



Where the Wild Things Are

Adventures in Reading:

Family Literacy Bags from Reading Rockets

Contents:

- Two books – one fiction, one nonfiction or concept book
- Parent information sheet
- Three activity sheets
- Bookmark
- Parent survey



for teachers and librarians

*This Reading Rockets activity packet has been designed to support reading activities at home using Maurice Sendak's **Where the Wild Things Are**. We've chosen some related fiction and nonfiction books and created activities to encourage some hands-on fun and learning. The packet has been designed for you to assemble and send home with your kindergarten students. The books and instructions should all fit in a two gallon zip top bag.*

Reading Rockets carefully chose books that are widely available and appealing to young readers. The titles selected should be available in your school library. If the suggested titles are not available, or you prefer another title, please feel free to substitute books related to the theme. You'll find our list of suggested titles included in bookmark format.

The featured books are **Where the Wild Things Are** by Maurice Sendak and one of the nonfiction or concept books suggested. In *Where the Wild Things Are*, Max's imaginative adventure begins the night he wore his wolf suit, making mischief and being downright rude. When he was sent to his room to cool off, he travels to the land of the Wild Things where he is crowned king only returning when he's ready to be loved again. The list of other books includes both nonfiction titles about night and fiction books that emphasize concepts such as dealing with feelings and using your imagination. When assembling your *Where the Wild Things Are* activity packet to send home, simply include a copy of *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak and one of the nonfiction or concept books suggested.

The parent information sheet includes an introductory note that you can personalize, instructions about how to use the packet, and tips for sharing fiction and nonfiction books with children.

The activities were designed to encourage further exploration and learning at home:

- >> The Creativity activity is a hands-on craft project.
- >> The Imagination activity encourages imaginative play, writing, or drawing.
- >> The Get Real activity focuses on real-world experiences a child and parent can have together.

The bookmark lists both the featured title and additional titles.

Putting it all together

Print out copies of the parent information sheet, the activities, the survey, and a master for making bookmarks from your computer. Cut the bookmark page into strips. You may wish to print the activity pages and bookmark on card stock for durability.

Into a two gallon zip top bag, place:

- >> two books: *Where the Wild Things Are* and one nonfiction or concept book
- >> parent information sheet
- >> three activity pages
- >> bookmark
- >> survey for parents to complete when they have finished using packet with their child.

Send the packet home with your student. Encourage parents to keep the parent information sheet, the activities, and bookmark, and return the books and survey to you by the date you specify.

Let Reading Rockets know what you think of the family activity packets by e-mailing us through our website: www.readingrockets.org/sitecontact. Click on "Family Literacy Bags."

ADVENTURES IN READING!

Welcome

Dear _____

Exploring new ideas and enjoying books with you sends a powerful message to your child: Reading and learning are fun, and happen everywhere—not just at school. This Reading Rockets activity packet about ***Where the Wild Things Are*** was created to help you and your child enjoy reading and learning together.

Start your learning adventure by reading some books with your child about this popular topic. Then explore the topic with three activities. Enclosed you'll find what you need:

- >> two books to share with your child
- >> three related activities
- >> bookmark with a list of other books to extend the fun, if you wish,
- >> short survey to tell me if you enjoyed using the packet

The simple steps on the back explain how to use the packet.

The bookmark, this parent information sheet, and the activities are yours to keep.

When you've finished with the materials, please return the books and the completed survey to school in your child's backpack. Please return the Reading Rockets activity packet by _____.

I hope you'll enjoy reading and learning together!

To learn more about children's books, reading with your child, and information about helping kids become confident readers, please visit www.ReadingRockets.org.



ADVENTURES IN READING!

Instructions

How to use your Reading Rockets Activity Packet

Getting ready

1. Before you read the books to your child, be sure to read them yourself. The first book is ***Where the Wild Things Are*** by Maurice Sendak. This book is fiction — a “make believe” story — but it deals with the real issue of the negative feelings many children may have and what they do to handle their emotions. The other book in your bag may be another fiction title that features kids expressing themselves in negative or positive ways or a nonfiction book — informational and true — about investigating the night. Reading the books first will give you the “inside scoop” to the twists and turns of the story, the interesting information inside, and the parts of the books that will appeal most to your child.

