Screams, Smiles, and Giggles with Skunks, Squirrels, and Grasshoppers

... a book to be read to and by young people learning to read









By Ronald E. Johnson, C.Ph.D.

Book 6 of 10

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Introduction

Young readers like to learn about things that are cute, cuddly, or a little bit scary. Screams, Smiles, and Giggles with Skunks, Squirrels, and Grasshoppers is written to cause children to smile, giggle, and shiver as they learn about creatures. In the process of reading, or listening as the book is read by an adult, children learn how to pronounce blends and divide multi-syllable words, how to understand the use of quotation marks, and how to read and write possessives. Along the way, readers and listeners learn about nature, ecology, and safety in the great outdoors. Photos of creatures and outdoor scenes are included to help the reader store vivid mental images of words and objects. A bonus is that young readers and listeners gain understanding and wisdom about life in a family.

Helps For Sounding Out Words

Many English words are “borrowed” from Greek and Latin words that do not fit conveniently into English phonetic rules. Such words must be learned by memory (repeating them often). By reading good books repeatedly, children learn to pronounce, spell, and use words, and to become wise.

The following helps for reading are provided to assist the teacher in training young readers to pronounce words according to basic phonetic rules. These reading rules do not apply to all English words, but the rules equip readers to pronounce and spell many words easily.

English words are made up of two types of letters: **vowels (a,e,i,o,u, and sometimes y) and consonants (b,c,d,f,g,h,j,k,l,m,n,p,q,r,s,t,v,w,x,z).**

In **short words (or single syllables) with <u>one</u> vowel <u>within</u> the word or syllable**, the vowel usually has a short sound. Short word examples: h**a**nd, c**a**t, r**e**d, sl**e**d, f**i**sh, l**i**p, d**i**sh, d**o**g, l**o**g, h**u**g, r**u**g. **A single vowel at the <u>end</u> of a syllable or short word** usually has a long sound (says its name): b**e**, h**e**, m**e**, h**i**, g**o**, s**o**, b**y**, m**y**.

In **short words (or single syllables) with <u>two</u> vowels**, the first vowel usually has a long sound (says its name) and the second vowel is usually silent. Short word examples: **a**pe, **a**te, **e**at, f**ee**t, w**i**se, pr**i**ze, s**oa**p, g**oa**t, bl**ue**, m**u**le, b**y**e, l**y**e.

Some consonants that are side by side make a special sound (bl, br, ch, cl, dr, fl, gr, pl, sh, st, th, wh). Examples: **bl**ack, **br**an**ch**, **cl**ap, **dr**um, **fl**ag, **gr**ape, **pl**um, **sh**ip, **st**op, **th**in, **wh**ip).

The combination of **ph** has the sound of the consonant **f**. Examples: tele**ph**one, ele**ph**ant.

More Helps For Sounding Out Words

The combination of the letters **sl** usually have a special sound made by placing the tip of the tongue just behind the upper teeth and flipping the tongue to pronounce the **sl** sound as in **sl**eep, **sl**ow, **sl**umber, **sl**ed, **sl**ope.

Words ending in two **l**'s have the sound of only one **l**. Examples: wa**ll**, hi**ll**, pi**ll**, fe**ll**.

Words with combinations of a vowel and the letter **r** (er, ir, ur, ar, and or), usually have the sound of just **r**. Examples: sug**ar**, s**ir**, wis**er**, b**ir**d, col**or**, w**or**d, auth**or**, h**ur**t, b**ur**n.

The combination of the letters **ow** sometimes have a special sound as in **ow**l, h**ow**l, c**ow**, n**ow**, h**ow**. At other times the **ow** letters together make a special sound in which only the **O** vowel is pronounced, as in st**o**w, b**o**w, cr**o**w, r**o**w, bl**o**w.

When two **o**'s are side by side, they make a short double-o sound, as in c**oo**k, f**oo**t, b**oo**k, h**oo**k, sh**oo**k. At other times, the **oo** letters have a long double-o sound as in b**oo**t, h**oo**t, t**oo**t, l**oo**se.

Helps For Reading, Dividing, and Saying Words

Words that are in bold should be explained as children listen to parents or teachers read the book. The following reading helps should be consulted and explained as children ask about the **bold** words. This habit expands vocabulary and facilitates memorization of phonetic rules and word meanings. It also stimulates children to draw pictures and play-act the various imaginations which will "well up" in their minds as they read or listen.

Syllables: Every syllable must have a vowel. Many words divide after a vowel or between double consonants.
Examples: ta/ble, pud/dle, ruf/fle, cir/cle, lit/tle, sprin/kle, cy/cle, trac/tor, trail/er, se/dan.

If a **syllable** ends in **a**, **e**, **o**, or **u**, the vowel says its name. If it ends in **I** it may be short or long.
Examples: va/ca/tion, lo/ca/tion, sal/va/tion, de/pend, u/ni/form, star/va/tion.

In a word of several **syllables**, if there is a **k** sound, it is usually sounded as a **c**.
Examples: va/ca/tion, fac/to/ry, va/cant, frac/tion, ac/tion, af/fec/ton, e/lec/tric, de/moc/ra/cy.

Some multi-syllable words are **divided with a / in the text** to help young readers learn to pronounce long words according to syllables.
Examples: **pul/led**, **mer/chants**, **wa/gon**.

