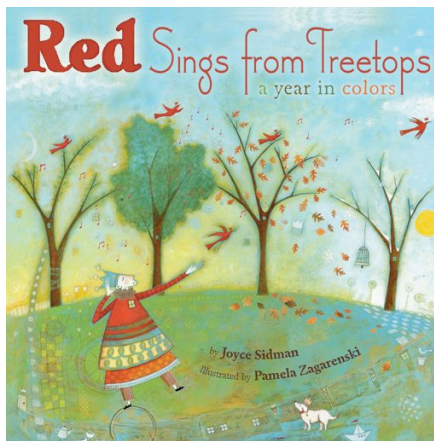




Activity Guide

from Junior Library Guild



Red Sings from Treetops

By Joyce Sidman

Illustrated by Pamela Zagarenski

Available only from
Junior Library Guild
7858 Industrial Parkway
Plain City, OH 43064
www.juniorlibraryguild.com



About JLG Guides

Junior Library Guild selects the best new hardcover children's and YA books being published in the U.S. and makes them available to libraries and schools, often before the books are available from anyone else. Timeliness and value mark the mission of JLG: to be the librarian's partner. But how can JLG help librarians be partners with classroom teachers?

With JLG Guides.

JLG Guides are activity and reading guides written by people with experience in both children's and educational publishing—in fact, many of them are former librarians or teachers. The JLG Guides are made up of activity guides for younger readers (grades K–3) and reading guides for older readers (grades 4–12), with some overlap occurring in grades 3 and 4. All guides are written with national and state standards as guidelines. Activity guides focus on providing activities that support specific reading standards; reading guides support various standards (reading, language arts, social studies, science, etc.), depending on the genre and topic of the book itself.

JLG Guides can be used both for whole-class instruction and for individual students. Pages are reproducible for classroom use only, and a teacher's edition accompanies most JLG Guides.

Research indicates that using authentic literature in the classroom helps improve students' interest level and reading skills. You can trust JLG to provide the very best in new-release books, and now to enhance those selections by giving your school the tools to use those books in the classroom.

And in case you think we forgot the librarians, be sure to check out the Library Applications page, shown on the table of contents in each guide.

From all of us at Junior Library Guild, we wish you and your students good reading and great learning . . . with JLG Selections and JLG Guides.



Red Sings from Treetops

By Joyce Sidman

Illustrated by Pamela Zagarenski

JLG Guide by Karen Sandoval

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Book Summary

Take an amazing journey through the seasons in Joyce Sidman's beautifully illustrated book of poetry, *Red Sings from Treetops*. Color comes alive in imaginative and surprising ways: blue hides during stormy spring days, white clinks in summertime drinks, and yellow grows wheels and lumbers off to school in fall. Children and adults alike will delight in discovering the many whimsical details in the artwork. Who will be the first one to find the names of the four seasons? Readers will never think of the seasons and colors in the same way again.



About the Author and Illustrator

Joyce Sidman is the award-winning author of the Caldecott Honor book *Song of the Water Boatman and Other Pond Poems*. She lives in Minnesota, where winter is long and white. She found inspiration for *Red Sings from Treetops* in “the sight of a sunlit, cherry-red cardinal on the tip of the tallest tree.” Ms. Sidman notes that she has always been delighted by color and has wanted to write about it for a long time. She credits her son (to whom the book is dedicated) with helping her find a way to connect color, place, and emotion in creative and imaginative ways. She says her favorite color is the soft green of early spring.



Ms. Sidman found the perfect collaborator for her work in illustrator Pamela Zagarenski. Before she ever sat down to bring the images to life, Ms. Zagarenski dreamed of the artwork and emailed her ideas about the illustrations to the author. When she is not illustrating picture books, Ms. Zagarenski is busy creating sculptures and large paintings. She says her favorite color is also the new green of spring.

Prereading Activities

Library Applications

Take a Picture Walk

Activate students' prior knowledge and generate interest in the book by having students preview it during a "picture walk." As you display the pages of the book, prompt students to describe what they see in the illustrations. Do not read any of the text.

Use questions that encourage students to note details, such as colors, objects, animals, clothing, and weather. For example, you might ask:

What animals do you see on this/these page/pages?

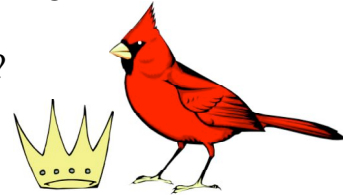
Who or what is wearing a crown?

What kind of weather is shown here?

How many birds are on this/these page/pages?

What are the three (two, four, etc.) main colors on this/these page/pages?

What do you see that seems not to belong on this/these page/pages?



As you go from page to page, have the students point out the red bird wherever it appears.

