How the Little Seal Escaped From the Giant Shark

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



By Ronald E. Johnson, C.Ph.D

Book 8 of 10

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this story is to help young readers learn to identify and pronounce blends at the front, middle, and end of words, while learning about courage and bravery. The story of The Little Seal and The Giant Shark is not an attempt to ascribe human characteristics to animals (anthropomorphism), but illustrates the balance of nature…how all creatures die in order for other creatures to live. Little fish are eaten by seals, then sharks hunt seals for food. The author has deliberately woven intense drama into the story in an attempt to engage emotional qualities that cause the reader to remember the purpose of the story…to learn about blends while gaining insight about life.

BLENDS

Blends are letter combinations of consonants that create special sounds by placing the tongue and lips in various positions in relation to the teeth. Blends (sometimes called diphthongs and digraphs) are **bold** letters in this story to help readers identify words which include certain letter combinations such as: sl, ch, th, sh, sn, st, cr, sw, fl, sm, sn, sp, fr, bl, gr, pr, and br.

The teacher should point out the **bold** letters in the following words which contain blends, and demonstrate for the reader how the lips, teeth, and tongue are positioned to pronounce words that include blends.

The letter **s** is combined with various consonants to form many blends: **sw**am, **spl**a**sh**ed, **sp**otted, **sch**ool, **sm**othered, **sh**ark, **sm**all, **spr**ay, **sw**im, **st**opped, **sw**allowed, **sw**irled, **sh**oreline, **sp**ed, **sh**arp, **sn**ap, **sp**ot, **st**ick, **sc**urry, **sp**ent, **sm**all, fi**sh**, **sl**iced.

The letter **f** with **r** and **l** form several blends: **fr**iend, **fr**oze, **fr**oth, **fl**ipped, **fl**urry, **fl**oating, **fl**oated, **fl**ash, **fl**ashed, **fl**uttered.

The letters **c** and **s** with **r** and **h** forms blends: **cr**a**sh**ed, **cr**a**sh**ing, **cr**uised, **cr**uel, **ch**urning.

The letter **b** combined with **l** and **r** forms blends: **bl**ack, **bl**ur, **br**avery.

The letter **g** with **r** forms blends: **gr**abbed, **gr**eeted, **gr**ipped, **gr**ow.

The letter **p** forms blends when mixed with **l** and **r**: **pl**ay, **pl**ayed, **pl**ayfully, **pl**unges, **pr**aise.

The letter **s** mixed with **t** and **m** forms blends: **st**eal**th**ily, **sm**o**th**ered.

The letter **t** followed by **h** form a blend: o**th**er, fea**th**ers, for**th**, mo**th**er.

The combination of **ch** forms a blend: wat**ch**ed, wat**ch**ing, rea**ch**ed, bea**ch**, cat**ch**, **ch**ance,

The letters **c** and **l** together form a blend: **cl**ose.

VOCABULARY ENHANCEMENT

Some vocabulary enrichment words and blends are bolded to draw attention to them as a means of adding new words and letter combinations to the reader's vocabulary. The teacher will want to point out the following vocabulary words and pause to define them in context.

Words to Learn:

Billows: large, high waves of spray

Journey: trip or path

Vanished: disappeared, went out of sight

Smothered: cut off the sound

Vicious: mean, cruel

Stealthily: quietly and slowly

Horrified: full of fear

Menacingly: plan to attack and kill

Evade: get away from

Cruised: swam along slowly while looking

Impulse: sudden idea or thought

Vibrations: movements in the water

Gruesome: ugly and cruel looking

Murderous: desire to kill

Massive: big, huge, large

Predator: created to kill other creatures for food

Churning: swirling around and up and down

Froth: foaming water mixed with bubbles and ripples

Pursuit: to chase or hunt

Elusive: hard to catch

The little seal **sw**am and **pl**ayed with his **fr**iends near an island. Big waves **cr**a**sh**ed against the grey rocks, causing **sp**arkling **billows** of **sp**ray to burst in the air. Beneath the surface, hundreds of bubbles **dr**ifted up and down as ea**ch** wave ended its **journey** to the **sh**ore.