More Helps For Reading, Dividing, and Saying Words

Suffixes include **s**, **ed**, **ing**. If a word ends in one consonant and has just one vowel before the consonant, we double the consonant before adding a suffix that begins with a vowel. We usually divide the word between the double consonants.
Examples: **hop** (hop/**ped** and hop/**ping**), **rub** (rub/**bed** and rub/**bing**), **run** (run/**ning**), **dream** (dream**ed** and dream/**ing**).

Homonyms can be confusing. They have to be learned from use. Some common homonyms are **to**, **too**, **two**. We go **to** church. We are **too** tired to run. You and I are **two** different people.

Other **homonyms** are road and rode, write and right, hear and here, would and wood, ate and eight, pale and pail, meat and meet, by and buy, knew and new, see and sea, week and weak, our and hour, be and bee, there and their, tale and tail, by and bye, threw and through.

Creatures with Wings















A young girl and boy went for a walk with their parents in a park. The father knew that his children liked to learn about creatures that jump, hop, and fly. The boy liked to watch bugs, rabbits, and deer.

The girl liked to watch butterflies, hummingbirds, and honeybees as they flutter among flowers. A beautiful butterfly with **pur/ple** and pink wings caused the girl to squeal with **de/light**.











She laughed when a black and red hummingbird **darted** quickly from flower to flower to collect nectar. **An/oth/er** hummingbird with a bright green **chest** zoomed into the flower **patch**. The two birds fussed and fought one another over a flower. **Sud/den/ly**, one of the tiny birds flew to her nest to feed her babies.







The girl's mother pointed to a red-winged blackbird **perched** on a bush. The blackbird flew away when the girl yelled, "Oh! It's beautiful!" The bright red, wing feathers were **spec/tac/u/lar**!

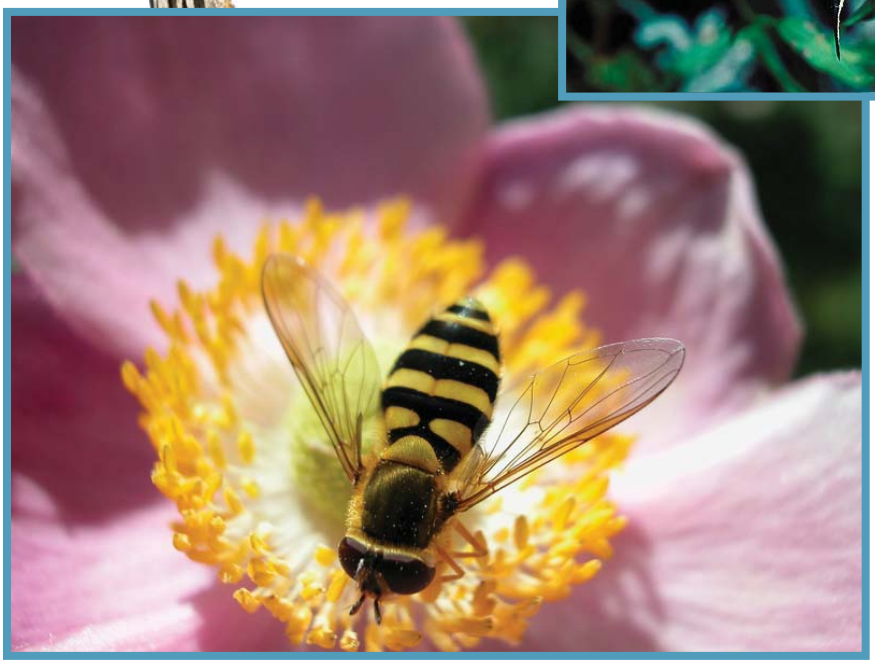




The **sleek** black tail feathers **glis/ten/ed** in the sun. Some honeybees buzzed near the little girl. She screamed and **rushed** to her mother. The boy and father smiled as the little girl **snug/gled** against her mother.







Creatures that Crawl









A wiggly worm crawled along a flower stem. The boy said, “Cool!” The little girl said, “Ugh!” The father picked up his daughter and told her that someday the ugly **cat/er/pil/lar** would turn into a **beau/ti/ful** butterfly. Just then, he noticed a cocoon and told the children that the caterpillar inside would crawl out as a beautiful butterfly in a few days.













