

Swirl by Swirl: Spirals in Nature

ILLUSTRATOR: Beth Krommes

PUBLISHER: Houghton Mifflin Books for Children

COPYRIGHT DATE: 2011

ART MEDIUM: list type/s: Scratchboard

GENRE: Nonfiction; Poetry

LIFE SKILLS: Curiosity; Organization; Resourcefulness

SYNOPSIS: This book explores spirals that occur in nature – from snails, to monkeys, to galaxies!

BOOKTALK: What do a snail and a monkey have in common? They use spirals to their advantage! Check out a book that explores spirals that naturally occur in nature!

AUTHOR: Joyce Sidman

Joyce was first drawn to writing in elementary school. In high school she became a writer of poetry. She has published eleven children's books so far. One of them, *Dark Emperor and other Poems of the Night*, received the Newbery Honor distinction. She teaches poetry writing to school children.

Other books written by the author:

Butterfly Eyes

Dark Emperor and other Poems of the Night

Meow Ruff

This is Just to Say

Ubiquitous

ILLUSTRATOR: Beth Krommes

Beth has been a full-time illustrator since 1989. One of her big interests is wood engraving which she has used for some of her illustrations. Because it is less time-consuming, she has begun to prefer scratchboard. Her first children's book, *Grandmother Winter*, was published in 1999. Her book, *The House in the Night*, won the Caldecott Medal in 2009.

Other books illustrated by the illustrator:

Butterfly Eyes

The Hidden Folk

The House in the Night

The Lamp, the Ice and the Boat Called Fish

The Sun in Me

CHALLENGING WORDS: coiled, defend, grasping, clever

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1 Why is the spiral such a useful shape in nature?
- 2 What other things in nature do you know that are spirals?
- 3 What man-made items can you visualize having spirals as an integral part of their form?
- 4 What are the smallest spirals you noticed in this book? The largest?

ACTIVITIES with CORE STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

Create an acrostic poem using the word “spiral.” Use the online creation tool as: <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/acrostic-poems-30045.html>. Have the students read poem aloud.

3. RF.4 Read on-level prose and poetry with accuracy, appropriate rate and expression on successive readings.

RL.3.5 Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

Science:

Gather items from nature including some mentioned in the book. Ask students to describe the objects in terms of the materials they see.

SCI.1.1 Describe objects in terms of the materials that compose them and in terms of their physical properties.

Art:

Examine the illustrations in the book and identify shapes.

VA.K.5 2008 - VISUAL LITERACY: Criticism and Aesthetics: Reflect on and discuss the nature of art, aesthetic experience, and aesthetic issues concerning the meaning and significance of art. Students demonstrate curiosity and insight concerning works of art and distinguish between human-made art objects and those from nature.

RELATED INTERNET SITES:

Joyce Sidman: www.joycesidman.com

Beth Krommes: www.bethrommes.com

ReadWriteThink: www.readwritethink.org

