



**Reading Reinforcement
Kit for**

The Mitten

adapted and
illustrated
by Jan Brett

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Introduction

Information about Jan Brett and all of her books can be found on her web site, a veritable treasure trove of educational ideas and materials based on her work.

Book Summary

http://www.janbrett.com/mitten_book.htm

Author Biography

<http://www.janbrett.com/biography.htm>

Other Books by Jan Brett

<http://www.janbrett.com/booklist.htm>

#1. Pre-Reading Activities & Materials

*Note:

Materials and activities in the pre-reading section can be used as follow-up activities as well.

Theme:

- animals in nature

T.V. Programs

Any nature show dealing with wildlife animals or nature in general would be a wonderful pre-reading activity. Watch a program with your child as a starting point for a talk about woodland animals.

Videos

Watch *Kratt's Creatures: The Great Bear Show* to look at one of the animals, in the wild, from the story *The Mitten*.

- Discuss animals and nature before viewing and follow-up with a discussion about the video.
- Draw a picture of a bear in nature.
- Write about the video in a journal. Puzzles

Puzzles

Animal Quiz

Jan Brett 1996-1999

Materials:

animal masks

Introduce the story animals by showing each mask and saying the name of the animal. Read the questions...the child can hold up an animal mask before hearing the answer.

WHO has strong legs?

WHO is full of energy?

WHO likes to hop and jump?

RABBIT, that's who!

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WHO likes to explore?
WHO is determined?
WHO protects himself very well?
HEDGEHOG, that's who!

WHO is always on the lookout?
WHO does not want to miss anything?
WHO wants to join the fun?
OWL, that's who!

WHO loves a surprise?
WHO is friendly?
WHO has bright eyes?
BADGER, that's who!

WHO is quiet?
WHO works hard?
WHO has a velvety coat?
MOLE, that's who!

WHO is curious?
WHO is very smart?
WHO is proud of his ruddy coat?
FOX, that's who!

WHO is very big?
WHO has a deep voice?
WHO gets a job done?
BEAR, that's who!

WHO is little?
WHO is playful?
WHO likes excitement?
MOUSE, that's who!

#2. Reading Readiness &: Introducing New Words:

***Note:**

Materials and activities in this section can also be used for follow-up activities within the animal and winter theme.

Reading readiness activities are important to help prepare children to recognize and read (letters) sounds) words) etc. These activities can be done anytime prior to reading. All or some of the following words could be introduced depending on the level and age of the child:

- rabbit
- hedgehog
- owl
- badger
- fox
- bear
- mole
- tracks
- camouflage
- forest
- winter
- animals
- mouse
- snow

Activity Ideas

- Use the masks of the story animals to:
 - talk about them
 - identify the animal
 - read the animal's name
 - spell the animal's name
 - make a sentence using the animal's name
- Have the child write the animal's name on art paper to draw and decorate a picture.
- Word fun ~
 - Try the Word Find activity sheet
 - Try to unscramble the words using the Scrambled Word activity sheet
- Use the vocabulary words and animal masks to talk about the forest, animal tracks, seasons and camouflage.
- Use the cut out large word cards to:
 - match the animal masks with the correct word cards
 - read the words and spell the words
 - put the words in ABC order
 - create sentences
 - talk about the different animals

#3. Introducing the Book

New books can be introduced by looking at the book cover ~ you can discuss, predict and explore using some of the following ideas:

1. the title & cover illustration
 - Tell me what you see.
 - Why do you think the book's title is The Mitten?
 - What do you think the story will be about?
 - What kind of animals do you see?
 - Where do you think the story takes place?
 - What do you feel when you see the cover illustration?
 - Does the cover remind you of anything?
 - Why do you think there's a mitten on the ground?

2. the author and illustrator
 - Do you know the author/illustrator Jan Brett?
 - What do you think *adapted* means?
 - Do you know other stories illustrated, adapted or written by her? Tell me about them.
 - Do you think the title matches the illustration on the cover? How would you design a book cover with this title?

