

A Guide for Teachers and Parents for



The Florida Division of Emergency Management

www.kidsgetaplan.com
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida
32399-2100
850-413-9969

Dear Educators and Parents,

The mission of the Florida Division of Emergency Management is “*Working together to ensure that Florida is prepared to respond to emergencies, recover from them, and mitigate against their impacts.*” We work with local governments to respond to all types of disasters. Many of these disasters are due to severe weather events such as lightning, tornadoes, and hurricanes, which in Florida, are common occurrences.

While we cannot prevent severe weather, there is much each of us can do to prevent injury to ourselves and damage to our property. Awareness begins with each individual, no matter how young. To that end, the Florida Division of Emergency Management has commissioned IDEAS, www.ideasorlando.com, to create; five storybooks, an interactive website www.KidsGetAPlan.com, mobile apps on Apple, Google Play, and Amazon app stores, as well as museum exhibits that are intended to be utilized by kindergarten through fifth grade students.

The storybook for first graders, The Adventures of Rabbit, Possum, and Squirrel in The 30/30 Rule, teaches young children how they can protect themselves from lightning strikes. Kindergarten through second grade students will enjoy Turn Around Don't Drown as they travel from Florida to Alaska on an adventure and learn the importance of avoiding areas of potential flooding. Professor Tinkermeister and the Wacky, Whiz-Bang, Weather-Watching Wonder allows the second grade reader a chance to learn about and protect themselves from the powerful nature of thunderstorms while traveling on a fantastic journey in a magical machine. In The Oak Tree Club, third graders will learn about how they can create a Disaster Supply Kit for their families to prepare for a hurricane and other emergency situations. The book for fourth and fifth graders, MegaTrack HTW, is a story of a ten-year-old boy whose family evacuates to a Red Cross shelter because a wild fire threatens their neighborhood. Each of these books was created at the appropriate reading level for each grade. The science is presented in a matter-of-fact and non-threatening manner so as not to create undue fears in our children.

Each of the books also comes with an accompanying guide for teachers and parents. Each guide explains some of the science presented in the books and answers questions that children are likely to have while reading the stories. The guides also explain how the books can be used to help our children to become better readers.

We hope you find the books, interactive website, and accompanying guides for teachers and parents helpful. Thank you for your continued support in helping Florida's children protect themselves from the hazards of severe weather.

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Before you read together...

Turn Around. Don't Drown. is a book about flooding safety. Although technically written at a grade one *reading* level, a child of this age will benefit from discussion of some of the *science* concepts and vocabulary before reading the book. The pre-reading suggestions below will help a young reader to comprehend the story better.

Introduce New Concepts and New Vocabulary

Beginning readers benefit by the introduction of new concepts and new vocabulary words before starting to read a book. In order to understand the story, and grasp the meaning of the science concepts introduced in it, it is important that the readers know and understand the following words and concepts that will be found in this book.

- ice dam (or ice jam): An ice dam occurs when water builds up behind a blockage of ice. Ice dams form either when a glacier blocks a river and forms a lake or when ice chunks in a river are blocked by something and build up to form a dam, often called an ice jam. River ice jams can cause flooding upstream during the jam (which is what happened in this story), flooding downstream when the jam releases, and damage from the ice itself on structures and ships in or near the river.
- snowshoe hare: These hares have large furry feet that allow them to walk more easily on the snow, thus the name “snowshoe.” They are sometimes called a snowshoe rabbit. In the story, Snowshoe Hare is the name of one of the characters. She lives in Alaska and is the cousin of Rabbit who was introduced in the book about lightning safety, The Adventures of Rabbit, Possum, and Squirrel in the 30/30 Rule.
- blizzard: A heavy snow storm with very high winds that makes it difficult to see. This may be a difficult concept for Florida students to understand. You can help them to relate by comparing it to how hard it is to see out the window during a very strong thunderstorm.
- routed: Planned a way to get from one place to another. In the story, Rabbit *routed* his way from Florida to Alaska.
- brown coat: Snowshoe hares have a snow-white winter coat that turns brown when the snow melts each spring. This helps them to hide. In the story, we first see Snowshoe in January wearing her white coat. By the time Rabbit visits her in May, her coat has patches of brown fur. As the summer progresses, her coat will turn almost completely brown.
- veggie juice: Rabbits and hares are both herbivores, eating only trees, shrubs, grasses, and other plants.

