

The Bear Books Series: A Curriculum Guide and Classroom Kit

By Karma Wilson

Illustrated by Jane Chapman

Grades P-3
Ages 4-8

Activities for use across the Bear Books

Lower elementary students will love the rhyming stories about Bear and his friends! Consider these classroom activities after reading a few of Bear's stories, especially if you're sharing the entire series with your students.

1. Teach your young learners to identify the story elements of each book in the Bear Books series. Create a class chart tracking the problem, solution, and lesson learned in each book. With some practice, students can work with partners to add to the chart themselves.
2. Introduce elements of poetry such as refrain, personification, rhyming, and alliteration. Students can listen for examples of the elements of poetry as you read aloud. Students can write a repetition poem where they repeat one word or one line throughout the poem, just like in the books!
**Note: this is great practice for early readers and English language learners!*
4. Have students work in small groups to write their own stories about Bear and his friends. Include a setting, characters, dialogue, a problem, and a solution. Throw a classroom publishing party when students complete their revisions, and then put their books in the class library.
**Note: As a challenge, students can include a refrain that matches the title, just like in the books.*
5. Create a class graph that lists all the characters in the Bear Books series, and have students vote on their favorite character. Discuss what character traits students most relate to and how these traits appear as characters interact with one another.
6. Pair this series with nonfiction books about bears and other animals that live in a forest habitat. As you read, encourage students to discern the realistic elements of these books from the fictional elements. Ask them what more they'd like to learn about these types of animals, and what they've read and seen already that most fascinates them.
**Note: As an extension discussion with older readers, consider asking students to identify basic traits and behaviors in bears and how people typically view them. Then have them consider what they've learned about bears' habitats and lifestyles. If people knew more about bears, would they perceive them differently?*
7. Challenge students to invent a new character for Bear and his friends. Include a detailed drawing of the character and their character traits. Have students vote on their favorites and send them to author Karma Wilson on social media or at the email address found on her website: <https://karmawilson.com>, and Jane Chapman at janekchapman@gmail.com.



Activities for use with individual titles in the Bear Books series

Each set of book activities features a multi-strategy approach to emphasize different reading skills and help students access the texts in a more personal way.

- **Focus on:** A book-specific reading skill or activity.
- **As you read:** How teachers can connect the skill to an activity for students to practice.
- **Write or draw about it!**: Writing or drawing as a creative activity to encourage students to connect the text to their own lives; share these prompts with your students to respond.

1. Bear Can't Sleep

HC: 9781481459730

EB: 9781481459747

Lexile®: AD510L

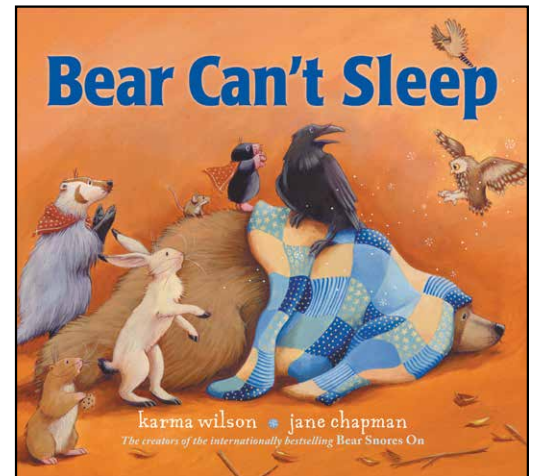
F&P Text Level Gradient™: L

Focus on: Story elements, identifying the problem

As you read: Ask students to listen for the problem in this story. How is the problem solved? Students can work with a partner to review all the ways Bear's friends try to help.

Write or draw about it! Have you ever had a hard time falling asleep? What do you do at night when you can't sleep?

*Alternative activity: Spin a tale! One thing Bear's friends love best are his stories. Be like Bear and write or illustrate a bedtime story you love!



2. Bear Counts

HC: 9781442480926

BB: 9781481499521

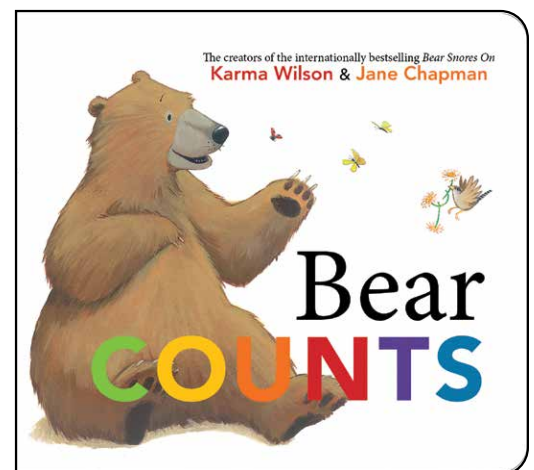
EB: 9781442480933

Lexile®: AD440L

Focus on: Creating counting books

As you read: Point out the numerical words and practice reading them out loud. Ask students how to say the numbers in different languages.

Write or draw about it! Work in small groups to make counting books. Each group will pick a different number to write about and illustrate, just like in the book. Assemble the books and share them in your class library, or gift them to a Pre-K or Kindergarten class in your school!



3. Bear Says Thanks

HC: 9781416958567

BB: 9781534474185

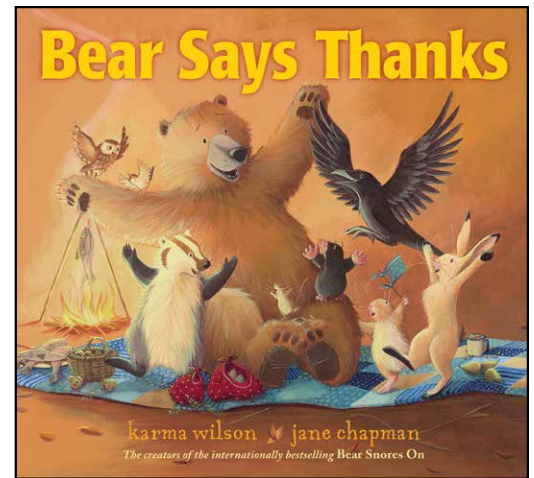
EB: 9781442461260

Focus on: Retelling the story by having students create simple puppets of each character and retell the story of who visits the cave in sequential order.

*Note: Save your puppets to practice retelling other Bear stories!

As you read: Point out the words that help readers understand the order of story events.

Write or draw about it!: If you were going on a picnic or to a friend's house, what would you bring to share? Why?



4. Bear Wants More

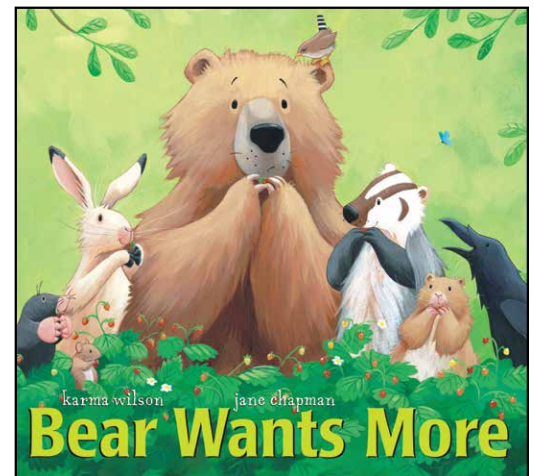
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BB: 9781416949220

Focus on: Cause and effect

As you read: Students focus on key events and what happens as a result by creating a class chart. Before you read, distribute the reproducible found at the end of this guide. It has two columns, one labeled *Cause* (why it happened) and the other *Effect* (what happened). Have students fill in the blanks.

Write or draw about it!: Think of a time when you wanted more of something, such as a game or activity, a food, or a toy. Write about what you wanted, if you got it, and how it made you feel.