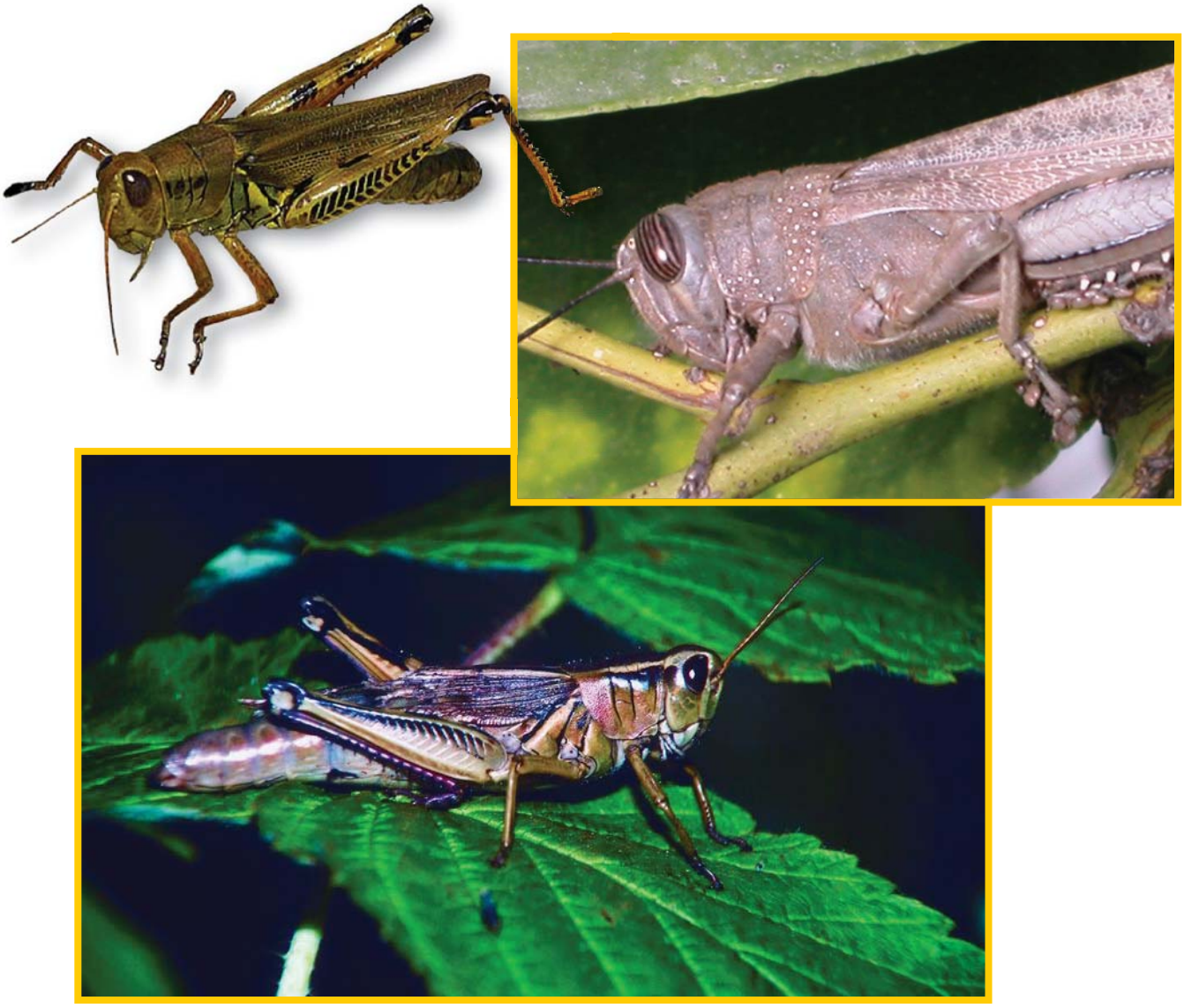






Just then, the boy spotted a ladybug **crawl/ing** on a stem of grass. The boy **squealed** with delight. Both children **squatted** to watch the funny little bug crawl along on its tiny legs.

Suddenly, a grasshopper landed on the little girl's arm. She **screamed** in fright. The boy quickly **snatched** the **grass/hop/per** from the girl's arm and looked closely at the legs, wings, head, and body. The mother explained that the body part was called the **thor/ax**.



The Balance of Nature











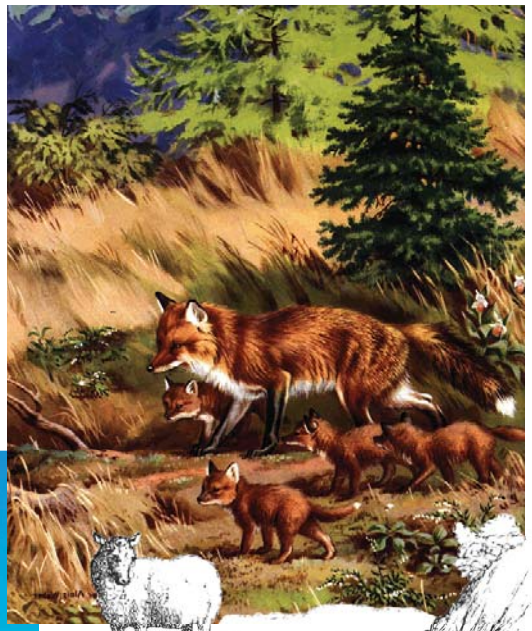






The mother explained that grasshoppers eat leaves and grass. The boy tossed the grasshopper into the air. It landed on a bush where a robin had a nest. Suddenly, the robin spotted the grasshopper and **plucked** it from the branch. The little girl said, “Oh!”