3. story or series
 - This is a Ukrainian folk tale ~ discuss The Ukraine and the meaning of a folk tale as a traditional story style.
 - Do you know the story? What did you think about it?

#4. Reading the Book

Reading can be a cozy bedtime or afternoon cuddle session with your child, an exciting, interactive experience or a fun and creative moment spent with children. There are numerous ways to read *The Mitten*. All forms of reading can be beneficial, especially if they are varied (i.e.. Is it simply a chance to spend quiet time with your child or an opportunity to be interactive and teach new ideas?) Choose the best one suited to you and your child's needs at the time.

Choose different methods each time you read the story...children will love to hear and read *The Mitten* over and over again!

Sample Reading Methods & Models

1. **Listening Model**
 - reader reads aloud and child follows silently looking at the pictures
2. **Reading Together**
 - Reader and child read together with the reader ahead by one or two syllables
3. **Choral Reading/Speaking**
 - Reader and child recite together a poem, poetic prose, or a story refrain using rhythm without music (ideal for small groups)
4. **Echo Reading**
 - Reader reads a word, sentence or page (depends on book and level) ~ child reads the same while imitating the reader's stress and intonation
5. **Audio Reading**
 - child listens to a taped recording of the story while following along either silently or as an echo reading
6. **Prediction Reading**
 - Reader reads parts of the story, stopping at key points in the story to ask the child what he/she thinks will happen next
7. **Participation Reading**
 - child participates by actively turning the pages, using the animal masks as puppets or props, or by acting out the story through drama and/or dance

Reading Tips

- use intonation and facial expression ~ use different voices as each animal is introduced in the story
- use visual aids (i.e. puppets, masks and props)
- ask questions
- The Mitten has many picture cues for the child to see ~ pause while reading for a child to "fill-in-the-blank" (i.e. Along came a [meadow mouse], no bigger than an acorn.)
- ask for predictions ~ What will happen next?
- ask for reactions ~ How do you think the animals feel in that little mitten?
...or... Did you think that was going to happen?

#5. Follow-up Activities

Questioning

Post Reading Questions

The reading introduction questions and discussion prior to reading the story can be followed up after reading the story. For example:

1. the title & cover illustration
 - Tell me what you thought about the story.
 - Was the story what you expected?
 - What do you think of the book's title now?
 - How did you feel about the story's characters? Did you have a favorite?
 - Did the story take place where you thought it would?
 - Do you think it was a happy or a sad story?
 - Do you feel different when you see the cover illustration, now that you've heard the story?

2. the author and illustrator
 - Did you like the way Jan Brett illustrated and adapted the story?
 - Was it different or the same as other books made by the author or illustrator?
 - Does the illustration of the front cover represent the story? Do you have a better idea?

3. story or series
 - Did you enjoy the folk tale?
 - Was there a lesson learned in The Mitten?
 - Discuss any themes presented from the story ~ woodland creatures ~ accommodating & sharing, etc.

Neat Ideas

It is a good idea to do some kind of a follow-up activity after reading a new story with a child. This can be as simple as talking about the story over breakfast...what made the story so good... retelling the story...how the animals must have felt together in the mitten, etc. Follow-up activities can take many different forms and may involve some materials or preparation. The point is that there are all kinds of NEAT IDEAS! Try a couple of the following:

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- Retelling ~ Have the child retell the story in his/her own words using the masks
- Sequencing ~ Go over the story in the proper sequence of events Have the child draw key parts of the story...mix them up and put them in the proper sequence
- Author info. ~ Read and discuss Jan Brett's biography from the web site: <http://www.janbrett.com/biography.htm> (see biography)
- Internet fun ~ Search the web together for book, author, subject, illustrator and/or story information @ <http://www.janbrett.com/>
- Cyber guide ~ use the Teacher Cyber Guide to learn how Jan Brett created her illustrations and how she was inspired to write The Mitten @ http://www.janbrett.com/piggybacks/piggybacks_the_mitten_teachers_guide.htm (see Teacher Cyber Guide)
- Outings ~ Go on a nature walk with your child
- Other books ~ use the story as a point for reading other books by Jan Brett (see Books by Jan Brett)
- Writing fun ~ write a review of the book in a Literature journal
- Letter fun ~ Write a letter to a friend recommending the book or a letter to one of the animals in the story (see friendly letters)
- Go back ~ Go back to some of the pre-reading activities and try one you haven't done yet or pullout a favorite (i.e. watch Kratt's Creatures The Great Bear Show video together)

Art Ideas

Bookmark Fun

Materials:

Jan Brett's bookmark images

scissors

iridescent glue or sparkles

glue heavy card stock

ribbon or yarn

Use the bookmark images from Jan Brett's web site to create beautifully illustrated bookmarks. Cut the image and paste onto card stock heavy paper. Punch a hole at the top to thread some ribbon through. Decorate with iridescent sparkle glue.

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The following ideas have been taken and/or adapted from *See, Make and Do in the Woods ~ exploring, discovering, observing, playing, crafts* by Pamela Hickman. Check the book out for other great ideas and tips related to nature.

Leaf Prints

Materials:

assorted leaves
acrylic paint in assorted colors
paint brushes
paper and/or blank cards
water
scissors
glue
interesting things from nature (i.e. twigs) small pieces of moss) small cones, etc.)
leaf and/or nature stamps (optional)
raffia, string or yarn to decorate (optional)

1. Go on a nature walk in a forest, your backyard or a park to collect different shaped leaves, and small interesting items from nature.
2. Clean and paint the surface of a leaf. Press the painted leaf onto the paper surface being careful not to smudge the paint. Repeat using different shaped leaves and colors.
3. Create a pattern directly on the paper or cut out to create a collage. Decorate with remaining natural materials.

Nature Walk

See the activity master sheet *"Take a Look" Nature Walk* for a description of this activity.

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Other Great Ideas

Free Stuff

address taken from Free Stuff for Kids

Write a letter (be sure to include your name and address) to get some free information about Canadian wildlife. Use paper and an envelope to write to:

Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment Canada
Publications Section
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0H3

In your letter ask for each of the following animals or subjects by name:

1. Great Horned Owl
2. Black Bear
3. Red Fox
4. Snowshoe Hare
5. What you can do for wildlife

Animal Tracks

Read *Big Tracks, Little Tracks ~ Following Animal Prints* by Millicent E. Selsam, and illustrated by Marlene Hill Donnelly ~ a Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science Stage 1. There are two fun activities described at the end of the book that deal with animal tracks. Try one!

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1. Pre-Reading Ideas

Use these ideas before reading the book.

Theme:

- animals in nature

T.V. Shows

- Watch any nature show about woodland animals (i.e. bears, owls, rabbits, etc.) or nature in general.
- Talk with your child about the show and what you saw.

Videos

Watch *Kratt's Creatures: The Great Bear Show* to look at one of the animals from the story *The Mitten*.

- Talk about animals and nature before seeing the video. Talk about what you saw after it is over.
- Have your child draw a picture of a bear.
- Have your child write about the video in a Writing Journal

Puzzles

Play the Animal Quiz.

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Animal Quiz

Jan Brett 1996-1999

Materials:

8 animal masks

1. Show each mask.
2. Say the name of the animal.
3. Read the questions.
4. Have your child hold up the mask of the animal they think you are talking about.
5. Read the answer.
6. Talk about the answer...did your child find the answer to the quiz?

WHO has strong legs?
WHO is full of energy?
WHO likes to hop and jump?
RABBIT, that's who!

WHO likes to explore?
WHO is determined?
WHO protects himself very well?
HEDGEHOG, that's who!

