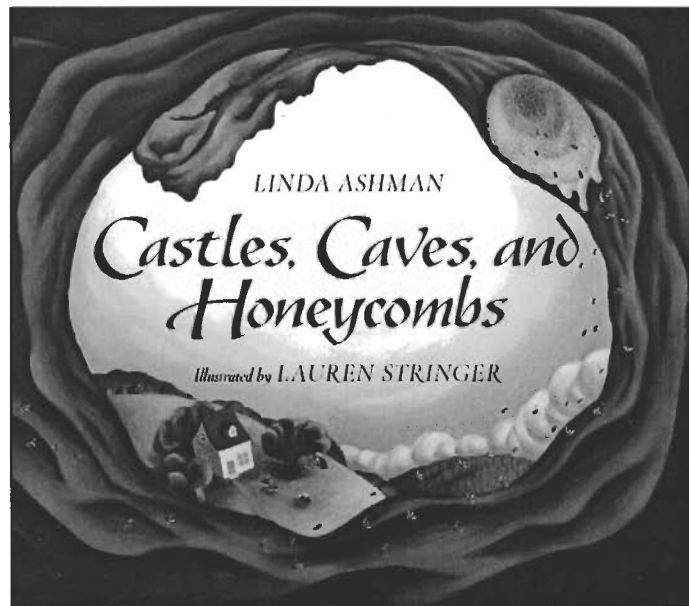


An Activity Guide to Accompany...



Castles, Caves, and Honeycombs

LINDA ASHMAN

Illustrated by LAUREN STRINGER

ISBN 0-15-202211-2 • Ages 2 to 5

These activities are suitable for children in preschool through second grade, and for groups of two or more (including one adult and one or more children). They are intended for use in libraries, classrooms, bookstores, and by homeschoolers.

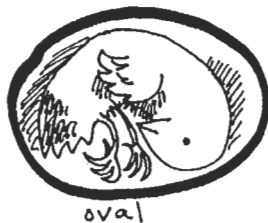
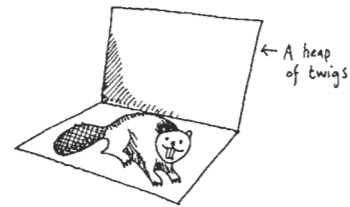
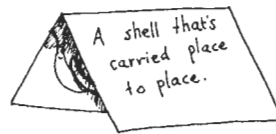
Some are short-term projects, which can be completed in an hour or an afternoon; others are suitable for extended study.

Animal Riddles

MAKE A GAME OF ANIMAL RIDDLES!

The author of *Castles, Caves, and Honeycombs* never names the animals in her story—she only describes their homes. For example: “A heap of twigs” . . . “A silky web” . . . “A shell that’s carried place to place.”

Write your own descriptions of animal homes and create simple riddle cards. Fold a piece of paper in half. On the outside write the riddle. Then on the inside draw a picture of the animal that lives there. Try to stump a friend. Have fun guessing each other’s riddles!



Different Kinds of Homes, Different Kinds of Shapes

CIRCLES, OVALS, SWIRLS, CURLS, AND A SQUARE!

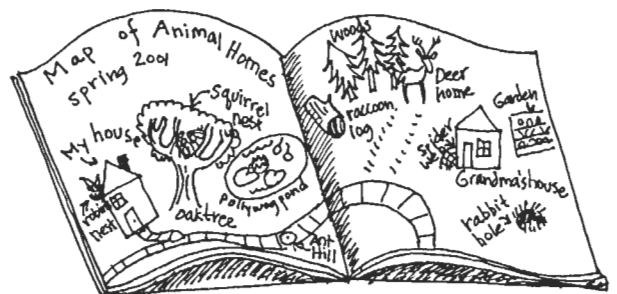
Humans usually build their homes as squares and rectangles, but animal homes come in many shapes. The illustrator of *Castles, Caves, and Honeycombs* uses curves and rounded edges in her paintings of the different homes described in the book. There is hardly a straight line in her artwork.

On a piece of paper, draw different geometric shapes (circle, oval, rectangle, square, triangle, etc.) Label the shapes, and then think of animal homes or people homes that might fit into each shape. Look around the room. What other shapes do you see? Can you fit an animal’s home into each shape? Have fun trying to fit a square house into a circle!

