

Snow

Written by Cynthia Rylant
Illustrated by Lauren Stringer
Published by Harcourt, Inc. 2008
ISBN 978-0-15-205303-1



Activity Guide

Soft snow.
Heavy snow.
Light snow.
Fat snow.

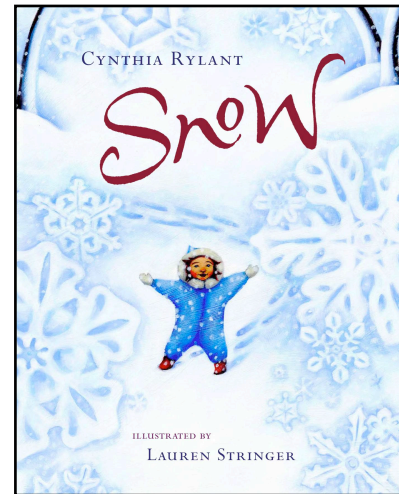
Which one do you
love best?

About the author:

Cynthia Rylant fell in love with the snow when she was a child in rural Appalachia. She is the author of more than a hundred books for young people, including the *Mr. Putter & Tabby* beginning reader series, and the novel *Missing May*, which received the Newbery Medal. She lives in Lake Oswego, Oregon.

About the illustrator:

Lauren Stringer's paintings for *Snow* were inspired by the memories of three generations of her family growing up in snowy Minnesota. She has illustrated many acclaimed picture books, including *Scarecrow* by Cynthia Rylant, *Mud* by Mary Lyn Ray, and her own *Winter is the Warmest Season*. She lives in Minneapolis.



Questions You Might Ask

Pre-reading:

- ◆ List everything that you think about when you think about SNOW!

Post-reading:

- ◆ Which type of snow brings you peace? Do you like the surprise of snow best?
- ◆ Why do you think the author calls the snow when you are somewhere you'd rather not be "fat, cheerful flakes?"
- ◆ How can snow take you home?
- ◆ Why is everyone happy when it snows? Are you?
- ◆ What do you notice in a light snow? What can you notice (or imagine you'd notice) from your own window in the snow?

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Questions continued

- ◆ When do cars get buried up to their noses?
- ◆ Do you like heavy snow or light snow best? Why?
- ◆ Why do you think children like snow better than anyone else? Do you love snow?
- ◆ What does the snow remind us of?
- ◆ Why is it good to take a walk in the snow? What do you like to do best after you come inside?
- ◆ Why is it “the snows turn?” Whose turn will be next?
- ◆ Which illustration is your favorite? Why? Why do you think Lauren Stringer chose the colors she did?

Projects:

Language Arts:

Write a poem about another type of weather inspired by Cynthia Rylant’s words.

-or-

Find all the examples of personification in the poem, (when an author lets something act or look like a person). Example: Snow waiting for you.

Snow Days!

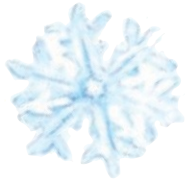
A snow day is a surprise holiday from school. In *Snow* the students look hopefully out the school window at the falling snow, perhaps imagining what they will do if a snow day is declared! Write a story about what you would do if you were let out of school early for a snow day. Draw a picture of your favorite thing to do when you are not in school.

Art:

Flip through the book again and notice how the artist played with the perspectives in each picture. Some are from the top down, others are bottom up or from the outside in or the inside looking out. Some pictures are a zoom into something specific while a few are zoomed out, (like a camera does) to make a wide portrait. Create at least three drawings for your weather poem and change the perspective in each one. Then, choose one piece to add color and complete.

Memories

In *Snow* the author writes: “*And the snow/ while it is here/ reminds us of this:/ that nothing lasts forever/except memories.*” When the illustrator painted the illustrations for *Snow* she included certain objects and photographs from her childhood and even her mother’s childhood, that were filled with memories. Photographs and certain objects, like favorite toys from when we were



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little bring back memories even as we grow and change. Draw or paint a picture of your favorite toy from when you were little. Write a story about the memories that came back to you as you made your drawing.

Seasons

Every season brings different kinds of weather. Winter often brings snow. Summer often brings sunshine. Make a list of the seasons, then list the different kinds of weather each season offers. Draw a picture of your house in your favorite season, then try drawing it again in another season. Compare how the seasons change the way the world looks around us.

Hot and Cold!

When the illustrator painted *Snow* she used a cool palette: cool blues and cool lavenders. The illustrator also wrote and illustrated a book called *Winter is the Warmest Season*, (Harcourt, 2006). When she painted this winter book, she used a hot palette: hot reds, warm oranges and yellows. Compare these two very different views of winter. Discuss how winter can be both hot and cold. Try drawing a picture of winter with a cold palette, then try drawing a winter picture with a hot palette.

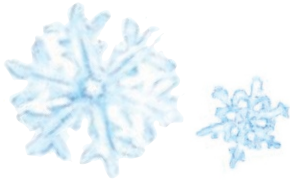
Math:

Figure out these snowy word problems:

If school will be cancelled when there are six inches of snow on the ground and it is snowing about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch an hour, how many hours will it have to snow for you to stay home tomorrow?

Mom says she will take you to the sledding hill if you get at least a foot of snow. It is coming down fast at two inches every half hour. How long until you get to go sledding?

Walking in the snow takes twice as long as usual. You want to get to your friend's house for a snowball fight by 2:00 and it usually takes you a half an hour to get there. When should you leave to not miss a single snowball?



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Music:

Sing to the tune of “London Bridge”

*The snow outside is coming down
like a soft, white gown
throughout the town.
The snow outside is falling down
Let's go sledding!*

Sing other verses with these last lines:

*Let's build snowmen!
Let's make angels!
Catch a snowflake!
Let's build a snowman!*

Make your own snowflake!

Most snowflakes have six sides or branches. Some have twelve, but you will never find an eight-sided snowflake. Using a square sheet of paper try folding this pattern at the right and cutting out a six-sided snowflake.

Since no two snowflakes are exactly alike, try seeing how many different designs you can make!

