

A cartoon girl with short brown hair, wearing a pink shirt and green pants, is walking and holding a large blue sign.A small yellow chick with a white beak and feet is peeking out from the left side.


GROW WITH MO!

A cartoon blue alligator with a friendly expression is walking towards the right.

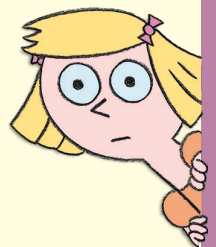
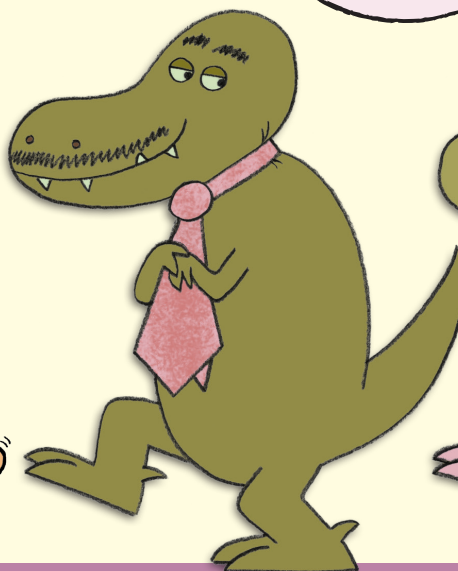
Books by Mo Willems for
Every Reading Level

Includes:

- Activities, activities, and more activities!
- Good ideas for using Mo Willems' books to develop cognitive skills
- Goslings, a hungry fox, a plump goose, a singing alligator, and much more

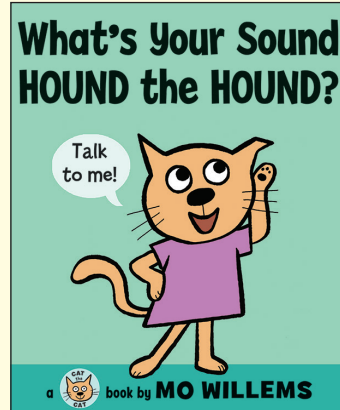
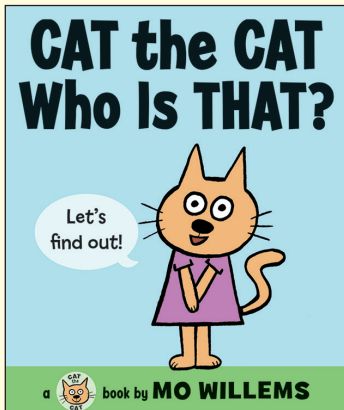
A cartoon fox wearing a brown top hat and a brown suit is running while carrying a large grey pot.

Aligns with
Common Core
State Standards
for Grades
Pre-K-2



The CAT the CAT Series

For Emergent Readers: Kids Who Are Exploring Books



Grow Your Knowledge

Cat the Cat learns new things about her many animal friends. Ask kids what they know about different animals. Which animals fly? What sounds do animals make? Which animals sleep in the day and which sleep at night? Which animals can be pets and which are always wild? Which animals live nearby and which live far away? Kids can discuss, illustrate, and label their favorite animals. Hang up the pictures to create a classroom zoo!

Activities

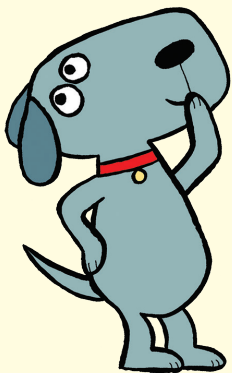
Sound Off

Have kids choose an animal and create a mask or headband to depict the animal. They can use a paper plate for the mask or use a sentence strip and draw the animal's picture on the front for the headband. Then give kids an opportunity to show off their animal mask/headband while making the animal's sound. Let all the kids sound off at once for a giant animal party!