2. Next, read the three activities to see which of them you think your child will enjoy most, and which one you have the time and materials on-hand to do right away. Chances are, after you read one (or both) of the books with your child, he or she may want to do an activity right away.

Start the fun

3. When you know you’ll have at least enough time to read and talk about one of the books, grab your child and a book, and dive right in. Start with *Where the Wild Things Are*. Talk about the cover of the book with your child — can they guess what it is about? Have they ever read a book by Maurice Sendak or a book about monsters? Read the book to your child. Take time to ask and answer questions, explore the pictures, and wonder what will happen next. Read it again, if your child asks you to. Then, try the other book or one of the activities.

4. If you read a nonfiction book next, take a moment to explain to your child the difference between the two types of books. *Where the Wild Things Are* told a made-up, make-believe story, but a nonfiction book is filled with facts about the real world. The information in nonfiction books can answer lots of questions.

5. Feel free to pick and choose from the activities, or change them to suit your child’s interests. Read the books again over the next few days and try different activities. Most important: have fun!

When you’re done...

6. Keep the bookmark, the activities, and this page. Complete the survey and return it with the books to your child’s school. Visit a library and look for some of the other books on the bookmark. Make the most of the excitement the books create, and try some hands-on learning or make-believe fun. Exploring new ideas along side you lets your child see you learning — and reading — too, and gives your child personal experiences to support his or her growing knowledge.

Tips for reading fiction books with kids:

- >> *Take your time and talk about the story with your child. Ask your child questions.*
- >> *Explore the pictures with your child.*
- >> *Read with expression. Change your voice or how fast you read to create excitement. Ham it up!*
- >> *You don’t need to read every word. Keeping your child interested is the goal.*

Tips for reading nonfiction books with kids:

- >> *Wonder out loud. As you are reading, or afterward, talk about facts you find interesting or questions you have.*
- >> *Show your child how to use the table of contents, section headings, index, glossary or word list to find the answer to a specific question.*
- >> *Don’t be afraid to jump around, reading pages that especially interest your child. You don’t have to read a nonfiction book straight through.*





get wild in the kitchen

*Then all around from far away across the world
he smelled good things to eat
so he gave up being king of where the wild things are.*

— *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak

Max must have been hungry! Would your child be willing to give up a kingdom for a favorite food? Create a tasty, healthy snack that your child will be wild about both cooking and eating. You can make an edible “Wild Thing,” a food sculpture of Max in his boat, or come up with your own recipe for what a Wild Thing would love to eat.

Supplies

- >> Favorite in season fruits and vegetables, such as bananas, oranges, apples, melon, grapes, berries, tomatoes, carrots, peppers, bean sprouts, cucumbers, celery
- >> Raisins, dried cranberries, black olives, nuts, dried fruit leather, cereals, mini marshmallows, shredded coconut
- >> Other soft foods easy to cut into shapes or shred, such as cheese, deli meats, lettuce
- >> Rice cakes, English muffins or bagels
- >> Something spreadable, such as peanut butter, hummus, Nutella®, cream cheese
- >> Kitchen scissors, knives and cutting board
- >> Plates

Instructions

To make an edible Wild Thing face, let your child choose a favorite spread and put a thin layer on a rice cake or bagel. A small peeled banana cut in two makes excellent horns. Try grapes for bulging eyes, a strawberry nose and coconut all around the face for a hairy look. Let your child try a variety of combinations that please his eye and his taste. You can also just let your child arrange the fruits and vegetables on a plate if he needs a larger “canvas” for his food designs.

If you want to try other creations:

- >> a simple slice of melon with a fruit leather sail on a toothpick floating in a sea of blueberries makes a nice boat for a marshmallow Max
- >> a trail mix of nuts, cereals and dried fruits seems a likely feast for Wild Things
- >> make and bake an edible sculpture using bread dough from the freezer section or try this recipe: www.mo4h.missouri.edu/projects/general/sculpting.htm
- >> See how some kids play with their food at: <http://library.thinkquest.org/5434/default.html>

Be sure to encourage your child to write down the recipe for any of his creations and if you can, take a photograph before it’s gobbled up!