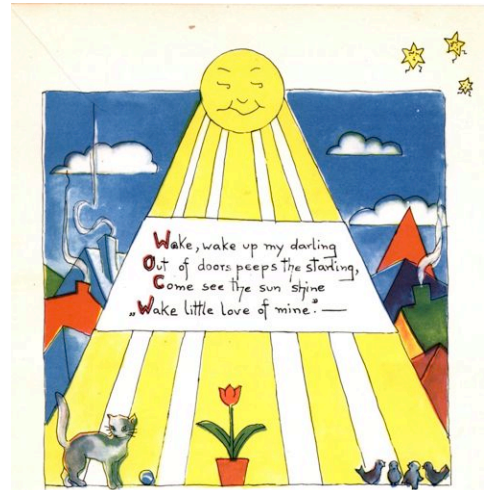
Before you turn to the next page, ask students to make predictions about what they might see next.

Using Prior Knowledge

Before reading the book aloud to the children, allow them to share some prior knowledge they have gained from their own experiences. Ask them:

What do you know about . . .

- . . . seasons?
- . . . colors?
- . . . poems?
- . . . trees?
- . . . birds?



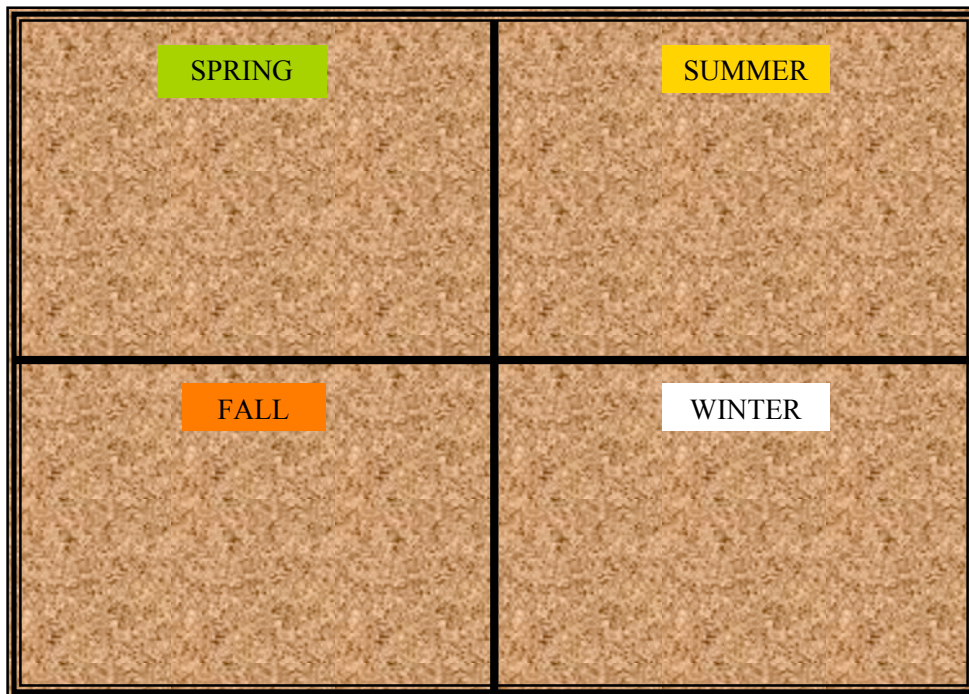
If the students are not very familiar with poems, use the sample above* as a simple example of a short poem. Explain that not all poems rhyme, but some do.

*courtesy of clipart.com

Bulletin Board Extension

Have students draw or bring in pictures of things associated with each season: spring, summer, fall, and winter. Use the pictures to create a bulletin board display. Students can also draw their own seasonal images, such as leaves or apples or suns.

Divide the display into four sections, one for each season. Create labels for the pictures the students brought to share. Talk about the colors, the weather, special foods or holidays, and the kinds of clothing students associate with each season. Add this information to your display, using words or images.



Art Connection

Have students create their own Four Seasons Scrapbook. On each page, they can draw, glue, or tape objects that remind them of each of the seasons. They can share their scrapbooks with the class before taking them home to share with others. Suggest that they make a cover that shows something from each of the four seasons.



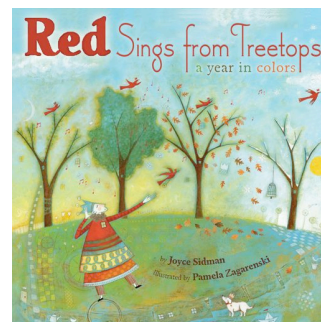
Concepts about Print

Parts of a Book

Identifying and Analyzing Visual Arts

Show the students the book cover, front and back. Ask:

- What is on the front cover?
- What is on the back cover?
- What do the front words on the cover tell you?
- How would you describe the four trees on the front cover?
- How are they different from each other?
- What are the four seasons?
- Which tree goes with each season?
- Who or what do you think is “Red”?
- Why do you think the red bird is flying away from the last tree?
- What do you think the red notes stand for?



