

A Teacher's Guide to the Books of LANE SMITH

FOR
USE WITH
COMMON CORE
STATE
STANDARDS

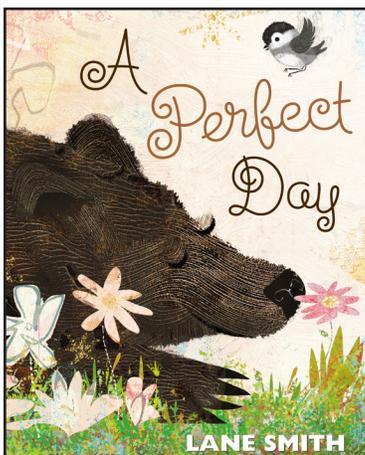


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LANE SMITH is the award-winning author and illustrator of *Grandpa Green*, *It's a Book*, and the middle-grade novel *Return to Augie Hobble*, among others. In 2012, the Eric Carle Museum named him a Carle Artist for “lifelong innovation in the field of children’s picture books,” and in 2014, he was awarded the lifetime achievement award from the Society of Illustrators. He lives in an old house in Connecticut with the designer Molly Leach, pondering the goings-on in his own backyard.

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This Common Core teaching guide presents a variety of Common Core activities to engage your students in meeting standards in Reading Literature, Writing, and Speaking and Listening while enjoying the books written and illustrated by Lane Smith. After engaging in the Pre-Reading Activity for each title, you’ll find comprehension questions that will allow you to monitor student understanding of the text before introducing a variety of these standards-based activities. This guide is aligned with Common Core Standards for grades K–3 but can be applied to multiple grade levels. To attain specific Common Core grade level standards for their classrooms and students, teachers are encouraged to adapt the activities listed in this guide to their classes’ needs. You know your kids best!



Ages 4–8 • 9781626725362

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Before sharing either the cover or interior of *A Perfect Day* with students, ask them what they know about bears. Make a list of all of the physical and behavioral traits they generate. [Note: You may want to have a few age- and reading-level-appropriate books or articles about types of bears common to your region on hand in order to check suspect facts.] Following this brainstorming, share the full book jacket illustration. Ask them whether the picture is a good match for their list of traits. Ask: Which traits do we see in the bear pictured in the illustration? Which traits are different from the bear pictured in the illustration?



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 Before reading *A Perfect Day*, begin by exploring the expectations that the full jacket art sets up. Share the illustration and ask students to quietly observe all of the details they notice in the illustration for 2–3 minutes. Then list them on the board, reminding them to list only what they actually see.

Next ask them to consider the title: *A Perfect Day*. Ask what they think the phrase means, in general, when applied to anyone’s day. Now combine the list of details from the cover and ask them to predict what “a perfect day” means in this book.

QUESTIONS TO CHECK COMPREHENSION OF A PERFECT DAY

1. What makes a perfect day for Cat?
2. What makes a perfect day for Dog?
3. What makes a perfect day for Chickadee?
4. What makes a perfect day for Squirrel?
5. What elements of the perfect day for Cat, Dog, Chickadee, and Squirrel make the day perfect for Bear?
6. Read the author information on the back flap of the dust jacket. How do you think Lane Smith got the idea for this story?

COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

MY PERFECT DAY

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: After reading and discussing *A Perfect Day*, ask students to share some of the things that make a day perfect for them. Depending on the developmental age and level of the students, scribe their responses or ask them to write down the ideas that resonate for them. Then invite them to remember a single day that held many of those elements and write a short narrative in which they present the satisfying details of that perfect day in the order in which they occurred. Ask them to provide a closing sentence, perhaps one as simple as, “And that was my nearly perfect day!” [Note: Invite kindergartners to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing, as necessary. Ask second graders to include thoughts and feelings in their narratives.]

CCSS.W.K.3 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

CCSS.W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

CCSS.W.2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

A BEAR’S PERFECT DAY

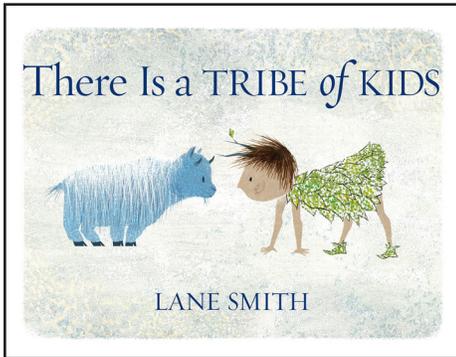
Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: Gather from the library a large selection of informational books, written at the appropriate reading level for your students, about bears common to your region (or another region you have studied.) If computers are available in the classroom, library, or lab, also identify several online sites with information about bears accessible to young readers. Invite students to learn as much as they can about one or more types of bears, including what they like to eat and what they like to do. Challenge them, either individually, in small groups, or as a full class, to record these facts. Then ask them to create an informational piece that incorporates these facts and describes a bear’s perfect day.