What your child eats influences his growth and development. While you are cooking, talk with you child about his or her favorite foods — how they taste, what color they are, how they smell, and what time of day they are eaten.



up all night

Where you live there are probably daily changes in light: light throughout day and darkness throughout the night. When it is daytime for you, the earth is facing the sun. At night, where you are on the planet has rotated away from the sun leaving you in the dark. Since we can't feel the earth turning, it is sometimes difficult for children to grasp the science of night and day but they are very aware of how the daily change in light affects them and the things they do.

Sort out your day (and night)

Using newspapers, magazines or photographs, create a collection of images associated with day and night. These can be activities that are part of your child's daily routine, such as bathing, getting dressed, putting on pajamas, eating various meals, sleeping, going to school, playing or brushing teeth and also pictures of things that might only be seen during the day or the night, such as the sun, moon, stars, animals, or street lights.

If you like, have your child attach his images onto index cards or sheets of paper. Or just have him sort the collection as it is into categories — a pile for night and a pile for day.

While sorting, talk with your child about how they feel when they wake up, during the day and when they go to bed at night. Ask why certain things might be done during the evening or morning.

Variation: If you can't come up with the images for sorting, try playing a few rounds of categories instead. To play, all you need is two or more people. Choose a category, such as nocturnal animals, people who work at night, or names of constellations. In turn, each player has to offer something that fits the category, such as raccoon, night watchman, or the Big Dipper. Players keep naming new objects for the category for each of their turns. When there's only one person left who can add to the category, you have your winner!

Check out the nightlife

For younger kids with earlier bedtimes, the excitement of getting to go outside at night will make for a memorable evening. Try a bedtime snack and a story outside by the light of the moon. (For a real nocturnal reading experience, you may want to choose a story with black and white illustrations, such as Maurice Sendak's *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* Or *There Must Be More to Life* or *Kitten's First Full Moon* by Kevin Henkes and share the interesting fact with your child that nocturnal animals do not see in color and even humans have difficulty seeing colors at night.)

If you are more adventurous, read Mary Ann Fraser's *Where Are the Night Animals?* and plan a night hike:

- >> Pick your route well in advance and hike it with your child during the day to look for potential hazards on the trail and to get familiar with the terrain. Choose a wide trail with openings in the treetops so that moon and star light can help you along the path.
- >> Learn about how to go owling: www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/spring/Owling.html
- >> Try this astronomy tutorial so you can learn to find your way north through the dark: www.quietbay.net/Science/astronomy/nightsky/
- >> Bring a flashlight (with a red lens — red cellophane works) to spy on nocturnal animals, but plan for hikers to rely on their night vision as well as other senses.
- >> Prepare as you would for a daytime hike with a backpack with snacks, water, first aid, and jackets.



acting wild

It isn't difficult for most kids to imagine themselves in Max's shoes. Explore more with your child about what happens when he expresses himself in negative or positive ways.

Act it out

- >> Have your child pretend to be Max while you pretend to be Max's mother. Make up and act out a conversation between Max and his mother after he returns to his room.
- >> Pretend to be one of the Wild Things and call and leave a message for Max.
- >> Let your child dictate or write a note that Max might have left for his mother before leaving or one that he might have sent from the place where the wild things are.
- >> **Variation:** Read *Sometimes I'm Bombaloo* by Rachel Vail and pretend what would happen if that book's main character, Katie, went to the place where the wild things are instead of Max.
- >> **Variation:** The character Max from *Max's Words* by Kate Banks expresses himself more positively than Sendak's Max. Ask your child to pretend to be Max from *Max's Words* and give Max from *Where the Wild Things Are* advice about other ways to use his imagination.

Be expressive

Max's feelings are shown through his loud actions and words. Compare this to how feelings are depicted in *My Many Colored Days* by Dr. Seuss. What does angry look like? What shape is it? How big is it? Give your child large sheets of paper and paints or crayons and ask him to draw or paint what he thinks anger, happiness, fear and feeling safe and secure look like. (If this seems too abstract, ask your child to think of how he looks or the kind of words that come out of his mouth when he has these feelings.)

