

# ***Building Our House***

**AUTHOR:** Jonathan Bean

**ILLUSTRATOR:** Jonathan Bean

**PUBLISHER:** Farrar Straus Giroux

**COPYRIGHT:** 2014

**ART MEDIUM:** Water color and ink

**GENRE:** Non-fiction, Biography

**LIFE SKILLS:** Personal Best, Patience, Resourcefulness, Common Sense, Initiative, Perseverance, Responsibility, Caring, Effort, Pride, Cooperation, Organization, Problem Solving

## **SYNOPSIS:**

Based on his own childhood experiences, the author tells the story, from his sister's viewpoint, of his family building a new home with the help of family and friends.

## **BOOKTALK:**

What kinds of things do you like to make? Can you paint? Do you like to build things? The book *Building Our House* is a story about a family who builds their own house. Think about how many things you would have to know in order to build a house. Imagine watching it get bigger and bigger starting with the basement and going up!

**AUTHOR:** Jonathan Bean website: [www.jonathanbean.com](http://www.jonathanbean.com)

Jonathan Bean was raised in Pennsylvania and now lives in New York. He enjoys the outdoors, because he was raised in the country.

**Other books written by the author:** *At Night*

**ILLUSTRATOR:** Jonathan Bean

**Other books illustrated by the illustrator:**

*At Night*

*Big Snow*

*Bad Bye, Good Bye*

## **CHALLENGING WORDS**

pasture

quarry

foundation

backhoe

insulate

wallboard

rig

cautiously  
chisel  
quarry

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Have you ever built anything with your family? What tools did you use? Describe the experience.
2. Do you have chores around the house? Why do you think it is important for families to pitch in and help around the house?
3. Knowing that this is based on a true story, how does that make you feel about the book?
4. Do you think this would be a fun way of growing up? Why or why not?
5. What steps did the family take to build a house?
6. Where would you like to build a house?
7. What kinds of rooms would you like in your house?
8. Why would someone want to build a house with his/her own hands?
9. What do you think it would be like to live in a camper for over a year? Would you miss your bedroom, or a room you could play in during the winter?
10. What are some of the things mentioned that will make for a strong, solid home?
11. What is the order of building a house? What was the first step that was completed? What came next? What did they complete after the frame-raising?

### **ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDS:**

#### **Language Arts:**

- Before reading the story, have the students look at the title and list steps in one column about how to build a house. After reading the book, write down the steps mentioned in the text and compare.

**2.RL.2.4** Make predictions about the content of text using prior knowledge of text features, explaining whether they were confirmed or not confirmed and why.

## Mathematics:

- Look for shapes in a house (triangle-roof, rectangle-main house, rectangles - windows, circle-doorknob, etc.)

**K.G.3:** Model shapes in the world by composing shapes from objects (e.g., sticks and clay balls) and drawing shapes.

- Students will draw a blueprint of their house similar to the blueprint in the story. They will measure the sides and label each room.

**3.M.2:** Choose and use appropriate units and tools to estimate and measure length, weight, and temperature. Estimate and measure length to a quarter-inch, weight in pounds, and temperature in degrees Celsius and Fahrenheit.

- Students will find the area and the perimeter of a house drawn by the teacher.

**3.M.5:** Find the area of a rectangle with whole-number side lengths by modeling with unit squares, and show that the area is the same as would be found by multiplying the side lengths. Identify and draw rectangles with the same perimeter and different areas or with the same area and different perimeters.

## Science:

- After reading the story, go back through the pages, looking specifically at the weather. Then create a chart that shows the season in which each step was completed.

**K.2.3** Describe in words and pictures the changes in weather from month to month and season to season.

## **Social Studies:**

- Discuss with students the steps it takes to build a house. Review the process as you show each step, looking specifically at each picture in the book to name what they are doing and what tools they are using. Use the handout Steps to Build a House to have students put the steps in order. Discuss a carpenter's job and what tools they use, and how most people hire a carpenter/builder to build a home.

**K.1.3** Identify and order events that take place in a sequence.

**K.4.2** Identify and describe different kinds of jobs that people do and the tools and equipment used in these jobs.

**1.1.2, 2.1.2** Compare past and present similarities and differences in community with the way they live in the present.

## **RELATED INTERNET SITES:**

Jonathan Bean (author/illustrator) <http://www.jonathanbean.com/>  
<http://us.macmillan.com/author/jonathanbean>

Ten steps in building a house <http://stepbystephousebuilding.blogspot.com/>

Activity Sheet : Steps to Building a House