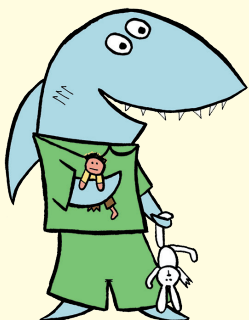
Create-a-Creature

Cat the Cat meets a new friend—it's an animal that she has never seen before! Ask kids to make up their own animal. What does it look like? What does it sound like? How does it move? Where does it live? Have kids draw their creature and, with help or independently, write about it too.



Saying Hello

How do the animal friends say hello to one another in *Let's Say Hi to Friends Who Fly!*? What other words or phrases can kids use to greet their friends? Have the kids try greeting their friends the way Cat the Cat does. Then ask kids to make up their own greetings and try them out on one another.



Go to Sleep!

In *Time to Sleep, Sheep the Sheep!*, all the animals are getting ready for bed. Discuss what the animals do to get ready for bedtime. Ask kids what time they go to sleep and have them share what they do to get ready for bedtime. Ask them about their favorite bedtime story too!



The CAT the CAT Series

For Emergent Readers: Kids Who Are Exploring Books

How Do You Do It?

In *Time to Sleep, Sheep the Sheep!*, Pig takes a bath, Giraffe brushes her teeth, and Owl wants to play checkers. Ask the class to choose one of these activities and write a class how-to story that lists instructions. What do you do first when you brush your teeth or take a bath? What next? How do you play checkers? As the kids give suggestions and you record them, point out sequencing words such as *first*, *next*, and *last* or *finally*. Have kids create a series of illustrations that depict each of the different steps.



Playground Story Time

The setting for *Let's Say Hi to Friends Who Fly!* is a playground, so why not enjoy an outdoor story time? Start reading at the swing set, move on to the sandbox, climb over the monkey bars, proceed to the seesaw, and finally end up at the spring animals, all the while reading the corresponding sections of the story at each location. Parents can also bring along the book during their trips to the playground so that they can read with their children in addition to play.



Taking Flight

Explore movement through this activity. Bee the Bee buzzes through the air, while Bird the Bird flaps. Bat the Bat flutters, and Rhino the Rhino zooms. Have kids imitate one of these four characters at a time as they practice buzzing, flapping, fluttering, and zooming around the room. What do these words mean? How is each type of movement different from the others?



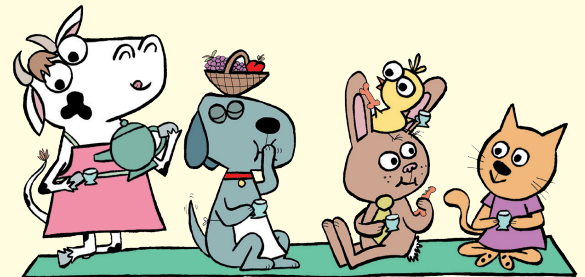
More Friends Who Fly

Reach beyond the story by having children identify other things, both living and man-made, that can fly. What animals can fly besides a bee, a bird, and a bat? Can a rhinoceros *really* fly? Rhino the Rhino zooms through the air with the aid of a plane. What other man-made flying objects can the kids name? Create a list of living and nonliving things that fly and then compare the list. What do these things have in common? How are they different?



Rhyming Ring

Many of Mo's Cat the Cat titles rhyme. Have kids stand in a circle. Give the kids a starting word (you can use words from the titles, such as *cat*, *sound*, *fly*, *sleep*) and have each child say a word that rhymes with it. Keep going around the circle until someone is stuck. Then choose a new word as you continue around the circle. How many times can you go around? You can also record the words to create rhyming lists for beginning readers to use.



