

Things That Help Me

by Jane Buxton

photographs by Dean Zillwood



Book Summary

This book takes a look at the simple technology that children use every day at school. Each common tool is named, and the sound it makes is emphasized by the creative use of typography

Features of the Book

- The elements of rhythm and rhyme.
- The blends – “sn,” “ch,” and “cl.”
- The high-frequency word “My.”
- The repetitive element in the text.
- Strong photographs provide visual clues to meaning.
- The use of creative typography as a support.
- Clear, bold text, consistently placed.

Purpose

Things That Help Me can be used in a guided reading setting to introduce the following skills and strategies:

- 📖 predicting the story line using illustrations from the book;
- 📖 identifying onset and rime within words;
- 📖 recognizing the relationship between letters and their sounds;
- 📖 writing labels for a specific purpose.

Introducing the text

Gather examples of the items used in the story. You could display each item as it is mentioned and discuss them as a group when you have finished sharing the book.

Discuss the photograph on the front cover.

- *What do you think this girl is making?*
- *Where do you think she might be doing this?*

Read the title and discuss this with the group.

- *What kinds of things do you think she might be using?*

Read the names of the author and photographer to the group.

Reading the text

- 📖 Predicting the story line using illustrations from the book.
- 📖 Identifying onset and rime within words.
- 📖 Recognizing the relationship between letters and their sounds.

Title page

- *What will she use these for?*

Pages 2 to 7 – Each spread begins with a simple statement, for example, “My scissors.” As you come to each new page, make a game of finding the word “my” as quickly as possible.

Look closely at each full-page photograph accompanying the text.

- *What things can you recognize?*
- *What do we do with these things?*
- *What do you think the girl is making?*

Page 8 – The finished product is revealed, along with the simple tools that the child has used to make it.

Children now read the book independently.

Revisiting the text

Each item makes a sound that begins with a blend – “sn,” “ch,” and “cl.” Find the words that begin with these blends. Listen to the sound at the end of these three words – “ip” or “ick.” Find the words that have these endings.

- *Why is the word printed in that shape?*

Ask the children what they think the girl’s book might be about.

Following Up

- 📖 Writing labels for a specific purpose.
- ✏️ Ask the children to draw and label tools they have used to make simple constructions.
- ✏️ Write a list of simple tools the children have seen or used at home.
- 📖 Complete the blackline master opposite.