CCSS.W.K.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).

CCSS.W.1.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).

CCSS.W.2.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).



Ages 5–8 • 9781626720565

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Write the title *There Is a Tribe of Kids* on the board in large letters where students will notice it before you begin. Draw their attention to it, if necessary, and ask them to start thinking about what it might mean. If they are pre-readers, you may want to read it aloud to them to start them thinking.

When it is time to begin, share the front cover of the book with them. Ask what they see. If they cannot identify the animal pictured, ensure that they know it is a goat and that young goats are called *kids*. Next ensure they know the word *kids* can also be used in place of *children*. Then ask them what they think the book might be about, based on only the title and cover illustration.

Share the illustrations on the first three pages after the copyright page as well as the text on the third page. Explain that a group of goats is called a *tribe*. Ask: Do these pages explain the title and cover illustration to you? Does the bottom illustration on page 3 lead you to make a prediction about what will come next?

QUESTIONS TO CHECK COMPREHENSION OF *THERE IS A TRIBE OF KIDS*

1. What are the two meanings of the word *tribe* in *There Is a Tribe of Kids*?
2. After the goat, which other animals does the child encounter?
3. What do you notice about the child’s body as he encounters each group of animals, plants, and natural features?
4. What scenes in the book do the illustrations on the second to the last page recall?
5. What is the message of the single illustration on the final page?

COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

MORE THAN ONE AND ALL TOGETHER

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: After reading and sharing *There Is a Tribe of Kids*, ask students to complete the left hand columns of the following chart, either as a whole class or in small groups.



INDIVIDUAL	GROUP NAME	INDIVIDUAL	GROUP NAME
Kid (goat)	Tribe		
Penguin	Colony		
Whale	Pod		
Raven			
Rock			
Rubble			
Plant			
Elephant			
Monkey			
Rhino			
Gorilla			
Turtle			
Caterpillar			
Butterfly			
Lightning Bug			
Star			
Blue			
Clam			
Dream			
Kid (human)			



Follow up with a discussion of the difference between common phrases, like “a rock formation,” colloquial phrases, like “an ocean of blue,” and the actual names for groups of animals, such as “a troop of monkeys.”

Now challenge kids to find many more animal group names to complete the right-hand column using a variety of online resources including:

- Enchanted Learning: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/animals/Animalbabies.shtml>
- National Geographic Kids: <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/awesome-8-hub/animal-group-names/>
- The Old Farmer’s Almanac for Kids: <http://www.almanac4kids.com/outdoors/groups.php>

CCSS.W.K.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).

CCSS.W.1.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).

CCSS.W.2.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: After completing the More Than One and All Together activity above, invite each student to choose his or her favorite animal and group name to illustrate in the style of author/illustrator Lane Smith’s art in *There Is a Tribe of Kids*. Share the “There was a FLIGHT OF BUTTERFLIES” single-page illustration as an example, and ask them to place the child from the story in company or pursuit of a group of the chosen animal.

CCSS.SL.K.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.

CCSS.SL.1.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

CCSS.SL.2.5 Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.



PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Much of the fun of *Kid Sheriff and the Terrible Toads* lies in the references to various dinosaurs. Get your students ready to appreciate the humor by doing some research on the following dinosaurs and their attributes. Be sure that students verify the key trait listed below as well as uncovering other interesting facts.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| • T. rex | large size/small arms |
| • Velociraptor | agile arms |
| • Protoceratops | slow moving |
| • Triceratops | gentle giant |
| • Allosaurus | sticky fingers |
| • Stegosaurus | plant eater |

This pre-reading activity will also serve to meet Common Core Writing Standard 7.

CCSS.W.K.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).

CCSS.W.1.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).