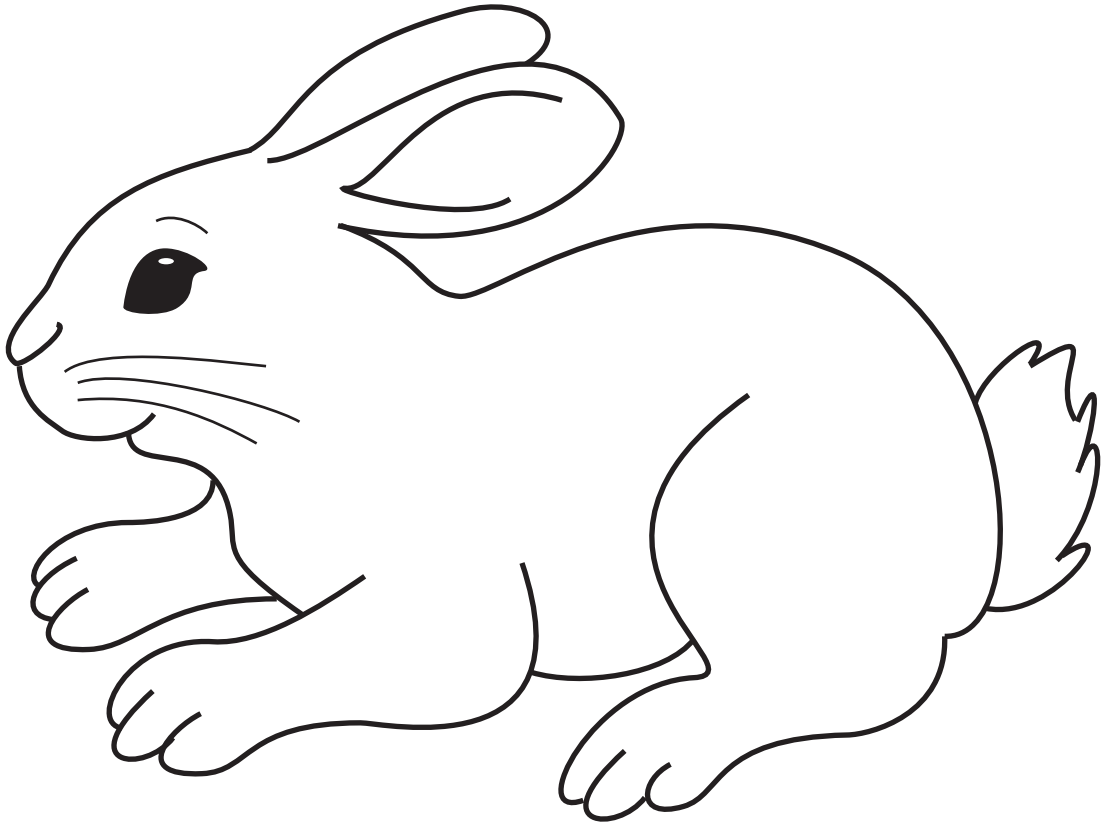




Her mother explained, “God created insects as part of nature’s food chain. Grasshoppers eat leaves. Butterflies, hummingbirds, and bees eat nectar from flowers. Birds and mice eat flower seeds, worms, and insects. Animals with fur, claws, and **sharp** teeth eat birds, insects, mice, and other creatures. That is why **house/cats**, foxes, coyotes, and bobcats eat mice, frogs, birds, gophers, and **rab/bits**.”

Activity Page

Color this Rabbit.



Copy these words.

rabbit _____ _____ _____

bush _____ _____ _____

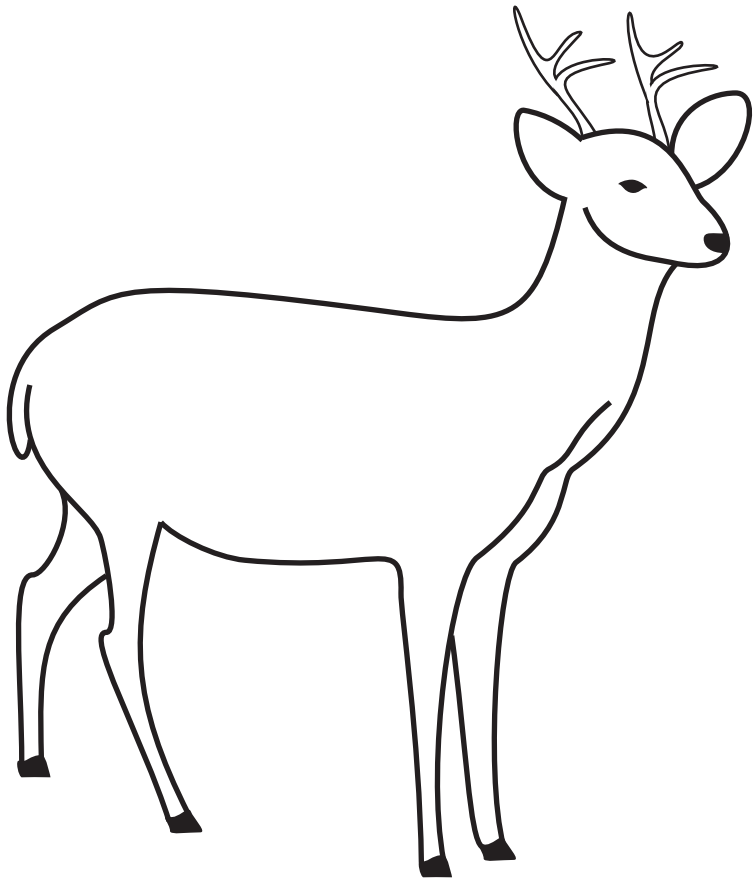
grass _____ _____ _____

leaf _____ _____ _____

black _____ _____ _____

Activity Page

Color this Deer.