Next, show students the title page. Ask:

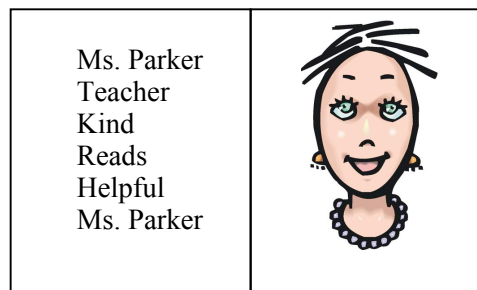
- What is this page called?
- What do you see on this page?

Point out the words contained in the art at the bottom of the page. Explain that these are the names of the four seasons—spring, summer, fall, and winter. Ask: *How does the art on this page illustrate each of the seasons?*

Applications: Making a Class Book of Poems

Give each student a blank poetry page. You may use the sample provided on page 15 at the back of this guide. Model how to create an “all about me” poem using your name and words that describe you.

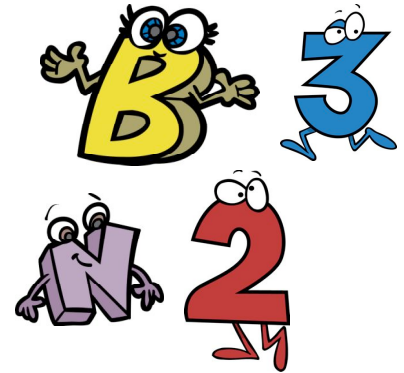
Explain that students will write their own poems using words that tell something about them. Have students dictate their poem for you to write out. Then they can draw a picture of themselves to go with the poem. Bind the completed pages into a class book. You can share the book with the class by reading aloud the poems and letting students share what they liked about this project.



Concepts about Print

Print Awareness

As you read the book aloud, ask the students to look closely at the artwork to find words and numbers. Point out places where the illustrator includes the names of the seasons. For example, the word “spring” appears on trees, and the word “summer” appears on the collar of a shirt. Some of the items will include the following:



words on a roof, mat, and door
words on clothing
a label on a bag of popcorn

numbers on houses
words on a wheel
letters on a crown





Grouping Ideas: Season by Season

Give each student a set of Season by Season Matching Game and Cards found on pages 16 and 17. Allow them to color the pictures if you’d like. Then have the students cut out the 16 cards on page 17. Explain that the game sheet (page 16) is where they will place their cards.

The top set of images on the game sheet shows a picture that symbolizes each of the four seasons. Have students look at their cards to decide which season each one belongs in. There are four cards for each season, so when they are finished, the game sheet should be completely filled. When they have correctly placed every card, the students can use a glue stick to adhere them to the page.

Other uses for this exercise:

For older students, have them match the word for each image to its correct picture. Write the word in each square of the game sheet, then reproduce the sheet for the students. You may follow the example shown here:

Season by Season Matching Game			
spring	summer	fall	winter
			
bunny	fan	pumpkin	mitten
duck	sunglasses	apples	snowflake
lamb	pail and shovel	squirrel	seed
kite	lemonade	football	skate

Alphabetic Awareness

Find the Letters

Make copies of page 18 and give each student one. Ask students to find the letters among the pictures. Have them color the letters first. Then they may color the rest of the page.

Encourage students to draw their own “letter pictures.” One way to do this is to begin by writing the letter. Then the student can draw a picture that incorporates the letter in some way. For example, here are some samples that use the letters L, m, and P :



Post their letter pictures on a bulletin board so the whole class can enjoy them.

Letter Match

Write the following words in two columns on the board as shown. Ask students to draw a line matching the word pairs that begin with the same lowercase letters.

fall	spring
summer	rain
pink	flower
red	wind
blue	grass
winter	black
green	peep



Phonemic Awareness

Sounds Alike

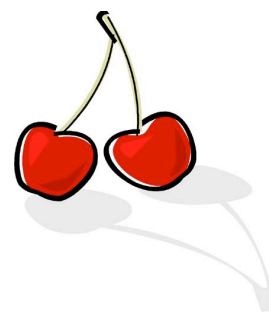
Use the following sets of words to practice finding the beginning sounds that are alike. All of the words in these sets come from our book, *Red Sings from Treetops*.

First, say: I will say three words. Listen for the beginning sound of each word.

Next, read aloud one set: cherry, spring, cheer.

Next, tell the students that you will read the set again. They should raise one hand when they hear the first word of the pair that sounds alike. Then they should raise the other hand when they hear the second word with the same beginning sound.

cherry	spring	cheer
hands	leaves	light
green	grows	flowers
blue	blinks	peep
summer	yellow	salt
pup	hill	humming
shadow	shy	earth
black	winter	worms



Blend the Sounds

Find the set of seasonal cutouts on page 19. Make a copy of the page for each student. If possible, enlarge one set for yourself.

1. Have students color and cut out each image.
2. Model how to say each sound represented on the cutouts.
3. Show students how to put cutouts together to form a word.
4. Model how to blend the sounds to say the word. Example; (/f/ /all/ /fall/)
5. Have students repeat what you have modeled.

Invite students to form other words by using the cutouts. Repeat the activity encouraging students to add the /s/ sound card at the end of words.