5. Bear Can't Wait

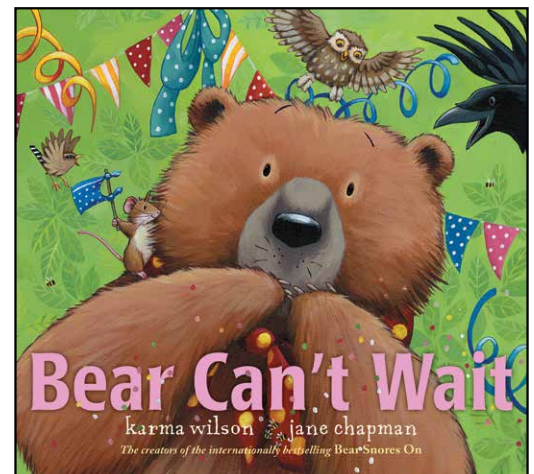
HC: 9781481459754

EB: 9781481459761

Focus on: Making predictions

As you read: Have students use what they already know and the clues in the text to make an informed guess about why Bear is so excited. What clues help students predict Bear's big event? Did their predictions change as they kept reading?

Write or draw about it!: Is there a time when you were so excited for something, you just couldn't wait? What makes you so excited that you get very impatient?



6. Bear Sees Colors

HC: 9781442465367

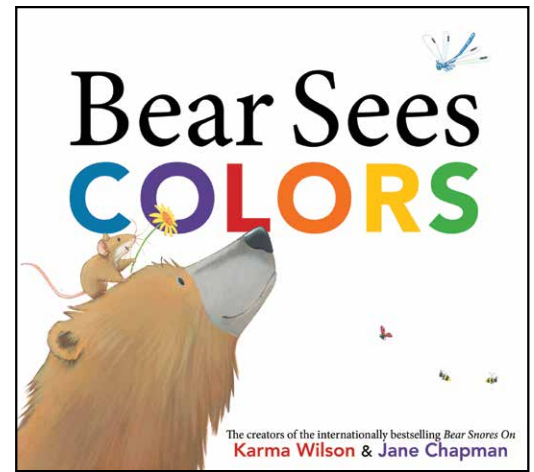
EB: 9781442465398

Lexile®: AD440L

Focus on: Color words and monochromatic art

As you read: Students read and write down the colors and the items included on each page. Encourage students to name and write down other items of that color.

Write or draw about it!: Choose a color from the book, and work with a partner to create a scene including objects of that color. Get creative and use magazine pictures, drawings, and small objects to create mixed-media masterpieces!



7. Bear's New Friend

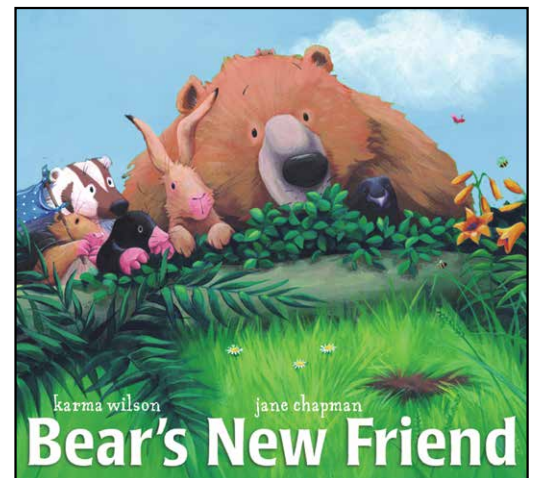
HC: 9780689859847

BB: 9781416954385

Focus on: Retelling a story in sequential order

As you read: Ask students to focus on the order of events in this story by keeping track of which animals join Bear as he tries to discover his newest friend. Write the key events of the story on sentence strips, and have students retell the story by putting the events in the correct order.

Write or draw about it!: One way to make new friends is to learn more about each other. Walk around the classroom interviewing your classmates; try to find a friend who fits certain characteristics, such as having a younger brother, knowing ballet, having a pet, and more. What are you most surprised to learn? What are some things you and your classmates have in common?



