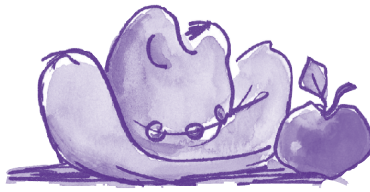


A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO HARCOURT'S BEGINNING READER SERIES







SERIES ACTIVITIES

WHILE READING

Impromptu Reader's Theater Many books in these series have significant amounts of dialogue, making them easy to use for an impromptu reader's theater. Once your students have read through a chapter or story, assign parts for the characters in that chapter, or the entire book, with one person assigned to read anything that isn't dialogue. In addition to developing fluency and practicing reading with expression, reading aloud in this way encourages recognition of dialogue punctuation conventions. If your students enjoy impromptu reader's theater, suggest staging a favorite story with simple props. (*Language Arts/Art/Drama*)


AFTER READING

 **Acrostic Poems** After reading several books in any series, challenge your students to write an acrostic poem about one of the characters using that character's name. Before each student creates his or her own poem, it might be helpful to share a sample poem (available on the website) or to write one together as a class. (*Language Arts/Writing*)

 **A Character's Closet** A creative way to explore how well you know a character from a story is to describe what you think you might find in his or her closet. Would Mr. Green's closet be messy or neat? Would Mr. Putter's

have any model airplanes from his youth? Challenge students to show what they know about a favorite character by having them draw and describe his or her closet. (*Language Arts/Art/Writing*)

What If . . . ? After reading several books from a series, have students work independently or in small groups to write and illustrate an adventure for the characters in that series. What would happen if the power went out at Mr. Putter and Tabby's house? What would Mr. and Mrs. Green do at the beach? What would happen if Iris and Walter had a snow day? (*Language Arts/Writing/Art*)

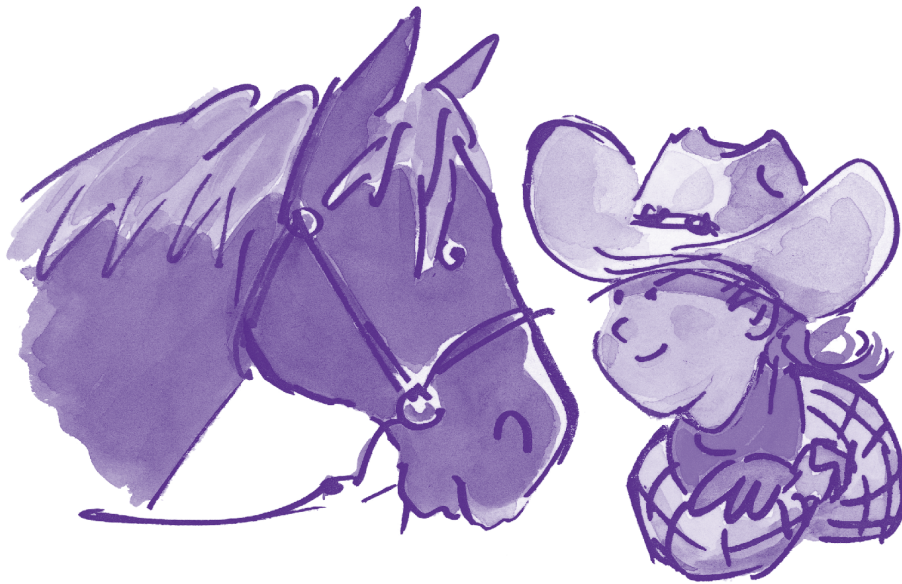
 **Thinking about Covers** The first thing a person sees when choosing a book is its cover. Illustrators and publishers spend a lot of time making covers appealing, and ensuring each is a good representation of the book. Do they make the right choices? Learn about the process of designing a cover by comparing three early versions of the cover for *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa: Partners* to the final cover that appears on the published book. Do the students agree with the choices the illustrator, Betsy Lewin, and the editor and designer made? What is similar and different in each version? After discussing the designs for *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa: Partners*, present the next book you will be reading together with the cover hidden (making a brown paper bag cover works well) and challenge students to design and illustrate a cover for that book. (*Art*)



Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa

Written by Erica Silverman

Illustrated by Betsy Lewin



ABOUT THIS SERIES

There's always a new adventure around the bend with Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa. There are cows to count and care for, roping skills to practice, and games of hide-and-seek to play. Whether Cowgirl Kate approves or not, Cocoa is sure to find time to search out and snack on tasty grass, apples, and carrots.

Honors and praise for *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa*:

A Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor Book

An ALA Notable Children's Book

"A fine choice for reading aloud to small groups or for confident new readers to tackle on their own."—*Booklist*

"The humorous text, warm friendship between horse and owner and captivating illustrations add up to a cowgirl and cowhorse with enough star power to ride the range together in subsequent sequels."