CCSS.W.2.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

QUESTIONS TO CHECK COMPREHENSION OF *KID SHERIFF AND THE TERRIBLE TOADS*

1. Is *Kid Sheriff and the Terrible Toads* a serious book or a funny book? On which page do you first know the answer to that question?
2. When he is first talking to Mayor McMuffin, what evidence does Kid Sheriff use to prove that he will make a good sheriff?
3. How is Kid Sheriff's dinosaur knowledge helpful in capturing the Toads?
4. Who is smarter, Mayor McMuffin, Kid Sheriff, or the Toads? How do you know?
5. Do you believe that Kid Sheriff had a plan all along to capture the Toads? Why or why not?

COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

THE WORK OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: Unlike the other titles in this guide, Lane Smith illustrated *Kid Sheriff and the Terrible Toads* but another children's book creator, Bob Shea, wrote the text. As in all picture books, the illustrations here not only capture the meaning of the text, they expand it. Ask students to think about the characters in the story. Read dialogue and descriptions of each character without looking at the accompany illustration. Then invite them to closely examine the illustrations featuring each of the following characters:

- Kid Sheriff
- Mayor McMuffin
- Big Mean Toad
- Big Weird Toad
- Big Ugly Toad

For each character, ask: How do Lane Smith's illustrations help you to understand each character better? Point to specific examples from the illustrations.

CCSS.RL.K.7 With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).

CCSS.RL.1.7 Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

CCSS.RL.2.7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

DINOS ON THE SCENE

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: Using the dinosaur information gathered in the pre-reading activity above, invite students to draw or paint one of the following imagined scenes in the style of Lane Smith. In each scene, show dinosaurs committing the crimes in Drywater Gulch:

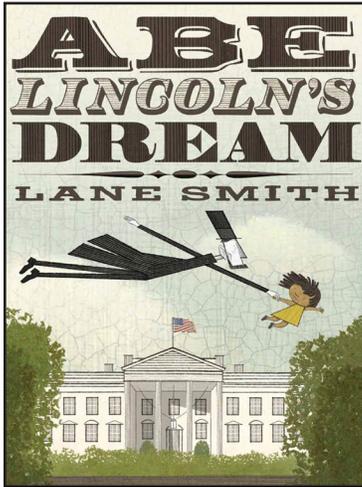
- T. rex breaking into the bank
- Velociraptors robbing the stagecoach with a Protoceratops decoy
- Triceratops kissing the cattle
- Allosaurus shoplifting at the mercantile
- Stegosaurus insulting the chili



CCSS.SL.K.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.

CCSS.SL.1.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

CCSS.SL.2.5 Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.



Ages 5-9 • 9781596436084

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Before reading *Abe Lincoln's Dream* aloud to students, share the front cover illustration and ask them if they can identify the house on the front. Once you have established that the White House is pictured there, determine whether they know who the flying man in the black suit and stovepipe hat is. After identifying Abraham Lincoln, read the author's note at the end of the book entitled "Mr. Lincoln's Dream." If students are unfamiliar with either the White House or Abraham Lincoln, or if they would like more information, locate a short informational book at the library to share with them about each. If books are not available, Enchanted Learning (enchantedlearning.com) has resources available about each.

Introduce students to the idea of White House pets. Share some online resources with them to introduce several of them. Consider consulting:

- National Geographic for Kids: <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/history/presidential-pets/#bo-white-house.jpg>
- Presidential Pet Museum:

<http://www.presidentialpetmuseum.com/whitehousepets-1/> (multiple pages begin here)

Finally, read the author's note at the end of the book entitled "Presidential Pooches."

QUESTIONS TO CHECK COMPREHENSION OF ABE LINCOLN'S DREAM

1. Why do you think Lane Smith begins the book by talking about the presidential dogs?
2. How does author/illustrator Lane Smith make us understand that Quincy is seeing Abraham Lincoln's ghost?
3. What makes both Abraham Lincoln and Quincy fun to be with?
4. What is Abraham Lincoln worried about? Why?
5. What does Quincy do to reassure him?

COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

WHO'S THAT TALKING?

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: After reading *Abe Lincoln's Dream*, begin a discussion of the role of the authors and illustrators of picture books. Then point out that Lane Smith is this book's author as well as its illustrator. Ask: How might this make it easier for Lane Smith to leave words out of the text and include them, instead, in the illustrations. Can you find an example of this in the book?

Unlike many books, much of *Abe Lincoln's Dream* is told in dialogue between Abraham Lincoln and the White House visitor, Quincy, with a narrator intervening from time to time. Discuss how this allows the reader to see the perspective of both Abe and Quincy. Ask: What things does Quincy know that Abe does not know?