Copy these words.

deer _____ _____ _____

squirrel _____ _____ _____

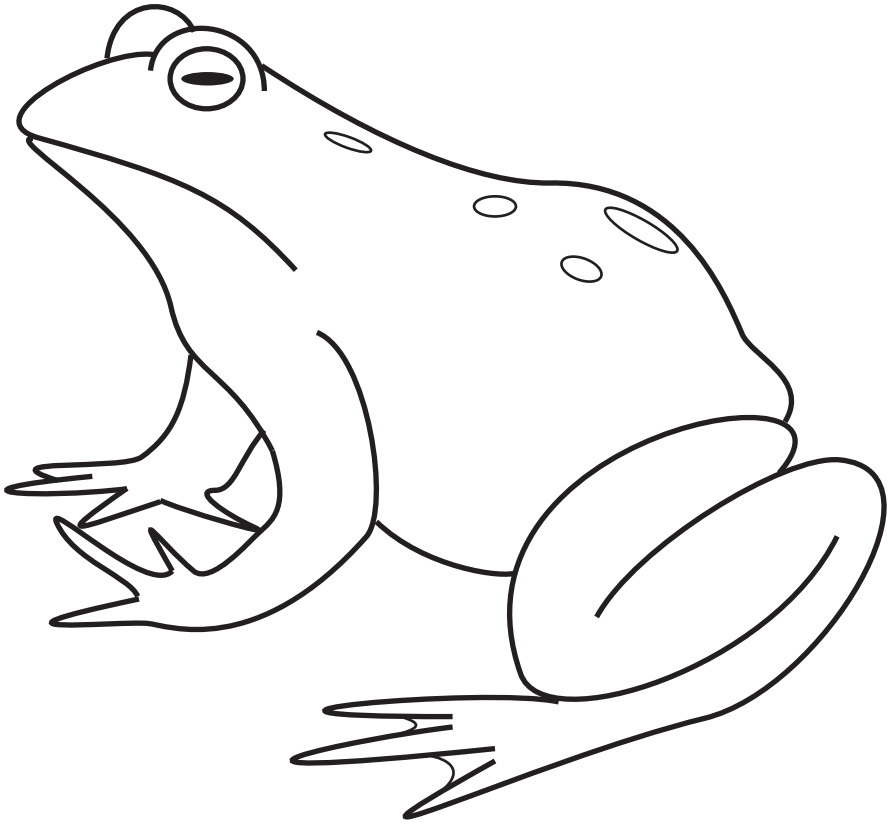
owl _____ _____ _____

skunk _____ _____ _____

toad _____ _____ _____

Activity Page.

Color this Frog.



Copy these words.

ant _____ _____ _____

table _____ _____ _____

sandwich _____ _____ _____

cloth _____ _____ _____

basket _____ _____ _____

Activity Page.

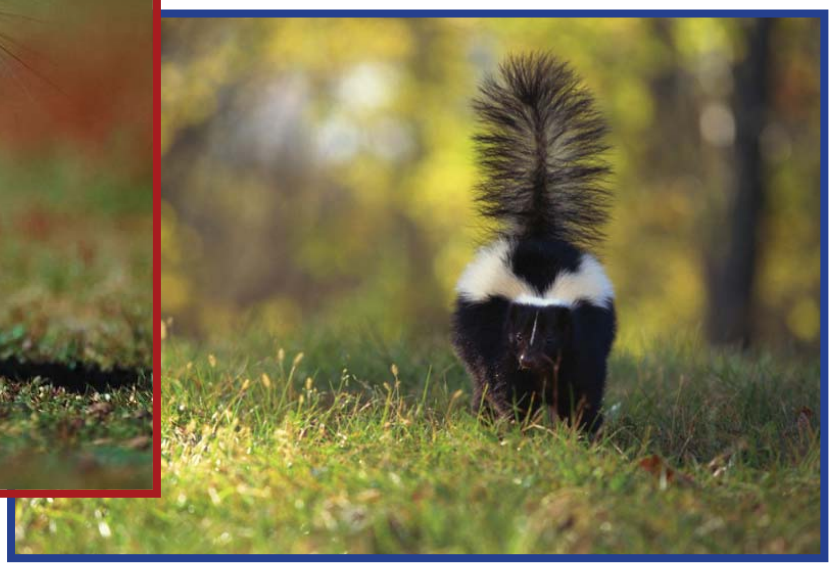
Draw and Color Your Favorite Creature in this Book.

