



Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide

Title: *Nature's Yucky! Gross Stuff That Helps Nature*

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Illustrator: Constance R. Bergum

**Publisher and
Copyright Date:** Mountain Press Publishing, 2003

**Connection to
Minnesota:** Minnesota authors

Summary: This is a factual account about some unusual behaviors by different animals and the reasons for their actions.

Suggested ages: 4-6, 7-10

Tips for Reading:

- Be prepared for lots of comments from the children as you read this book, and think about how many comments you might want to respond to without taking so much time that you might not be able to finish reading the book in an appropriate amount of time.
- Ask the children to say the phrase “Eeewww!! That’s Yucky” with you. This phrase repeats throughout the book, and encourage the children to say the phrase in a loud and gross manner.
- There are other phrases that repeat throughout the book, such as “Did you know…” and “But hey, it’s okay. Just imagine if it weren’t that way!” – practice how you’d like to say these phrases as the consistency can help the children follow the story.
- After reading the paragraph announcing the yucky behavior, don’t continue reading right away. First, try to guess *why* the behavior could be useful.

**Questions
before reading:**

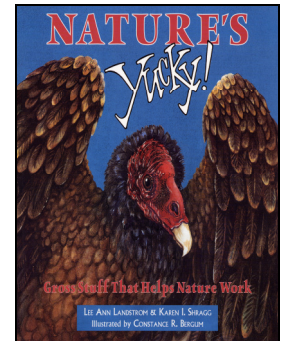
- Do you like talking about or reading about gross things?
- Have you ever seen animals do anything that you thought was gross or yucky? If so, describe what you’ve seen and if you can think of a reason for the animal’s actions.
- What could be yucky about each animal, particularly a rabbit, a robin, a sea star?

**To Introduce
this story say:**

This is a true story about some animals and the gross things they sometimes do and the reasons why they do them. Let’s read the yucky story about how nature works.

**Questions
After Reading:**

- What was the most gross or yucky part of the book? Why?
- Did the reasons for the gross things in the book make sense to you?
- What is this book trying to tell you?
- Can you think of other gross things in nature, and the reasons why those things occur?



RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Art:**
- Pick your favorite yucky part of the book, and draw the scene.
- Culture:**
- Are these behaviors yucky to all cultures across the world? Why or why not?
- Dramatization:**
- Act out the refrain (“Eeewww!!... But hey, it’s ok...”) without words.
 - How many yucky faces can you make?
- Language:**
- After reading aloud, look for examples of alliteration. Look for all the rhyming words.
 - Create an adjective alliteration of your favorite animal.
- Math:**
- Calculate: of the 16 animals, which percent are mammals?, birds? Make a bar chart of these percents.
 - In the “More About” section, make charts of the weights, sizes, or ages of the various animals.
- Music:**
- Make up a song based on the Twelve Days of Christmas, e. g. nine babies pooping, eight orcas ripping, seven sea stars slurping...
- Science:**
- Read and discuss the “More about Nature’s Yucky! Animals” section near the end of the book.
 - Read the information on “scat cookies” at the end of the book, and make them by following the recipe at the end of the book.
- Writing:**
- Write a one page report on a “gross” or “yucky” thing you have observed in nature.
- Suggestions for English Language Learners:**
- Choose one unfamiliar word. Look in the dictionary to see the source of the word.
 - What are the words, formal and slang, for poop and pee in your native language?
- Related Books:**
- ***Gross Me Out!: 50 Nasty Projects to Disgust Your Friends & Repulse Your Family*** by Joe Rhatigan & Rain Newcomb (a.k.a. Ralph Retcher & Mary Lou Poo), illustrated by Clay Meyer (Lark Books, 2004)
 - ***Gross Universe: Your Guide to All Disgusting Things Under the Sun*** by Jeff Szpirglas, illustrated by Michael Cho (Maple Tree Press, 2004)
 - ***Looking at Nature*** by Brigitte Baumbusch (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1999)
 - ***Animal Grossology: the Science of Creatures Gross and Disgusting*** by Sylvia Branzei, illustrated by Jack Keely (Addison Wesley, 1996)
 - ***Grossology: The Science of Really Gross Things!*** by Sylvia Branzei, illustrated by Jack Keely (Addison Wesley, 1995)
 - ***Animals Nobody Loves*** by Seymour Simon (SeaStar, 2002)

