongs to her and her brother.

The cat facts and artwork are both very interesting. This is a good tool to introduce calendar time to a class. At the end of the book, the author makes suggestions to adults and kids in how to use this book with many other books.

—Shelly Norling, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

The Leopard Family Book for ages 6-10 examines the lifestyles of a leopard, Chui, observed by the author Jonathan Scott in the Masai Mara National Park in Kenya. Chui gives birth to two cubs, both male. The book takes the reader through the hunting patterns, territorial relationships, and the family life of a leopard.

The reader is introduced to many facts for helpful background information and the book uses comparisons to the house cat so readers can relate. These help bring the story to life for young readers, and the bright photographs grab the reader’s attention and provide insight to the leopard’s lifestyle.

This book is easy to read because it focuses on one leopard, Chui. It would be an excellent choice to read aloud to a class because the intriguing adventures offers students a vicarious travel experience. Students of all ages will find this book interesting and informative.

—Stacy Foltz, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


This dinosaur book is very fun and informative, appropriate for ages eight and older. It includes 15 double-page layouts, each featuring a different dinosaur. There is an illustration of each dinosaur next to something that children are familiar with for comparison. The page also includes the name of the dinosaur, what the name means, and a fact about the dinosaur.

Students might already be familiar with some of the dinosaurs in the book, but there is some information that they might not know. The last page is dedicated to providing more in-depth information on each dinosaur in the book and also gives the pronunciation of each name. The illustrations are very realistic, but a few of the comparisons to other objects might be difficult for some children to understand.

This would not be an ideal book for reading aloud in the classroom, but it is definitely a great resource for students wanting to know more about dinosaurs. I would recommend this book as a useful classroom resource and an enjoyable non-fiction book to read in one’s free time.

—Alison Williams, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

*Safe, Warm, and Snug* is an excellent book for children ages eight and above. This book shows the extraordinary way that many unique terrestrial and marine animals care for and protect their newborns from predators and the environment around them.

This book gives children an opportunity to see and learn about animals that they might not otherwise know exist. Many of the animals in the book cannot be found in the United States, but live as far away as Antarctica. The book tells how each animal is born. For example, the African rock python lays its eggs, whereas the newborn kangaroo, called a Joey, is born, then develops inside its mother’s pouch. The book also tells how the animals protect their young from the surrounding environment and predators. For instance, the cichlid opens her mouth and allows the babies to swim inside when there is danger. The illustrations in the book are excellent, showing such things as Emperor penguins eggs sitting on the male’s feet for warmth and protection. What makes this book especially unique is the way each of the animals is defined at the end of the book, where there is a picture of each animal and a paragraph describing how the animal has its babies, how the animal protects its young, and in what part of the world the animal can be found.

—Erin Reimer, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

Animal Dreaming tells the story of what many Aboriginal people of Australia believe to be how the land was formed. The formation of the lakes, clouds, and hills were believed to be caused by spirits in the form of animals. These events are referred to as Dreamtime. The tale of Dreamtime is told in this picture storybook with introductions to many Aboriginal spiritual names and Australian terms, which are defined in an easy to understand glossary.

In this book, author/illustrator Morin not only relates this tale through an enchanting story, but also makes it come alive through his beautiful pictures, which are based upon Aboriginal art, common to the ancient Dreamtime ceremonies. One will find that these illustrations along with an easy-to-follow storyline makes this story real to the reader and fun to experience. This book is appealing for all ages because of its simple, yet detailed storyline and extraordinary pictures.

—Jeanette Walters, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Unbeatable Beaks is mainly a reference book for young children. It is appropriate for children ages four to eight. Within the text of this book, the author describes the many different types of beaks that birds have and the uses for them. An added plus to the text is that it is in rhyming verse, making it easy for children to listen and follow along.

Each page features different types of birds that are beautifully and accurately illustrated. Each illustration is accompanied by the bird’s common name. At the end of the book, a short quiz is provided to test the knowledge of the reader. A glossary is also supplied.


Do You Remember the Color Blue? And Other Questions Kids Ask About Blindness, is a dramatic story about the triumphs and tribulations of a person who became blind as an adult. In telling her story, Sally gives the answers to many questions that children have asked her about being blind.