- **Moose:** The Algonquin Indian word "mons" or "moz" (depending on the dialect)—has been adopted into the English language as "moose." It means “twig eater.” In the story, Moose is the character who gets himself into trouble because he does not heed the warning to stay away from the river.
- **browsing:** Moose, like deer, lack a set of upper teeth in the front; they strip off leaves and bark with their thick tongue and lips. This is called “browsing.”
- **Muskox:** The muskox is a large Arctic mammal related to goats and sheep. It is known for its thick coat and for the strong odor emitted by males. A muskox can live up to twenty or more years in the wild. In the story, Muskox is the character who has a great deal of wisdom, no doubt acquired from his long experience in the wilds of Alaska.
- **exquisite:** Extremely beautiful.
- **bluff:** A high steep bank or cliff.

Introduce the Characters

As you look at the book cover with the children, point out the four characters Rabbit, Snowshoe, Moose, and Muskox. Most children in Florida will relate to Rabbit as we have many like him that roam wild in our state, but they may never have seen a white rabbit, except for perhaps as a domestic pet. Moose is typical of moose found in the wild. He is a loner and, fortunately for him in this story, a strong swimmer. Muskox may be the most foreign animal to Florida students. Although similar looking to an ox or a “buffalo” (more properly called a “bison”), the muskox is actually in the same family as goats and sheep.

Ask your students if they have ever seen animals like these before. Ask them what they know about these kinds of animals. Spend a few moments listening to any stories that they may have in their own experiences. Doing so will help them “get into” the book much more easily.

As you read together...

As you read with the children, pause every so often to ask probing questions about the story. (If you are using the interactive online books, you can click on the question mark at the top of each screen and the narrator will ask the questions for you!) Before reading a page, take a look at the picture. Ask the students about the things they see in each picture. Talk about what they see. Point out how they can get cues from the pictures to help them read. Help them to begin to think about the story *before* they start to actually read the words on each page. If you model this kind of questioning with your students, you will help them build mental models of the story and increase their reading comprehension. Because children are great mimics, eventually, they will begin to create their own questions as they read on their own. There is no “exact right way” to do it. Use the suggestions below as a guide.

PAGES 1 and 2

Why does it look sunny and warm outside Rabbit’s window and dark and snowy outside Snowshoe’s window? [This one is tricky, since in reality, there are only four hours difference in time zones between Florida and Alaska, so the time of day is not that much different! The answer is more related to *the time of year* and the fact that Alaska is so far north. (Almost half of Alaska lies north of the Arctic Circle.) In parts of Alaska in January, it is dark almost around the clock. In Florida, while we do experience less daytime hours in January, most students of this age will not have noticed much of a difference. This is a great opportunity to talk about how the tilt of the earth on its axis creates the seasons.]

PAGES 3 and 4

Why doesn’t Rabbit want to go visit Snowshoe now?

PAGES 5 and 6

What are the differences in the two scenes of Snowshoe’s house? How are the two scenes similar?

PAGES 7 and 8

How do you think Rabbit is feeling?

PAGES 9 and 10

Why was Rabbit so surprised when he saw Snowshoe?

PAGE 11 and 12

What is Moose doing?

PAGES 13 and 14

Why is Rabbit holding his nose?

PAGE 15 and 16

Where is the strong smell coming from?

PAGE 17 and 18

What does the weather look like in the picture?

PAGES 19 and 20

Why do you think Rabbit looked strange to Muskox?

PAGE 21 and 22

Why does Moose want to go to the river?

PAGE 23 and 24

Why do you think Muskox tells Moose it's a bad idea to go down to the river?

PAGES 25 and 26

Why is the river dangerous right now?

PAGE 27 and 28

Rabbit looks really scared. Why doesn't Snowshoe look scared?

PAGE 29 and 30

What do you think will happen next?

PAGES 31 and 32

What happened to Moose?

PAGES 33 and 34

How did Moose save himself?

PAGES 35 and 36

What did Moose learn?

After you read together...

After reading the story, talk about it with your students. Suggested questions to discuss are:

- Where do you think this story took place? How can you tell?
- In what season did the story happen? How do you know?
- Among the four characters, who seemed to be the wisest one? Who seemed to be the most adventurous? Why do you think that?
- What lesson did Moose learn?
- Why didn't the other characters jump in the river and try to save Moose?
- How does the rule "Turn around. Don't drown." apply to you?
- When have you come across waters that could have been dangerous? What did you do?
- What lesson did you learn from the story?