The little seal became tired after **sw**imming with his **fr**iends and **fl**ipped himself up on a rock to rest in **th**e warm sun. He wat**ch**ed **pr**etty seagulls wing lazily in circles looking for **sm**all fi**sh** to eat.



Suddenly, one of the birds dipped his wings and **sp**lashed into the surf. It **sn**at**ch**ed a minnow and rose on a wind current. O**th**er seagulls soon began to dip and dive in a **fl**urry of feathers as they spotted a school of bait fish. One bird grabbed a minnow and **fl**oated on the waves while eating the minnow.



In a **bl**ur of movement, the bird **vanished**. It just disappeared! The little seal wat**ch**ed the spot **wh**ere the seagull had been **fl**oating. Something was **wr**ong! Birds don't just vani**sh** from sight. Then, a big **sh**ark fin **sl**owly parted the surface and began moving toward a group of seals **pl**aying in the surf.



Fear **gr**ipped the little seal. He rose up and began to bark loudly to warn his family and **fr**iends to swim to the **sh**ore, but the noise of cra**sh**ing waves **smothered** the alarm. “What can I do?” asked the little seal. He knew that he must **pr**event the giant **sh**ark from attacking the o**th**er seals. But, how could he warn his family? He was too **sm**all to fight such a huge and **vicious sh**ark.



The **sh**ark moved ***s*tealthily** back and forth, just beyond the **cr**a**sh**ing waves, waiting for a baby seal to **sw**im away from its mo**th**er. The little seal became **horrified** when a baby seal **pl**ayfully darted past its mother. The huge fin **st**opped its cir**cl**ing and pointed **menacingly** **st**raight at the baby seal.



Activity Page

Write the correct word to complete the following sentences:

