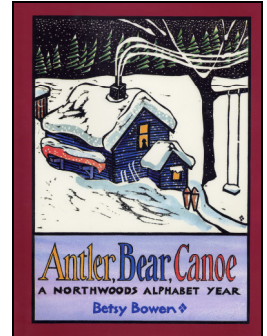




**Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide**



Title: *Antler, Bear, Canoe: A Northwoods Alphabet Year*

Author/Illustrator: Betsy Bowen

Publisher and Copyright Date: Little, Brown and Company, 1991

Connection to Minnesota: Minnesota author/illustrator, Minnesota setting

Summary: This is a nonfiction alphabet book set in the Northwoods of Minnesota. The book starts in the winter time with “Antler” and journeys into spring when “Junk” shows up under the melted snow and continues into summer when the “Outboard” motor is used to fish. The alphabet continues through fall with the “Trees” changing color and ends back in winter when it is below “Zero” outside.

Suggested ages: 4-6, 7-10

Tips for Reading:

- Discuss activities in the area in which the children live compared to the activities about life in the Northwoods
- Point out the illustrations – ask the children what they think of these types of pictures.

Questions before reading:

- Have any of you ever been to the Northwoods of Minnesota? If so, when and what do you remember?
- Can you name the four seasons? What things happen in your house when the season changes?
- How do you know when it’s spring, summer, fall, or winter?
- Have you ever seen a moose, a beaver, or the Northern Lights?
- Have you ever gone fishing, been in a canoe or a fishing boat?

To Introduce this story say: We’re going to look at an alphabet book that is set in the Northwoods of Minnesota. It also provides lots of information about the seasons, winter, spring, summer and fall and what people in the north woods do during these seasons.

Questions After Reading:

- What did you learn about the Northwoods? Did you know that people still live like this? Would you like to live there?
- How are the activities in the Northwoods different from the activities where you live?
- What do you think of the illustrations? Do you think that the pictures do a good job of showing the seasons?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Art:

- Draw a picture of your favorite activity in your favorite season
- Collect leaves, especially in the fall, and use them to make prints.
- Pick a letter from a hat and do a drawing for that letter. The group could make its own alphabet book.

Language:

- Have each child pick a letter and develop a story about the object depicted by each letter.

Suggestions for English Language Learners:

- Show pictures of the four seasons for children who are originally from countries that do not experience the four seasons.
- Review the alphabet.

Related Books:

- ***Gathering: A Northwoods Counting Book*** by Betsy Bowen (Little, Brown & Company, 1995)
- ***M is for Minnesota*** by Dori Hillestad Butler, illustrated by Janice Lee Porter (University of Minnesota Press, 1998)
- ***Swing Around the Sun*** by Barbara Esbensen, illustrated by Cheng-Khee Chee, Janice Lee Porter, Mary GrandPré & Stephen Gammell (Carolrhoda Books, 2003)
- ***V is for Viking: A Minnesota Alphabet*** by Kathy-jo Wargin, illustrated by Karen Latham and Rebecca Latham (Sleeping Bear Press, 2003)



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