Variation: In *Not a Box* by Antoinette Portis, rabbit can use his imagination to turn his cardboard box into anything from a racecar to a robot. *Harold in Harold and the Purple Crayon* shows how far you can go with imagination and a purple crayon. Talk with your child about using his imagination to meet a need or want. Gather a variety of household items such as a wooden spoon, a coat hanger, a comb, and an umbrella and ask him to draw or tell you about other ways to use these objects.

Dance the night away

When Max cried "let the wild rumpus start!" he and the wild things begin dancing in the dark. Kids naturally love to move around and dance is a powerful way to express feelings. Encourage expressive dance or other movements from your child's own response to the words and pictures in *Where the Wild Things Are*. He may want to stomp around and do an angry dance, move like a wild thing, or a happy to be back home dance. Make sure the room you're in is suitable for dancing or if your child needs lots of room to express himself, try the backyard or a park. If you've read *Where Are the Night Animals?* by Mary Ann Fraser, your child could also try making some of the movements of the nocturnal animals described.

On the PBS Kids show *WordGirl*, WordGirl's trusty sidekick Captain Huggy Face acts out the meaning of a new word. When he gets it right, he does a fun dance. Challenge your child to do the same using words about different feelings. Huggy has some good moves to learn from at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfLZ2lhcd9U

WHERE THE
WILD THINGS ARE



Featured titles

Fiction

Where the Wild Things Are
by Maurice Sendak

Sometimes I'm Bombaloo
by Rachel Vail

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Not a Box by Antoinette Portis

Max's Words by Kate Banks

Harold and the Purple Crayon
by Crockett Johnson

Nonfiction

Where Are the Night Animals?
by Mary Ann Fraser

What Makes Day and Night
by Franklyn M. Branley

Night Animals (Beginners Nature)
by Susan Meredith

Night Creatures by Sylvaine Pérols

*The Night Book: Exploring Nature after
Dark with Activities, Experiments, and
Information* by Pamela M Hickman

Adventures in Reading:
*Family Literacy Bags from
Reading Rockets*



WHERE THE
WILD THINGS ARE



Featured titles

Fiction

Where the Wild Things Are
by Maurice Sendak

Sometimes I'm Bombaloo
by Rachel Vail

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Not a Box by Antoinette Portis

Max's Words by Kate Banks

Harold and the Purple Crayon
by Crockett Johnson

Nonfiction

Where Are the Night Animals?
by Mary Ann Fraser

What Makes Day and Night
by Franklyn M. Branley

Night Animals (Beginners Nature)
by Susan Meredith

Night Creatures by Sylvaine Pérols

*The Night Book: Exploring Nature after
Dark with Activities, Experiments, and
Information* by Pamela M Hickman

Adventures in Reading:
*Family Literacy Bags from
Reading Rockets*



WHERE THE
WILD THINGS ARE



Featured titles

Fiction

Where the Wild Things Are
by Maurice Sendak

Sometimes I'm Bombaloo
by Rachel Vail

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Not a Box by Antoinette Portis

Max's Words by Kate Banks

Harold and the Purple Crayon
by Crockett Johnson

Nonfiction

Where Are the Night Animals?
by Mary Ann Fraser

What Makes Day and Night
by Franklyn M. Branley

Night Animals (Beginners Nature)
by Susan Meredith

Night Creatures by Sylvaine Pérols

*The Night Book: Exploring Nature after
Dark with Activities, Experiments, and
Information* by Pamela M Hickman

Adventures in Reading:
*Family Literacy Bags from
Reading Rockets*



WHERE THE
WILD THINGS ARE



Featured titles

Fiction

Where the Wild Things Are
by Maurice Sendak

Sometimes I'm Bombaloo
by Rachel Vail

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Not a Box by Antoinette Portis

Max's Words by Kate Banks

Harold and the Purple Crayon
by Crockett Johnson

Nonfiction

Where Are the Night Animals?
by Mary Ann Fraser

What Makes Day and Night
by Franklyn M. Branley

Night Animals (Beginners Nature)
by Susan Meredith

Night Creatures by Sylvaine Pérols

*The Night Book: Exploring Nature after
Dark with Activities, Experiments, and
Information* by Pamela M Hickman

Adventures in Reading:
*Family Literacy Bags from
Reading Rockets*