Vocabulary

Show Me the Meaning!

Tell students that some words have more than one meaning. Point out that the word spring is the name of a season. Explain that spring is also an action word that means “to jump suddenly.” It is also an object that is coiled (you may need to draw this for them). Have students take turns by giving you a sentence that shows each meaning. For example:

I like spring better than winter.
My dog springs up from the floor when I come home.
The spring in my toy broke.



Repeat using some of the following words from our book:

left Please turn to the left.
 I left school at 3:00.

float We watched the boat float downstream.
 My dad likes a root-beer float.
 The team made a float for the parade.

cold It’s too cold in here.
 Does the teacher have a cold?

fall Don’t fall down the icy steps.
 Fall is a busy time on the farm.



rule “No running” is an important rule at the swimming pool.
 The king wanted to rule his people well.

light The light in the kitchen is bright.
 The large box was light instead of heavy.
 Would you let Mom light the candle?
 She liked light blue better than pink.



Math

Our Favorite Color: Making a Graph

Give each student an index card and six (6) crayons: red, blue, yellow, green, orange, and purple. Have the students color their cards with their favorite color from those six. Draw a chart on display paper as shown below. Label each column with the name of a color. Invite students to tape their cards in the matching column.

Use the completed graph to have students practice math skills, such as counting, comparing numbers, and identifying more than and less than. Ask questions such as the following:

- *How many students chose blue as their favorite color?*
- *Which colors did the same number of students choose?*
- *Which colors got more than five votes? Which colors got fewer than five votes?*

RED	BLUE	YELLOW	GREEN	ORANGE	PURPLE
■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■				■
	■				

Next ask students to use the data on the chart to create a graph. For example, the following pie chart has sixteen sections. Have students color in a similar pie chart, showing the colors as sections (3 red sections, 4 blue sections, etc.), keeping colors together as a pie chart would show. Then you can discuss fractions if your students are ready.

Extend the activity by asking students to suggest other topics for a “favorites” survey, such as favorite season, favorite sport, or favorite subject in school.

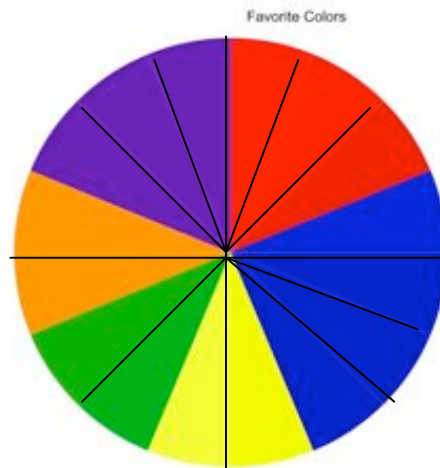


Chart creation courtesy of:
www.nces.ed.gov/nceskids/createagraph*

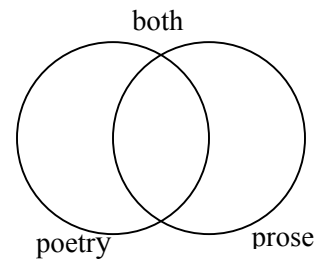
*Recommended source

Reading Comprehension

Poetry vs. Prose

Explain that *Red Sings from Treetops* is a book of poetry. Read aloud a few familiar poems or rhymes. Ask students to share what they know about poems. Then display a familiar storybook, and read aloud a page or two. Ask students to tell how poems are different from a storybook. Display a spread from *Red Sings from Treetops* and point out how the text is organized into short lines. Display a spread from the storybook and point out how the text is organized into paragraphs. Explain that the storybook is prose.

Lead a discussion about the differences between poetry and prose. Then discuss how they are alike. Record students' responses in a Venn diagram. Use the completed diagram to summarize the class discussion and reinforce key points.



Spring Is Here!

Use the following questions as you read aloud the spring section of the book to draw students' attention to key details and to assess their comprehension of the text.

Fun Attention Keeper: Prompt students to point out the red bird whenever they see it.

- *What colors does the poet think of in spring?*
- *What is red and sings from the tops of trees?*
- *What is red and wiggles on the wet ground?*
- *Why do we think about green when we think of spring?*
- *What do you notice about the trees in spring?*
- *Do birds wear jackets? What do you think the poet means by saying the birds have yellow jackets?*
- *What is yellow and shouts with light?*
- *What do the illustrations tell us about the weather in spring?*
- *How can white be loud and scary? How can white be quiet and gentle?*
- *Why do you think the poet includes a nest of pink baby birds in this section?*



Ask similar types of questions for each of the remaining sections of the book.