1. This book teaches readers about _____
   a. mountains b. blends c. churches

2. The main creature in this story is a _____
   a. donkey b. bird c. seal

3. Big waves _____ against the rocks.
   a. crashed b. sparkled c. melted

4. Seagulls fluttered above the _____.
   a. hills b. waves c. ships

5. A big _____ swam near the seals.
   a. Goose b. shark c. turkey

6. The little seal had to _____ the shark.
   a. attract b. hit c. swallow

7. The giant shark had _____ teeth.
   a. Yellow b. sharp c. broken

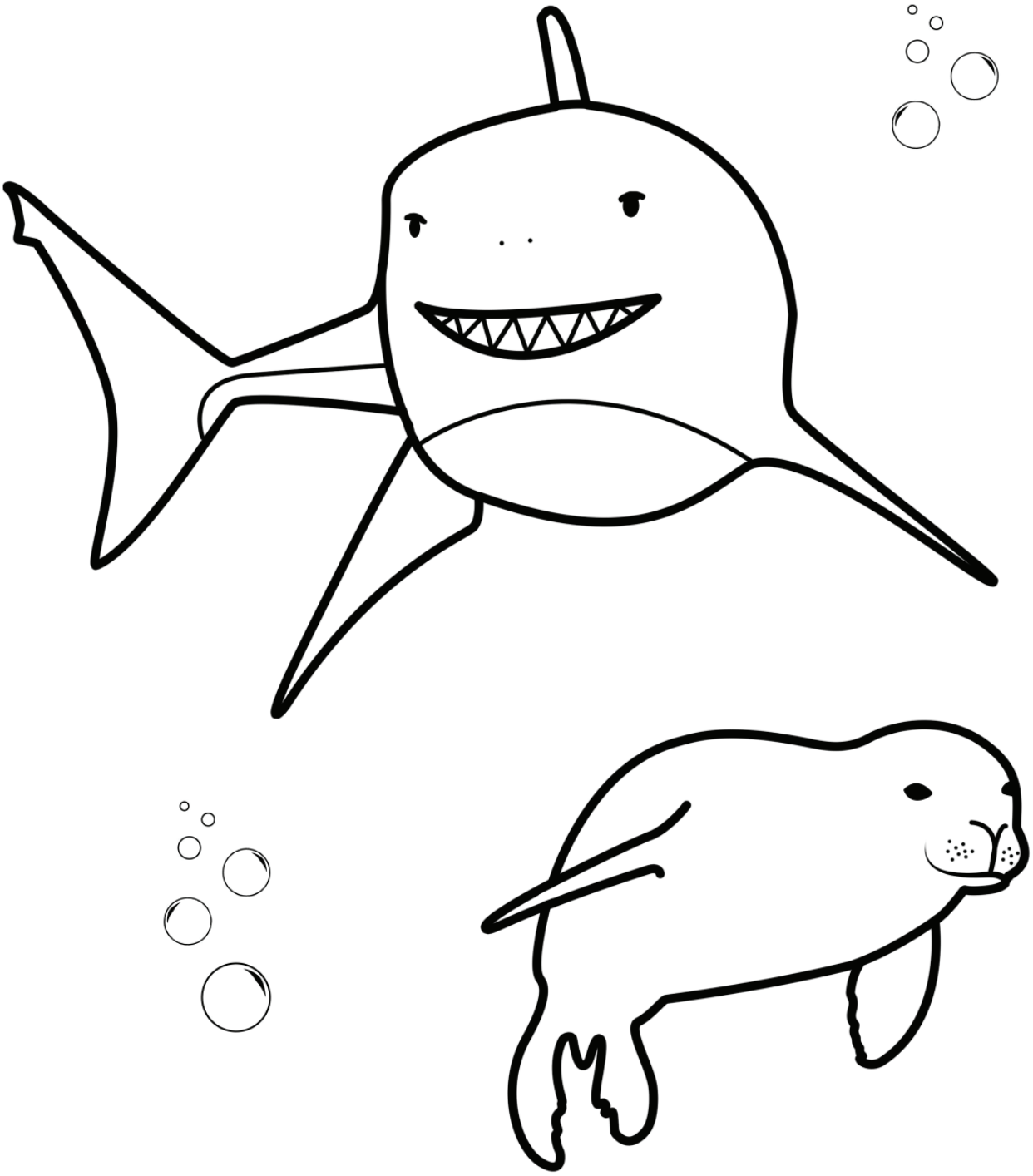
8. The little seal swam near the _____ of the shark.
   a. Tail b. nose c. side

9. The mother seal _____ her baby safely to the shore.
   a. Pushed b. carried c. dragged

10. The little seal was cheered by the other _____.
    a. Seagulls b. seals c. sharks

Activity Page

Color the picture of the seal and shark.



Activity Page

Copy the following words in cursive three times.

a. shark _____ _____ _____
b. seal _____ _____ _____
c. shore _____ _____ _____
d. swim _____ _____ _____
e. splash _____ _____ _____
f. brave _____ _____ _____
g. plunged _____ _____ _____
h. sharp _____ _____ _____
i. blends _____ _____ _____
j. fish _____ _____ _____
k. school _____ _____ _____
l. billows _____ _____ _____
m. crashed _____ _____ _____
n. floated _____ _____ _____
o. flurry _____ _____ _____
p. rocks _____ _____ _____
q. waves _____ _____ _____
r. sea _____ _____ _____
s. sky _____ _____ _____
t. sand _____ _____ _____
u. birds _____ _____ _____
v. teeth _____ _____ _____
w. jaws _____ _____ _____
x. swam _____ _____ _____
y. tail _____ _____ _____
z. dive _____ _____ _____

Activity Page

Draw a picture of the seal and shark.

The little seal had to act **qu**ickly, or the baby seal would be **sw**allowed by the **sh**ark. There was only one thing to do. He had to at**tr**act the **sh**ark's attention away from the baby seal. The little seal remembered wat**ch**ing a grown seal **evade** a **sh**ark by **sw**imming behind the **sh**ark as it **cruised** the **sh**oreline, sear**ch**ing for **pr**ey.