Animal Homes Journal

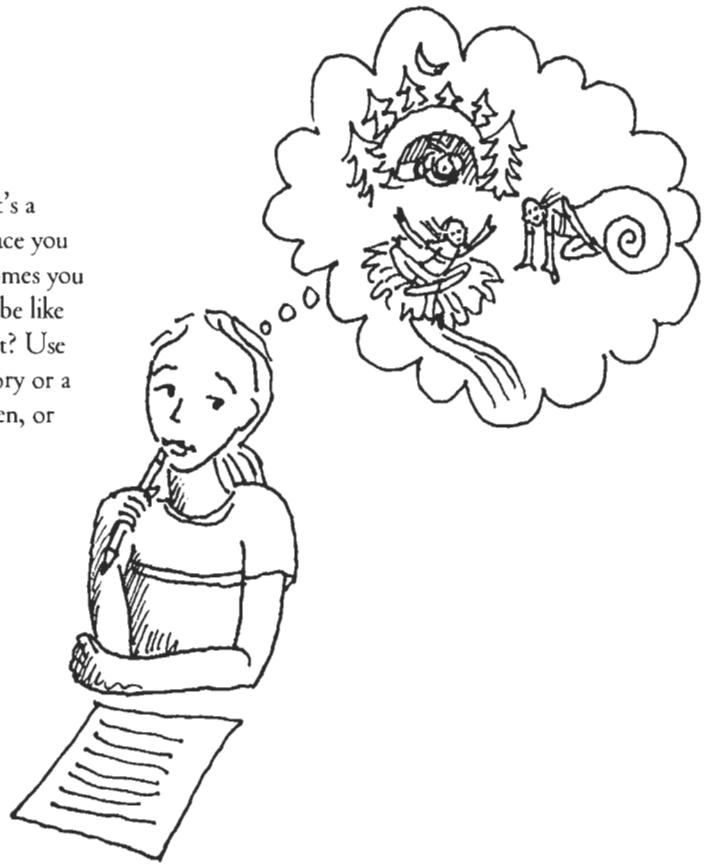
On the title page of the book, two children are playing in a box with two animal friends nearby. Turn the page and see the children discovering animal homes around their own home.

Do you have animal neighbors? What kind of homes do they live in? Are there animal homes near your school? Make a journal and use it to record your findings. Create a map that shows where you found each of the homes. Be sure to date each entry in your journal. Many animals move their homes after a season or two. Compare your findings season to season, year to year.



Favorite Places

Where is your favorite place to live? Maybe it's a place you have really lived or maybe it's a place you dream of living in. Are there any animal homes you would like to try living in? What would it be like to live in a cave? Or to build yourself a nest? Use your imagination and try writing a short story or a poem about living in a shell, a tide pool, a den, or another animal home.



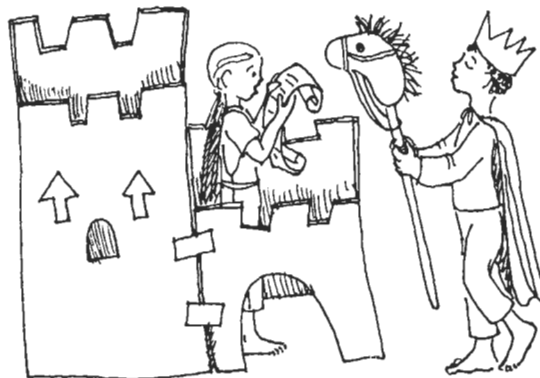
Build Your Own Homes

Have fun using a large cardboard box from an appliance*, as a "castle," like the kids in the book do. Break into groups and choose different animals to research. Learn about the kind of home each animal lives in and what materials the home is made of. Work together to build a life-size version of the animal home, so everyone can try it on for size.

**A local appliance store may be able to supply you with boxes.*



A cave to hibernate in...



Building Animal-Home Poems

BUILD A POEM AND BUILD YOUR VOCABULARY
AT THE SAME TIME!



rough rocks



slender sticks



gritty sand



icy snow



smooth shells

Read *Castles, Caves, and Honeycombs* aloud to introduce rhyme and rhythm in poetry. How is a poem written? How is an animal home built?

