

Growing Readers Review

June
2023



Books of Excellence and Notable books are selected annually by a panel of Bright Horizons early childhood experts and represent some of the best new writing in children's literature.

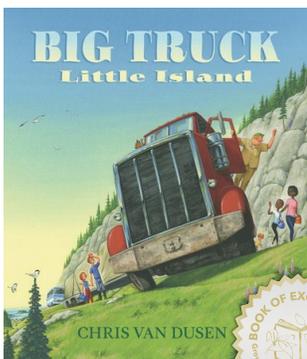
Book of Excellence

Check out...

Growing Readers
Book Club videos!
See page 2
for further details.

PRESCHOOL

Big Truck Little Island



Written and Illustrated by Chris Van Dusen

On a tiny island, on a narrow road, a big truck rumbles along carrying a mysterious package – until, that is, it gets stuck. Five resourceful kids and a tow truck help solve the problem and the mystery of the package. Rhyming text and whimsical illustrations bring this true story to life.

Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Repeat read.** Kids love to hear a story more than once, especially one as engaging as “Big Truck Little Island.” These experiences help them master early literacy skills such as recognizing letters and words, rhymes and alliteration, and story sequence and character.
- ▶ **Find solutions.** After you read the story, discuss it briefly. How did the children find a solution? What would your child do? Did it remind you of any real-life challenges you’ve experienced?
- ▶ **Point out the details.** Chris Van Dusen is known for his detailed illustrations. Read slowly enough to notice the characters’ facial expressions, the setting, and the small, almost hidden details.

Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Cover and uncover.** Invite your child to cover or hide stuffed animals, toys, and household objects in boxes, envelopes, or towels. Young children love to play hide-and-seek, an experience that helps them explore object permanence.
- ▶ **Explore fasteners.** In the story, a tarp hiding a mysterious object is secured with “wraps, buckles, and straps.” Create a collection of fasteners in your house such as clothing or shoes with buttons, belts, shoelaces, straps, Velcro®, zippers, suspenders, or other fasteners. Help your child learn to use the fasteners, and challenge your child to invent a new type of fastener.

Notable Books

Other great books we recommend.

Point your smart phone camera at the code to link to the Growing Readers website for more book recommendations.



PRESCHOOL

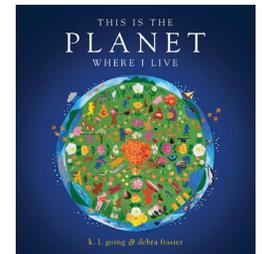
This is the Planet Where I Live

Written by K.L. Going; Illustrated by Debra Frasier

The book's brilliant illustrations and classic rhyming structure lead children through an exploration of Earth and the connections that bind us to it and to each other.

Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Introduce other rhymes.** "This is the Planet Where I Live" has a classic rhyming structure similar to "There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly." Learn a few nursery rhymes or fingerplays with your child to boost early literacy concepts like phonological awareness.
- ▶ **Examine the illustrations.** Point out the multimedia illustrations that combine silhouettes, collage, paint, and photographs. What details do you notice?



Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Make connections.** Think about your connections, starting with your home, family, and pets, and expanding to include your street, neighborhood, and community. Make a spiral map (similar to the book's illustrations) to include favorite locations such as friends' and family members' homes, restaurants, schools, or grocery stores. Place your home at the center of the map to help your child understand the connections you enjoy.
- ▶ **Observe local nature.** Take a clipboard or notebook and go on a nature walk. Make note of the insects, birds, and animals you see. Visit arboretums, wildlife preserves, farms, or botanical gardens to learn more about your area's animals and plants.

Don't Miss This!

Don't miss this month's riveting video episode of the Growing Readers Book Club! Become Teacher Nate's co-researchers as you and your child are introduced to high-quality children's books along with ideas to explore, create, and investigate further!

Growing Readers
Book Club

This month's Growing Readers Book Club video features the book "Big Truck Little Island" by Chris Van Dusen. Join Teacher Nate as he shares this fun tale of problem solving, teamwork, and community — inspired by a true story that happened in Maine. Also find out how to get your Growing Readers Book Club membership certificate!



[Watch the video here!](#)

We are proud to partner with The Book Vine for Children on our Growing Readers book selections. [Click here](#) to order these books and more.

Notable Books *Continued...*

SCHOOL-AGE (K-2)

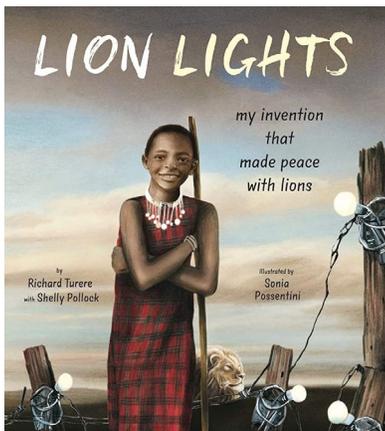
Lion Lights

Written by **Richard Turere with Shelly Pollock**; Illustrated by **Sonia Possentini**

The true story of how a nine-year-old boy used ingenuity and curiosity to save his family's cattle while preserving lions' safety on the plains of Kenya.

Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Stop to discuss.** Point out the complex paradoxes Richard faced, e.g., Richard's family relied on the cattle for meat, milk, and hides, yet the lions were hungry too. If the people destroyed the lions, tourists would stop coming to the region. If the lions killed all the cattle, the people would not have food. There was no simple solution. Has your child or your family ever experienced a difficult dilemma? What would your child do?
- ▶ **Explore the back material.** Learn about the Maasai people by reading the material at the end of the book. Use the resource page to discover more. These experiences build children's curiosity, persistence in learning, and research skills.



Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Dive into engineering.** Invite your child to take apart an old alarm clock, typewriter, or simple hand appliance (no computers, televisions, or other electronics which may contain dangerous chemicals). Or use simple tools and wood, PVC pipe, or other materials to create something. Encourage your [child's creativity](#) through open-ended play and exploration.
- ▶ **Build a fence.** Challenge your child to create a fence with straws, sticks, blocks, LEGOS®, or other materials. Add stuffed animals or toy figurines.
- ▶ **Explore light.** Offer a flashlight and invite your child to use it in a variety of ways. Make shadow puppets on a wall or create a code and send messages to each other.