

# An Educator's Guide for *How to Bake a Book*

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A Common Core State Standards–Aligned Educator's Guide for  
**Kindergarten and Grade 1**



*Note: The activities in this guide align with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for Kindergarten and Grade 1, but standards for other grades may also apply.*

Prepared by We Love Children's Books

## About the Book

Discover the secret ingredients to crafting a truly delicious story, as one imaginative little girl creates the recipe for the perfect book. A pinch of good, a dash of bad, some big words, and carefully cut out characters all provide the ingredients for a truly delicious read!

## About the Author

Born in rural Norfolk, **Ella Burfoot** has been drawing and writing since she was a small child. She comes up with most of her ideas for stories when out walking in the countryside. Her inspirations include artists and storytellers like Edward Lear, Eric Carle, and David McKee. She has written and illustrated several picture books, including *Betty and the Yeti* and *Darkness Slipped In*, which was highly commended at the British book design and production awards in 2008 and nominated for the Kate Greenaway Medal in 2009.



## Praise for the Book

**“As the trend of picture books praising the codex continues, few will match the light tone, originality, and quirkiness of this one.”**

—Kirkus



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**“A fun concept that could inspire children to write and spark a lively discussion of what makes a good story.”**

—*School Library Journal*

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### Pre-Reading Questions and Activities

As a class, look at the cover of *How to Bake a Book*. What do students think is going to happen in this book? What kind of story do they think it will be—a storybook, informational, or both?

Have students ever followed a recipe to make something in the kitchen? What is a recipe? What are ingredients? What do students think it means to “bake a book”?

### Vocabulary Words

There are some words in this book that students may not know. After you have read the book, go over the following list of words. Using context and the accompanying illustrations in the story, define the words as a class. Are there any additional unfamiliar words students would add to this list? Identify real-life connections between the words and their use. Discuss other words that could be used which mean the same thing.

whisk  
weigh  
elephant  
crocodile  
buttercup  
characters  
watery  
mixture  
quicken  
thicken  
moment  
cupboard  
delicious

L K.4, K.5, 1.4, 1.5



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### Baking Your Own Book: A Recipe for Good Storytelling

In order to “bake” anything, you first need to collect your ingredients. The following exercises provide steps to guide students in creating a class pantry that contains all the ingredients for a good story. At the end, students will assemble these ingredients and be ready to bake their own book. As the class works on these exercises, list the ingredients on a “Master Recipe” displayed in the classroom. Students can refer to this list to help them identify what goes into a good story.

#### Ingredient #1: The Characters

The first ingredient on our list is characters. Characters are important to a story. While she is “baking” her book, our heroine creates many different characters. As a class, review the illustrations in the book and identify the characters she creates. Which characters are the heroes? Which are the villains? Ask students to share a favorite character from another book they’ve read. Then, working independently with adult help if necessary, have students create two characters they’d like to read about in a story and make a drawing of each one. Collect their drawings and use them to start your “pantry” of storytelling ingredients.

RL K.1, K.3, K.7, K.9, 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 1.9, SL K.1, K.2, K.5, 1.1, 1.2, 1.5

#### Ingredient #2: The Setting

The next ingredient is the setting. The setting is where the story takes place. Stories can be set anywhere—a cozy cottage, a high-rise apartment building, even a magical kingdom. Discuss the settings for books the class has read this year. What are their favorite settings? What is the setting for *How to Bake a Book*? What does the book’s text and illustrations tell students about this setting? Now ask students to come up with a setting of their own for a story. Have them draw a picture and label it, working with an adult as necessary. Collect the students’ settings to go into the pantry of ingredients.

RL K.1, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, SL K.1, K.2, K.5, 1.1, 1.2, 1.5

#### Ingredient #3: The Plot

Another essential ingredient of a story is the plot. The plot refers to the series of events in a story. How does the story begin? What adventures do the characters have? How does the story end? Break students into pairs and have them retell *How to Bake a Book* to each other. Working together, have them create a summary of the story. What was each group’s favorite part of the story? To get our next ingredient, have each student select and illustrate an action that they would like to have appear in a story. Students will pick from these words to get the plot ingredient for their final stories. Working with an adult, have them label their drawings with the proper form of the verb needed for the final exercise and add them to the pantry.

RL K.1, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, SL K.1, K.2, K.5, 1.1, 1.2, 1.5



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### Ingredient #4: Good Words

And to make the whole book delicious, you need the right words. The words a writer chooses are very important. Good descriptive words show the readers how the characters feel. Strong action words can get readers excited about what is happening. The words in the book are as important as the pictures.