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WHO is always on the lookout?
WHO does not want to miss anything?
WHO wants to join the fun?
OWL, that's who!

WHO loves a surprise?
WHO is friendly?
WHO has bright eyes?
BADGER, that's who!

WHO is quiet?
WHO works hard?
WHO has a velvety coat?
MOLE, that's who!

WHO is curious?
WHO is very smart?
WHO is proud of his ruddy coat?
FOX, that's who!

WHO is very big?
WHO has a deep voice?
WHO gets a job done?
BEAR, that's who!

WHO is little?
WHO is playful?
WHO likes excitement?
MOUSE, that's who!

#2. Getting Ready to be a Reader

These ideas are important to help make a child ready to read (letters, sounds, words) etc. These ideas can be done before reading.

*Note:

These ideas can also be used after reading the story.

1. Show new words by using as many of the five senses as you can! LOOK, SEE, HEAR, TOUCH and TASTE (yes, even taste!!).
2. Use games, songs, puzzles, things found at home, art ideas and talking with your child to help him/her become a reader!
3. Read other books like: *Big Tracks, Little Tracks ~ Following Animal Prints* by Millicent E. Selsam. There are two fun ideas at the end of the book that deal with animal tracks. Try one!

Words you can use with this book:

- rabbit
- hedgehog
- owl
- badger
- fox
- bear
- mole
- tracks
- camouflage
- forest
- winter
- animals
- mouse
- snow

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Activity Ideas

- Cut out the large new word cards. Use the cards to:
 - match the animal masks with the right word cards
 - read the words and spell the words
 - put the words in ABC order (alphabetical order)
 - make sentences
 - talk about the different animals
- Use the masks to:
 - name each animal
 - make a sentence using the animal's name
 - spell the animal's name
 - talk about the animals
- Have your child write the animal's name on art paper and draw a picture.
- Word fun ~ Use the puzzle activity sheets (an answer sheet is included) for the:
 - Word Find Puzzle
 - Scrambled Word Puzzle
- Use the new words and masks to talk about the forest, animal tracks, seasons and camouflage.

#3. "Getting to Know" the Book

Show your child a new book before opening it ~ you can talk about the book by using any of these ideas:

1. Look at the front of the book. Ask questions and talk about the cover and picture.
For example:
 - Tell me what you see.
 - Why do you think it is called The Mitten?
 - What do you think the story will be about?
 - What kind of animals do you see?
 - Where do you think the story takes place?
 - What do you feel when you see the cover picture?
 - Why do you think there's a mitten on the ground?
2. Tell your child Jan Brett adapted the story and drew (illustrated) all of the pictures for the book. Talk about any stories your child may have read by Jan Brett. Talk about the pictures. For example:
 - Do you know the author/illustrator Jan Brett?
 - What do you think *adapted* means?
 - Do you know other stories illustrated, adapted or written by her? Tell me about them.
 - Do you think the title goes with the picture on the front of the book? Would you make it different?

#4. Reading the Book

Children will love to hear and read *The Mitten* over and over again! Try any of these reading ideas:

1. Read the story to your child while he/she listens and looks at the pictures.
2. Read the book out loud together ~ at the same time.
3. Listen with your child to a taped recording of the story ~ follow along silently or read out loud with the tape
4. Read parts of the story. Stop to ask your child what he/she thinks will happen next.

Reading Tips

- Have your child help turn the pages
- To make the story come alive:
 - raise and lower your voice (intonation)
 - use different voices for each animal
 - make faces (facial expression) to show surprise, etc.
- use the masks to read the story
- have your child act the story out through drama and/or dance

More Reading Tips

- Ask questions and talk about feelings (reactions) ~ How do you think the animals feel in that little mitten? ...or... Did you think that was going to happen?
- Slow down (pause) while reading for a child to "fill-in-the-blank" by looking at the picture on the page (i.e. Along came apause.... [meadow mouse], no bigger than an acorn.)