Sally begins by addressing the issue of asking questions. She encourages questions as the best way to learn. She tells the reader how she became blind; then she discusses the feelings and emotions that go along with such an experience. Sally explains what she had to do to become a functioning blind adult, how she entered a training program, and how she learned to use a Seeing Eye dog. She tells how she met her husband, what it is like to be a blind parent, and how people treat her.

The thirteen chapters flow well and the many pictures within the story compliment the text. There are pictures of Sally before and after she became blind, pictures of her with her husband, children and friends, and pictures of items that she uses to make life a little easier.

This story is appropriate for children ages nine and up and would be great to read aloud in class as students focus on different aspects of diversity. The students will also be able to express their concerns and feelings about dealing with disabilities. I would definitely recommend this book as a way to connect to people with disabilities.

—Michelle Mosiman, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


This book is a collection of summer poetry that helps with word recognition and activities for the summer. The book starts with daytime poems and ends with nighttime poems. It is well organized and creatively illustrated for children of all ages. It includes jump rope chants as well as poems about lemonade, flowers, games, animals, fireworks, and night times.

I think this book is exceptional for a special education classroom because it can be integrated into motor skill activities. It is appropriate to be read to a preschool and/or kindergarten classroom. It is easy reading for children in second grade and up. I would recommend this book for any teacher needing fun transitions into summer holidays.

—Sarah Shub, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

The Lightbulb is a well-written informational book about Thomas Alva Edison and his invention of the lightbulb. Appropriate for ages nine and up, it describes in detail how the lightbulb was made, and what a tremendous impact electrical light still continues to make today.

The information is organized into five chapters. The first, titled "The Search for Light," focuses on the beginning methods and substances used to emit light. Those included range from fire, kerosene lamps, and one less recognized--whale oil. These options were short-lived and often were dangerous to use. Chapter Two delves into the life of Edison, his childhood, his natural curiosity, and of course his other inventions including his first, the phonograph. "Inventing the Lightbulb," Chapter Three, depicts the actual development of the bulb, including the grueling process of experimenting with filaments. Finally, Chapters Four and Five, "A Revolution of Light" and "The Future of Light," discuss the improvements of the bulb itself, as well as the purpose that light serves us today and will serve in the future.

The beauty of this book is its illustrations. The book has integrated great works from renowned artists such as Claude Monet and Norman Rockwell, diagrams of how the bulbs work, and even incorporates an advertisement for light in another language. The index and the Further Reading section of this book also make this book easy for children to use.

I recommend this book for any young reader wanting to know more about the invention of the lightbulb and Edison himself. For such a small book, it contains a large amount of valuable information.

–Toni Meyer. Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

The Telephone is an exceptional book based solely on the telephone. From inventors to recent expansions of the telephone, this book discusses everything you might want to know about the telephone. Ways of communicating before the telephone, the invention of and improvements of the telephone, and the different types of telephones are all discussed in detail. Anyone from the age of nine up will find this book useful and intriguing. The author has a magical way of taking such an everyday object and making it into a complete discovery of its own.

The book is organized into five sections, each discussing a certain aspect of the telephone. This book (which includes a table of contents and index) can be used as a reference book because there is so much information, but it is easily readable making it almost like a storybook, fun to read. Children of all ages will enjoy learning about the telephone, a simple object that had anything but a simple beginning and has anything but a simple future ahead of it.

The book has a clear and understandable language that gets the reader interested very quickly. All facts are presented very clearly throughout the book; even recent discoveries about the Internet are discussed, giving the book a real sense of being up to date. The best things about this book are the pictures—everything from real black-and-white old photos to new, vibrant, and colorful illustrations are used.

I would recommend this book to anyone wanting to learn more about the telephone and its history or to anyone who is interested in reading a fun and informative book.

Katie Grammer Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


I Wonder is an intriguing book that encourages the young mind to explore questions it has never pondered before. This book by Tana Hoban is recommended for readers in grades 1-3 and can help them explore their creativity within and beyond the classroom.

This book is a compilation of questions that come to mind as a young child walks in the park. The child’s questions are about objects found in nature such as insects, birds, flowers, and frogs. At the end of the book, the question arises: do animals in the book wonder about the child, too?

The text is in easy-to-read large print with a question and answer on each page, along with a picture of the creature in question. All the photos are also collected at the end of the book in a two-page compilation.

The final two pages of the book are designed to get the student involved by providing numbered and lined pages for the student to write about what they see and wonder about. These pages could easily be copied for students to use in an activity such as going to the park or zoo.

