



Perfect Pairs: Using Fiction & Nonfiction Picture Books to Teach Life Science, K-2

By Melissa Stewart, Nancy Chesley



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Hands-on lessons can be fun and compelling, but when it comes to life science, they aren't always possible, practical, effective, or safe. Children can't follow a lion as it stalks a gazelle, visit the exotic kapok tree in a rainforest, or swim alongside the underwater life in a pond. But they can explore a whole world of animals, plants, and ecosystems through the pages of beautifully illustrated, science-themed picture books.

Perfect Pairs, which marries fiction and nonfiction picture books focused on life science, helps educators think about and teach life science in a whole new way. Each of the twenty-two lessons in this book is built around a pair of books that introduces a critical life science concept and guides students through an inquiry-based investigative process to explore that idea from animal/environment interactions to the role of structure in plant and animal survival, from inheritance of traits to variation of species.

Each lesson starts with a 'Wonder Statement' and comprises three stages. Engaging Students features a hands-on activity that captures student interest, uncovers current thinking, and generates vocabulary. The heart of the investigative process, 'Exploring with Students,' spotlights the paired books as the teacher reads aloud and helps students find and organize information into data tables. 'Encouraging Students to Draw Conclusions' shows students how to review and analyze the information they have collected. Bringing high-quality science-themed picture books into the classroom engages a broad range of students, addresses the Performance Expectations outlined in the Next Generation Science Standards, and supports the goals of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts.

Even if you are science shy, *Perfect Pairs* can help you become a more confident teacher whose classroom buzzes with curious students eager to explore their natural world.



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- Sales Rank: #384361 in Books
- Published on: 2014-08-12
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.00" h x .88" w x 8.00" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 360 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

'I have seen what may be the MOST useful and beautiful professional use title in all my livelong days. There are sample questions and worksheets and pretty much anything a K-2 teacher would need. It is also lovely on the old eyeballs and clearly well researched. I love it. You need it. No one has heard of it. Go get it.' -- School Library Journal blog

'*Perfect Pairs* provides teachers with meaningful ways to use literature and inquiry to engage students in life science concepts' --The Nonfiction Detectives blog

About the Author

Dr. Melissa Stewart is founder and Executive Director of the Organization of Patient Educators. Using her patient-centered Medagogy approach the conceptual framework discussed in *Practical Patient Literacy* she has effectively taught health care professionals how to improve their education and communication techniques.

Dr. Stewart is on the faculty at Our Lady of Lake College, and also serves as Director of Education at eQHealth Solutions, the Medicare Quality Organization for Louisiana. She received her Doctorate of Nursing Practice from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, and completed her Masters in Education at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She is a Registered Nurse and Certified Patient Educator.

In 2010, Dr. Stewart authored a resolution making health literacy a major initiative for the American Nurses Association. Dr. Stewart's patient literacy work and her UPP tool were used in a Center of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) pilot program administered by eQHealth. That project resulted in special recognition from the CMS for its leadership role in Care Transitions.

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Alberta Smith:

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