Common Core State Reading Standards for Literature: RL.PK.4, RL.PK.5, RL.PK.7, RL.PK.10, RL.PK.11, RL.K.3, RL.K.5, RL.K.7, RL.K.10, RL.K.11, RL.1.3, RL.1.7, RL.1.9, RL.1.10, RL.1.11

Common Core State Reading Standards for Foundational Skills: RF.PK.1, RF.PK.2, RF.PK.3, RF.PK.4, RF.K.1, RF.K.2, RF.K.3, RF.K.4, RF.1.1, RF.1.2, RF.1.3, RF.1.4

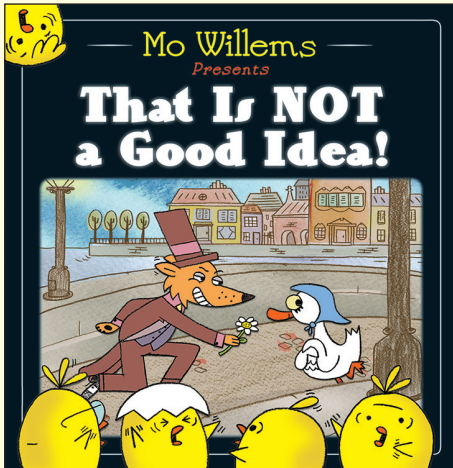
Common Core State Writing Standards: W.PK.11, W.K.3, W.K.11, W.1.3, W.1.11

Common Core State Speaking and Listening Standards: SL.PK.1, SL.PK.2, SL.PK.3, SL.PK.4, SL.PK.5, SL.PK.6, SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.3, SL.K.4, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.4, SL.1.5, SL.1.6

Common Core State Language Standards: L.PK.1, L.PK.2, L.PK.6, L.K.1, L.K.6, L.1.1, L.1.6

That Is NOT a Good Idea!

For Early Readers: Kids Who Are Reading with Assistance



Grow Your Thinking

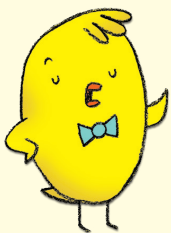
Pause after every two pages as you read the book *That Is Not a Good Idea!* Ask the kids why the baby geese keep saying, “That is not a good idea!” Ask the kids what they predict will happen to the goose and what clues are in both the pictures and the text of the book. At the end of the story, ask kids if they are surprised. Why or why not?

Activities

Soup’s On

Goose and her baby geese like Fox soup. Ask the kids: what kind of soup is your favorite? Hold a class vote to choose one overall favorite. Then ask the kids what ingredients they would need to make the soup. Kids can also add some original ideas for new ingredients!

List the ingredients. Then distribute the list of ingredients so kids can make the soup in school or at home. Soup’s on! How does it taste?



Have kids make up a song for the chorus of baby geese to sing. They can either use the gosling chorus’s lines from the book (“That is really, really NOT a good idea!” etc.) and put them to music or make up their own words and tune. Ask them to write it down if they can. Then they should sing their song loud and proud!



Sing It Out

Surprise!

Mo Willems is a master of surprise endings, especially in this story. Here’s a way to create a story with a surprise ending: Have kids pair up with a classmate, and have each partner tell or write the beginning of a story. Then they should switch stories with their partner. Have kids tell or write the ending to their partner’s story. It’s guaranteed to surprise them both!



Sock Stage

Mo Willems tells the story of *That Is Not a Good Idea!* in the style of a silent movie or performance with Fox, Goose, and the baby geese as the stars. In small groups, have kids put on a performance for the rest of the class. Set up a puppet stage and have them choose a story to tell (some good ideas to choose from: “Little Red Riding Hood,” “The Emperor’s New Clothes,” “Hansel and Gretel,” or “The Shoemaker and the Elves”). Have kids make scenery for the background and sock or paper-bag puppets for their characters.