8. Bear's Loose Tooth

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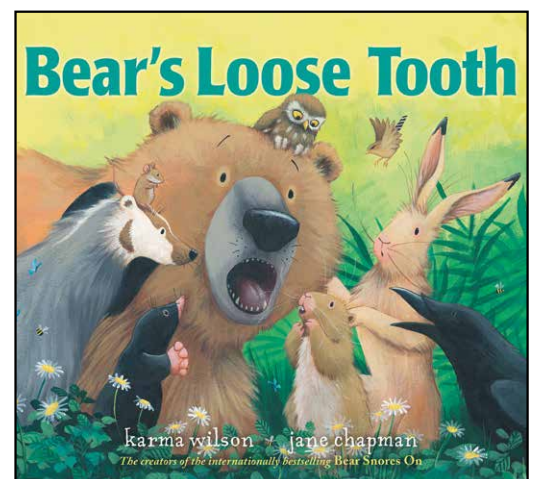
BB: 9781442489363

EB: 9781442436206

Focus on: Discerning fantasy from reality

As you read: Have students practice identifying fantasy from reality by discussing these questions: What elements of the book could be true, and which details are fiction? Students can write or draw the elements of the story that are true and those that are made up.

Write or draw about it!: Are you anxious about losing a tooth? Have you or a sibling or friend lost one yet? Are you looking forward to losing one?



9. Bear Snores On

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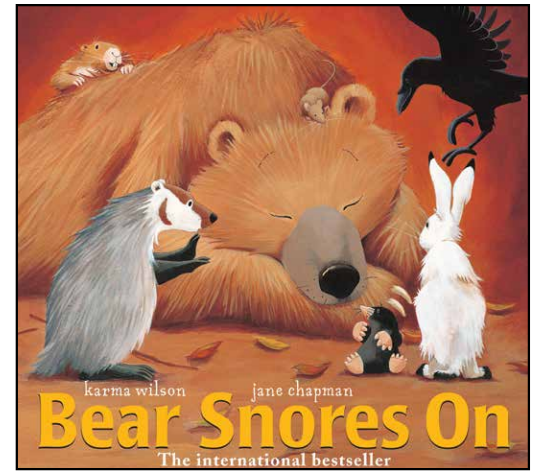
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Lexile®: AD470L

Focus on: Poetry elements, such as onomatopoeia

As you read: Read all the sound words using that sound. Encourage students to listen for all the different sound words in the story and to practice saying the words out loud.

Write or draw about it! Write or illustrate a short story using at least four sound words.



10. Bear Stays Up for Christmas

HC: 9780689852787

BB: 9781442427907

POB: 9781416958963

EB: 9781442436756

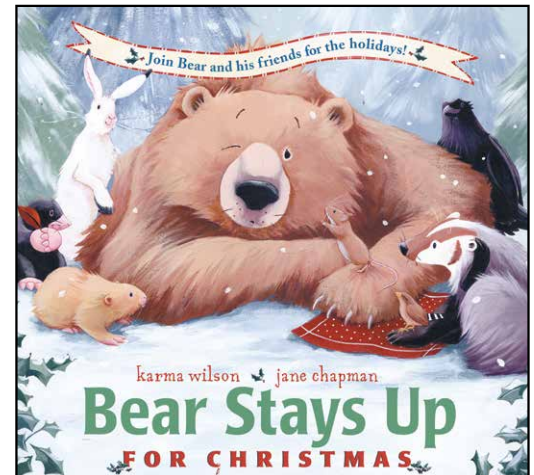
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Focus on: Holiday traditions at home and around the world

As you read: What are some of the Christmas traditions Bear and his friends celebrate in the story?

Write or draw about it! What are some holiday traditions you and your family celebrate?

*Extension activity for older students: Choose a country and research their winter holiday traditions. Share your findings with your class.