Sarah Charles, Elementary Education Major, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


This is a great book to begin an amphibian unit with children ages five to nine. The illustrations by Mary Ann Fraser give the reader many wonderfully-drawn examples of frogs and their habits. The text is very clearly written with language that any first to fifth grader can easily understand, but is still informative and interesting.

Why Frogs Are Wet explains many of the basic concepts about frogs and effectively illustrates each concept. It deals with amphibian evolutionary history, the meaning of the word amphibian, hibernation, maturation, reproduction, and adaptive features such as jumping and eye placement. An entire page is dedicated to the different species of frogs and tells about what makes each species unique.

The last page of the book gives recipes for making “frog skin” and “frog eggs.” The “skin” is a boiled egg, which is allowed to dry out to represent what happens to a frog’s skin when it dries out, and why the frog can no longer breathe through its skin and dies. The “eggs” are made from tapioca pudding, which is also left out to demonstrate why they must be laid in water.

When a class is doing a thematic unit on amphibians, Why Frogs are Wet will be a wonderful addition to a classroom reading center or introduction book. The book is short, factual, and colorful, and the pictures are so full of detail that the children will want to read it.

Jaimee Camp, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Outside and Inside Kangaroos is a wonderfully descriptive book about every aspect of a kangaroo. It tells about the life of a kangaroo and includes interesting facts and new words. The book also goes into great detail about the inside of a kangaroo, and even includes photographs. The reader is taken through the conception, birth and life of a kangaroo.

Though the publisher suggests this book for ages five through nine,
a five-year-old might not be ready for the graphic pictures of a kangaroo embryo or the intestines of a kangaroo. However, the photographs are amazing and very good. The text is geared toward children but includes words that might be over the heads of five-year-olds. I found this book interesting and informative.

I suggest this book should be used to help introduce the marsupials as a type of mammal. An entire unit could be based around Australia or the animals that live there. For middle school students, this book could be a wonderful resource for a research paper.

—Amanda Loreman, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


One Good Apple is an interesting book that provides a large amount of information on the hazards of spraying crops with pesticides, and the benefits of growing food organically. The book begins by listing several different types of pesticides, purposes for each, and the effects of using them. Also listed are some of the chemicals that make up the pesticides and what fruits and vegetables they are used on. The second half of the book describes organic farming, and it gives many pointers for growing food organically. Also included is information on how pesticides can be harmful to animals as well as humans.

The clear and up-close pictures of gardeners and gardens, along with information on all the advantages of organic gardening, might encourage children to become interested in growing food in their own garden at home. Beginning gardeners might find the next to last page helpful, because it contains a list of ideas that can easily be implemented to help a garden survive. These ideas could be tested in the classroom. An index is included, which allows children to easily find the topic they are searching for. I would recommend this book for older children; this book is too sophisticated for young children. Children should be informed of the issues concerning the food they eat, so that they know how to protect themselves from the chemicals. This is a good way to approach a topic that is a very important health and safety issue.

—Layla Beyer, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


John Walsh thinks he has the best job in the world; he travels all over the world saving animals from natural disasters. In the first chapter John visits a jungle that is being flooded by a lake; he saves thousands of animals from drowning there. In the second chapter he visits the Iraqi zoo after a war and saves all the animals that are still alive. Finally, in the third chapter, he visits Kobe after an earthquake has destroyed most of the city; and he saves many cats and dogs.

This book is an excellent book for a third grade classroom to read when studying animal survival. The writing is clear and very easy to read. All the photographs go along with the story very well. The only negative aspect of this story is that in some parts, sad information about the animals is given. If you have an emotional group of children, you might not want to choose this story.

This book could be used in several ways. One is to learn about new animals. Most of the animals that John talks about saving are ones that we do not hear about every day. Another way to use this book would be to talk about how important it is to come together and help each other when a natural disaster takes place. After this discussion, each child could draw a picture and write a story about how they would help a person or an animal in trouble.

—Jami Harris, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

Ultimate Field Trip 2 is an exciting book for 8 to 12 year olds. It provides information about archaeology in the southwestern United States. The first chapter tells about how the Pueblo people lived over a thousand years ago. A group of eighth graders from Hannibal Middle School in Hannibal, Missouri, visit Crow Canyon to learn about the pueblo people and why they left the land they lived on for more than one thousand years.