Common Core State Reading Standards for Literature: RL.PK.2, RL.PK.5, RL.PK.7, RL.PK.10, RL.PK.11, RL.K.2, RL.K.3, RL.K.5, RL.K.7, RL.K.10, RL.K.11, RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.4, RL.1.7, RL.1.10, RL.1.11

Common Core State Reading Standards for Foundational Skills: RF.PK.1, RF.PK.2, RF.PK.3, RF.PK.4, RF.K.1, RF.K.2, RF.K.3, RF.K.4, RF.1.1, RF.1.2, RF.1.3, RF.1.4

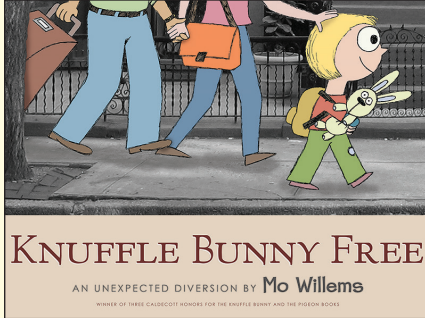
Common Core State Writing Standards: W.PK.3, W.PK.5, W.PK.11, W.K.3, W.K.5, W.K.11, W.1.3, W.1.5, W.1.11

Common Core State Speaking and Listening Standards: SL.PK.1, SL.PK.2, SL.PK.3, SL.PK.4, SL.PK.5, SL.PK.6, SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.3, SL.K.4, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.4, SL.1.5, SL.1.6

Common Core State Language Standards: L.PK.1, L.PK.2, L.PK.6, L.K.1, L.K.2, L.K.6, L.1.1, L.1.2, L.1.6

KNUFFLE BUNNY FREE: AN UNEXPECTED DIVERSION

**For Transitional and Fluent Readers:
Kids Who Are Beginning or Able to Read Independently**



Grow Your Feelings

Trixie experiences many different feelings throughout this story. She feels excited about taking a big trip on an airplane, impatient while waiting in line, worried and sad that Knuffle Bunny is lost, and brave and generous when she gives away Knuffle Bunny. Pause at different points in the book to ask kids how Trixie is feeling and how they would feel in the same situation. Would they be able to give Knuffle Bunny away? Why or why not?

Activities

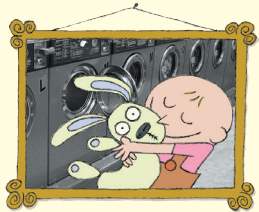
P.S. I Love You

Trixie's grandparents have a photo of her in their home. For Grandparents Day in September (or anytime of year!), have kids bring in a picture of themselves to paste into a card for their grandparents (or other relatives). Encourage them to write a message inside telling their grandparents how much they love them. The next time they visit, make sure they look for their card on display in their grandparents' house!



Time Capsule

Trixie has grown up over the course of the three Knuffle Bunny books. How will the kids in your class have grown up by the end of the year? Have them write letters to themselves about what they're like right now. What do they enjoy? What do they dislike? What are their hopes for this year? What do they wish for? When they're done, collect the letters and return them on the last day of school so they can see just how much they've grown up over the year!



Kodak Moments

At the beginning of *Knuffle Bunny Free*, there's a collage of important moments from Trixie's life. Have kids bring in three to five photos of their own Kodak moments. With construction paper, glue, and crayons, have them make their own collages. They can decorate the collages as much as they want, but make sure they write captions beneath their photos.

Little World Travelers

Using pushpins or stickers and a large map of the world, have kids mark off where they've traveled in the world. How many states has your class been to? How many countries?

Now here's the *real* question: if your students could go anywhere in the entire world, where would they go? Discuss and have students write about traveling to their chosen destination!



Dad to the Rescue!

In the Knuffle Bunny books, Trixie's dad is always there for her. As a group, have kids share a time when their dad (or other guardian) did something special for them—something they never forgot! Have kids write down and illustrate their story to share with Dad. What a great Father's Day gift!