11. Bear Feels Sick

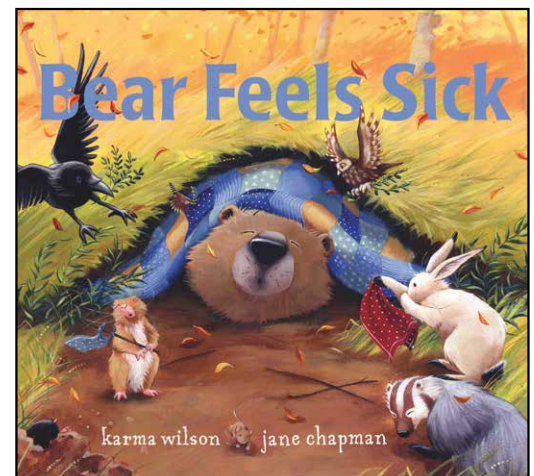
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BB: 9781442440937

Focus on: Identifying key details. Key details are important pieces of information that support the main idea of the story. In this story, the main idea is that Bear is sick.

As you read: Ask students what words or imagery in the story let them know that Bear is sick, and have them fill out the chart found as a reproducible at the end of this guide. They should put a word or phrase that supports the main idea on each spoke.

Write or draw about it! What can we do to try to help people who are sick? How do people help you when you are sick?



12. Bear Feels Scared

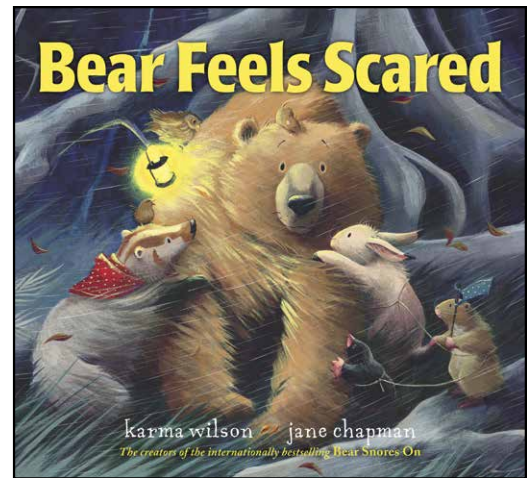
HC: 9780689859861

BB: 9781442427556

Focus on: Context clues

As you read: Ask students how they can use the sentences and pictures in a book to help them learn new words. Some examples to share: What is a *search party*? What does *clustered* mean?

Write or draw about it!: In the story, we learn that Bear is only ten feet from his lair, but that doesn't stop him from being scared. What can we do to stay calm when we get scared? What can we do if we get separated from our families?



13. Big Bear, Small Mouse

HC: 9781481459716

EB: 9781481459723

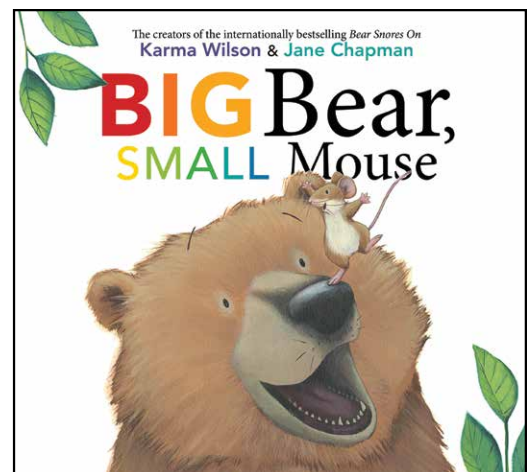
Lexile®: 390L

Focus on: Opposite words, or antonyms

As you read: Explain to students that they should pay attention to all the opposite words, or antonyms, used to describe Bear and his friends. After reading, brainstorm a class list of more antonyms.

Write or draw about it!: Play a game to build language skills.