Literary Response and Analysis with Writing Strategies

Poems Can Be Riddles

Explain to the students that often in poetry, the poet will write about something in a way that is almost like a riddle. After reading the book aloud, read the following “riddles” and see if the students can remember what object they are about. If they have trouble, go to the page where the words are and look for context clues in the illustrations:

SPRING	“red squirms on the road after the rain”	_____
	“they beam at each other with bright velvet faces”	_____
SUMMER	“white clinks in drinks”	_____
	“yellow melts everything it touches”	_____
	“red darts, jags, hovers; a blur of wings”	_____
FALL	“a tiny round house, dolloped with a roof”	_____
	“yellow grows wheels and lumbers down the block”	_____
	“full, heavy moon, thick with pulp and seed.	_____
WINTER	“Red, Orange, and Yellow—have all gone home.”	_____
	“Red beats inside me: thump-thump-thump”	_____
	“Red hops to treetops”	_____

See if the students can work together to create their own “riddles” for things in nature. Here is an example to help you get started:

What is white, lumpy, and moves with the wind ?
(describing word) (describing word) (action words)

Answer: A cloud!

Write the sample question on the board and leave the blanks empty. Do several together and then encourage students to write and illustrate their own riddles.

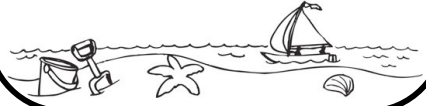


Class Poem

Tell students they will work together to write a class poem. Choose a season from the book and reread that section. Then ask the students to name words related to that season. Encourage them to use nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Record their responses in a three-column chart with the headings: *Things*, *Describing Words*, and *Action Words*. Invite students to choose words from the chart, and use them to write a class poem like the one below.

<u>Things</u>	<u>Describing Words</u>	<u>Action Words</u>
summer	yellow	splashing
sun	hot	diving
sand	fun	swimming
beach	sunny	playing
pool		camping
		relaxing

Summer
Yellow, hot
Diving, swimming,
splashing
Sun, sand, beach, pool
Playing, camping,
relaxing
Fun, sunny
Summer



Write All About It

Ask students to write about their favorite season. Use the handout below, found on page 20, to use for their final draft. If there is time, have students illustrate their response.

My favorite season is

I like this season because

During this season I like to

All about Me




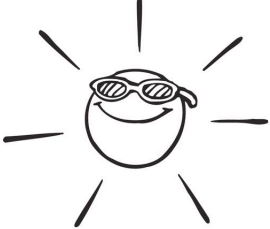
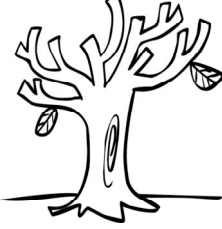

