

Activity Guide

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 Edited by Kathy Leggett

to be used with
***Look What I See! Where Can I Be?
 IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD***

written by Dia L. Michels
 photographs by Michael J. N. Bowles

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“Where am I?” the baby wonders.

Look What I See! Where Can I Be? In the Neighborhood is a very special book for the earliest readers and listeners. A baby explores her world on daily walks through the neighborhood with her family. Rich language and warm, colorful photographs help young readers label their environment and make connections to their own surroundings.



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Establish Prior Knowledge/Critical Thinking/ Pre-Reading

When introducing the book to the listeners: MAKE CONNECTIONS.



Collect some of the objects that are seen during the walk around the neighborhood. Display and discuss: What is this? Where in your neighborhood might you see this object? Are these items found in every neighborhood? Looking for these items sets a purpose for listening and can help youngsters to focus.



Ask the children to look for pictures of similar things in the pages of the story. As you read, have them match the items in the book to the items displayed in the classroom and discussed before reading. Order classroom items in same sequential order as the text.



Interview the children in the audience to determine the types of families they have. Who has brothers or sisters? Compare their families to the family in the book. In the story, what family members does the baby have? How can we tell?



Define the term *neighborhood*. What is a neighborhood? *A neighborhood is a place where families work and play together.* What makes your neighborhood special? A neighborhood has places for people to gather.

- a place to sell and buy food,
- a place to play safely,
- a place to sleep quietly,
- a place to park our cars,
- a place to be cared for when we are sick.



List neighborhood places in your neighborhood: the pizza parlor, the dry cleaner, and the traffic light at the big intersection. Encourage the children to draw word pictures of their experiences at each place. If you can, bring in a magazine or newspaper photo of the place and hold it up as the children talk about each neighborhood spot. Use the level of experience of the group to gauge the depth of this discussion.



Explore distinctions between similar objects. Show a real baby carrier to the children. Have them observe a stroller, a sling, backpack and even a wagon. Any or all! Discuss how the carriers are the same or different. Has anyone in the group ever seen someone carrying a baby using a type of carrier? How is being carried different from walking? Who can remember being carried before he learned how to walk? Why do we use something to help us carry around a baby? Are you ever being carried by your mother or father somewhere now? Is it when you are tired? Is it in a place like the highway where it is very dangerous?

Shared Reading/During Reading

First Reading/Let's Talk About It

Enjoy text with children at first reading.



Predict from the title, *Look What I see! Where Can I Be? In The Neighborhood*, what the story is going to be about. What does the title tell us? Who are the people in the picture? What are they doing? Where could they be going? How can you tell? How is your family like this one?



Rejoice with the children in the revelation of the baby's location as you turn each page. Don't look ahead. Each page is a guessing game. Get ready to be a detective!



Take time to allow the listeners to name as many pictures as their attention span permits. Allow many reasonable answers to the question "Where was I?" Other points to discuss might be: Have you ever been to the market? To the aquarium? How does this family feel about what they are doing? What does your family like to do together? How will the family get where they are going? How do you know that?

Subsequent Readings/Reading Aloud Together



Invite children to join in the reading of the story as it is read the second time. A second reading enhances comprehension and fluency. The simple text is perfect for choral reading (All children read together). Or echo reading (You read first and the listener "echoes" reads after you).



Read the story aloud a dozen times. Very young children will delight in reading this story over and over. Once they have memorized it, they will be able to guess the family's location before it is revealed on the following page. This enhances their confidence and gives them a thrilling sense that they own the story. Eventually they will be able to recite it without the book and adapt to situations beyond those pictured in the book's photographs. Repetition is wonderful!

Build self-confidence with early readers by pointing out how the pictures give clues about what the text is saying. As children become more familiar with letters and words, give them the opportunity to identify words they know. Begin with nouns, especially the names of large objects, such as "I fell asleep in the _____." Move up to more subtle nouns and then move into verbs and adjectives the child may be able to decipher either by sounding out the letters or by memorizing the text.

Follow-Up/After Reading Activities

Depending on the Age Your Listeners...



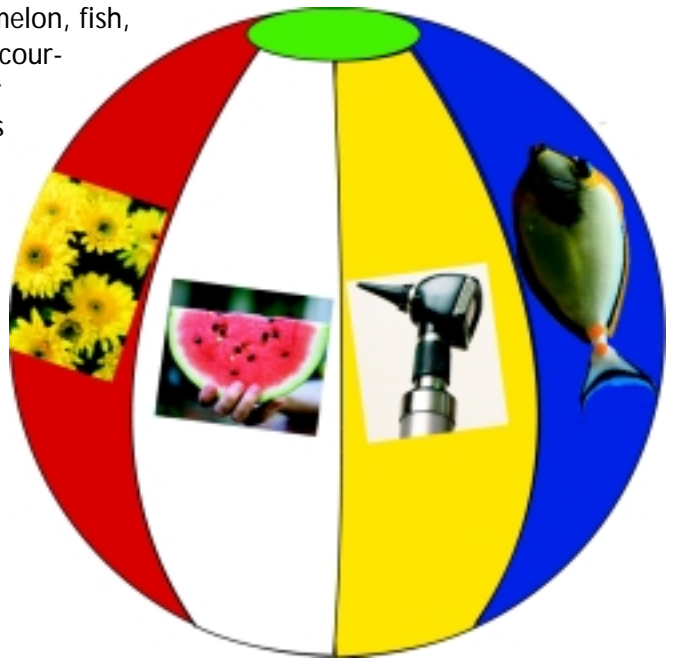
Play *I Spy* using the objects in the book. Then play the game with objects in the room. As you look at each picture, say, "I spy something red, round and big. It is..." Gauge the child's readiness to determine how difficult an object you choose to spy. It is always better to choose an object that is too easy for the child to guess than one that is too difficult.



