



A Teacher's Guide: Tad Hills Author Study



About Tad Hills's Books

Tad Hills's beautifully written and illustrated books teach students the important concepts of reading, writing, discovery, and friendship in a playful and

sympathetic way that captures the hearts of young and old. Board books, Step into Reading books, and picture books provide opportunities for students of all ages and abilities to engage in the storytelling of Tad Hills and learn at their own pace. Join Duck, Goose, Rocket, and their friends on an unforgettable journey that will show your students that learning can be fun, adventurous, and full of surprises.

Preparing for an Author Study

- Visit the Tad Hills website at tadhills.com to learn about the author and how he developed his ideas for the Duck & Goose and Rocket books.
- Create an Author Study Center. Choose a corner or other place in the classroom where you can keep and display the Tad Hills books. Decorate a display board with the author's name and photo. Students can add more information and photos as the author study progresses. Make sure you have enough room in your center to display work created by the students as part of this study.
- Discuss the concepts of character and setting. Ask students to be aware of the Tad Hills characters and settings, and plan to discuss differences and similarities.
- Set up a word wall or word tree in your classroom. Use letters and words that are age appropriate, and be prepared to add words throughout the study.
- Have students start an author study journal in which they can record their feelings and thoughts about the books, keep track of questions they have for the author, and take notes for their assignments.
- Foster a home-school connection by sending a letter home explaining the author study. Ask families to encourage learning by asking questions about the author, the books, and classroom activities.

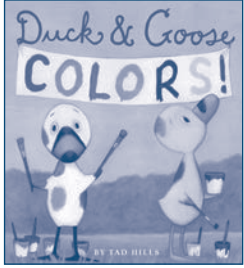


GUIDE PREPARED BY JAMIE SIMON, AN EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT IN THE WASHINGTON, DC, AREA, WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN EDUCATION FOR MANY YEARS AS BOTH A TEACHER AND AN ADMINISTRATOR.

Random House Children's Books • School and Library Marketing • 1745 Broadway • New York, NY 10019



Grade Range: Up to Preschool



Duck and Goose: Colors!
Board Book: 978-0-553-50806-2
EL: 978-0-553-50807-9

About the book: What color are Duck's feet? What color are Goose's feathers? Duck and Goose explore the world around them and search for colors in familiar places.

For discussion: What is your favorite color? What do you see around you that is that color?

Class activity (sorting): Place a variety of items on a table—classroom toys, nature items, school supplies, etc. Then label individual desks with the name and picture of a color. Ask students to sort the items by color and place them on the properly labeled table.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Language 5

Enrichment: Have students create their own version of a rainbow using the art supplies in your classroom. They should identify each color as they add it to the rainbow. Then have them add one nontraditional color to their rainbow to make it unique!



Duck & Goose: It's Time for Christmas!
Board Book: 978-0-375-86484-1
EL: 978-0-375-98268-2

About the book: It is time for Duck and Goose to decorate their Christmas tree, but Goose is too busy skating, sledding, and making snow angels to help.

For discussion: Discuss the setting in this book. What does it feel like? What does it look like?

Class activity (family traditions): Students should think of a tradition that their family has in the wintertime. Ask them to draw a picture of this tradition and describe it to a friend. When finished,

they can turn their traditions into snowflakes. Fold the paper into quarters and cut small holes in various spots. Open it up to find family-tradition snowflake!

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Writing 2

Enrichment: Ask students to bring in two items of clothing that help them stay warm in the winter. They can use pictures of Duck and Goose for inspiration.



Duck & Goose Find a Pumpkin
Board Book: 978-0-375-85813-0
EL: 978-0-375-98284-2

About the book: Duck and Goose are searching for a pumpkin, but where is the best place to find one? A hint from a friend leads them to the pumpkin patch, where they find exactly what they're looking for.

For discussion: What is a pumpkin patch? Have you ever visited one? Make some

observations about a pumpkin patch.