Creatures with Fur



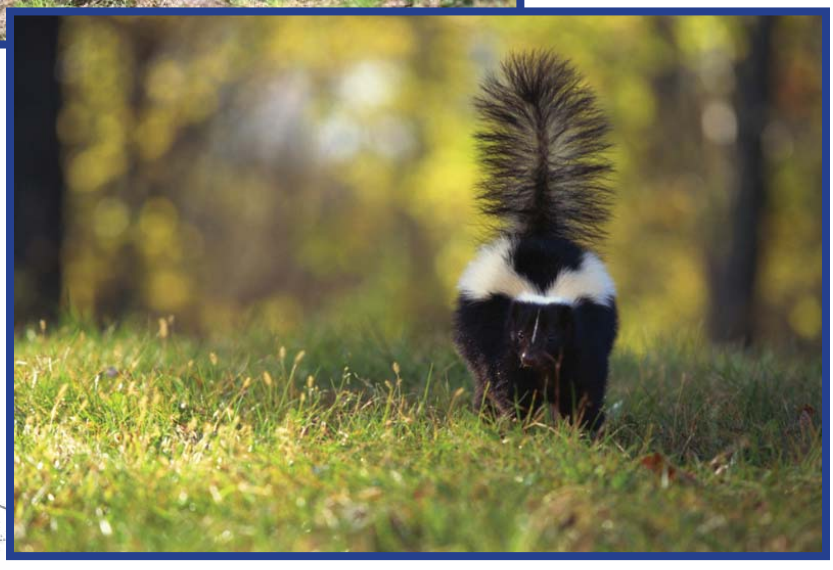






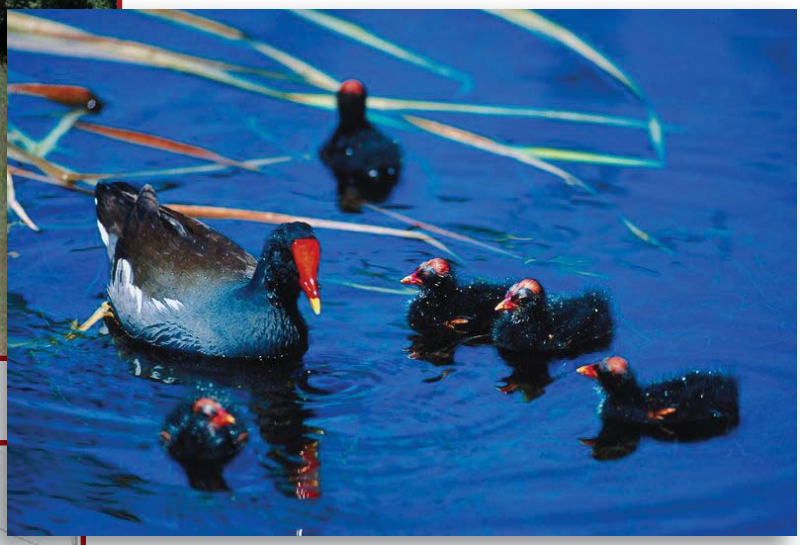
The boy interrupted with a loud warning, "Watch out. There is a **skunk**!" The fluffy black-and-white animal **wad/dled** out of a patch of weeds and stopped to watch the human family. The father **slowly** guided his family away from the skunk before it could spray its terrible odor.

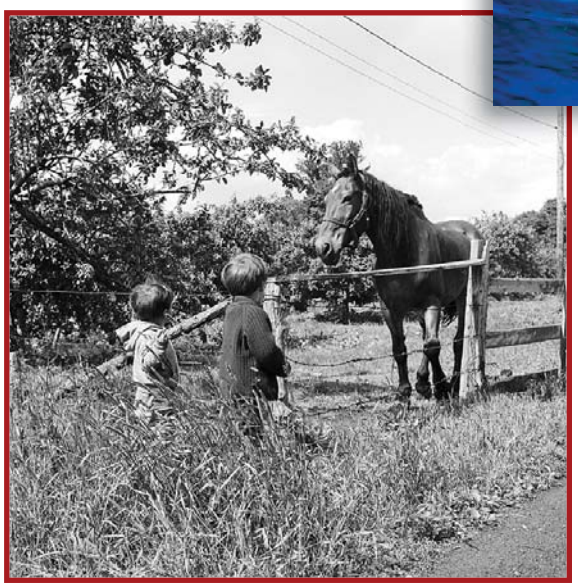






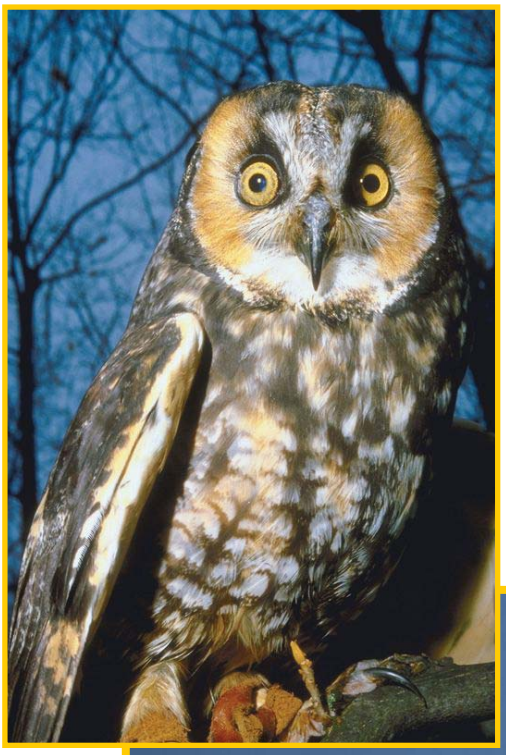








The family walked along a path toward a pond. The family stopped to look at a horse. A **squirrel** darted up a tree trunk and began to bark at the family that had interrupted the squirrel's meal of acorns. The squirrel scolded the human intruders.