Provide large sheets of paper and crayons. Ask children to draw some of the simple shapes they see in the book, e.g., the watermelon, fish, gingerbread boy. Since scribbling is a precursor to writing, encourage children to "write" about their pictures. For children under four, it is a good idea to draw the shape with them a few times before asking them to draw it on their own.



Bring in a striped beach ball to class. On each stripe of the beach ball draw a simple picture that gives the listeners a clue to a place the baby visited (or print pictures from Addendum A on p. 9 and glue to ball). Call out a child's name as you carefully toss the ball to him. "Jessica, tell us about the watermelon." As Jessica tosses the ball back to you, she calls out, "At the fruit market!" The teacher catches the ball and then tosses it to another child saying, "Omar, tell us about the fish." "With Mommy at the aquarium!" The rhythmic tossing of the ball and the inclusion of each of the children makes this simple game inclusive and reassuring.



Vocabulary Development



For older children: Collect real objects to match those in the book. Each time an object appears on the page, ask a student to hold up the real object and call out its name. Use sticky notes to cover words in text. This is an inexpensive technique to mark places in the text where objects appear.



For younger children: Encourage children to call out names of objects as you turn each page. Pause to look at each object carefully. Ask children to name properties of each object, such as size, color and shape. Then encourage them to describe each object in a complete sentence.



Recalling Riddles—Use riddles to encourage children to recall details from the text. Such as... *Baby saw me. I am yellow. I was in the park. I have many petals. What am I? I am a flower!*

Visual Memory/Inferences



Once the book is familiar to the listeners, encourage the children to see if they can identify which members of the family are missing in some of the pictures. For example, the mother and brother are absent from the post office photograph. Have children speculate on to where they might be: at school, at soccer or even taking the picture. While younger children might surmise where the missing family members are, older children might write a sentence to explain their guess.

Art/Writing

Make a Wall Story



The family travels from place to place throughout their neighborhood. Paint a mural to show what they think the entire community might look like. Discuss ...where the children think the post office might be in relationship to the park. Allow each child the opportunity to work on an area of the mural. With the children label the mural with the name of each place visited. Older children may be able to write their own sentence to correlate with the place they drew in the mural. Display the final completed mural in a visible space where the children can continue to enjoy the community and read and reread their sentences.

Community Model



Create a model of the children's own community. Draw a simple grid to represent streets in the neighborhood on a large paper and place on top of a rectangular table. Allow children to build their own homes (milk cartons are a good size) and place on the map. Encourage each child to learn his/her address. Add all the special places in your own community. Each child can be responsible for one additional building or place...assign this as a homework project ...get families involved. Finally make puppets of the families and have the families travel through the display visiting the different locations. Older children can write about their walk through the community and who and what they saw.



Community Helpers – As Baby traveled around the community she visited many places and met different people. A person who works at a library is called a librarian. Who else did baby meet? Discuss the names of the people in our community who help us. Label their names and find where they work in the community using the mural or the model.



Create a Class Big Book

The words to this big book can also be a song. It goes to the tune of "Sing A Song"

Families do things together. Families may include two parents and several children, one parent and one child, or grandparents, aunts and uncles, foster parents or guardians. Discuss with the children where they like to go with their family. Using large drawing paper have each child make an illustration of themselves and all the people in their family in a scene that depicts one of their favorite things to do. Create a big book of all the illustrations. Use the computer to generate a simple "two-line" sentence for each child to attach to their illustration that tells about what their family is doing together.

*Read, read, read a book,
Read a book together...*



continued next page...



Make Your Own “Look What I See” Book

Read other books that have a similar format, such as *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do You See?* Create a class/family book following the pattern – add you own twist.

Take a walking field trip around the neighborhood. (Make binoculars from cardboard tubes to take along for closer observation.) Use a camera and take a digital photo of each place you pass on your walk. Print the pictures along with the heading “Where Was I?” and a short caption that describes the place, At the Coffee Shop, At the Video Store, At the Ice Cream Store, At the Fire Station, At the School, etc. If a camera is not available, print the text and have children create their own illustrations. Bind the pages, place it in the library center for students to read. The completed book can be shared with parents by placing it in a protective bag or book bag. Children can “sign out” their class book and take it home overnight. Include a few blank pages at the end for parents to write comments to the class.

Skill Development/Language Skills

The text of the story lends itself to the enhancement of various skills. When taught and practiced within the context of a story, the skill lesson becomes more meaningful to the learner, not just an isolated concept.