The students spend a week at Crow Canyon Archaeological Center where they learn about the desert and dig up artifacts from the past. The students have a terrific time exploring and finding out about the mysterious objects that they find. They also try out the old ways of living; they grind corn, start fires, hunt, and play games. The students' experiences boost their interest in artifacts and history.

Ultimate Field Trip 2 allows the reader learn about artifacts and the area of the Southwest. The book is clearly written for students to read. There is a glossary, pictures of the students from Hannibal, Missouri, and pictures of the artifacts they discovered.

—Heather Armstrong, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Once a Wolf is an inspiring book for ages 10 and above. This book gives a brief history of how humans used to treat wolves and how they believed wolves were a danger to humans. Also, this book gives an insight into the work that biologists have been doing to restore wolf populations in the United States, particularly in the Yellowstone National Park in Montana.

The illustrations and text of this informative book are very well balanced. The illustrations are smoothly integrated with the text, giving readers an idea of what wolves look like and also the different techniques used by biologists to track and capture wolves. With the colorful illustrations and information, younger readers will be kept focused on this inspiring book about wolves and their history.

This book would be interesting and enjoyable to read aloud to a science class during an endangered species unit or activity. Along with this book, a teacher could include information on other endangered species that are in trouble because of the human attitudes. This book is a wonderful way to enlighten children about endangered species and the importance that wolves play in our ecosystem.

—Dathan Fischer, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


They Walk the Earth is a beautiful and very informative book, which is appropriate for third grade readers and older. In this book, the reader learns about the migration patterns of several land animals including caribou, lemmings, elephants, frogs, and more.

This book goes into detail about various species and their long journeys overland. Simon has written more than two hundred books and has won many awards for his science books. He writes clearly, yet fills the book with bits of information sure to spark interest in young animal lovers.

Elsa Warnick did a magnificent job illustrating this book. The large, bright pictures are quite detailed to give a more accurate representation of each creature, and will attract young, aspiring readers as well as older ones.

They Walk the Earth would be an excellent educational tool to use when studying land animals and their migratory behavior. It could also be used as a research instrument for school children. Even very young children will love to hear about animals and see the vivid illustrations. Teachers and parents alike can use and enjoy this wonderful book.

—Sarah Zeller, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Koko and Michael speak with their hands—that is, they know and use some American Sign Language (ASL). This isn't that uncommon, except that Koko and Michael are gorillas. Koko-Love! Is an engaging book about these gorillas, appropriate for ages 9 and above. The reader is introduced to Koko and her adopted "mom" and trainer Dr. Francine "Penny" Patterson. The book follows Koko’s life—interactions with people, learning to sign, and meeting her pets and her gorilla friends Michael and Ndume. This biography is presented in a creative way including engaging stories about Koko and her friends, and also contains factual information about gorillas, primates, mammals, and even sign language.

This book would be interesting to read aloud to a class; however, it would be even better for the students to read individually. The colorful
pages of this book are filled with captivating pictures and sidebars, which would be better enjoyed by the students as they read through it themselves. However, although these pages make the book very interesting, all of the visual activity could be distracting to some, especially younger readers.

In the classroom this book could be an excellent supplement to science lessons, and can provide a new perspective on animals and special insight into the lives of primates. This book could also be kept in the classroom for the students to read for enjoyment, which might promote an interest in other nonfiction stories. No matter the reason for reading it, this is a story that anyone can enjoy.

**-Erin Taylor, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS**


**The Desert Fox Family Book** presents young readers with detailed photographs and descriptive information about the desert fox, or fennec. The pictures were taken by author Hans Gerald Laukel, whose dream came true when he had the opportunity to study and observe fennec cubs in the Sahara Desert. Laukel’s photos and explanations of the fennec’s habitat and survival skills could be used to study wildlife as well as geography. His book will interest readers who enjoy learning about wildlife and are enrolled in grades 1-5.

The author provides the reader with great detail about the desert fox. Through his text and pictures, he explains that desert foxes are nocturnal and hunt for food in the early morning hours or in the evening so that their body temperatures will not rise too high. They are able to cope with the extreme temperature because of their large ears, which are used cooling devices in addition to being used to detect prey.