#5. Follow-up Activities

Questioning

Questions to ask after reading the book

You can ask questions and have a talk with your child after reading the story. For example:

1. The title & cover picture:
 - Tell me what you thought about the story.
 - Was the story what you expected?
 - What do you think of the book's title now?
 - How did you feel about the story animals? Did you have a favorite?
 - Do you think it was a happy or a sad story?

2. Jan Brett:

- Did you like the pictures she drew for the story?
- What kinds of animals would you have used if you had written the story?

3. story:

- Did you enjoy the folk tale? What about the ending?

Neat Ideas

Try any of these ideas after reading the book:

- Have your child retell the story in his/her own words using the masks
- Go over the story in the order of events ~ Have your child draw parts of the story...mix them up and put them in the right order
- Read and talk about Jan Brett's biography (life history)
- Search the Internet together to find things about Jan Brett's books @ <http://www.janbrett.com/>
- Go on a nature walk with your child
- Read other books by Jan Brett (see Books by Jan Brett)
- Write a letter to a friend telling him/her about the book or a letter to one of the animals in the story (see friendly letters)
- Go back to some of the pre-reading ideas and try one.

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More Neat Ideas

The following ideas have been taken and/or adapted from *See, Make and Do in the Woods ~ exploring, discovering, observing, playing, crafts* by Pamela Hickman. Check the book out for other great ideas and tips about nature.

Leaf Prints

Materials:

different leaves

acrylic paint in different colors

paint brushes

paper and(or blank cards

scissors

glue

things from nature (i.e. twigs, moss, small pine cones, etc.)

leaf or nature stamps ~ ink pads (if you like)

raffia, string or wool (if you like)

1. Go on a nature walk in a forest, your backyard or a park to collect different leaves, and small items from nature.
2. Clean and paint the top part of a leaf. Press the painted leaf onto the paper being careful not to smudge the paint. Repeat using different leaves and paint colors.
3. Use leaf stamps, twigs, pine cones, string, etc. to finish your picture.

Nature Walk

Use the "*Take a Look*" *Nature Walk* idea sheet when you go for a nature walk with your child.

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Free Stuff

address taken from Free Stuff for Kids

Write a letter (be sure to include your name and address) to get some free information about Canadian wildlife. Use paper and an envelope to write to:

Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment Canada
Publications Section
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0H3

Copy this list in your letter:
please send me the following:

1. Great Horned Owl
2. Black Bear
3. Red Fox
4. Snowshoe Hare
5. What you can do for wildlife

Bookmark Fun

Materials:

Jan Brett's bookmark pictures
scissors
iridescent glue or sparkles & glue
heavy paper
ribbon or wool

Use the bookmark pictures to make easy bookmarks. Cut the picture and glue onto heavy paper. Punch a hole at the top to pull some ribbon or wool through. Decorate with sparkles and glue.

WORD CARDS

Word card suggestions:

Cut the cards out. Cards can be left as is, pasted on heavy card stock, laminated or decorated. Sample sentences could be written on the back of each card and word cards could be numbered in alphabetical order for immediate feedback.

Answers for ABC order: 1) animals 2) badger 3) bear 4) camouflage 5) forest 6) fox 7) hedgehog 8) mole 9) mouse 10) owl 11) rabbit 12) snow 13) tracks 14) winter

mouse	mole
snow	fox
tracks	rabbit

WORD CARDS

hedgehog

owl

mouse

bear

camouflage

badger

forest

animals

SCRAMBLED WORD PUZZLE

Use the new word list to unscramble the following words:

1. olem _____
2. sown _____
3. oxf _____
4. ratkcs _____
5. itbbar _____
6. omseu _____
7. erba _____
8. inwtre _____
9. ehdggeho _____
10. olw _____
11. ouaafcmge _____
12. dgreab _____
13. refost _____
14. mlsaina _____