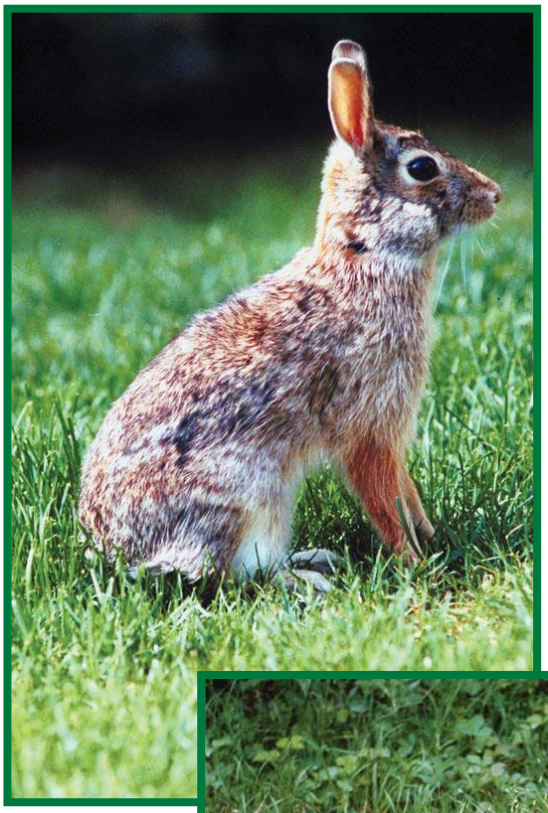


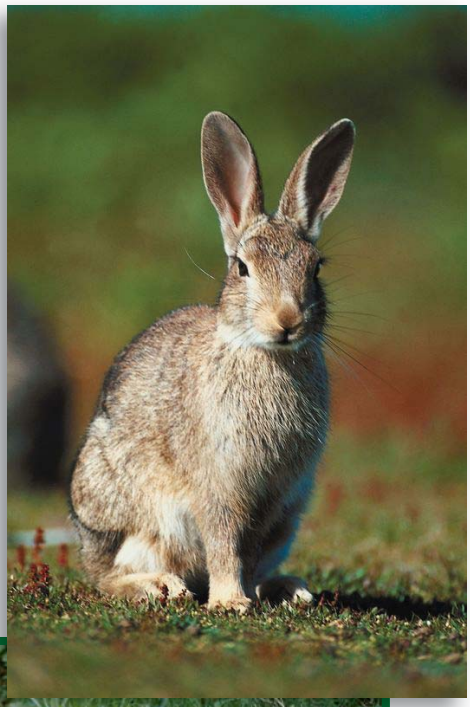




Suddenly, a large owl **glided** through the trees looking for a meal. The squirrel spotted the owl and dived into a hole in the Oak Tree. The girl laughed when the squirrel poked out his head and **chattered** angrily at the owl.

A small cottontail rabbit hopped from behind a bush. The boy saw it first and exclaimed, “Look at the rabbit!” The family watched quietly as the furry creature nibbled clover leaves. The little girl **sneezed** and scared the rabbit. It hopped quickly behind some bushes.









The father stopped suddenly. He pointed to a mother deer and her fawn as they stood near a tree. The mother deer saw the humans, and **carefully** guided her fawn into the brush where they **dis/ap/pear/ed**. The boy had been holding his breath, and slowly let air out of his lungs. He exclaimed, “Wow! That was neat!”

A Picnic Lunch



The little girl's stomach growled. She **touched** her stomach and said, "I am hungry! May we eat our picnic lunch now?" The mother smiled and replied, "Sure." The father and his son walked to the car to get the picnic basket. In a few minutes, they joined the mother and daughter at a picnic table.



The boy and girl **spread** a cloth on the table. The father and mother placed hotdogs, grapes, and carrot **sticks** on the table. The girl poured water in cups and handed them to her parents and brother. The father thanked God for the food and time together at the park. They ate their meal while talking about the bees, butterflies, squirrel, owl, rabbit, and deer.





The boy noticed a line of ants on the table. He **watched** the ants collect pieces of food and carry them away. The girl followed the trail of ants to an anthill near the table. A horned lizard sat very still by the anthill. His eyes followed the line of ants.





Suddenly, his tongue darted out to **snatch** an ant. The other ants tried to **sting** the lizard, but his skin was too thick. One ant managed to sting the lizard near his eye. He shook his head and dashed off into the grass.



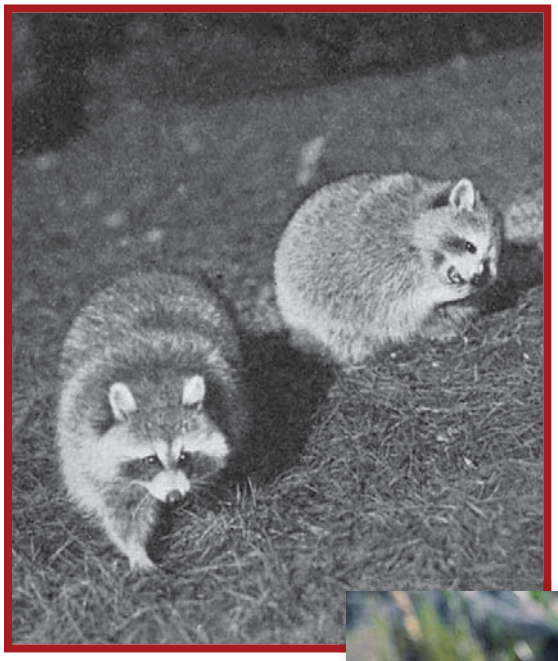


The family **finished** their meal and **placed** their paper cups and plates in a **trash** barrel. The sound of **thunder** caused the mother to **glance** toward the sky. Dark **clouds** had begun to gather. She said, “We need to hurry if we want to stay dry!” The father picked up the picnic basket and tablecloth,and led his family to the car. The boy said, “Thanks, dad, for taking us on a picnic.”

