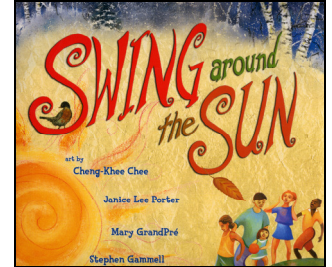




**Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide**

Title: *Swing Around the Sun*
Author: Barbara Juster Esbensen
Illustrators: Cheng-Khee Chee, Janice Lee Porter, Mary GrandPré, Stephen Gammell
Publisher and Copyright Date: Carolrhoda Books (text, 1965, illustrations 2003)



Connection to Minnesota: Minnesota author, four Minnesota illustrators, Minnesota publisher

Summary: This is a collection of poetry that was originally published in 1965. This newly published version celebrates the seasons with five poems for each of the four seasons. The illustrations are by four accomplished Minnesota illustrators.

Suggested ages: 4-6, 7-10, all ages

Tips for Reading:

- After reading a poem allow a minute of silence for it to sink in.
- Read each poem at least two times.
- Read the whole book of poems or read the poems that match the season you are in.
- Share a poem or two a day at the appropriate time of year.

Questions before reading:

- When you think of winter, which color comes to mind? How about for spring, summer, and fall?
- What are the sounds we might hear during each season?
- What smells make us think of winter? spring? summer? fall?
- What activities do we do in winter? spring? summer? fall?
- Right now it is (fall/winter/spring/summer). How do you feel?

To Introduce this story say: We're going to look at a book of poems (a poem/a few poems) that connects us to a season. Think about the words that we just brainstormed as we listen to these poems.

Questions After Reading:

- Did we find any of the sounds, smells, colors, or activities that we thought of before we read the poems?
- Does the writer, Ms. Esbensen, describe something in a different way than we have heard before?
- How does each illustrator make use of color, different art techniques, close-ups or panoramic views?
- Does the illustrator show us the words of the poem or give us a feeling similar to the poem?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Art:**
- Paint the feelings of a season by using the colors we associate with that season – think of the sounds and smells of that season while you are painting.
- Music:**
- Create a symphony of the seasons with instruments you have on hand. What instruments would you use to communicate the sound of grass growing? “the tip-tap-tup of icicles”? “thumping in the hall?” “wind runs howling/rain slants cold”? “one golden flowing yellow note”?
- Language:**
- Ms. Esbensen uses metaphor and simile in unexpected ways: “umbrellas bloom along our street,” “who shook the night and made the feathers fly?” Pick an object you can see and use a word to describe it that you normally wouldn’t use. Does a pencil sing? Does a shoelace jump ‘n’ jive? Does a sandwich sparkle?
- Writing:**
- (For younger children) Write a poem to go with the painting you made earlier. Remember – poems don’t have to rhyme, but they can!
 - (For older children) As a group, make four lists: seasonal adjectives, seasonal adverbs, seasonal nouns, and seasonal verbs. Pick one word at random from each column and write a poem using those four words. Try using other words from the list, but don’t try to make them fit exactly.
- Suggestions for English Language Learners:**
- Talk about the seasons in Minnesota and how they are different or similar to the seasons in the place from children’s home countries. For some children the idea of four seasons is very new. If they have recently arrived in the US you may spend more time on pictures to show how different the seasons look.
 - Talk about the descriptive words we use in English for the seasons (e.g., glare ice, black ice, thunderboomer, tornado, cyclone) Make a list of these new words. Illustrate the words. Place words under season categories to show how many happen in all seasons and some only are found in specific seasons.
- Related Books:**
- ***Antler, Bear, Canoe: A Northwoods Alphabet Year*** by Betsy Bowen (Little, Brown and Company, 1991)
 - ***Seasons of the Circle: A Native American Year*** by Joseph Bruchac, illustrated by Robert F. Goetzl (Bridgewater Books, 2002)
 - ***Circle of Seasons*** by Myra Cohn Livingston, illustrated by Leonard Everett Fisher (Holiday House, 1982)
 - ***Ring of Earth: A Child’s Book of Seasons*** by Jane Yolen, illustrated by John Wallner (Harcourt, 1986)
 - ***Seasons: A Book of Poems*** by Charlotte Zolotow, illustrated by Erik Blegvad (HarperCollins, 2002)
 - ***It’s Fall!*** and ***It’s Winter!*** and ***It’s Spring!*** and ***It’s Summer!*** – all 4 books by Linda Glaser, illustrated by Susan Swan (Millbrook Press, 2001)