Grade One, Grade Two: With assistance for struggling readers, turn to the text beginning with, “Then one day . . .” Assign three reading parts: a narrator, Abraham Lincoln, and Quincy. Ask student readers to read through to Abe’s line, “Three cheers and ballyhoo,” taking care to use different tones of voice for each reading part. Consider assigning multiple teams of readers to do the same, giving as many students a chance to read as care to.

CCSS.RL.K.6 With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.

CCSS.RL.1.6 Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

CCSS.RL.2.6 Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

IT TAKES ALL TYPES

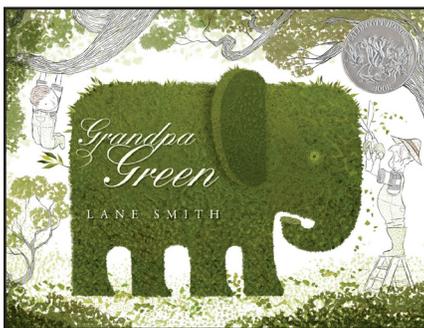
Kindergarten, Grade One: Read and discuss *Abe Lincoln’s Dream*. Depending on age and developmental level of your students, read all or part of “Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865)” by Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benét, which can be found at <https://farmschool.wordpress.com/2008/02/15/poetry-friday-for-abraham-lincoln/>. If possible, also read a short informational book about Lincoln. Then ask students to identify the differences between a fiction book, an informational book, and a poem.

Grade Two: *Abe Lincoln’s Dream* is a particularly rich text for discussing the overall structure of a story. Begin by discussing Lane Smith’s decision to open the book with the three White House dogs. Ask: How do the dogs set the stage for the arrival of Abraham Lincoln’s ghost? Next turn to the arrival of Quincy’s class and her wandering away from the group. Ask: Why is it important to the story that Quincy leave her classmates? Then discuss how these two opening scenes serve the middle of the story and how ending with Quincy’s dream provides a satisfying conclusion.

CCSS.RL.K.5 Recognize common types of texts, e.g. storybooks, poems).

CCSS.RL.1.5 Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.

CCSS.RL.2.5 Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.



Ages 5–9 • 9781596436077

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Begin this activity by introducing the Caldecott Medal, discussing the significance of the award for both the Caldecott Medal winner (gold medal) and the Caldecott Honor winners (silver medal). Students will, perhaps, see a Caldecott Honor sticker on the front of *Grandpa Green*. If your copy was purchased before author/illustrator Lane Smith won the award, share an illustration of the book with the sticker (<http://us.macmillan.com/grandpagreen/lanesmith/9781596436077/>).

Share Lane Smith’s other Caldecott Honor book, *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, written by Jon Scieszka. Invite students to compare Smith’s illustration styles in the two books.



 Before reading *Grandpa Green*, share the full jacket illustration with students. Ask them to list all of the things they notice in the illustration. Once the list is complete, discuss the three human figures pictured there, noting what each person is doing. Then turn your attention to the elephant. Ask students if they know what trait elephants are primarily known for. Should they not be familiar with the common saying, share it with them: An elephant never forgets. Share the real life significance of this saying, explaining that the matriarch of the elephant family carries the memory of the place where water was found during the last drought, no matter how long ago it might have been. Ask: What might this saying have to do with the story we are about to read?

QUESTIONS TO CHECK COMPREHENSION OF *GRANDPA GREEN*

1. Who is telling this story, and who is the story about?
2. What is a topiary?
3. How does author/illustrator Lane Smith show events from the great-grandfather's life in the topiaries he illustrates?
4. How has Grandpa Green changed in recent years?
5. How does the garden remember for Grandpa Green?

COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

THEY REMEMBER TOO

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: After reading and discussing *Grandpa Green* and the life story of the great-grandfather in the story, invite students to choose a grandparent, other family member, or elderly friend or neighbor to interview. Assign them to ask the following questions:

- What do we have in today's world that wasn't invented yet when you were born?
- What was the place like where you grew up?
- What were one or two of your favorite books as a child? What were they about?
- Did you study after high school? What did you study?
- If you didn't study after high school, what did you do?
- Did you ever get married?
- Did you have any children?
- Do you have grandchildren or great-grandchildren? If you do, how many?
- Do you ever have a hard time remembering?

When student interviews are complete, help students to formulate sentences from each answer modeled on the sentences in *Grandpa Green*.