With a sudden **impulse**, the little seal **pl**unged from the rock and **spla**s**h**ed loudly into the waves. The **sh**ark felt **vibrations** in the water, and turned its **gruesome** jaws toward the little seal. In a **murderous** motion, the huge **sh**ark darted toward the little seal. Even **th**ough his tiny heart beat like a **dr**um, the little seal **br**avely faced the **gr**eedy **sh**ark. On **sw**am



the shark, gaining speed as it sped toward the little seal. The giant jaws **sp**read open with confidence that the little seal was soon to be **sl**ashed by razor-**sh**arp tee**th**. Just as the **sh**ark **st**arted to **sn**ap its wicked jaws, the little seal, darted downward and to the right side of the **sh**ark. In a **fl**ash, the little seal turned and **sw**am just below and behind the **sh**ark's tail.





The angry **sh**ark turned quickly to try to **sp**ot the little seal as he escaped the first **sn**ap of the **sh**ark's jaws. The **sh**ark was confused and angry that he had missed the little seal, and that the seal was not in sight!

Most seals would have tried to escape by **sw**imming toward the **sh**ore. They seldom rea**ch**ed safety. Vise-like jaws **sw**allowed them before they were half-way to the beach.



The big **sh**ark **sw**ung its **menacing** head side to side as its cruel eyes sear**ch**ed for the little seal. Then, the **sh**ark **fl**ipped its tail to surge back toward the baby seal. The little seal knew that the baby seal had no **ch**ance to survive.



The little seal darted to the left, just far enough to be seen by the **sh**ark. The monster fi**sh** suddenly turned its **massive** body to **sn**ap at the little seal. But, the wise little seal darted back toward the **sh**ark's tail. The enraged fi**sh** **tw**isted, dipped, **pl**unged, and turned as it tried to cat**ch** the little seal.



His heart **fl**uttered and his muscles began to **gr**ow weary. But, his only **ch**ance to survive was to **st**ick close to the **sh**ark's tail. Any attempt to out-swim the monster **predator** would mean instant dea**th**.



Around and around **sw**irled the furious **sh**ark.

Meanwhile the **churning** water caused the

o**th**er seals to **sc**urry to safety on the bea**ch.**



They wat**ch**ed the water **froth** as the heroic

little seal kept the hungry **sh**ark dis**tr**acted

from the baby seal.



Suddenly, the mo**th**er seal **sp**ed to her infant and carried it to safety on the **sh**ore.



By then, the exhausted **sh**ark **sw**am **sl**ower and **sl**ower, as it **tw**isted and turned in **pursuit** of the **elusive** little seal.

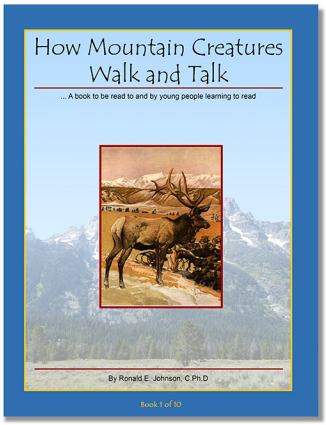
Finally, the **sh**ark **sp**ent its energy and knew that even if the little seal were to be eaten, its **sm**all body would not replace the energy used to cat**ch** the little **pr**ey. With a lazy-like motion, the **sh**ark gave up the hunt, and headed toward deeper water in sear**ch** of bigger seals. The little seal **sw**am cautiously behind the departing **sh**ark until it left the surf area.