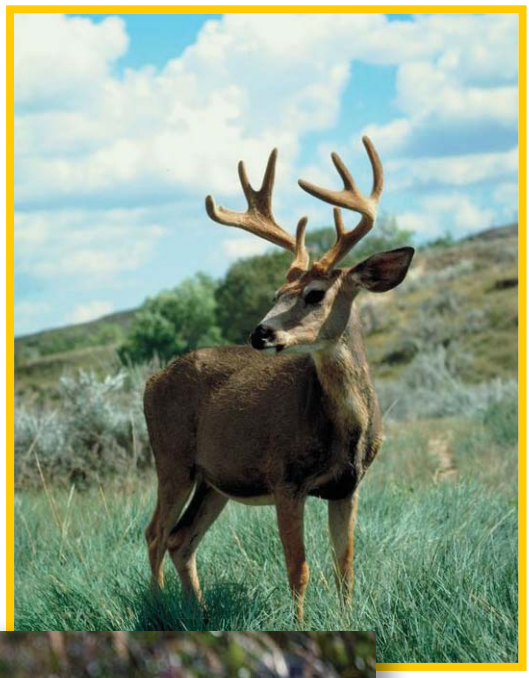








Racoon



Deer



Fox



Hummingbird



Owl



Deer and Fawn



Ladybug

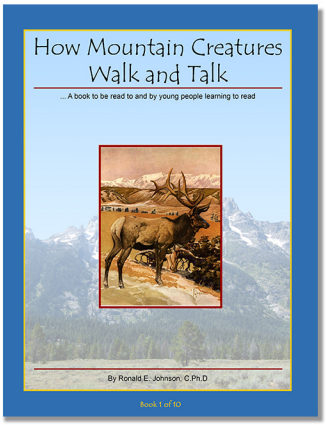


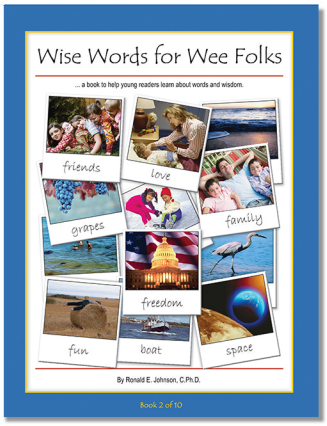
Fox

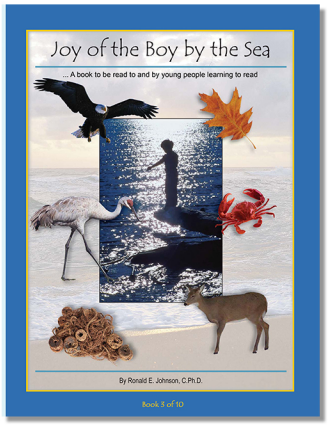


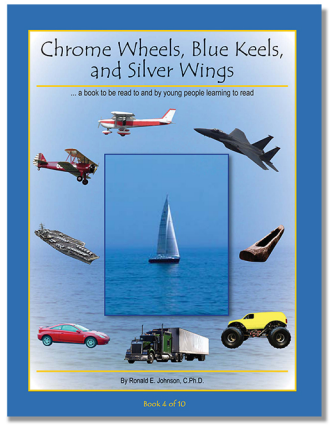
Owl

Read other books available in the Reader Series

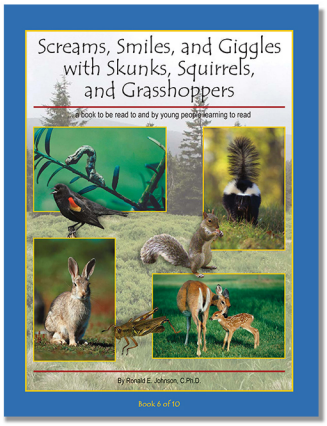


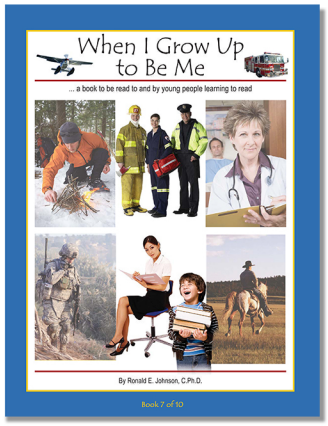


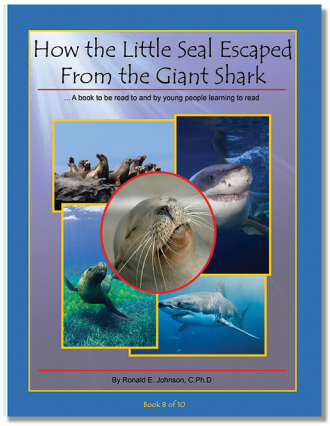


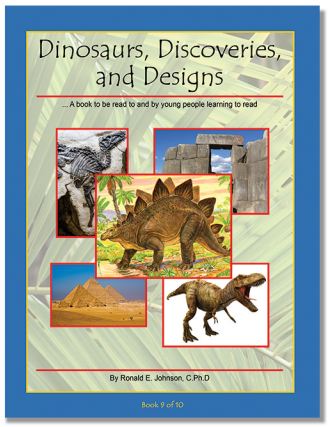


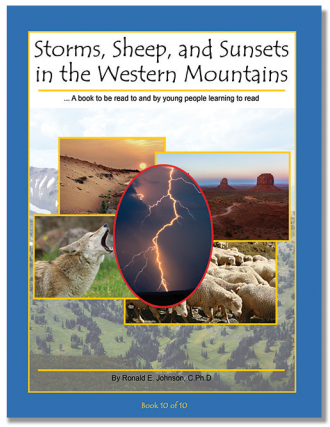














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