



Educator's Guide for

William's Winter Nap

Grade Level: PK-K
Author: Linda Ashman
Illustrator: Chuck Groenink
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About the Book

William is all set for bed when—*TAP TAP TAP!*—a chilly chipmunk arrives at his door looking for a warm place to sleep. The two curl up under the covers, then—*KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!*—a frosty porcupine asks to join them. One after another, a parade of furry guests appears at William's door in search of a snuggly place to spend the winter. Each time, William and friends scooch over—but is there room for ALL the visitors who show up?

Praise for *William's Winter Nap*

★ “Beautifully paced, rhymed, and cadenced . . . [The] mixed-media artwork creates a strong sense of the setting and the appealing characters.” Starred review, *Booklist*

A Junior Library Guild Selection: “[An] ideal read-aloud for a cold winter night.”

About the Author

Linda Ashman's more than thirty picture books have earned numerous honors and starred reviews, and have been included on the “Best of the Year” lists of *The New York Times*, *Parenting* and *Child* magazines, Bank Street College of Education, the New York Public Library and more. She's also the author of *The Nuts & Bolts Guide to Writing Picture Books*. Linda lives with her family in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Visit her at lindaashman.com.



About the Illustrator



Chuck Groenink hails from an overgrown village among the peat bogs in the north of the Netherlands, where he spent his formative years climbing trees, drawing, reading, and cycling. He attended the Artez Institute of Arts in Kampen, graduating from the department of illustration. He now lives in Syracuse, New York, with his wife and two cats. Visit him online at chuckgroenink.com.



Pre-Reading and Predicting

Read the title of the book and look at its cover, front and back. What characters do you see in the illustrations? Who do you think is the main character? Why? What can you tell about the setting of the story? What do you think the story is about?

Character Lessons

In the book, a series of animals arrives at William’s door looking for shelter. Is William welcoming to his visitors? In what ways? At what point in the book are the animals not so welcoming?

How does Bear respond after William opens the door? How do you think he feels? What do the other animals do then?

Talk about a time when someone made you feel welcome—or unwelcome. How did you feel? What sorts of things can we do to make others feel welcome and included?

Natural Science: Animals in Winter

Imagine having to find food and shelter in the coldest, snowiest months of the year. It’s not easy! But animals adapt to harsh weather in a variety of interesting ways. Some grow thicker coats, or change color so they’re camouflaged in the snow, or migrate to warmer climates.

Many others—like the animals in *William’s Winter Nap*—spend all or most of the winter sleeping. Some, like woodchucks, are true hibernators, entering a state in which their body temperature drops dramatically and their breathing and heart rate become extremely slow. Others, like bears, are deep sleepers—although their heart rate and breathing are much slower than normal, their temperature drops only slightly.

Make a Science Journal

As a class, make a special journal to record your observations.

Take Field Notes

Over the course of a week or longer, go outside to observe animal activity. Keep a record of the sorts of wildlife you observe—mammals, birds, reptiles, fish or insects. What are they doing? Draw pictures of what you see.

Find Out!

As a class, share your observations and make a list of the wildlife you’ve observed, as well as other animals found in your region. How do they spend the winter? What do they do to prepare?

Online Resources:

San Diego Zoo:

<http://animals.sandiegozoo.org/animals>

National Geographic Animal Facts:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/index/>

National Education Association Winter-Themed Classroom Resources, including Animal Adaptations:

<http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/winter-theme-gradesK-5.html>

Animal Adaptations in Winter Teacher Resources:

<http://blogs.cornell.edu/naturalistoutreach/files/2013/09/Winter-Adaptations-I-168fn9g.pdf>



Language and Listening

Repetition

Writers of picture books sometimes like to repeat lines so that readers can join in. What phrase is repeated in *William's Winter Nap*? What changes as the line is repeated (and more animals arrive)?

Rhyming Words

William's Winter Nap is written in rhyme, which means that certain words have the same end sounds. For example, here are the rhymes on the first page of the story:

steep/sleep

bed/head

nap/tap

Pick out some other rhyming words in the book. Then, as a class or on your own, make a list of other words that rhyme with the word pair. Here are some to try:

tight/night

(e.g., bite, bright, kite, light . . .)

door/more

there/bear

trees/please

snow/go

Sound Effects

The author uses sounds to convey the arrival of new visitors. For example, Chipmunk wakes William with a TAP, TAP, TAP, and Porcupine with a KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK. What sounds are made when Woodchuck, Raccoon, and Bear arrive?

The literary term for words that sound like what they mean is *onomatopoeia*, and its use can make our writing livelier. Try coming up with some sounds of your own to describe other wintry activities like these:

- Sledding down a hill.
- A snowball fight.
- Opening a heavy door.
- Snow breaking a tree branch.
- Skating on a frozen pond.
- Wind in the trees.
- Hail hitting different surfaces—metal, wood, someone's head(!).
- Walking through fresh snow.
Is the sound different if you're a small chipmunk?
A big bear?



Art and Design

An illustrator may use a particular range of colors—or *palette*—to give a book a consistent style and mood. How would you describe the palette Chuck Groenink uses in *William's Winter Nap*? What do the colors tell us about the setting?

At different times in the story, the animals are (among other things) cold, content, sleepy, ungracious, remorseful and happy. How does the illustrator convey these emotions in the illustrations?

Artists include many details in their illustrations to enhance the setting and story. What sorts of details caught your eye in the book?

Writing and Art Activity

Brainstorm!

Brainstorming is an excellent exercise to do before writing. You start with a topic—in this case, “Winter”—and jot down all the words that come to mind. If you can only come up with a few, think about winter clothes, activities, foods, holidays, and scenery, and see if you can expand the list.

Write!

What do you like most about winter? What are your favorite things to do? Are there any things you *don't* like about winter? Write about them as well.

Illustrate!

Create an illustration to go with your writing. Show your favorite (or not-so-favorite) things about winter and share them with the class.

