Welcome to the Candlewick Press
Read to Us!
STORY-HOUR KIT

Get Set for Story Hour

It is our pleasure to present our latest Candlewick Read to Us! Story-Hour Kit. This kit contains simple and entertaining activities that are linked to our books. Each activity is designed to foster the skills that lead to early reading success in children.

Our fall 2015 story-hour kit showcases four delightful books focusing on themes of love, adventure, humor, and perseverance. For each title, we offer two activities aimed at boosting children’s narrative skills, letter knowledge, print awareness, vocabulary, print motivation, or phonological awareness — but most of all, their enthusiasm for literature. Because the caregiver’s role is essential in a child’s readiness to read, we have included a handout at the end of this kit that explains these six specific early literacy skills. Passing this out to caregivers will assist them in getting their child ready to read.

Have fun!

Books to be used with this Candlewick Read to Us! Story-Hour Kit

- **Black Cat, White Cat**
  - by Silvia Borando
  - 978-0-7636-8106-7
  - Ages 2–5

- **Happy in Our Skin**
  - by Fran Manushkin
  - illustrated by Lauren Tobia
  - 978-0-7636-7002-3
  - Ages 2–5

- **Ragweed's Farm Dog Handbook**
  - by Anne Vittur Kennedy
  - 978-0-7636-7417-5
  - Ages 3–7

- **The Little Snowplow**
  - by Lora Koehler
  - illustrated by Jake Parker
  - 978-0-7636-7074-0
  - Ages 3–7
**Black Cat, White Cat**

**Black Cat, White Cat / Day Cat, Night Cat**

This is the story of two cats—Black Cat goes out only in the day and White Cat goes out only at night—and what happens when they meet. Their encounter develops into a friendly adventure as each cat explores a brand-new world. Ask the children what things the cats see at night and what they see in the day. What things do you see at night and in the day? Are there some things you can see only at night? Or in the daytime? After discussing the differences between day and night, have children draw them on the accompanying reproducible.

*This activity builds print awareness and narrative skills.*

**Happy in Our Skin**

**Look at You!**

When we are born, we all begin “small and happy in our skin.” We all have skin, but we are not all the same. This sweet, playful book describes how our skin protects us, grows, and heals. The basic theme of the book is that we are all the same, yet unique in our own right. For example, as the text says, “sometimes skin has freckles or birthmarks or dimples.” Use the accompanying reproducible and have children explore their own features. Have them draw a picture of their own face, complete with any freckles, birthmarks, dimples, or other features. Make sure they color their skin and include eye color and hair. Each child should then write his or her name under the picture.

*This activity fosters narrative skills and print motivation.*

**Colorful Kittens**

Black Cat and White Cat have kittens—six of them, and all orange! Ask the children if black and white mixed together would make orange. What color does it make? What two colors combine to make orange? Distribute black, gray, red, yellow, and orange crayons to the children. Then use the accompanying reproducible and have the children color the matching kittens. Once they are finished, have the children trace the letters of the colors below each kitten.

*This activity promotes print awareness and phonological awareness.*

**All About Me**

This delightful story of diversity allows children to see that we are all one of a kind. Hold a discussion about what makes us each special and different from one another. Reread the lines “Yes, we all have skin, but nobody is you. You are one of a kind and your fingerprints, too.” Ask the children what those sentences mean. Do we each have a unique fingerprint? Let’s find out! Using a washable ink stamp, have the children press a finger onto the ink and place their fingerprint in the box on the accompanying reproducible. Then have each child complete the rest of the “All About Me” sheet. Some children may need help and may wish to dictate the words to an adult.

*This activity builds print awareness and narrative skills.*

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Ragweed’s Farm Dog Handbook

My Special Handbook
Ragweed is a dog who lives on a farm, and this clever book invites readers to follow his handy tips for becoming the best farm dog ever. The humorous tale will make children smile as they learn what farm dogs should and shouldn’t do—and what will actually get them a biscuit! Ask the children what they think a farm dog’s job should be. Does Ragweed make a good farm dog? Use the accompanying reproducible and have children create their own special handbook. Using the model of getting Ragweed biscuits as a treat, ask the children to imagine the reward they would like to receive for a job well done and then draw a picture of it in their handbook.