In *How to Bake a Book*, the little girl plans to “add a watery word or two” to her story and then lists some of her favorites. Review this list of words with students and, as a class, distinguish shades of meaning among these verbs.

splish  
splosh  
splash  
drip  
sprinkle  
glug  
gurgle  
squelch  
twinkle

Choose a different category than “watery”—like “fast” or “smelly.” See how many words the class can come up with that fit the category. Identify real-life connections between the words and their use. This word list will not become part of the pantry of ingredients, but the exercise will. Have each student repeat this exercise independently when “baking” their book to create a rich and vivid story.

RL K.4, 1.4, L K.4, K.5, 1.4, 1.5

### Ingredient #5: Punctuation, Capitalization, and You

Punctuation is important—capital letters, periods, question marks—all in the right places and all used properly so readers can understand the story. Go through the book as a class. Identify the capitalized words on the pages and discuss the rules for capitalization. Point out the punctuation used to end each sentence and discuss what each one means. Remind students that they will need to follow these rules when they write their own stories.

RL K.1, 1.1, RF K.1, 1.1, L K.2, 1.2



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### Putting It All Together: Baking Your Book

The preceding exercises have introduced students to the ingredients that go into a good story. It is now time for students to draw on these lessons to “bake a book” of their own. Have each student pick the ingredients of their story from the pantry:

1. Two characters
2. One setting
3. One “action” word to be the plot element

Working with an adult as necessary, have students arrange their ingredients to make the first sentence of their story then add descriptive words and phrases to make their story come alive. When they are done, have them dictate or copy that sentence onto a piece of paper using proper punctuation and capitalization. Now have students dictate or write at least two entirely new, original sentences to complete the tale. Have students illustrate their stories, and display them in class along with the pantry ingredients they selected. You may wish to do this exercise once as a class to familiarize students with the process.

W K.3, 1.3, SL K.5, 1.5

### What Kind of Cake Would You Bake?

At the end of *How to Bake a Book*, the heroine's story has transformed into a marvelous and well-decorated cake. Now that students have practiced writing a story with elements from the pantry, they should be ready to make one of their own from scratch. Have students imagine a story of their own, including ingredients from the class recipe like characters, settings, actions, and good words. If they were to bake it, what would it look like? Using a variety of materials (paint, crayons, collage, photos, etc.), have each student create a “book cake” for their story. When the designs are finished, scan them on the computer and create a slide show of the entire class's illustrations. As you show each picture, have students explain what their “book cake” is about and what each element means.

W K.3, K.6, 1.3, 1.6, SL K.5, 1.5



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### Additional Exercises

#### Prepare for Prepositions

As a class, discuss prepositions in general, and how they are used. It is easy for these small but important words to pass by unnoticed. Help students focus on them by assigning each student a preposition that appears in *How to Bake a Book*. As you reread the book aloud, have students raise their hands when their preposition is read and keep count of how many times their preposition is used. Tally the results. Which one was used most often? Next choose a sentence from the book and read it out loud, having a volunteer say the preposition aloud. Now choose other students at random and read the sentence, having each student replace the real preposition with their assigned preposition. Does it change the meaning of the sentence?

RL K.1, 1.1, SL K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2, L K.1, 1.1

#### Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How

Composing questions about a book is a great way to learn more about it and to demonstrate comprehension. Break the class into small groups and have them practice making up questions about the book using the “Five W’s and One H”: who, what, where, when, why, and how. After their brainstorming session, have each group select their five favorite questions about the story (one for each question word) and, with the help of an adult, write them down on separate index cards. Questions can be about the story or about the illustrations. Collect the questions and remove any duplicates. Break students into teams and hold a “Five W’s and One H” Quiz Contest. Which team answered the most questions correctly? What were students’ favorite questions?

RL K.1, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, SL K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2

#### Did You See That?

The illustrations in *How to Bake a Book* are full of details that tell the reader about the book that our heroine is “baking.” Break students into pairs or small groups and assign each a page or pages in the book. Have the students identify the details in their assigned illustrations. What is the setting of the story? What characters are featured on this page? How do the illustrations show what is happening in the story? What part of the story does it tell? How does it work with the words to tell the story? When this activity is completed, have the groups share favorite elements of their assigned pages with the rest of the class.

RL K.1, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, SL K.1, K.6, 1.1, 1.6

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Visit the **Common Core State Standards** website to read about the individual standards listed here:  
[www.corestandards.org/the-standards](http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards)