



# Moonsnail Song

## TEACHER'S NOTES

by Sheryl McFarlane illustrated by Sheena Lott

April is a dreamer and her moonsnail shell helps her dream about the sandy beaches of her summer as she moves through a school day. Lyrical language and soft watercolour paintings evoke the peace and soft rhythms of the seashore.

Although *Moonsnail Song* is not a science text, it manages to communicate a fair amount of information about inter-tidal life. Perfect for launching a unit on the seashore, this book could be read aloud to a primary or intermediate class.

### CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

*Language Arts*—listening, vocabulary development, appreciation of style, descriptive language, discussing, choral reading

*Science*—seashore habitat, inter-tidal life, tides, labeling, identification, research

*Art*—illustrating, painting

*Drama*—dramatization of the story

*Healthy Living*—favourite places, holidays, stress release

### SPELLING/VOCABULARY LIST

#### *Living Things*

moonsnail	otter
kelp	crabs
gulls	hermit crabs
sculpin	sea urchins
barnacles	anemones
sea stars	raven
scoter	sand dollars
jellyfish	oysters
eelgrass	shrimp
snails	nudibranchs
plover	bats
insects	arbutus trees

#### *Non-Living Things*

tidal flats	waves
driftwood	rocks
shore	tidepool
whorls	salt water
eggcase	shell
tides	spirals
surf	

#### *Other*

treasure	harmony
scuttling	tangles
rhythm	solitary
phosphorescent	frothy
jutting	pounding
elude	twilight
bleached	delicate
stranded	strands
nimble	rhythmic

# BEFORE YOU READ

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## *Listening*

Ask students to close their eyes and listen while you read *Moonsnail Song* for the first time. Discuss the images that the text brings to mind. Distribute paper and tell students that you would like them to create an illustration for the book. Read the text aloud again, but don't show the illustrations until the students have completed their own artwork.

## *Discussion*

Conduct a class discussion to allow your students to talk about their favourite places. Why is this a favorite place? What is the significance of this place? What makes it special? How do you feel when you are at your favorite place? How does your body feel when you are there? What kinds of things do you notice about the way your body is?

## *Using Your Senses*

Find a moonsnail shell (a student may have one at home). Before reading, pass the moonsnail shell around and ask students to use all their senses to describe the shell. List these words and compare them to the words used by the author.

## *Museum Collection*

Have students bring in objects relevant to the theme—Life on the Sea Shore—to put in a designated area for a museum collection. Objects can include shells, photos, paintings, or anything that relates to the seashore.

## *Word Search*

Words appear vertically, horizontally and diagonally. The word "sea" appears 4 times.

# AS YOU READ

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## *Classification*

Read the story aloud. As you read or when you're finished, list all the items related to the sea mentioned in the book. (See Spelling/Vocabulary List.) Classify the items on the list in various ways (e.g. living/non-living; plants/animals; land/water; mobile/ stationary). The worksheet provided can then be done individually or in small groups.

## *Writing Style*

Discuss the author's use of repetitive language in order to create rhythm and to maintain the continuity of the story. (e.g. *In and out. Out and in.*)

## *Identification of Sea Life*

As you read, have students identify the various animals in the pictures of the story and have students repeat names aloud to learn correct pronunciation, e.g. "anemone" can be difficult. Note similarities and differences within the species, e.g. sea stars – colour, number of legs, texture.

## *Drama*

During a second reading have students show, through movement, how the various animals move, e.g. barnacles' feather plume reaches out and pulls in food, sculpins dart about, jellyfish undulate, eelgrass waves in the tides.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Moonsnail Song Word Search

*moonsnail otter kelp crabs gulls sculpin*  
*anemone raven oyster bats shrimp eelgrass*  
*barnacles arbutus plover scoter urchin shell*  
*tide shore sea rocks sand salt*

The word "sea" appears \_\_\_\_\_ times.

G	U	L	L	S	D	R	A	V	E	N	E
B	A	T	S	S	A	N	E	M	O	N	E
A	S	C	O	T	E	R	S	E	A	S	L
R	P	L	O	V	E	R	A	T	E	C	G
N	U	R	C	H	I	N	N	A	R	U	R
A	R	B	U	T	U	S	D	E	O	L	A
C	M	O	O	N	S	N	A	I	L	P	S
L	S	S	T	Y	R	O	C	K	S	I	S
E	H	H	T	T	S	A	L	T	W	N	I
S	O	E	E	I	E	T	C	R	A	B	S
E	R	L	R	D	A	R	E	I	S	E	A
K	E	L	P	E	L	S	H	R	I	M	P

# AFTER YOU READ

## LANGUAGE ARTS

### *Literary Style*

Read a short description of seashore life written in textbook style, and then reread *Moonsnail Song* to your students. Discuss the differences in style and why the two pieces of writing are so different.

### *Choral Reading*

Have students practise reading *Moonsnail Song* aloud in groups of four to six. Suggest ideas such as two students chanting the repetitive phrases on particular pages; using wind sounds where appropriate. Plan a time when students can perform for an audience.

### *Descriptive Writing*

After or during the class discussion about style, draw students' attention to the techniques used to set the dreamy mood, e.g. alliterative language, use of adjectives, repetition. Ask students to write about their favourite place or a place that is memorable because it was scary, exciting, spooky, etc. Encourage students to use vocabulary and style to help communicate how they feel about the place. Students can use the margins on the page to create a pictorial border.

### *Animal Research*

Students choose one animal to research from the list created in the classification activity. Have students use the master provided to record as much information as possible. Reports could be collated into a class book or displayed on a mural or bulletin board.

## SCIENCE

### *Identification and Labelling*

Gather resources containing photographs of tidal life for reference. Ask students to draw and colour a tidal pool, complete with creatures that might be found there. Ask them to label their drawings.

## ART

### *Murals*

Make a mural. Create a background of sea plants and rocks, add sea life by cutting and tearing colourful paper; use different textures, shiny paper, fabric and even half sculptures to stand out on the paper.

### *Watercolours*

Introduce students to the basics of watercolour and have them do five to ten quick watercolour sketches of inter-tidal life. Quick sketches usually have better results and are more satisfying in the watercolour medium.

## HEALTHY LIVING

### *Discussion*

Discuss how April is keeping herself healthy by going to her favorite place. Look at the expression on her face. *How does she feel? Why is it important to have a place like this to go? When do we go to a place like that? What if we need to go, but for some reason cannot get there? What can we do instead?* Talk to students about stress, stress release, visualizing their favorite place and making note of how they feel when they are in that favorite place.



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Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## *Animal Research*

*Name of Animal* \_\_\_\_\_

*Write one fact in each box. Use these notes to write a report about the animal you are studying. Write one paragraph for each heading.*

<i>Appearance</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Habitat</i>	<i>Enemies</i>	<i>Babies</i>

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## *TIDAL POOL*

*Make a picture of a tidal pool. Draw and label plants and animals you might see in a tidal pool. Colour your picture.*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## CLASSIFICATION

List all the seashore things that are mentioned in the story.  
Classify them in four different ways.

LIVING	NON-LIVING

PLANTS	ANIMALS

LAND	WATER

MOBILE	STATIONARY