Common Core State Reading Standards for Literature: RL.PK.1, RL.PK.2, RL.PK.3, RL.PK.4, RL.PK.5, RL.PK.7, RL.PK.9, RL.PK.10, RL.PK.11, RL.K.1, RL.K.2, RL.K.3, RL.K.4, RL.K.5, RL.K.7, RL.K.9, RL.K.10, RL.K.11, RL.1.1, RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.4, RL.1.7, RL.1.9, RL.1.10, RL.1.11, RL.2.1, RL.2.2, RL.2.3, RL.2.5, RL.2.6, RL.2.7, RL.2.9, RL.2.10, RL.2.11

Common Core State Reading Standards for Foundational Skills: RF.PK.1, RF.PK.2, RF.PK.3, RF.PK.4, RF.K.1, RF.K.2, RF.K.3, RF.K.4, RF.1.1, RF.1.2, RF.1.3, RF.1.4, RF.2.1, RF.2.2, RF.2.3, RF.2.4

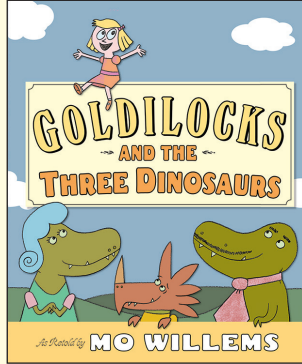
Common Core State Writing Standards: W.PK.2, W.PK.3, W.PK.5, W.PK.8, W.PK.11, W.K.2, W.K.3, W.K.5, W.K.8, W.K.11, W.1.2, W.1.3, W.1.5, W.1.8, W.1.11, W.2.2, W.2.3, W.2.5, W.2.8, W.2.11

Common Core State Speaking and Listening Standards: SL.PK.1, SL.PK.2, SL.PK.3, SL.PK.4, SL.PK.5, SL.PK.6, SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.3, SL.K.4, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.4, SL.1.5, SL.1.6, SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.3, SL.2.4, SL.2.6

Common Core State Language Standards: L.PK.1, L.PK.2, L.PK.3, L.PK.5, L.PK.6, L.K.1, L.K.2, L.K.4, L.K.5, L.K.6, L.1.1, L.1.2, L.1.4, L.1.5, L.1.6, L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.2.4, L.2.5, L.2.6

Goldilocks AND THE THREE DINOSAURS

For Transitional and Fluent Readers:
Kids Who Are Beginning or Able to Read Independently



Grow Your Decision Making

Ask kids to reflect upon Goldilocks' decisions. Why do you think she made those choices? If you saw a giant bowl of chocolate pudding, wouldn't you want to eat it too? Do you agree with her choices? Why or why not? What can you learn about making decisions from Goldilocks' experiences in this story?

Activities

Pretend-a-Saurus

Ask kids: how many different kinds of dinosaurs can you think of?

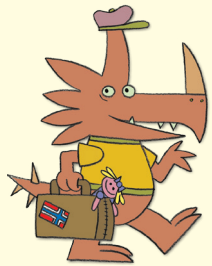
Make a list of all the ones you know. Then ask kids to make up their own dinosaurs! Have them think about what they'd look like and come up with names and characteristics for them.

(A Mosaurus would write and illustrate funny books, of course!)

Here Comes the ~~Sun~~ Dinosaur

Play a classic song and have kids replace one word in the refrain with *dinosaur*.

Have a sing-along and ask kids to show off their finest dinosaur dances. For example, the lyrics to the song "Shout" can be modified to "You know you make me want to DINOSAUR!" while "Here Comes the Sun" could become "Here comes the DINOSAUR."



My Prehistoric Family

Have kids draw a picture of their family as dinosaurs. Ask: Is your mom a brontosaurus with big hair and a pocketbook? Or maybe your grandfather is a pterodactyl with glasses and a sweater-vest? Have kids share with the class what their dinosaur family looks like. Remind kids to label each family member.



Home Sweet Dinosaur Home

Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs is filled with dinosaur jokes, including funny items dinosaurs might have in their houses (the extra-long phone, the tall chairs with dino feet, etc.). Ask kids to draw their own picture of how they think a dinosaur household would look. What would be in the kitchen? What would hang on the walls? What toys would dinosaur kids play with?



Goldilocks and the Three ... What?

Have kids choose one of the crossed-out titles from the book's endpapers. Then they should write and illustrate a story to match one of those titles. Younger kids can draw a picture or a series of pictures to show the story. Remind kids to try including plenty of visual jokes like Mo uses in the book!