This activity promotes narrative skills.

Everyone Has a Job on the Farm
After reading Ragweed’s Farm Dog Handbook and learning what everyone’s job is at the farm—from roosters that wake the farmer to cows that make milk—have the children complete the accompanying reproducible. They will need scissors to cut out the pictures (located on the next page) and glue to affix them in the proper spots to complete each sentence correctly. For example, the picture of the pigs should be glued at the beginning of the sentence “_____ get bigger and bigger.”

This activity supports vocabulary.

The Little Snowplow

The Little Snowplow Maze
All the trucks on the Mighty Mountain Road Crew are big, until a new little snowplow joins their crew. The big trucks think the new snowplow is too small to be able to push snow and figure that they will have to help him. Discuss the different types of trucks in the story and what each one’s job might be. What happens when it snows? Who needs the help? After reading and discussing the book, distribute the help and have the children draw a path for the Little Snowplow to follow to clear the snow.

This activity encourages print motivation.

Beep Beep!
This is the story of a little snowplow who has the determination and perseverance to train and exercise so he will one day be ready when a blizzard comes. Discuss with the children how the big trucks treat the Little Snowplow. Ask: How do you think the snowplow feels? What does he do instead of pouting? How do you think the snowplow feels when Will tells him, “Let’s go!”? Do the trucks treat the Little Snowplow differently at the end of the story? What do you think will happen after the story ends? Get the children up and moving by acting out the Little Snowplow’s exercises. Have the children step forward, then back, then lift their arms up and down ten times fast. Finish by having them yell “Beep beep!” Direct them to the table and distribute the accompanying reproducible. Remind them that the Little Snowplow clears streams, cleans up after parades, and pushes leaves into piles before clearing snow. Ask: If you were the Little Snowplow, what kind of work would you do? What things would you clean up or push or pull? Have the children illustrate their answers on the attached reproducible.

This activity encourages print motivation.
Black Cat, White Cat

Black Cat, White Cat / Day Cat, Night Cat

Black Cat sees fireflies, snakes, bats, and mice. What other night treats might be nice?

White Cat sees bumblebees, daisies, doves, and butterflies. What other daytime wonders might she find?
Black Cat, White Cat

Colorful Kittens

BLACK  +  WHITE  =  GRAY

RED  +  YELLOW  =  ORANGE

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Happy in Our Skin

Look at You!

Draw a picture of your face. Do you have any freckles? Do you have any birthmarks or dimples?

This is me! My name is _______________________.

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Happy in Our Skin

All About Me

My name is _________________________________.

I am _________________ years old.

My eyes are ____________________.

My hair is ____________________.

Something special about me is __________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________.
1. I am good at ________________________________
   __________________________________________

2. My job is ________________________________
   __________________________________________

3. My special treat is _________________________
   __________________________________________
Ragweed’s Farm Dog Handbook

Everyone Has a Job on the Farm

The rooster wakes the farmer.

get bigger and bigger.

make eggs.

grow curly hair.

make milk.
Ragweed’s Farm Dog Handbook

Everyone Has a Job on the Farm
The Little Snowplow

The Little Snowplow Maze

Help the Little Snowplow clear snow from the streets.

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The Little Snowplow

Beep Beep!

What would you do if you were the Little Snowplow?
Help Your Child Get Ready to Read

**Narrative Skills**
Tell stories together, encourage pretend play, and let your child be a storyteller.

**Letter Knowledge**
Help your child identify the first letter in his or her name and find it in books, on street signs, and on package labels.

**Print Awareness**
Help your child discover how to hold a book and turn the pages.

**Vocabulary**
Teach your child the specific names for things, such as vegetables in the grocery store.

**Print Motivation**
Find books that speak to your child's interests, and share them often.

**Phonological Awareness**
Sing songs, play games, and share rhymes to help your child play with the smaller sounds in words.