CCSS.W.K.3 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

CCSS.W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

CCSS.W.2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

ANOTHER SECRET GARDEN

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: After completing the They Remember Too activity above, host a sharing day, perhaps inviting the interviewees, if possible. In preparation, ask each student to create one large illustration modeled on the gatefold illustration of Grandpa Green's garden that captures the



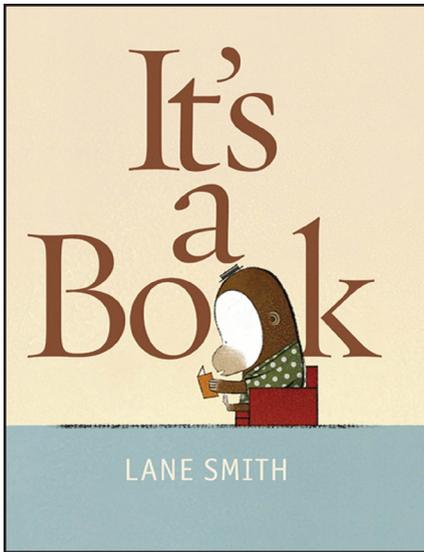
events of their chosen person's life. If you are studying plants or would like to remain faithful to Lane Smith's book, you may want them to copy Smith's topiary representations of life events. However, you may choose to allow students the freedom to capture these life events realistically or representationally in some other way.

Grade Two: If time allows, invite students in grade two to record the story of the person they have interviewed to accompany their illustration.

CCSS.SL.K.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.

CCSS.SL.1.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

CCSS.SL.2.5 Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.



PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Before reading *It's a Book*, create or post a large chart with a Venn diagram or use your electronic white board for this activity. Label one side of the diagram BOOK and the other side ELECTRONIC DEVICE (unless you would like to limit this side to one of the following: computer, tablet, smart phone; if using ELECTRONIC DEVICE, take time to list devices that fall into this category and their capabilities). Challenge students to brainstorm physical actions and activities of the mind they perform when they use each item. Place those that can be performed when using both items, such as reading, at the intersection of the circles.

For Grade Two students, you may want to make the activity even more fun by providing a triple Venn diagram with labels to include BOOK, SMART PHONE, and TABLET (or COMPUTER).

QUESTIONS TO CHECK COMPREHENSION OF *IT'S A BOOK*

1. What does the jackass mistake the book for?
2. What seven questions does the jackass ask the monkey at the beginning that let you know he is confused about what a book is?
3. What does the monkey do as he is trying to help the jackass understand what a book is all about?
4. How does the jackass respond?
5. What does the jackass say at the end of the book that lets you know he is still confused about what a book is?

COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

WHO'S SPEAKING?

Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two: The two main characters in *It's a Book*, the monkey and the jackass, could not be more different—which makes the title perfect for the discussion of point of view. Begin by identifying Lane Smith as both the author and the illustrator of the book, asking kindergartners, especially, to identify the two jobs that Smith has undertaken in creating this title.

After reading the book aloud and discussing it with students, focus on the narration. Lead students to realize that, with the exception of the title page, the entire text is told in dialogue, with one chunk of literary text and one chunk of text messaging. Ask: Is there a narrator in this book? How do you know? If not, how are the character's voices differentiated?



Grade Two: If time allows, divide students into teams of two and challenge each team member to choose one character's part to read aloud. After they have had a chance to hear the text read in two voices, invite students to read the entire text aloud individually, differentiating the character voices.

CCSS.RL.K.6 With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.

CCSS.RL.1.6 Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

CCSS.RL.2.6 Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

WHAT'S THAT YOU SAID?

Grade One, Grade Two: One of the funniest sections of *It's a Book* occurs when the jackass renders the page of literary text about Long John Silver as text messaging, losing all the richness of language. If you and your students are knowledgeable about text conventions and keyboard emojis, engage them in this activity. Begin by asking two students to have a brief dialogue using complete sentences. Scribe their words. Next, challenge students to render the conversation in as few characters as possible, as the jackass does in *It's a Book*. For additional fun, allow them to employ the SMS Generator at www.classtools.net/SMS/ to render their texts as they would appear on a phone, tablet, or computer screen.

CCSS.SL.K.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

CCSS.SL.1.6 Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation. (See grade 1 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 26 for specific expectations.)

CCSS.SL.2.6 Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification. (See grade 2 Language standards 1 and 3 on pages 26 and 27 for specific expectations.)