**Laukel displays cute photographs of the young cubs. He also describes the importance of the mother’s hunting skills and makes the reader aware of the dangers that the fennec family faces. His pictures also show a small part of the terrain of the Sahara Desert and some of the reptiles along the dried river bed. The photos will help students understand the Fennec and why they live the way they do. The young readers will enjoy the interaction between the mother fox and the four cubs and then the father fox and the cubs. This book will help students understand animals better and will be fun either for them to listen to or to read themselves.**

**-Emily Ayers, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS**


**Gorillas** teaches children many interesting facts about these human-like animals. Children learn that gorillas are not as ill-tempered as movies tend to make them appear. Simon shows the readers ways gorillas are similar to humans, such as their physical form and attitudes, and ways they are different. Information is given about family members, and how gorillas spend their days and what they eat. Simon also provides readers with interesting facts about gorillas’ facial expressions and various sounds they make.

The illustrations in the book are incredible real photographs of gorillas, which clarify the text without distracting the reader, yet provides young readers with accurate visual aids. The text is easy enough for a third or fourth grader to read. Younger children will benefit from the illustrations if a more accomplished reader reads the book to them.

**Gorillas** is a great book to use with a science unit dealing with mammals. A teacher could discuss what characteristics gorillas have to make them mammals. Before reading the book, the teacher could have the students draw a picture of what they think a gorilla looks like. After reading the book, students could compare their pictures with the illustrations in the book to see how accurate they were. This can show students how television can change the image of something. Students can also make a model of an environment in which gorillas can be found.

The information Simon provides in his book seems to be well researched and accurate. The book is quite lengthy and packed full of information. I highly recommend this book to teachers who are doing a unit on mammals or need an accurate book on gorillas. It can benefit children of a variety of ages in different ways.

**-Stacey Weber, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS**


The baby lemur, Liam, learns that it is okay for him to go off and play with the other little lemurs because his mom will always be waiting for him to come back home. There is a strong use of vocabulary. The illustrations are very colorful and nicely accompany the text. It is a great story and is easy to understand.

**-Suzanne Jost, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS**

Australian Animals is a well-written book for children of all ages. It depicts the many animals that live in Australian forest, grassland, desert, and seacoast. The sections of the book are divided by regions of Australia. The animals range from slithering snakes to the screaming Tasmanian Devils. This book is written clearly in a language that children can easily understand and find interesting. The descriptions are imaginative. Each animal description is accompanied by a clear, detailed, and up-close photograph.

Caroline Arnold researched the animals while on a trip to Australia. She received assistance in her research from the Australian Tourist Commission, the Melbourne Zoo, and the Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary. Arnold has done her research well and uses the information in a way that will encourage children to do follow-up research on their own. On page 2 of the text a pronunciation guide is given for difficult terms. This book would be a wonderful introduction to a unit on the animals with more information that they have gathered on their own.

Children will love to see the distinct features of each animal in the accompanying photographs. The bright pictures and the interesting descriptions of their habitats and lifestyles will leave children wanting to find out more.

–Rachel R. Guenther, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Learning Adventures in Science: Grades 5-6 gives readers a brief view into the world of science through activities with thought-provoking questions. The book is divided into sections for fifth grade and sixth grade. Within each grade level six areas of science are explored: inquiry skills, life science, physical science, earth and space, technology, and health. A table of contents, information for parents, and answers are included.

This book is a good support for teachers or parents to reinforce what students are learning. It briefly touches upon six areas of science, including activities that would help further understand science.

–Arielle Smith, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS

Kitchen Chemistry provides many low-budget science experiments that can be conducted by students and teachers alike. The experiments are geared toward grades 4-6 students and are set up with easy basic step-by-step procedures. The experiments demonstrate concepts on particle movement, floating and sinking, and growing yeasts and molds, to mention a few. Each experiment provides a section on critical thinking for the student.

I believe students will enjoy investigating these experiments. The experiments are excellent and the critical-thinking questions help students delve deeper into their problem solving skills. However, a few of the comments found in the book is information that will need to be clarified for some students, for example, the complicated vocabulary. Because this book is made for students to use, there are no answers to the questions provided; therefore, the teacher will need to perform the experiments beforehand for a good understanding of the experiment and concepts.

Kitchen Chemistry gives unique experimental experiences for both elementary teachers and students. I recommend this book for those teachers seeking great hands-on activities for their classroom.

-Jessica White, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Food for Thought, Edible Physical Science, is a fun-filled 91-page book of science experiments that are edible when the students are through performing the experiment. Each experiment has concepts being taught, objectives for the students, what the teacher needs to know, what materials are needed, preparation, how to motivate the students, and a description of exactly what the students will do for the experiment. It also has questions to ask the students, suggestions on how to know what the students learn, and how one can apply and extend their learning. I would suggest this book for students fourth to eighth grade.