SCRAMBLED WORD PUZZLE

ANSWER SHEET:

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| 1. olem | mole |
| 2. sown | snow |
| 3. oxf | fox |
| 4. ratkcs | tracks |
| 5. itbbar | rabbit |
| 6. omseu | mouse |
| 7. erba | bear |
| 8. inwtre | winter |
| 9. ehdggeho | hedgehog |
| 10. olw | owl |
| 11. ouaafclmge | camouflage |
| 12. dgreab | badger |
| 13. refost | forest |
| 14. mlsaina | animals |

WORD FIND PUZZLE

Use the new word list to find as many smaller words as you can in each word without changing the order of the letters! For example, without moving the letters around, NO, OW and NOW are words found in SNOW. See how many words you can find!

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. moles | e.g. mole |
| 2. snow | e.g. no now ow |
| 3. fox | _____ |
| 4. tracks | _____ |
| 5. rabbit | _____ |
| 6. mouse | _____ |
| 7. bear | _____ |
| 8. winter | _____ |
| 9. hedgehog | _____ |
| 10. owl | _____ |
| 11. camouflage | _____ |
| 12. badger | _____ |
| 13. forest | _____ |
| 14. animals | _____ |

WORD FIND PUZZLE

ANSWER SHEET: Answer may vary.

Use your discretion ~ not all words may be considered appropriate for children

***inter** ~ *v.* place [a corpse] in earth or tomb

***cam** ~ *n.* projecting part of wheel etc. in machinery, shaped to convert circular into reciprocal or variable motion

1. moles	mole
2. snow	no now ow
3. fox	ox
4. tracks	track rack racks a
5. rabbit	rabbi I bit it a
6. mouse	us use
7. bear	be ear a
8. winter	win in *inter I
9. hedgehog	he hedge edge hog
10. owl	ow
11. camouflage	a am *cam
12. badger	bad ad a
13. forest	for or rest fore
14. animals	a an animal I I'm

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Master Sheets

From Jan Brett's web site, download and print colour masks of the animals from "The Mitten".

Masks

http://www.janbrett.com/mitten_masks_main.htm

"Take a Look" Nature Walk

Cut the list out and paste onto heavy card stock paper for easier writing while exploring.
Take a walk and have fun!

THINGS TO LOOK FOR:

Make a check mark when you find any natural objects that fit the words below.

Find a different object for each word listed:

Look for something.....

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> soft | <input type="checkbox"/> round |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sharp | <input type="checkbox"/> huge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sharp | <input type="checkbox"/> wet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rough | <input type="checkbox"/> prickly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> smelly | <input type="checkbox"/> slimy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hard | <input type="checkbox"/> pointy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stretchy | <input type="checkbox"/> pretty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hot | <input type="checkbox"/> squishy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> noisy | <input type="checkbox"/> tiny |
| <input type="checkbox"/> heavy | <input type="checkbox"/> hairy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> oval | <input type="checkbox"/> blue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dry | <input type="checkbox"/> cold |
| <input type="checkbox"/> red | <input type="checkbox"/> sticky |

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Neat Ideas

Jan Brett's web site contains a wealth of wonderfully imaginative materials and ideas for extension activities based on her books. The following are just a few examples of what you can find.

Jan Brett's Home Page

<http://www.janbrett.com>

A Friendly Letter

http://janbrett.com/friendly_stationery_b_w_main.htm

A Jan Brett Alphabet

http://www.janbrett.com/alphabet/alphabet_main.htm

The Mitten Newsletter

http://www.janbrett.com/newsnotes/mitten_newsnotes2.htm

Teacher CyberGuide

http://www.janbrett.com/piggybacks/piggybacks_the_mitten_teachers_guide.htm

Hedgehogs Plain and Fancy

http://www.janbrett.com/bake_hedgehog_cookies.htm