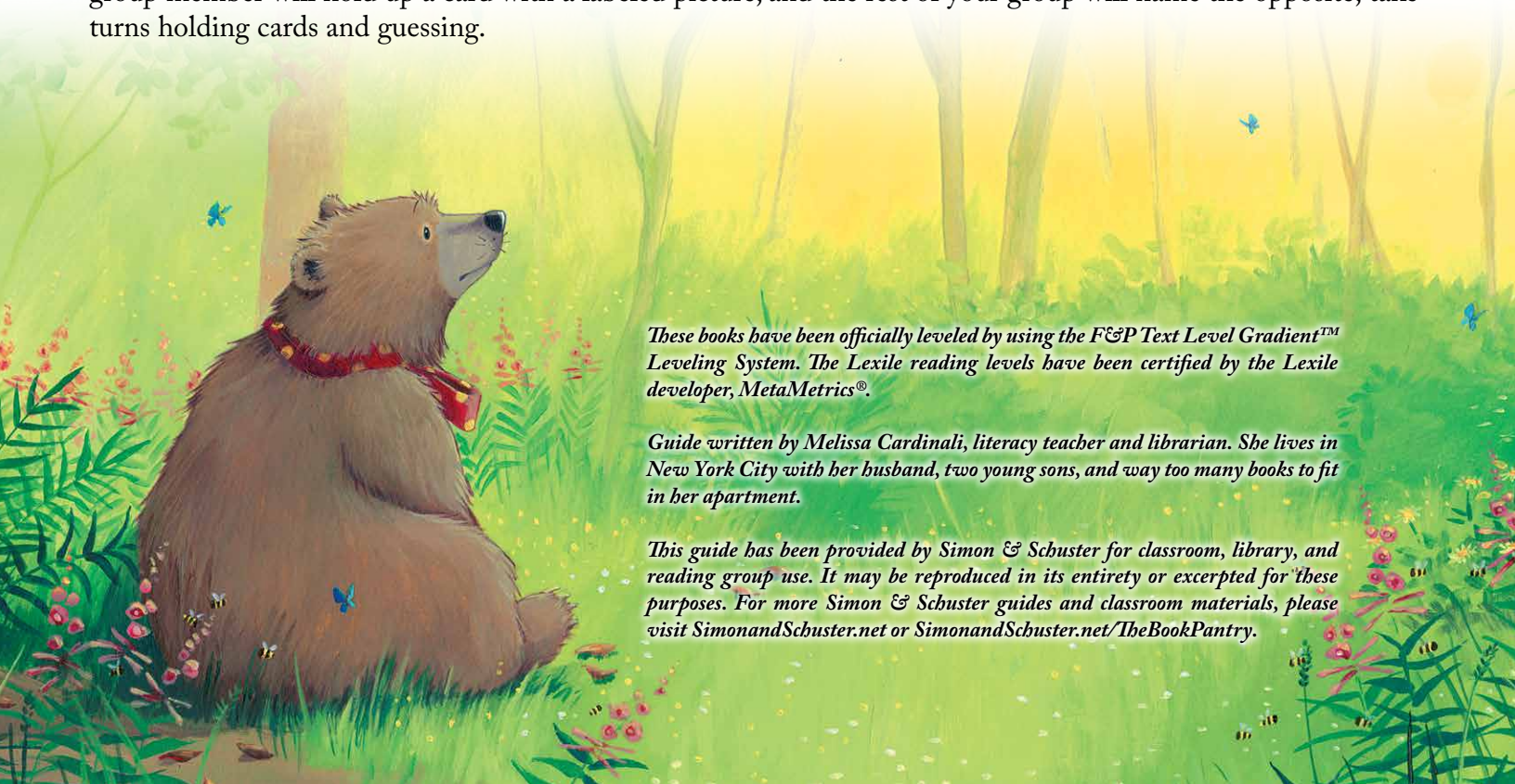
Work with a partner or in a small group to play “opposites memory” or “game of opposites.” Your teacher or a group member will hold up a card with a labeled picture, and the rest of your group will name the opposite; take turns holding cards and guessing.



These books have been officially leveled by using the F&P Text Level Gradient™ Leveling System. The Lexile reading levels have been certified by the Lexile developer, MetaMetrics®.

Guide written by Melissa Cardinali, literacy teacher and librarian. She lives in New York City with her husband, two young sons, and way too many books to fit in her apartment.

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4. *Bear Wants More As You Read Chart*

CAUSE	EFFECT
Bear woke up from his long winter nap	
Bear and his friends find food	
	Bear gets a belly ache from eating too much!

11. *Bear Feels Sick As You Read Chart*

Key details

