

# THE PARENT-CHILD BOOK CLUB

## CONNECTING WITH YOUR KIDS THROUGH READING

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO ORGANIZING AND  
CONDUCTING YOUR FAMILY BOOK CLUB

MELISSA STOLLER & MARCY WINKLER



HorizonLine Publishing LLC  
New York, NY

question books. We also try to buy stickers that relate to the specific books we are reading.

- Plastic bags
- Four-color set of food coloring
- Beads and beading string
- Stamping materials — stamps and ink pads

### Quick Tips for Easy-to-Assemble Adaptable Art Projects

If you have these materials on hand, you can do an easy-to-assemble project that could connect to most any book your book club reads:

- Undecorated picture frames** — decorate the frame in the book theme using collage materials
- Sticky clear contact paper** — make a book club book mark — decorate a book mark shaped piece of poster board or paper using the themes and/or characters from the book, and then laminate the book mark using the clear contact paper. For an additional decoration, punch a hole at the top and tie a colorful ribbon.

Another easy project with clear contact paper is to make a theme-related place mat. Decorate a sheet of construction paper and cover it on both sides with clear contact paper for a permanent mealtime reminder of the book.

- Plain white T-shirts or fabric bags and fabric markers** (the exception to our rule about washable materials) — any book club could decorate a shirt or bag using the themes of the book.

- ☐ Collages made with scrap materials glued to poster board or cardboard — they are useful in a multitude of book club themes.
- ☐ Old shoe boxes to be used for book scenes and animal habitats — add clay, collage materials, small figures, paint, and anything else that would be related to the theme of the book.
- ☐ Toilet Paper Rolls — turn them into binoculars by taping them together next to each other with masking tape, decorating them, using a hole-puncher to make a hole on each side, and stringing with string or ribbon. Use them to set out on an adventure for an adventure book, or to watch birds or other animals in a nature book. Similarly, you can use a paper towel roll to create a telescope to use in a book about stars.
- ☐ Felt, cotton, and sewing materials — children can cut out two identical pieces of felt relating to any book theme, sew them together, and stuff with cotton. Use fabric markers to embellish.
- ☐ Puppets — using old socks or paper bags with assorted collage materials, create puppets of people or animals that could relate to any book.
- ☐ Snow globes — use clean baby food jars, hardening clay stuck to the jar lid, and small figurines, that relate to the book, placed into the clay. Add water and sparkly sprinkles for the snow globe effect.
- ☐ Toothpicks and large and small marshmallows — create geometric figures that would suit any book club theme.
- ☐ Coffee filters — wrap them around a marshmallow or small ball and tie with yarn. Draw the face of any character from your book club book.

- ☐ **Rocks** — paint small rocks such as ocean or river rocks (acrylic paint works well). Glue several rocks together to create a person or animal. Painted rocks can be any book character or scene.
- ☐ **Magnet strips** — Draw and color a book-based decoration on paper or poster board. Glue onto a magnetic strip to create a personalized magnet.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips are extremely enriching activities because they take the group out of the familiar and introduce an unusual element to the book discussion. We might include a field trip every few months, depending on the ages of the participants and how busy everyone is at the moment. Field trips take a little more scheduling and research, so only plan them when you have enough time to devote to the details (such as checking the hours of the site, any restaurant information, the price of admission, and other details of interest).

Because we live in New York City, we have tried to take advantage of all the local cultural attractions that might be related to our books. While working our way through the *Magic Tree House* series we often tried to tie in a field trip. For example, when reading a *Magic Tree House* book about ancient Egypt, we sketched in the Egyptian galleries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. We also visited the Metropolitan Museum when reading a *Magic Tree House* book about George Washington, and we studied and sketched the famous *Washington Crossing the Delaware* painting by Emanuel Leutze. That day, we also played a game with a dollar bill because it has a picture of Washington, and we