Season by Season Matching Game

spring

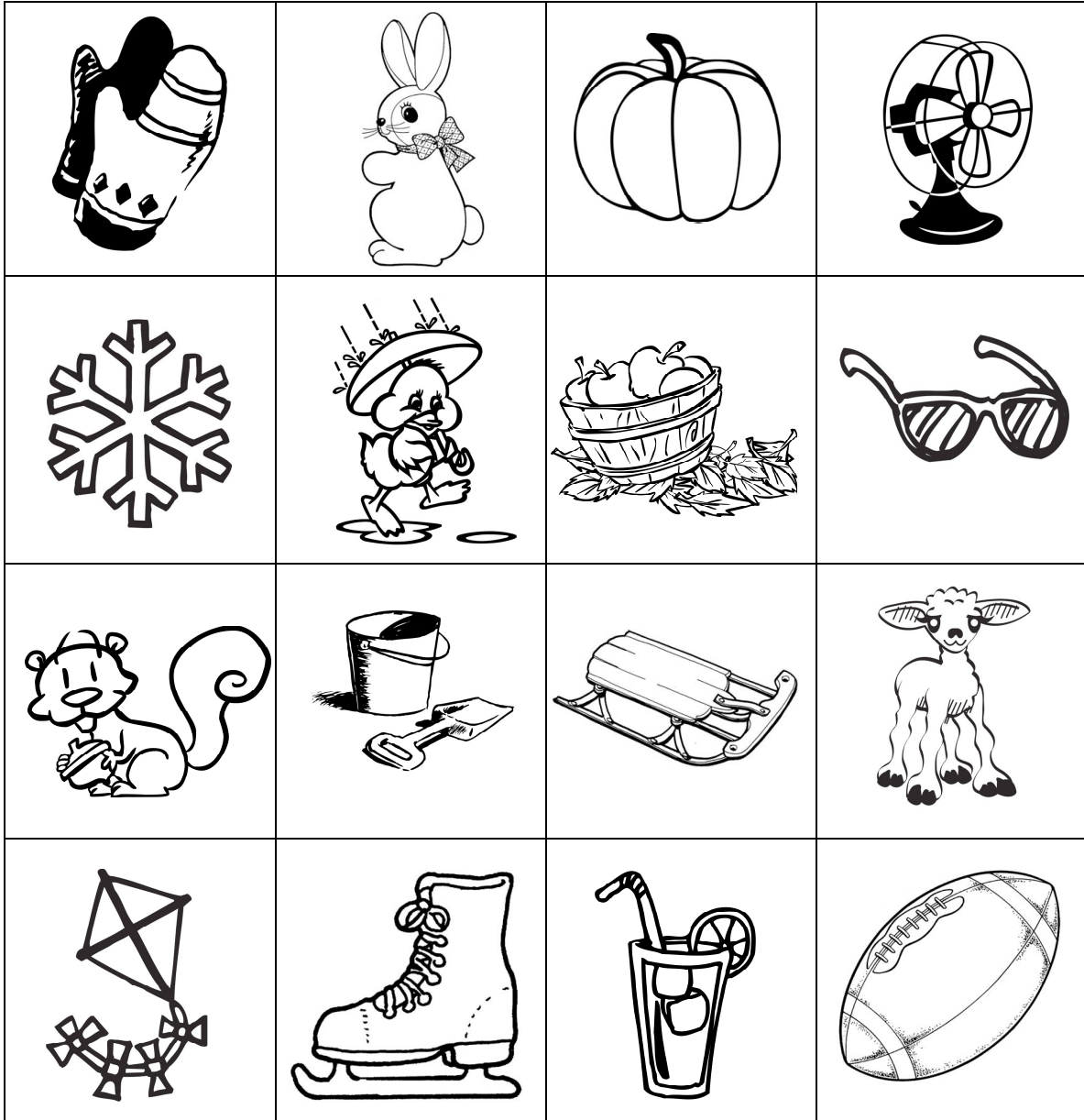
summer

fall

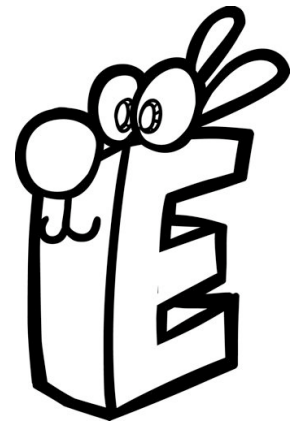
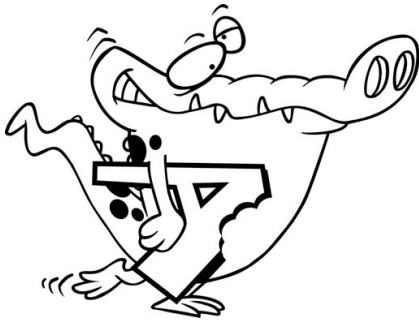
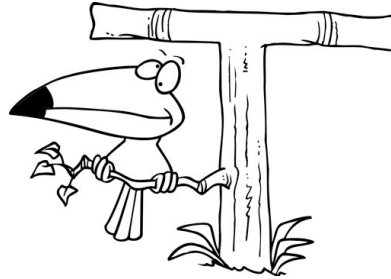
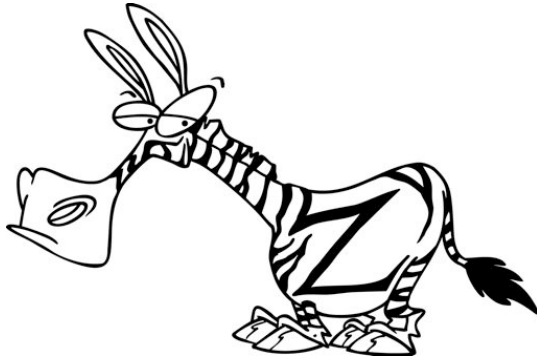
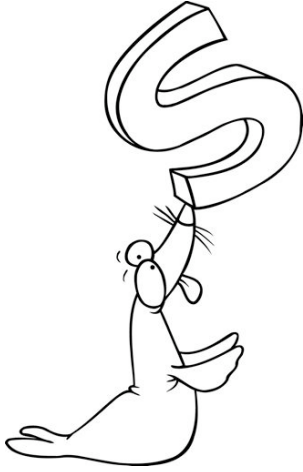
winter

