Books Always Everywhere
The 2015 CLEL Bell Award Book for READ

by Jane Blatt, illustrated by Sarah Massini
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Random House Books for Young Readers, 2014

Follow along with a diverse cast of babies and toddlers as they fill their days with playing, sharing, and reading. Books Always Everywhere encourages families to see that books and reading can be a joyful part of their daily activities.

Activity Ideas for Books Always Everywhere:

• Read other books about reading! Try Lola at the Library by Anna McQuinn, Don’t Turn the Page, by Rachelle Burk, or Yoko Finds Her Way, by Rosemary Wells, or Again! by Emily Gravett. Ask the children to notice when they see a character reading, or holding a book. Talk about the different things that we read in addition to books: signs, labels, or email, for example. Seeing that there are many reasons to read helps motivate children to become readers themselves.

• Go back through the illustrations of Books Always Everywhere and take a closer look at the books the characters in the story are reading. There are pictures on the book covers and words on the pages. Describe these and ask the children what they think those books would be about. Which one would they like to read and why? Asking open-ended questions that don’t have a “yes” or “no” answer gives children the opportunity to develop their own ideas and discover the words to express them.

• Have the children help you make a list of all the different things the babies are doing in the illustrations of Books Always Everywhere. Write down their ideas on a big piece of paper, then read the list out loud. Writing lists together is one way to help children make the connection between the words we say and the marks on the page.

• Next time you read this story, try singing it! Books with short text can easily be sung or chanted, either to a familiar song, like “Twinkle Twinkle,” or to a tune of your own creation. Singing a story will capture children’s interest and give them a different way to hear the language and sounds. Written language is built on oral language skills, so the more ways children hear words, sounds, and sentences, the better!

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit http://www.clel.org and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.

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