Collect and/or discuss building materials that animals might use for their homes. Create a vocabulary list while exploring these materials. Add nouns that name the objects (sticks, snow, rocks, webs, sand, shells, etc.) and adjectives to describe them (rough, icy, smooth, sticky, gritty, etc.). Consider all five senses as you think about adjectives.

Nouns and adjectives are the building blocks of a poem. Use your word list as the foundation for your own animal poem. Choose an animal. Imagine becoming that animal. Discuss what it might feel like to live on a sticky web or in a home made of snow or sticks.

When your poem is finished, mount it on a larger sheet of paper; decorate the border with the building materials you found—sand, straw, shells, even cotton balls (to represent snow).

With adult guidance, young children can collaborate to write a group poem.

Homes for Everyone

A place to play,

A place to rest.

A place to share.

A place to hug.

A home is someplace safe and snug.

What does a home mean to you? Think about what your home feels like and how it is special to you. What would your life be like without your home?

Not everyone has a home that is "safe and snug." Many families live in shelters or apartments that are too small, because there is not enough affordable housing in the city or town where they live. Habitat for Humanity is an international organization that knows how special it is to have your own home in which to play, share, and rest. With the help of volunteers, Habitat for Humanity teaches people to build and finance their own homes. Visit Habitat for Humanity on the Web at www.habitat.org. Contact your local chapter of Habitat for Humanity and learn what that organization is doing to build homes in your community. Visit one of the homes being built and maybe even volunteer for an afternoon on the site!



Home Sweet Home



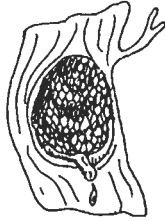
Home Sweet Home

A MATCHING GAME

Fill in the blank with the correct number to match each animal to its home.



A) aerie



B) honeycomb



C) web



D) cave



E) shell



F) sand dune



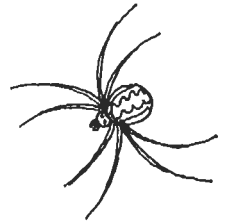
G) den



H) cocoon



1) bat



2) spider



3) caterpillar



4) eagle



5) bees



6) wolves



7) snail



8) crab

A ___

B ___

C ___

D ___

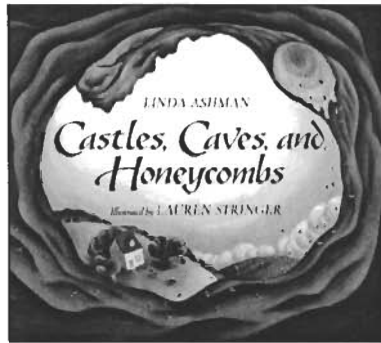
E ___

F ___

G ___

H ___

Answers: A-4, B-5, C-2, D-1, E-7, F-8, G-6, H-3



Castles, Caves, and Honeycombs

Linda Ashman

Illustrated by Lauren Stringer

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About the Author

"*Castles, Caves, and Honeycombs* grew out of my 'nesting' period following the birth of my son, Jackson. We had recently moved into a new house, so I was thinking a lot about what makes a home warm and cozy.

In addition, I had been doing research for another book about how animals carry their young (*Babies on the Go*, illustrated by Jane Dyer, coming from Harcourt in spring 2003) and had become fascinated with how animals create their homes and care for their young."

Linda Ashman lives in Los Angeles with her husband, Jack Hicks, their son, Jackson, and their two dogs. She is the author of *Maxwell's Magic Mix-Up* and *Sailing off to Sleep*.

About the Illustrator

Lauren Stringer lives in a huge old Victorian house in Minneapolis. This is no ordinary house. Colors and sounds fill every room. Of course it has the necessary bedrooms, kitchen, living room, and bathrooms, but it also contains two enormous studios—one for Lauren and one for her artist-composer husband—where book illustrations, sculptures, paintings, and music are made. The basement is filled with the saws, sanders, and other tools Ms. Stringer uses to build her wooden sculptures. Her two children manage to turn the other rooms into a theater for plays and dances, an art studio, and sometimes even a vet's office, an aquarium, or a cave for spelunking.

Lauren Stringer's Harcourt books include *Mud* and *Red Rubber Boot Day*, both written by Mary Lyn Ray, and *Scarecrow*, written by Cynthia Rylant. She has received numerous grants and prizes for her children's books, paintings, and sculptures. She often visits schools and libraries to share her art and experiences with students of all ages.

 **Harcourt**

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