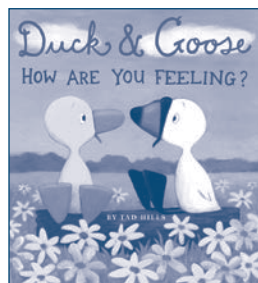
Class activity (adjectives): Bring a small pumpkin to class and play "Pass the Pumpkin" with your students. Sit in a circle and have students pass the pumpkin to the person on their right. Each student has to use an adjective to describe the pumpkin when they are holding it. Try not to repeat words!

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Language 5

Enrichment: Cut out a pumpkin shape and hide it somewhere in the classroom; then challenge students to find it. The first student to find it can have a turn hiding it the next time.



Grade Range: Up to Preschool



Duck & Goose: How Are You Feeling?
Board Book: 978-0-375-84629-8
EL: 978-0-375-98283-5

About the book: Duck and Goose experience a variety of emotions as they build, argue, play, and laugh. The beautiful and simple illustrations will help your students understand their own emotions as well.

For discussion:

What makes you feel happy, sad, angry, and frustrated?



Class activity (drama): Have each student act out a feeling in front of the class using facial expressions and body movements. The other students should guess the emotion being portrayed. Then ask the students to describe a time they felt that way.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening 4

Enrichment: Provide each student with a small mirror. Have them examine the way their face looks while expressing different emotions. Focus on the eyes, mouth, and eyebrows.



Duck & Goose: 1, 2, 3
Board Book: 978-0-375-85621-1
EL: 978-0-375-98282-8

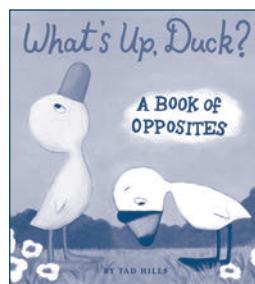
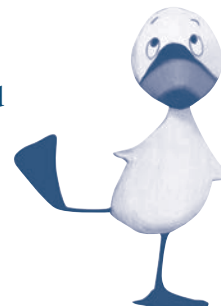
About the book: With the help of their friends, Duck and Goose count from one to ten using their bodies and the world around them. Each page tells a story that your students will love.

For discussion: How many students are in the class? How many boys are in the class? How many girls? How many teachers?

Class activity (matching): Collect Popsicle sticks and divide them into groups of 20 for each table of students. On one half of the sticks, write the numbers 1 to 10, and draw shapes on the other half of the sticks that illustrate the numbers 1 to 10. Ask students to match up the number sticks and the shape sticks.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Reading: Informational Text 7

Enrichment: Give each student a number card and have them stand in a large group in the middle of the room. Then ask them to silently arrange themselves in numerical order from one to ten. No talking allowed!



What's Up, Duck? A Book of Opposites
Board Book: 978-0-375-84738-7
EL: 978-0-375-98858-5

About the book: Duck and Goose help each other learn their opposites in a playful, funny, and sometimes messy way.

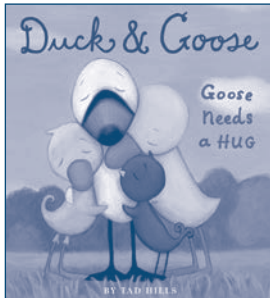
For discussion: Act out opposite movements and ask students to follow your actions. For example, say your name loudly; then say your name quietly. Or stand facing the front of the room; then stand facing the back of the room.

Class activity (collage): Provide a wide variety of objects and magazines, and ask students to create a collage that illustrates opposites. Students should draw a line down the center of a large piece of paper and then select objects from the table, or cut out pictures from the magazines to glue onto their collage. Some examples are light/dark, small/large, front/back, heavy/light.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Language 5

Enrichment Create an opposites obstacle course in your classroom. Students can go *over* a chair, *under* a desk; *into* a box, *out* the door; *in front* of the table, *in back* of the cubbies.

Grade Range: Up to Kindergarten



Duck & Goose: Goose Needs a Hug
Board Book: 978-0-307-98293-3
EL: 978-0-307-98294-0

About the book: Goose is feeling sad, and his friends are determined to cheer him up. But what does he need to feel better? Duck and friends are ready to find out.

For discussion: When you are sad, what makes you feel better? What do you do to make others feel better when they are sad?

Class activity (charting): During the discussion, record students' answers in a horizontal line on the board. Then give each student a name tag and have them place their name under the phrase/word that best applies to them. When all students have added their name, tally each column and discuss the findings. How many people like hugs? How many people like to laugh?

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening 1

Enrichment: Create a card shop. Students can make greeting cards to cheer up their family and friends. Save them to mail out when a student is sick or when a family member needs some extra attention.



Duck & Goose: Here Comes the Easter Bunny!
Board Book: 978-0-375-87280-8
EL: 978-0-375-98744-1

About the book: Duck and Goose have to find the perfect place to hide and wait for the Easter Bunny. But a quick nap reveals that they missed their chance and all they have left are eggs. Happy Easter!

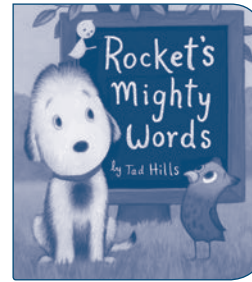
For discussion: What is the best hiding spot in your house?

Class activity (camouflage): Discuss the concept of

camouflage. Were Goose's and Duck's hiding places good ones? Where could they have hidden so that they were camouflaged?

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Literature 7

Enrichment: Decorate Easter eggs and hide them around the room for an old-fashioned Easter egg hunt!



Rocket's Mighty Words
Board Book: 978-0-553-53866-3
Oversized Book: 978-0-385-37233-6

About the book: Rocket is very busy, but he is taking the time to teach us to read. Follow Rocket through the snow and mud as you learn more than one hundred of his favorite words.

For discussion: What is your favorite word? Why is it your favorite? Do you like the way it sounds, the way it feels in your mouth, or what it represents?

Class activity (word wall): Divide the class into small groups and assign a few pages of the book to each. Ask them to write the words from their pages and add them to a word wall. When everyone is finished, review the new words that were added. Which words were already on your word wall?

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Reading: Foundational Skills 3

Enrichment: Ask student to draw a self-portrait. Then have them label the different parts of their face, similar to the way Rocket was drawn on the first page of the book. They can refer to the new words on the word wall for help.



Grade Range: Preschool–2nd



Duck & Goose
Hardcover: 978-0-375-83611-4
EL: 978-0-375-98920-9

About the book: Duck and Goose have found an egg, and are both determined to take good care of it. They argue, they dream, they plan, and then they realize that it may not be an egg at all. Regardless, a true friendship is born.

For discussion: What characteristics are important in a friend?

Class activity (Venn diagram): Demonstrate how to create a Venn diagram using two large circles. Label one circle “Duck” and the other “Goose.” Ask students to complete their own

Venn diagrams that will show the things Duck wants to do with the egg and the things Goose wants to do with the egg. The center, shared region should show their ideas for the egg that are similar.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Literature 9

Enrichment: Have students create a Venn diagram with a friend. One circle should represent “Me” and the other circle should represent “My Friend.” Students can discuss their similarities and differences, complete the diagram, and then present their findings to the class.



Duck, Duck, Goose
Hardcover: 978-0-375-84068-5
EL: 978-0-375-98921-6

About the book: There’s a new duck in town! Thistle thinks she is better than Goose at everything, and she tries to prove it. But Goose and Duck have had enough and devise a plan to show Thistle that she is the best at something. And the afternoon becomes quiet once again. . . .

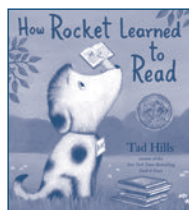
For discussion: What does it mean to be competitive? What does it mean to brag?

Class activity (talent show): Everyone is good at something! Ask students to think about something they are really good at. Host

a “Hidden-Talent Show” in your classroom and have each student demonstrate something they are really good at. Be sure to promote good manners and sportsmanship during the presentations.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening 4

Enrichment: Discuss different ways to make a new friend. What could you say and do? Then challenge students to make one new friend either within or outside school. At the end of the week, gather students together to discuss the strategies that worked and the ones that didn’t.



How Rocket Learned to Read
Hardcover: 978-0-375-85899-4
EL: 978-0-375-98922-3

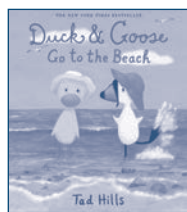
About the book: Rocket is ready for his nap until a surprise teacher appears and changes his life forever. Learning to read and spell opens a new world for Rocket, and he now looks forward to spring, when his teacher begins class again.

For discussion: Ask students to find a cozy spot in the classroom where they can sit, recline, or lie down. Then read aloud a favorite story and let them enjoy hearing your voice and experiencing the story.

Class activity (onomatopoeia): Discuss the definition of *onomatopoeia*—forming a word from a sound, like *whoosh* and *grrr* from the book. Ask students to come up with ten such words on their own and then select their favorite to write in a sentence. The sentence should describe what object is making that sound.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Literature 4

Enrichment: Sprinkle flour on the desk in front of each student. Have them draw letters in the flour using their finger, just like Rocket did in the snow.



Duck & Goose Go to the Beach
Hardcover: 978-0-385-37235-0
EL: 978-0-385-37236-7
GLB: 978-0-385-37237-4

About the book: When Duck and Goose decide to go on an adventure, they can’t imagine where they’ll end up. The beach is a magnificent place filled with exciting sounds and wonderful sights, but there is no place like their meadow.

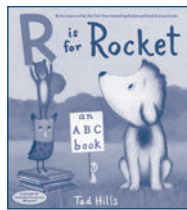
For discussion: Ask students to imagine they are at the beach. What do they hear? What do they see? What do they smell? What do they feel?

Class activity (mapping): Ask students to draw a map of your school that illustrates the path they take to get to the cafeteria (or library, gymnasium, etc.). First take your students on a walk through the building so that they can make notes of where things are. Then have them create a map that shows different parts of the building and add a dotted line that marks the path from their classroom to their destination.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening 5

Enrichment: Write a story about a trip to the beach and an animal friend that you might meet there. Describe that friend and what you did together.

About the book: Rocket and his friends introduce each letter of the alphabet in a creative and charming way so that your students will grasp phonics concepts and develop letter recognition.



R is for Rocket: An ABC Book
Hardcover: 978-0-553-52228-0
EL: 978-0-553-52230-3
GLB: 978-0-553-52229-7

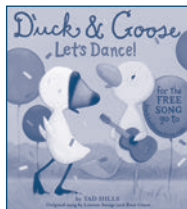
For discussion: Look carefully at the alphabet. Which letters only have straight lines? Which letters only have curves? Which letters have both? Which letters have holes?

Class activity (letter hunt): Place plastic bins around the classroom with one letter of the alphabet taped on the front of each one. Gather your students in the center of the room and tell them that they are going on a scavenger hunt—they have to find items around the room that

start with each letter and place them in the correct bins. When they are finished, gather the class together to go through each bin and review the items inside. Which bins had the most items and which had the least?

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Reading: Foundational Skills 2

Enrichment: Ask students to select a letter of the alphabet and create it *without using a writing utensil*. They can use any materials they find in the classroom.

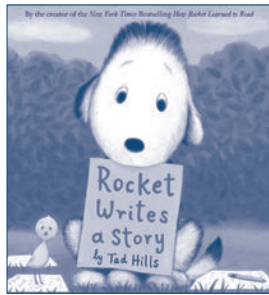


Duck & Goose: Let's Dance!
Board Book: 978-0-385-37245-9
EL: 978-0-385-37246-6

About the book: Want to learn the Duck & Goose song and dance? Join Duck & Goose at their dance party! With easy-to-follow moves, like first jump forward and then jump back, *Duck & Goose: Let's Dance!* is sure to get little bodies wiggling. This lively board book features lyrics from an original song by Lauren Savage and Ross Gruet, so put on your dancing shoes and get ready to “walk like a duck, honk like a goose, and flap your fuzzy tail feathers too!”

Enrichment: Get bodies moving with the original song included with *Duck & Goose: Let's Dance!* Talk to readers about the importance of exercise and come up with your own feather-flapping moves to add to the Duck & Goose dance party.

Grade Range: Preschool–3rd



Rocket Writes a Story
Hardcover: 978-0-375-87086-6
EL: 978-0-307-97491-4

About the book: Rocket has a collection of words, but what is he going to do with them? Write a story, of course! He searches for inspiration and finds it high up in a tree. Once the story is done, Rocket even has a new friend.

For discussion: What book inspires you? Why?

Class activity (story writing): Tell your students that they are going to write a story about something that inspires them. Take them for a walk outside and ask them to use their senses to find their inspiration. Back

in the classroom, the story writing can begin! They can illustrate the

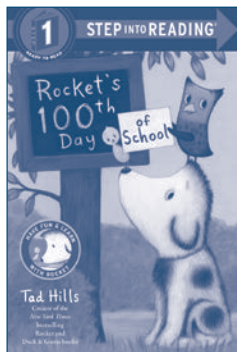
story and then read it aloud to a friend to ask for ideas on ways to improve it. And tell them to remember: stories take time.

🕒 **Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Writing 3**

Enrichment: Have students write three different endings to their story, then read them aloud to the class and let them vote on which one they like best.



Grade Range: 1st–4th



Rocket's 100th Day of School
Hardcover: 978-0-385-39095-8
EL: 978-0-385-39098-9
GLB: 978-0-385-39096-5
PB: 978-0-385-39097-2

About the book: It's the 100th day of school, and Rocket is searching for 100 special things. After gathering all his things, he finds that a friend made five of them disappear. But Rocket's friends come in handy and help him reach 100!

For discussion: How much is 100? How many ways can you count to 100? Try counting by ones, fives, tens, and twenties.

Class activity (word problems): Tell students that they have to collect 100 things, and they have to create a word problem that explains how they do it. Ask them to write out how they are going to reach 100, but there must be something that gets lost and replaced. For example, they can collect 10 pretzels, 30 marbles, 25 erasers, 30 pebbles, and 5 napkins.

But 10 marbles roll away, so they need to collect 8 more books and 2 more blocks. Have students present their collections and their word problems to the class.

🕒 **Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Reading: Information Text 3**

Enrichment: Challenge students to use multiplication and division in their word problems in order to reach 100.



Drop It, Rocket!
Hardcover: 978-0-385-37247-3
EL: 978-0-385-37249-7
GLB: 978-0-385-37248-0
PB: 978-0-385-37254-1

About the book: On a search for words, Rocket finds many things. But there is one thing that he will not let go of . . . except when his friends trade him for his favorite thing of all—a book! Good boy, Rocket.

For discussion: What is the one thing that you love most in the whole world? Would you trade it for anything?

Class activity (story map): Build a story map for the book that includes the characters, setting, problem, solution, and main events from the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

🕒 **Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Literature 5 and 7**

Enrichment: Have students create a story map for one of their favorite books. Share the story map with the class and see if they can inspire a classmate to read that book.

To Conclude Your Author Study:

- Students can write letters to the author that include questions and comments about his books.
- Invite families into the classroom to show off student work.
- Film student reviews of the books.
- Dramatize one of the books and have a performance for the school.
- Host an author party where students dress as the book characters and transform the classroom into one of the book settings.
- Play a game such as trivia or bingo to test students' knowledge of the books.
- Have students write a prequel or sequel to one of the books.