Common Core State Reading Standards for Literature: RL.K.1, RL.K.2, RL.K.3, RL.K.4, RL.K.5, RL.K.7, RL.K.9, RL.K.10, RL.K.11, RL.1.1, RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.4, RL.1.7, RL.1.9, RL.1.10, RL.1.11, RL.2.1, RL.2.2, RL.2.3, RL.2.5, RL.2.6, RL.2.7, RL.2.9, RL.2.10, RL.2.11

Common Core State Reading Standards for Foundational Skills: RF.K.1, RF.K.2, RF.K.3, RF.K.4, RF.1.1, RF.1.2, RF.1.3, RF.1.4, RF.2.1, RF.2.2, RF.2.3, RF.2.4

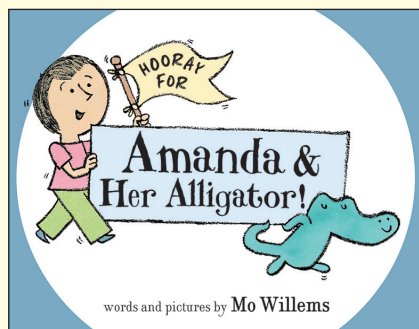
Common Core State Writing Standards: W.K.3, W.K.5, W.K.11, W.1.3, W.1.5, W.1.11, W.2.3, W.2.5, W.2.11

Common Core State Speaking and Listening Standards: SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.3, SL.K.4, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.4, SL.1.5, SL.1.6, SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.3, SL.2.4, SL.2.6

Common Core State Language Standards: L.K.1, L.K.2, L.K.4, L.K.5, L.K.6, L.1.1, L.1.2, L.1.4, L.1.5, L.1.6, L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.2.4, L.2.5, L.2.6

HOORAY FOR Amanda & Her Alligator!

**For Transitional and Fluent Readers:
Kids Who Are Beginning or Able to Read Independently**

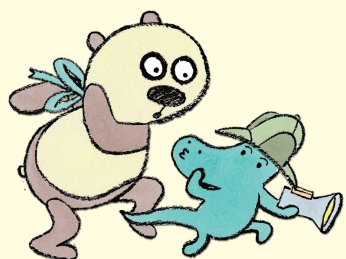


Grow Your Friendship

Amanda and Alligator are friends, and soon enough, Alligator and Panda become friends too. Ask the kids to think about their own friendships. Who are your best friends? Why? Are you a good friend to others? How can you be a good friend? Do you like making new friends? How do you show friendship? You can focus on friendship in your classroom with activities such as having kids write friendship notes to each other and having kids give friendship awards to each other when someone is especially kind.

Activities

Making Discoveries



Ask kids to think of a friend they'd like to know more about or someone they don't know well but who they'd like to be their friend. Have the kids sit down for an "interview" with the person and ask questions to find out something about him or her they didn't know before. (What is your favorite ice cream topping? If you could choose to meet any person or creature, who would it be? Do you prefer waffles or pancakes?) Kids should write down their questions beforehand and record their friend's responses as they do the interview.

Books Beat Boredom

Learning about each other's interests is a friendly thing to do! Have kids visit the school or classroom library with a friend. They should pick out a book for their friend to read and have their friend pick out a book for them to read. When they've both finished their books, they should talk about the best parts and ask each other questions. Then they can write a book recommendation that includes a summary of the book and why it is a great book to read.



Singing Silly Songs



Have kids write a silly song about a friend in the class. They should include the friend's name as they write down their lyrics about that friend. Then they can choose or make up a tune, practice the song, and finally, perform the song for their friend!

Telling the Truth (a Game)

Ask kids to think of two things about themselves that are true and make up one thing about themselves that isn't true. Pair up kids. One person tells the partner these three things, and then the partner guesses what's true and what isn't. Then they switch places—the other person shares three things and the partner guesses.