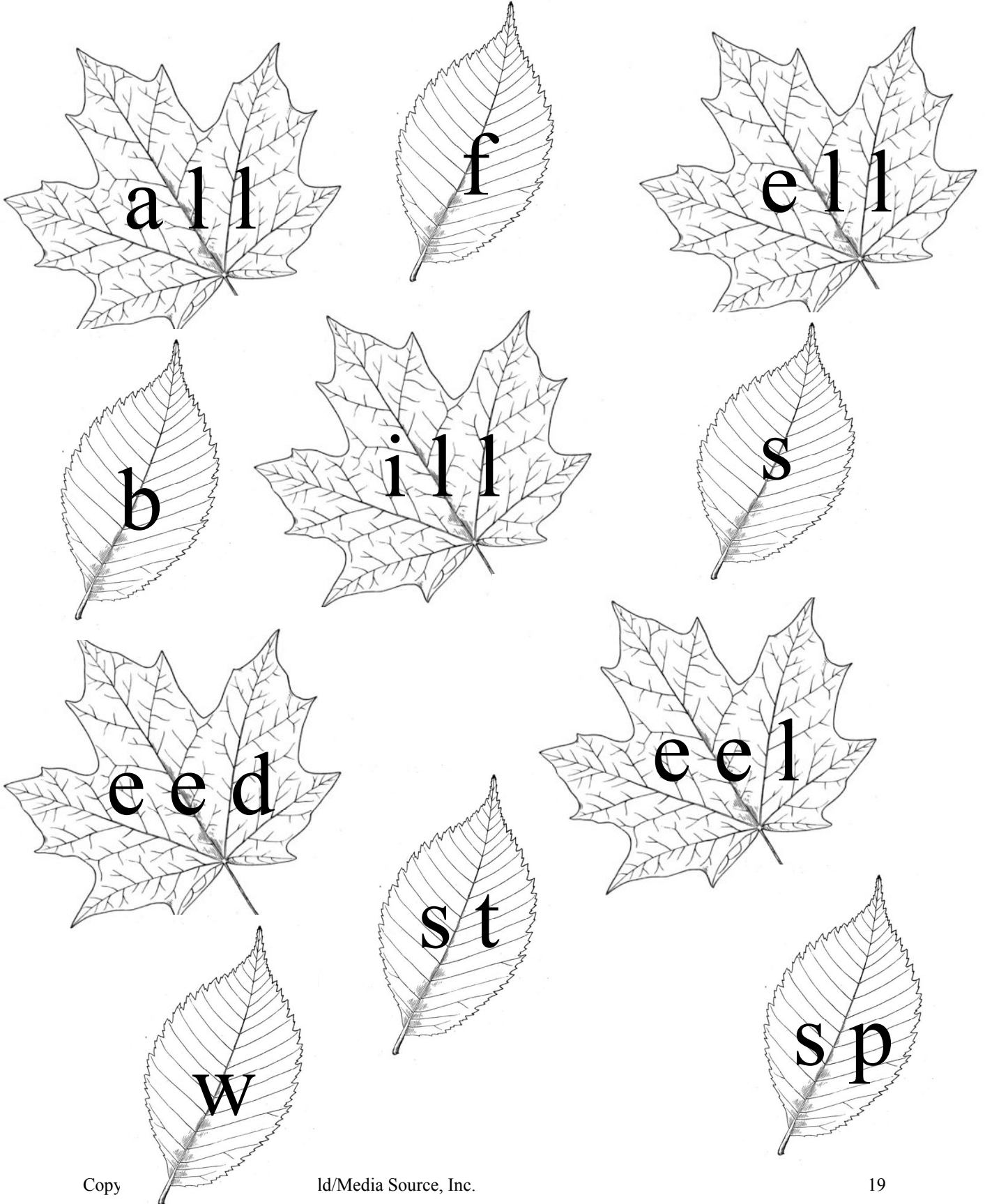
Season by Season Matching Cards



Find the Letters



Blend the Sounds



Write All about It

My favorite season is

I like this season because

During this season I like to

Correlations to National Standards For Grades K–4

Content Area	Standard Number	Standard Objective
Visual Arts	NA-VA.K-4.3	Choosing and Evaluating a Range of Subject Matter, Symbols, and Ideas
Language Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.1	Reading for Perspective
Language Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.2	Reading for Understanding
Language Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.3	Evaluation Strategies
Language Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.4	Communication Skills
Language Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.5	Communication Strategies
Language Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.6	Applying Knowledge
Language Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.12	Applying Language Skills
Mathematics: Number and Operations	NM-NUM.PK-2.1	Understand Numbers, Ways of Representing Numbers, Relationships Among Numbers, and Number Systems
Mathematics: Algebra	NM-ALG.PK-2.1	Understand Patterns, Relations, and Functions
Mathematics: Data Analysis & Probability	NM-DATA.PK-2.1	Formulate Questions That Can Be Addressed With Data and Collect, Organize, and Display Relevant Data to Answer
Mathematics: Representation	NM-REP.PK-12.1	Create and Use Representations to Organize, Record, and Communicate Mathematical Ideas
Science	NS-K-4.3	Life Science (seasons)

Answer Key

Page 4: Take a Picture Walk: Answers will vary.

Page 4: Using Prior Knowledge: Answers will vary.

Page 6: Parts of a Book

1. Show the students the book cover, front and back. Ask:
 - *What is on the front cover?* A: trees, birds, a person, a dog
 - *What is on the back cover?* A: trees, birds, a boat, a cup, a teapot
 - *Where is the title of the book?* A: at the top of the front cover
 - *Describe the four trees. How are they different?* A: The first tree has just a few green leaves. The second tree is full of green leaves. The third tree has red and orange leaves that are falling to the ground. The fourth tree is covered in snow and does not have any leaves.
 - *What are the four seasons?* A: spring, summer, fall or autumn, and winter. Ask students to identify which tree represents each season.
 - Read aloud the title and ask: *Who or what do you think is Red?* A: the person wearing a crown; one of the birds
 - *Why do you think the red bird is flying away from the last tree?* A: it is flying away for the winter
 - *What do you think the red notes stand for?* A: singing or music
2. Show students the title page. Ask:
 - *What is this page called?* A: the title page
 - *What do you see on this page?* A: a person with a crown, a dog, bushes, butterflies, a fox, the sun, leaves, snowflakes, etc.
 - Point out the words at the bottom of the page. Explain that these are the names of the four seasons—spring, summer, fall, and winter. Ask: *How does the art on this page illustrate each of the seasons?* A: green bushes for spring, butterflies for summer, red and orange leaves for fall, and snowflakes for winter, etc.

