

# INTRODUCING A UNIT ON MAMMALS with THE BEARS ON HEMLOCK MOUNTAIN by Alice Dalgliesh by Nancy Polette

**The Bears on Hemlock Mountain:** About the Book

Jonathan lived in a stone farmhouse at the foot of Hemlock Mountain. Grown-ups did not think there were bears on the mountain but Jonathan did. Besides, Uncle James said he had once seen a bear.

When Jonathan's mother sent him over the mountain to borrow a large cooking pot from his aunt, the boy is late in returning and a search party goes out looking for him. What they find is a surprise for everyone.

### ABOUT BLACK BEARS

Answer these questions about black bears. Guess if you do not know.

- A. Black bears weigh \_\_\_ pounds when born. B. A newborn black bear is \_\_\_ inches long.  
C. Black bears live about \_\_\_ years. D. The largest known black bear weighed \_\_\_ lbs.

### INTRODUCING VOCABULARY

Put these words on separate small cards. Students are to use as many of the words as they can to make two or three sentences about bears. Other words can be added.

Jonathan	munched	bears	hungry	Hemlock Mountain
farmhouse	footprints	tracks	puzzle	creatures
cousins	arched	company	breath	cottontail
raccoon	politeness	relatives	brave	nonsense

### JOURNAL WRITING

*Before* reading each chapter, or group of chapters, choose one of the open-ended sentence starters to complete. Then write two more sentences about it. Be ready to read what you have written to a small group of your classmates.

Chapter One:

1. Wild animals get food in winter by...
2. A really good supper would be...

Chapter Two:

3. Having lots of relatives would be...
4. Animals you might see in a walk through the woods...
5. Having 20 people for dinner

**WRITE A FOOD SONG** Here is a verse about food Jonathan's mother cooked:

She cooked:

Brown	chicken	sizzling	in the skillet
Yellow	corn	steaming	in the pot
Apple	pie	baking	in the oven

Eat, all you people, eat!

(Sing the song to the tune of "Skip To My Lou")

**Write another verse using *your* favorite foods:**

I like:

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Eat, all you people, eat!

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT**

James taught Jonathan to look closely when he went into the woods. They saw a cottontail rabbit, a song sparrow and a raccoon.

Choose an animal that lives in the woods. Find facts about the animal. List six facts and number them 1-6. One fact must be a "give away" fact. Ask a classmate to give you a number between one and six. Read the fact for that number. If the student passes, call on another classmate to give you a different number. The game continues until the mystery animal is guessed, or all clues are read. EXAMPLE:

1. I am sometimes called a clown.
2. I can climb trees.
3. I have black fur.
4. I have four legs.
5. My name rhymes with pear.
6. I sleep in the wintertime.

**A SPECIAL BOOK TO READ! AND TO WRITE!**

*In the Woods: Who's Been There?* by Lindsay Barrett George. Greenwillow Books, 1995.

Two children take a walk through the woods and see clues that tell them what animal has been there before them.

They see shells of nuts.

Who's been there?

Answer: A squirrel.

Draw a picture of something an animal might have left in the woods.

Ask your reader: *Who's been there?*

On the next page of your book, draw a picture of the animal.

**WRITING PATTERNS**

Jonathan would see different things on the mountain at different times of the year. For example, he might see a tadpole in a mountain stream in the spring. By summer the tadpole would be a frog.

What other living things change from one form to another? Can you add two more to this list?

1. A tadpole becomes a frog.
2. An acorn becomes a tree.
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one of the items you added and write a poem about it, using the pattern below.

**PATTERN:**

Look at the frog that grew from a tadpole	Look at the _____ that grew from a _____
Slowly, slowly from a tadpole	Slowly, slowly from a _____
In the pond it grew and grew	In the _____ it grew and grew
Look at the frog, it's brand new!	Look at the _____ it's brand new

**PREDICT**

Jonathan heads down the mountain when he sees two dark shapes. He hides under the cooking pot as the shapes come closer.

Write what you think the shapes are and what will happen next.

Jonathan hid under the cooking pot. As the two shapes came closer and closer he peeked out and saw \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ (did what?) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and Jonathan (did what?) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. The (tell what happened) \_\_\_\_\_

**WRITING ABOUT SPRING**

Jonathan continues his journey and sings a song about no bears on Hemlock Mountain. He hears a drip, drip of melting snow. If there were bears, is this a sign of spring? Are they waking up? Write a chant about spring. Follow the pattern for the winter chant.

<b>WINTER THINGS</b>
Cold winds
Warm fires
Icicles
Fur coats
Warm mittens
Ear muffs
These are just a few
Snow boots
Sleeping bears
Bare trees
White snow
Road cleaners
Dark mornings
Fast sleds, too
From near and far
Here they are
<b>WINTER THINGS!</b>

<b>SPRING THINGS</b>
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
These are just a few
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____, too
From near and far
Here they are
<b>SPRING THINGS!</b>

**ABOUT BLACK BEARS**

Black bears are sometimes called the clowns of the woods because they like to play, standing on their heads, dancing and falling over and over. Some black bears have brown fur instead of black. They are the smallest of all North American bears. They can climb trees and run fast. They spend much of the winter sleeping in caves or hollow trees. They eat fruits, berries, acorns, leaves and roots of plants. A newborn black bear weighs one half pound and is about seven inches long. The largest black bear known weighed 900 pounds.

Black bears live about twenty-five years.