—*Kirkus Reviews*

BEFORE READING

The Perfect Pet No doubt many students will think that Cowgirl Kate has the perfect pet. Before reading, ask students what their perfect pet would be and why. What would they need to do to take care of it? (*Language Arts*)

WHILE READING

Cocoa's Basic Needs Cocoa sure likes to eat! And Cowgirl Kate sure takes good care of Cocoa and the cows. Chapters like “Bedtime in the Barn” from *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa* offer good opportunities to discuss the basic needs (food, shelter, water, air) of an animal—like Cocoa or the cows—and how those needs are met. Ask students about Cowgirl Kate’s basic needs. Are they the same as Cocoa’s? (*Science*)

 **Words that Work Together** *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa: Partners* is full of compound words. In the first chapter, point out and discuss the words *cowgirl* and *horseshoes*. Then ask students to look for other compound words, including *cowboy*, *cowhorse*, and *everywhere*. After discussing these words, give each student—or two “partners”—a set of cowboy boots printed out from the website. Each set of partners should cut out their boots, find a new compound word in the book, and write one part of the compound word on one boot and the second part of the word on the other. Post the words they find on a bulletin board. If you make extra copies of the boot template, this can be an “early finisher” activity using other books. (*Language Arts/Word Study*)

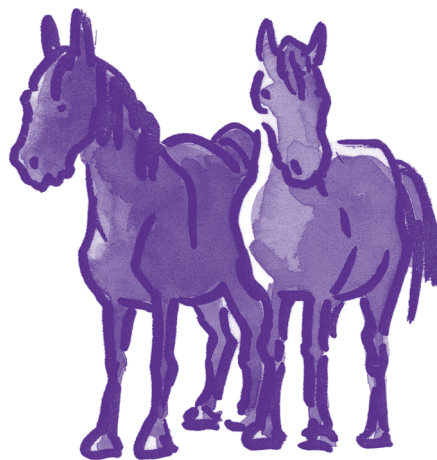
AFTER READING

Time to Count the Cows Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa often count cows or calves to make sure their herd is safe. Students can help Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa practice addition, subtraction, counting by twos or fours, and multiplication. You will need only a large set of cubes or other math manipulatives to use as your “cows.” To practice addition, have students take a handful of manipulatives and count their “herd.” Then ask what would happen if each student combined his or her herd with that of another student. To practice subtraction, again have each student take and count a herd, then have half the students close their eyes while a partner takes some cows away. When the first group of students open their eyes, they can

count again and figure out how many cows are “lost.” To check their answers, their partners can produce the lost cows. For counting by twos or fours, or for multiplication by those numbers, have each student take and count a herd, then ask each to determine how many ears his or her herd has (counting/multiplying by two), or how many legs (counting/multiplying by four). (*Math*)

Sleep Tight! At the very end of *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa*, Cocoa sings Kate a special lullaby, an adaptation of “Rock-a-Bye Baby,” that’s just right for a cowgirl. For a wonderful writing workshop project, write both the original “Rock-a-Bye Baby” lyrics and the words to Cocoa’s “Rock-a-Bye Cowgirl” on chart paper. Ask students to talk about the similarities and differences between the two versions. Have them discuss what the lullaby would be like if Kate wrote one for Cocoa, and have them write their own lullaby. Post the original lyrics from one or two other lullabies, such as “Hush, Little Baby,” to give students several choices. You can find the words for “Hush, Little Baby” and other well-known lullabies at many sites on the Internet by searching “words for lullabies.” (*Writing*)

Animal Partners After reading either *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa* or *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa: Partners*, ask students to discuss how Cocoa helps Cowgirl Kate. What other ways can horses help humans? What other animals help or have helped us in the past? Ask each student to write and illustrate a page for a class book titled *Animal Partners* that will show how animals other than horses help humans. (*Science/Art/Writing*)



CONNECTIONS

If You Need a Book About . . . Try . . .

BIRTHDAYS *Mr. Putter & Tabby Make a Wish*
Iris and Walter and the Birthday Party

FALL *Mr. Putter & Tabby Pick the Pears*

FAMILY *Zero Grandparents*
Iris and Walter and Baby Rose

FIELD TRIPS *Iris and Walter and the Field Trip*

THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL *Iris and Walter, True Friends*
Pa Lia's First Day

GETTING A NEW PET *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa*
Mr. Putter & Tabby Pour the Tea
Mr. Putter & Tabby Feed the Fish

THE 100th DAY OF SCHOOL *"100 Pancakes" in Meet Mr. and Mrs. Green*

**SCHOOL PLAYS
and TALENT SHOWS** *Lucky Days with Mr. and Mrs. Green*
Iris and Walter: The School Play
The Talent Show

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS *Iris and Walter and the Substitute Teacher*

SUMMER *Mr. Putter & Tabby Row the Boat*

WINTER *Mr. Putter & Tabby Write the Book*
Mr. Putter & Tabby Bake the Cake
Mr. Putter & Tabby Catch the Cold

COMPLETE TITLE LIST FOR COWGIRL KATE AND COCOA

COWGIRL KATE AND COCOA

Ages 6 to 9

\$15.00 hardcover

\$5.95 paperback

Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa

0-15-202124-8

0-15-205660-2 pb

Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa: Partners

0-15-202125-6

About the Guide Author

This teacher's guide was written by Anne Davies, an elementary school teacher and former children's book editor. She lives in Seattle, Washington, and frequently writes for *Book Links* magazine.



**Please visit www.HarcourtBooks.com/BeginningReaders
for classroom activities and for more information about
Harcourt's Beginning Reader series.**

Available at libraries and wherever books are sold, or by calling
Harcourt Customer Service toll-free at 1-800-543-1918.



www.HarcourtBooks.com

Back cover illustration copyright © 2004 by Keith Baker

All illustrations used throughout the interior of this guide are the protected copyrights of their respective holders.
Copyright © 2006 by Harcourt, Inc. All rights reserved.