



# ***A Mother's Song***

by Janet Lawler

## Curriculum/Parent Guide

A mother and child share and enjoy nature during every season.

### PRE-READING DISCUSSION

Share the book cover. Read the title aloud. What do you think this book will be about? Show back cover. Any more ideas?

How do moms show their love?

What fun things do you do with your mom (or maybe your step-mom, older sister, grandmother, aunt)?

### DISCUSSION/PARTICIPATION WHILE READING TEXT

(consider one reading straight through, then discussing each 2-page spread on 2<sup>nd</sup> reading)

### **Go for a walk**

#### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

### Text-to-Life Connections

Do you like to go on nature walks?

Why do you think the mom is going to sing?

Why do you think she will she slow down her footsteps? (*her daughter is smaller; the dog needs a slower pace; maybe she wants to stop hurrying and look all around and enjoy the walk*)

### **Find pebbles**

#### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

#### Text-to-Life Connections

Have you ever picked one a pretty rock or pebble and brought it home?

Do you have a rock collection?

What does your favorite rock look like?

Do you have a nature collection? (rocks, shells, bird nests, leaves, etc.)

### **Wade in puddles**

#### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

#### Text-to-Life Connections

What do you see when you look in a puddle?

Have you ever stomped in a puddle? What did you have on your feet?

### **Listen to birds**

#### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

What kind of bird is in this picture?

Why do you think the baby birds are chirping?

#### Text-to-Life Connections

Have you ever been awake before your family? What sounds do you hear?

Do you think the birds in this story actually said, "Good Morning"?

Do you have a favorite bird? Name and describe it.

## **Sniff flowers**

### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

Do you know what kind of flower is in this picture? (*zinnia*)

What is the dog interested in? Is it the flowers?

### Text-to-Life Connections

Do you like to smell flowers?

Which flowers smell best to you?

What is your favorite flower?

## **Feel rain on bare feet**

### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

Do you think the dog likes getting wet? What is he doing?

### Text-to-Life Connections

Have you ever been barefoot outside during a rainstorm?

How does the rain feel on your feet?

## **Chase leaves**

### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

Do you think there is more than one kind of tree nearby?

Why? *Suggest children look at shapes of leaves.*

### Text-to-Life Connections

What fun things do you do with leaves in autumn?

## **Pick apples**

### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

### Text-to-Life Connections

Have you ever gone apple picking?

Do you remember what kind of apples you picked?

Do you have a favorite kind of apple?

Name different ways to eat and cook apples. What is your favorite?

## **Make snow angels**

### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

Do you think the dog likes the snow? Why or why not?

### Text-to-Life Connections

What other fun things can you do in the snow?

How do you make a snow angel?

## **Ice skate**

### Picture Clues

What season of the year is shown on this page?

What are the clues that tell you the season?

Where are the mom and girl ice skating?

What sport is being played in the picture?

### Text-to-Life Connections

Have you ever tried to ice skate (or roller skate/blade)?

Can you ice skate in the summer?

Would you rather skate outside or in a rink? What are the differences?

What part of your body needs to be strong when you ice skate (or roller skate/blade)?

Have you watched ice skating on TV? (*both men and women ice skate, some play on hockey teams. Anyone can skate if they practice a lot.*)

## **Last page – Holding hands**

### Picture Clues

Do you think the girl and mom had a fun day?

### Text-to-Life Connections

Do you like to hold your mother's hand? Why do people hold hands?

How does it make you feel?

What do you think they will do when they get home?

Why does the author say there is magic all around?

## **FUN QUESTIONS**

Do you think the dog enjoyed the walks in this book?

What makes you think so?

The illustrator used the author's dog as a model! See a picture of the author's dog by visiting <http://www.janetlawler.com/motherssong.html>

Why do you think the name of the book is ***A Mother's Song***?

(if necessary, re-read the first page)

Is the mom happy in this book? Why?

Do you sing when you are happy?

### **BEYOND THE BOOK – Subject Tie-Ins and Activities**

#### Physical Activity

*Take children on nature walk. Collect items. Look for clues about the season.*

*Have child(ren) leap like frogs and croak each time they land.*

*Have children lie on floor and pretend to be snow angels.*

#### Science

Methodology - Create how-to instructions for making a snow angel, either as a class exercise or individual task.

Where does the rain go after it falls? Discuss the water cycle.

Collect leaves. Identify them (guide and coloring sheet for New England leaves: <http://gonewengland.about.com/cs/fallfoliage//b/leafidguide.htm>).

Have each child bring in a favorite rock to share. Make a display of a class rock collection. For older grades, try to identify some of the rocks.

Find robin or favorite bird in bird book or on internet. Discuss bird songs.

Identify different kinds of apples, using book or internet. Discuss growth cycle from seed to tree to apple.

#### Language Arts

Write and illustrate a story about a special day or activity with Mom. (Make assignment inclusive to encompass those with alternative family situations.)

Write a story about a fun outdoor activity.

Create a Mother's Day card and write inside about a favorite activity with Mom.

#### Math

Sort and count a collection (rocks, shells, etc) by category (color, size, etc.)

Create graph to display sorting results.

## Art

Kathleen Kemly is the illustrator of this book. That means she drew and colored all the pictures.

How do the colors make you feel?

(If someone says they are sunny – How does the sun make you feel? Warm and good, inside and out.)

The crayons she used are called pastels. They are bright colors and are a little like chalk. You can rub to spread the color on the page.

Use pastels to draw a flower. Experiment with their texture and colors.

Create a rock sculpture.

Draw a picture of something you do outdoors with your mom.

## Season projects

Spring – Plant seeds. Look for bird nests. Study bulbs.

Summer – Collect rocks or seashells. Draw them or use them to create a diorama.

Fall - Collect leaves and do crayon rub drawings. Create a leaf collage.

Winter - Make paper snowflakes. Read *Snowflake Bentley*, written by Jacqueline Briggs Martin and illustrated by Mary Azarian, to learn about how snowflakes form and about William Bentley, who loved snowflakes and spent his life photographing them.

To learn more about the author and her other books visit:

[www.JanetLawler.com](http://www.JanetLawler.com)