Days of the Week



The text naturally progresses through all the days of a week. Use this opportunity to review with the listeners where the days fit in a week. Illustrate using an event frame to show where the baby was visiting on what day of the week. Children could then illustrate and label their own event frame to show things they do each day of the week.

WHERE WAS THE FAMILY?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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REPEAT BOXES WITH HEADLINE: WHERE WERE YOU?



Sentence Structure

A sentence has a capital letter and a period.

Did we read sentences when we read this story?

Listen. How many sentences do you hear?

How can you tell? Stomp your foot (clap your hand) when you hear the end of a sentence.

continued next page...

Skill Development/Language Skills Continued

Number Concept/Math



Calendar/Number Sense

Use the days in the story to introduce the concept of yesterday, tomorrow, and today. On Tuesday, ask the children, "What did Baby do yesterday?" On Wednesday, ask the children, "What will Baby do tomorrow?" Show children how the days of the week relate to these three concepts.



Seven Days in the Week/Tally

Count the days of the week aloud with the children as you go through the pages of the book. As a day of the week is said, mark that day on the chalkboard. Then count up the days with the class. Have the children name each of the seven days so that they can see the seven days marked on the board as they practice the names of the days as a group.



Exploring Seasons

There are four seasons in a year. Were these pictures taken in the summer, spring, winter or fall? How can you tell? What would be different in the pictures if the season were different?



At The Park/Counting/One to One Correspondence

Baby is at the park. Many children are there playing. Count!

How many children do you see playing?

How many grown-ups are in the picture?

How many pets are in the picture?



Number Comparison

Ask the children to count the number of people in their family on their fingers. Then ask them to count the number of people in Baby's family on the book page. Which number is bigger? Which number is smaller? What is the difference?



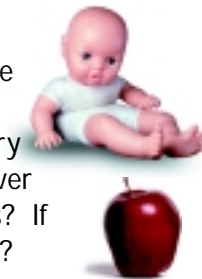
Part to Whole

In each scene, Baby first recognizes a part of an object, then the whole object is revealed. Use objects in the classroom to practice part-to-whole. Cut a hole in a piece of cardboard. Put an object behind the cardboard so a small amount shows through. Can you guess the object? Try using a collar from a jacket, shoelaces from a shoe, a handle for a lunchbox.



Find the Hidden Objects

The doll and an apple are hidden in all the scene pictures. Did the kids notice these hidden objects? Did the grown-ups? Are there details in many books that get missed the first time through? Do the doll and the apple look like they belong in every picture? Do the kids have favorite items (a doll or a blankie) that is seen over and over again in their family photos? Why do you suppose the author chose those two items? If the children were doing a similar story, what two items would they choose to include?



Addendum A. Artwork for After Reading Activity

To be used with After Reading Activity found on page 4. Print the artwork found on this page and the following page, trim, and glue to the beachball.



Addendum A. continued



About the Author/Dia L. Michels

Dia Michels lives with her husband and their three children in a hundred-year-old house in Washington, D.C. Their house was built when Theodore Roosevelt was president. From their living room you can see the United States Capitol where Congress meets. This section of Washington is called Capitol Hill; you can see pictures of her neighborhood in *Look What I See! Where Can I Be? In The Neighborhood*.



Dia has been married to Tony Gualteri for 16 years. He is a scientist at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, but his real love is playing with model trains. Dia and Tony have three children, Akaela (11), Zaydek (8) and Mira (2). Dia thinks that is perfect. She says, "to me, a family really becomes a family when there are more kids than grown-ups." Dia's hobbies include writing children's books, going for long walks and singing songs from Broadway musicals.

Though she is busy as a mother and a publisher, Dia always makes time for writing. She does it all the time—sometimes she pulls the van over to the side of the road to write or has lunch alone in a restaurant to work on a book idea in peace. "I like to connect with people through the words in my books," she says, "but it is even better to connect fact to face. The magic of words, whether written or spoken, - is that they can bring us together. That's what learning how to write is all about—and that's what life is all about."

You can write to Dia at:

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Meet the Photographer

Michael J. N. Bowles, photographer, is a prize-winning portraitist. His work appears in major magazines, including *Forbes* and *People*. A world traveler, he lives in New York City.



Meet the Activity Guide Writer

Sandy Vielhaber teaches first grade in Akron, Ohio, where she has been reading stories to children in kindergarten and first grade for more than 25 years. She and her husband Tom have three children; Sandy loves to paint and has a huge vegetable garden in her backyard.



Meet the Activity Guide Editor

Kathy Leggett has been creating exciting schooldays for little people for 23 years, 16 of them as a first grade teacher in Prince William County, Virginia, public schools. She incorporates ideas that have worked in real classrooms into our Platypus Media activity guides. Kathy earned her teaching degree from Fairmont State University and her masters in gifted and talent education from West Virginia University. The mother of two boys, Kathy was also an active Cub Scout pack and den leader: her boys have now both graduated into Boy Scouts.



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Visit the kids section of our website, PlatypusMedia.com, for more activities and information.

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