I thought the book was an excellent collection of experiments for children. It not only included fun edible experiments, but vocabulary words and everything one needs to know about conducting the experiment as well as follow-up activities. I think the kids will really enjoy any experiment chosen out of this book. For the teachers, the experiments are explained thoroughly. There is a table of contents with the name of each experiment, accompanied by a description of the concept it teaches. That way one doesn’t need to thumb through each experiment to figure out the concept being taught. This book would be handy to have around the classroom.

-Jackie Bishop, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Physical Science Labs is a hands-on workbook for grades 3 and 4. It has five different classroom units on Physical Science: heat, magnets, states of matter, motion, and waves. The introduction gives a nice summary of what the teacher can do with this book and the equipment table at the back lists exactly what is needed for each experiment. This book is very easy to follow and has teacher’s notes and many reproducible pages to give to the students to help them along in the experiments. However, before beginning any of these activities the teacher should instruct the students on what a science log is and how to use one.

This book should be handy for any parent or teacher to have around to get the children more interested in Physical Science. These experiments are fun and easy to do and I think they could also be used in the classroom in a unit lesson.

-Alicia Christiansen, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Rainy, Windy, Snowy, Sunny Days is a resource for teachers to use for grades K-5. It is designed to help elementary teachers who are planning integrated units of study involving weather and seasons of the year.

Each part of the book begins with a “bookweb” of possible fiction books, two books that serve as bridges that combine factual and fictional elements, nonfiction connections, and other topics to explore. There is a summary of each of the suggested books along with discussion starters, activities, and possible topics for further student investigation. Part five offers additional resources for teachers to use for each of the topics and an author-title index.

This book would be good to use in any elementary school classroom. The discussion starters and activities are interesting and apply to the suggested books well. The possible topics of further investigation are useful in helping children learn more
about weather and seasons.
—Knochetta Johnson, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Emma Jo’s Song is a literature book appropriate for grades K-3. It is about a little girl who felt that she did not have musical talents like the rest of her family. She is proved wrong when she sings at a family reunion and is helped by her dog.

This is an interesting book about family and the impact that it can have on a person. The illustrations went along well with the story and helped to accentuate what the author is saying. This book would be useful when talking about pets or family.
—Knochetta Johnson, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


Off We Go! is the story of baby woodland creatures who, one by one, leave home and sing their way to visit grandma. Frog leaves his log, mole leaves his hole, and spider leaves his web. This is a playful book that uses rhythm and rhyme to introduce young children to different animals and their habitats. The text is well written and progressively builds to a clactic ending where all the animals get to the best place ever—Grandma’s house—whether that is a hole, a tree, a web, or a log.

Younger children will enjoy the fun, rhythmic language and the predictability of the story in Off We Go! and will want to read along with the teacher. Illustrations are soft and sweet; the colors are quiet and peaceful. The story is enhanced by the pictures, which also tell a unique story of their own. This book would be an excellent starting point for a creative writing lesson or a science lesson. Off We Go! is a quick and lively book that both teachers and students will enjoy.
—Shelley Powell, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


When Morning Comes is a book that looks animals who come out after sunrise. It is appropriate for ages 6-9. This book is full of great information about the morning and the animals, flowers and colors that are seen. The story is about how wildlife begins their day along with the changes in nature throughout a day. It looks at how animals sleep, hunt, spread their wings for warmth, or find places to play or hide. It defines what morning really means. The afterword also provides great information about animals and how the morning affects their life.

The information provided in this book was excellent. I would recommend reading this book to children to help them to take a real look at what morning means and how important it is. It takes a real look at nature and shows great photos of animals, flowers, and nature, all full of many colors and detail. The book is very educational, and it would be great to use when dealing with colors, animals, and nature. The book is very easy to read and is printed in big font.
—Tricia Morgan, Elementary Education, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS


There are many good, interesting introductory probability activities. The book could used as a replacement unit or could provide supplementary activities when needed. There is a teacher page that provides all the information the teacher would need to use the activity. There are worksheets provided for copy for the students and answers are in the back of the book. Many of these activities would be useful for both middle and high school students doing introductory probability.
—Connie Schrock, Division of Mathematics and Computer Science, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS