

Tie It In!

Using this book with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.

Educators: Here are examples of activities using *The Farmer's Away!*... that align with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards at the Pre-Kindergarten level (3-5 years). Other standards may also apply.

Librarians, parents, and others: The Ohio Department of Education adopted Early Learning and Development Standards to describe key concepts and skills that young children develop during the birth-to-five year period. The purpose of these standards is to support the development and well-being of young children and to foster their learning. For more information, including the complete set of standards, follow this link to the Ohio Department of Education site: goo.gl/1E0xp.

These activities are also great for library programs, family time, and playgroups.

Language and Literacy

Listening and Speaking – Expressive Language. Ask the children to name and describe their favorite animals. Their answers may include general kinds of animals ("ducks") or specific animals ("my dog, Scout"). See how many different descriptive words they can use.

Reading – Phonological Awareness. Did the children notice that the animal sounds in the story rhyme? Words don't have to be "real" to rhyme (the "name game" is a great example of this). Encourage the children to make up words that rhyme. If you have a group, assign a "rhyme leader" to slowly repeat a word. The other children take turns rhyming with the word. Alternate rhyme leaders after each set of rhymes. The focus of this exercise is awareness of what rhyming sounds like. Bonus points for rhymes that use animal sounds!

Approaches toward Learning

Creativity – Expression of Ideas and Feelings through the Arts. Ask the children for their thoughts on the book's artwork. What's their favorite illustration? Why? How does it make them feel? Have the children draw their own pictures of farm animals doing something fun while the farmer's away.

Cognition and General Knowledge

Cognitive Skills – Symbolic Thought. Many of the scenes in *The Farmer's Away!*... represent iconic situations. Ask the children to identify what the animals are doing in each picture to see how they interpret the symbols present in the illustration (for example, if we see a picnic basket, a blanket, and food in an open field, what are the animals doing now?).

Measurement and Data – Data Analysis. So many different animals on the farm! Ask the children about the page near the end where the animals are quietly sneaking back to the barn (with the dog and the rooster in the bottom corner). How many pigs are there? Are there more cows than snakes? Are there any animals with that same total number? Etc.

Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

Physical Well-Being – Physical Activity. Maybe it's time to get those boots a little dirty! Have the children visited a farm? Farms are an excellent educational tool, from showing where food and milk come from, to explaining how farms are an important part of Ohio's economy, to good old-fashioned getting to know and experience barnyard animals. Your local county extension office may be able to suggest a farm to visit. A directory of county extension offices in Ohio is available at: extension.osu.edu/lao. Even if you can't get to a farm, there are ways to bring the farm to your child! The Ohio Farm Bureau has developed a directory of education programs and teacher resources, available online at: goo.gl/qwFj1q.



Choose to Read Ohio, a project of the State Library of Ohio, the Ohioana Library Association, and the Ohio Center for the Book, encourages public libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation of Ohio authors, illustrators, and literature. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits: library.ohio.gov/ctro.

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A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit

Use this toolkit to plan library programs as well as activities for the daycare, classroom, or family.

Meet Ohio author and illustrator Anne Vittur Kennedy and learn how animal sounds impact early learning.

Discover connections to the Five Early Literacy Practices in easy extensions that can be done at home, school, or at the library.

Explore fun activities that align with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.

The Farmer's Away! Baa! Neigh! By Anne Vittur Kennedy

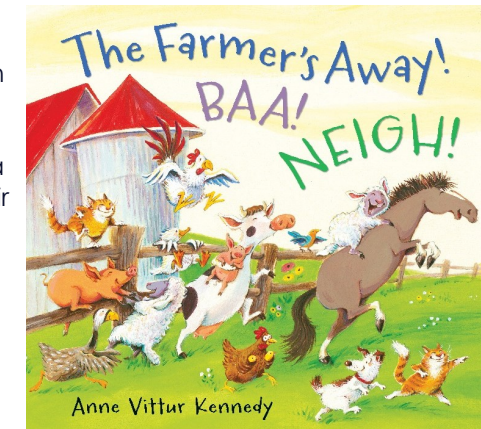


About the Book

What mischief do the animals get up to when the farmer's back is turned? Anne Vittur Kennedy lets us know in the animals' own words! There will be boating, of course, and a picnic, a rollercoaster ride, Jet Skiing, a hot-air balloon, ballroom dancing — oh, no! Could that *arf! arf! arf!* mean the farmer's heading back? Even the youngest listeners can read this book aloud by following along with the pictures and making each animal's sound.

Candlewick, 2014. ISBN 9780763666798.
Ages 0-8.

candlewick.com/cat.asp?browse=Title&mode=book&isbn=0763666793



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Get Ready To Read!

Encouraging early literacy skill-building in young children.

Many of the activities in this toolkit incorporate **five early literacy practices**, everyday activities that help children get ready to read. These practices are:
Reading - Writing - Talking - Singing - Playing

Reading to and with children is the most effective way to support reading readiness. Reading aloud develops vocabulary and comprehension; builds familiarity and comfort with books; and is fun for adult and child.

Writing (or drawing and scribbling) helps children learn about print, letters, and vocabulary, and supports fine motor skills.

Talking helps children learn oral language – a critical early literacy skill – and also increases vocabulary and comprehension.

Singing slows language down so children can hear the different sounds that make up words, and develop vocabulary and phonological awareness.

Playing teaches children to think symbolically, practice self-expression, and put thoughts into words.

All of these practices lead to children being ready to learn how to read when they begin school.

Parents, teachers, and librarians can share these practices with children at home, in the classroom, or at the library. For more information, visit ohreadytoread.org.

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Author photo courtesy Candlewick Press; used with permission.

Biographical information courtesy Ohioana Library Association.

About the Author/Illustrator

While growing up in Columbus, Ohio, Anne Kennedy's first illustration job was creating tiny paper animals and selling them to her classmates, in fourth grade. Her love of drawing funny animals has never left her, and she has been illustrating children's books for nearly 30 years now. She and author Eileen Spinelli received the Green Earth Book Award for *Miss Fox's Class Goes Green* (Albert Whitman Co.). Recently she has begun to write new titles as well. *The Farmer's Away! Baa! Neigh!* was given a coveted starred review by *Kirkus*, and her latest title, *Ragweed's Farm Dog Handbook*, is available through Candlewick Press. She hopes her books bring a smile and help promote a love of reading and kindness to animals. Anne lives near Columbus with her husband Jack and their rescued dog, Banjo.

Author/Illustrator Resources

Author/Illustrator page on Candlewick Press website
candlewick.com/authill.asp?b=Author&m=bio&id=12917

Anne's friend Tucker the Horse meets Cupcake the Pig (video) youtu.be/JeGBRXwt208

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:
 Contact appearances@candlewick.com

Original artwork in this toolkit provided by Anne Vittur Kennedy for CTRO. Used with permission.



"Read" your favorite animals-
Baa! Neigh!

Write with meaningful scribbles.

Sing "Old MacDonald" like an animal chorus!

Practice It!

Here are some fun ideas for extending the story to include the five practices.

Reading

Though *The Farmer's Away!...* doesn't feature many words found in the dictionary, learning to read animal sounds is very helpful for developing early literacy skills.

Follow the words with your fingers as you make the animal sounds for your child to hear. Encourage them to point to the animals as you say the word-sounds. The animals in *The Farmer's Away!...* appear in the same order as the words,

and they can be "read" just like the words. This can help your child get used to the left to right, top to bottom arrangement of written English, and also helps build literacy skills by practicing associating specific images with specific sounds and concepts.

A beautifully illustrated and text-light book like *The Farmer's Away!...* might become one of your child's first favorite books. Favorite books present wonderful opportunities for what's known as "dialogic

reading", an interactive approach in which an adult asks a child questions about the story while reading through a familiar book. This can help deepen the child's learning experience and promote greater engagement with the text.

Dialogic reading also allows a parent or other caregiver to hear for themselves what a child knows, giving them an opportunity to add information that the child may find useful or interesting. For more information on dialogic reading and other

free early learning resources offered by Get Ready to Read, go to getreadytoread.org. Here's a direct link to the feature on dialogic reading: goo.gl/HIH7CS

Writing

Scribbles are wonderful! Scribbling is a natural part of developing early skills for both writing and drawing.

If your child scribbles, ask what the scribble means. This may be a good opportunity to remind your child that letters are shapes with special meanings, both individually, and especially when they're grouped together to form a word or sentence.

Talking

Author Anne Vittur Kennedy has said "Animals are the funniest people I know ... watch and listen carefully. They do tell jokes!" While reading *The Farmer's Away!...*, talk with the children about what the animals are doing on the page. The vibrant and active illustrations provide opportunities to practice a wide range of vocabulary words, especially descriptive words. Your questions might include, "who's driving the yellow speedboat?",

or "what are the animals doing now?" When you look and listen carefully, do you notice any jokes?

Playing

Near the end of their big day, the animals have a fancy ball with a piano and, of course, dancing. Do the children know how to dance? What does a formal dance look like? Are there other kinds of dance? What kinds of instruments (if any) go with different kinds of dance? If simple instruments are available, consider encouraging some of the children to make music for the others to dance to. Suggest switching roles if anyone gets antsy, and don't be afraid to dance or play an instrument yourself!

Singing

"*Old MacDonald*" is one of the most popular children's songs in the English language. But in a way, it's not completely in English, since the "language" of animals plays a major role! In the spirit of *The Farmer's Away!...*, after reminding the children of the traditional song, try singing it animal style, using only animal sounds. For example, a traditional verse like:

*Old MacDonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O*

*And on his farm he had some ducks
E-I-E-I-O*

might become:

*Quack quack moo moo ree ree quack
Cock-a-doodle-doo
Eek sss sss splish honk moo cheep
Cock-a-doodle-doo*

This activity could be repeated with any number of songs familiar to the children, and could also be done in phases, repeating the song several times, each time switching more closely to the "animal" version of the song. In the case of "*Old MacDonald*", the fun-to-sing "E-I-E-I-O" might be one of the last parts to change.



Animal Sounds and Early Literacy

"Although animals sounds might not seem like actual words, they can help children learn to associate a simple sound with an actual object or picture. Because the sounds are easy to say, children are more likely to imitate them. This success, in turn, helps them make the jump to 'real' words. So don't hold back: moo, baa, and neigh away!"

- Becca Jarzynski, M.S., CCC-SLP, "*Moo Baa La: How Animal Sounds Can Help Your Child Talk.*" Available at: talkingkids.org/2011/04/moo-baa-la-how-animal-sounds-can-help.html