Making Friends



Ask kids to choose two or three characters from different Mo Willems books and write a story that features all of them. What would happen if Cat the Cat met Amanda and Alligator walking down the street one day? What would Trixie and Goldilocks do if they had a playdate? Encourage kids to let their imagination come up with all kinds of good ideas!

Common Core State Reading Standards for Literature: RL.K.1, RL.K.2, RL.K.3, RL.K.4, RL.K.5, RL.K.7, RL.K.9, RL.K.10, RL.K.11, RL.1.1, RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.7, RL.1.9, RL.1.10, RL.1.11, RL.2.1, RL.2.2, RL.2.3, RL.2.5, RL.2.6, RL.2.7, RL.2.10, RL.2.11

Common Core State Reading Standards for Foundational Skills: RF.K.1, RF.K.2, RF.K.3, RF.K.4, RF.1.1, RF.1.2, RF.1.3, RF.1.4, RF.2.1, RF.2.2, RF.2.3, RF.2.4

Common Core State Writing Standards: W.K.1, W.K.3, W.K.5, W.K.11, W.1.1, W.1.3, W.1.5, W.1.11, W.2.1, W.2.3, W.2.5, W.2.11

Common Core State Speaking and Listening Standards: SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.3, SL.K.4, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.4, SL.1.5, SL.1.6, SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.3, SL.2.4, SL.2.6

Common Core State Language Standards: L.K.1, L.K.2, L.K.4, L.K.5, L.K.6, L.1.1, L.1.2, L.1.4, L.1.5, L.1.6, L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3, L.2.4, L.2.5, L.2.6

Meet MO WILLEMS

Marty Umans

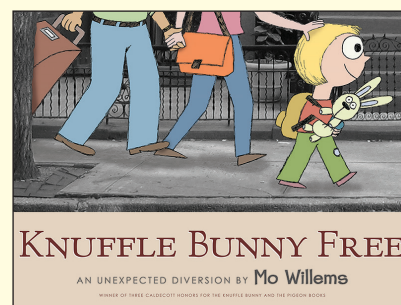
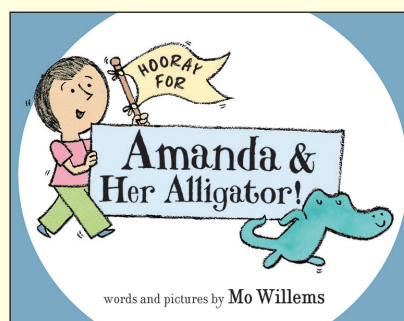
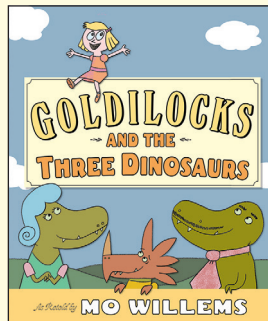
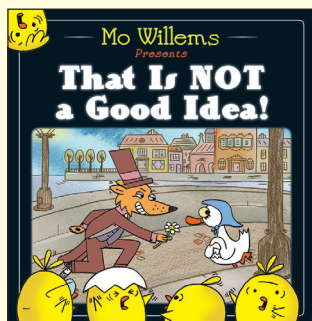


Mo Willems likes writing and drawing funny books. A three-time Caldecott Honor winner (for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *Knuffle Bunny*, and *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity*), he also won two Geisel Medals and three Geisel Honors for his Elephant and Piggie books. His books are perennial *New York Times* bestsellers, including *That Is Not a Good Idea!*, *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs*, *Knuffle Bunny Free: An Unexpected Diversion*, *Hooray for Amanda & Her Alligator!*, and the Cat the Cat series. Before he turned to making picture books, Mo was a writer and animator on *Sesame Street*, where he won six Emmy Awards. Mo lives with his family in Massachusetts.

Good idea!



Mo' Books, Mo' Fun!



BALZER + BRAY

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Grow with Mo online at www.GoMo.net!

Teaching guide prepared by Sue Ornstein, a first-grade teacher in the Byram Hills School District in Armonk, New York.

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