Page 7: Concepts about Print: Print Awareness. A: words appear on buildings on pp. 1, 16, 24; numbers on houses on pp. 1, 2, 10, 16-17, 27; words on clothing on pp. 2, 8, 22, 26; words on a wheel on p. 2; words on trees on p. 2; a label on a bag on p. 7; letters on a crown appear throughout the book; words on leaves on pp. 14-15; number on a bus on p. 17.

Page 7: Grouping Ideas: Season by Season. A: Spring images: bunny, duck, lamb, kite; Summer images: fan, sunglasses, pail and shovel, lemonade; Fall images: pumpkin, apples, squirrel with nut, football; Winter images: mittens, snowflake, sled, ice skate.

Page 8: Alphabetic Awareness: Find the Letters. A: (seal) S, (kangaroo) K, (teddy bear) O, (zebra) Z, (toucan/bird) T, (toy soldier) i, (cup) D, (penguin) P, (alligator) A, (house) H, (bunny) E.

Page 8: Letter Match. A: fall/flower; summer/spring; pink/peep; red/rain; blue/black; winter/wind; green/grass.

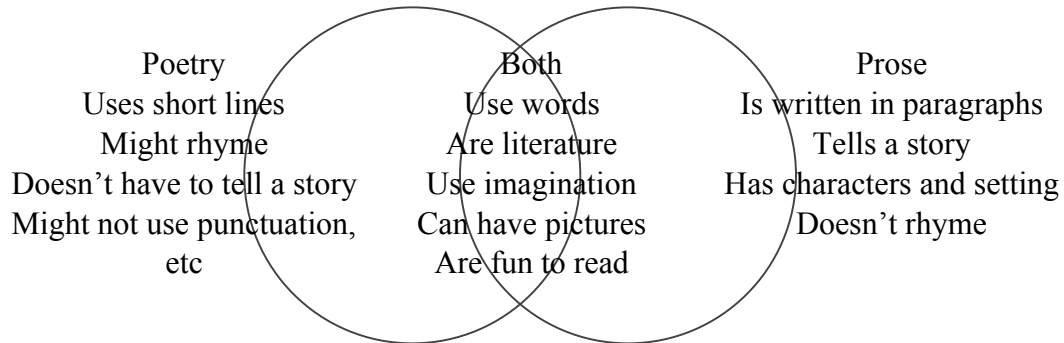
Page 9: Phonemic Awareness: Sounds Alike. A: cherry/cheer; leaves/light; green/grows; blue/blinks; summer/salt; hill/humming; shadow/shy; winter/worms.

Page 9: Blend the Sounds. A: Possible word combinations include: fall, fell, fill, feed, feel, falls, feeds, feels, ball, bell, bill, balls, bells, bills, seed, wall, well, weed, walls, wells, weeds, stall, still, steed, steel, stalls, steeds, spell, speed, spells, speeds.

Page 10: Vocabulary. A: Answers will vary. Some examples are given on page 10.

Page 11: Our Favorite Color Graph. A: Answers will vary.

Page 12: Reading Comprehension. Poetry vs. Prose. A: Some suggestions are:



Page 12: Spring Is Here! A:

- *What colors does the poet think of in spring?* (red, yellow, purple, white, blue)
- *What is red and sings from the tops of trees?* (birds)
- *What is red and wiggles on the wet ground?* (worms)
- *Why do we think of green when we think about spring?* (New things sprout and grow in spring and they are mostly green.)
- *What do you notice about the trees in spring?* (The trees have green leaves.)
- *Do birds wear jackets?* (no)
- *What do you think the poet means by saying the birds have yellow jackets?* (Their yellow feathers are their yellow jackets.)
- *What is yellow and shouts with light?* (the sun)
- *What do the illustrations tell us about the weather in spring?* (Sometimes there are blue skies, and it is sunny or windy. Other times it is dark, and there are storm clouds and lightning.)

- *How can white be loud and scary?* (Storms and lightning can be loud and scary.)
- *How can white be quiet and gentle?* (Clouds can be quiet and gentle.)
- *Why do you think the poet includes a nest of pink baby birds in this section?* (Baby birds hatch in the spring, and she wanted to use pink.)

Page 13: Literary Response and Analysis: Poems Can Be Riddles. A: Spring: worms, flowers (pansies); Summer: ice cubes, sun, hummingbird; Fall: acorn, school bus, pumpkin; Winter: leaves, heart, red bird (cardinal). Student riddles: Answers will vary.

Page 14: Class Poem. A: Answers will vary.

Page 14: Write All About It. A: Answers will vary.