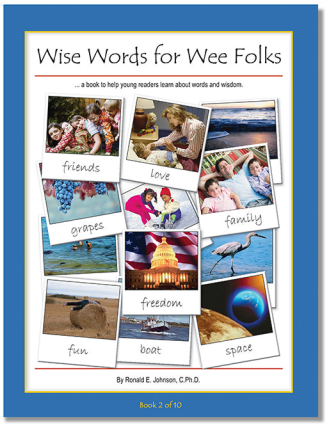


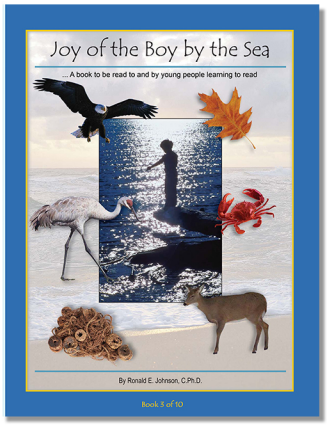
The little seal knew he was safe, so he turned and **sw**am directly toward the **sh**ore, **wh**ere he was **gr**eeted with loud barks of **pr**aise for his **br**avery and courage. He **fl**ipped up on a rock to rest and wat**ch**ed as the evil fin **sl**iced the water far away **fr**om the bea**ch**.

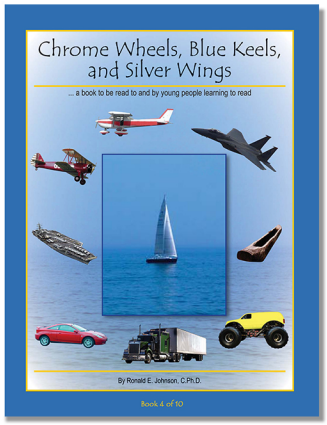


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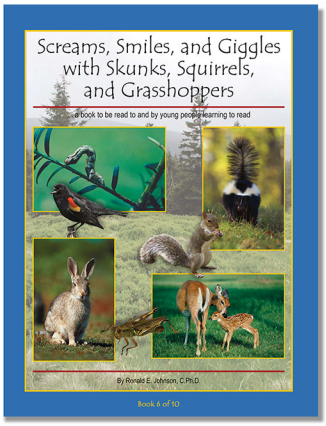


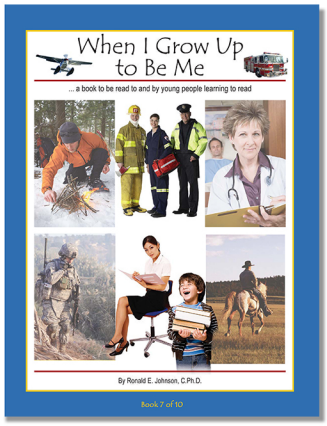


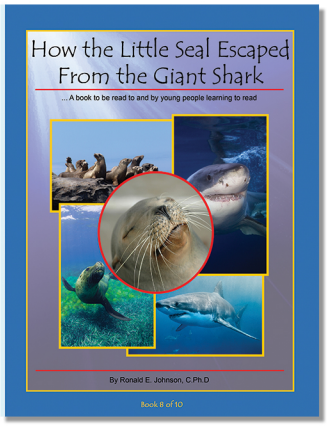


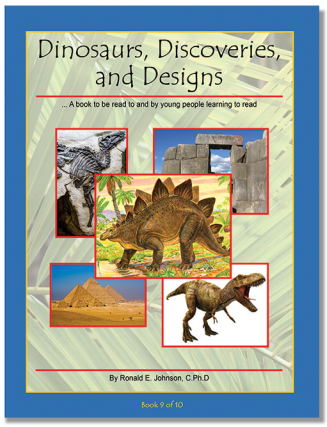


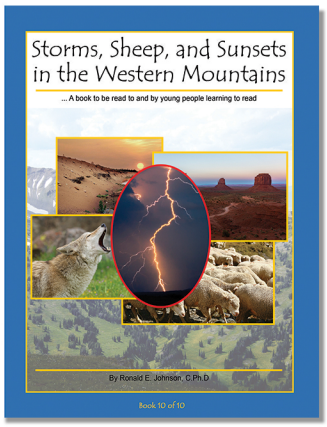












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