



Teaching Guide to the Books of

MICHAEL HALL

INCLUDES:

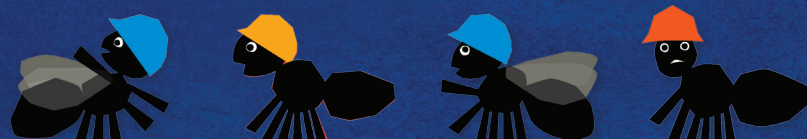
My Heart Is Like a Zoo

Perfect Square

Cat Tale

It's an Orange Aardvark!

 GREENWILLOW BOOKS
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Aligns with Common Core State Standards for Grades PreK-3

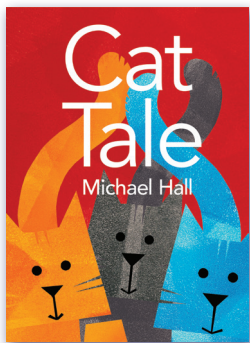
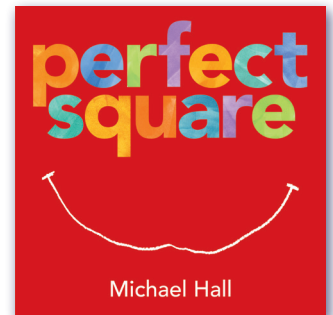
About Michael Hall

Michael Hall is an award-winning designer whose work has been widely recognized for its simple and engaging approach. He studied biochemistry and psychology at the University of Michigan and worked in biomedical research for several years before becoming a designer. He is the creator of the *New York Times*–bestselling *My Heart Is Like a Zoo* and the acclaimed *Perfect Square*, *Cat Tale*, and *It's an Orange Aardvark!* He is also the creative director of the Hall Kelley design firm. He lives with his family in St. Paul, Minnesota. You can reach him online at www.michaelhallstudio.com.



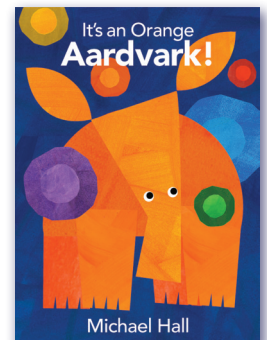
A heart can be hopeful, or silly, or happy. A heart can be rugged, or snappy, or lonely. A heart holds every different feeling, and debut author-artist Michael Hall captures each one with a delicate touch. For each feeling, the bold, graphic artwork creates an animal out of heart shapes, from “eager as a beaver” to “angry as a bear” to “thoughtful as an owl.” An accessible and beautiful debut, *My Heart Is Like a Zoo* is everything a classic picture book should be: honest, sincere, and speaking directly to even the very youngest child.

A perfect square has four equal corners and four equal sides. It is perfectly happy. But then it is cut into pieces, punched with holes, ripped, shredded, stepped on, folded, and crumpled. How terrible . . . except that now the square is a fountain, a garden, a park, a river, or a mountain. It can make children laugh and clap and play. Now that is a reason to be perfectly happy. *Perfect Square* is a book about shapes, colors, and creativity, but it is also a book about change, expanding your boundaries, and exploring everything that you can be.



Three adventurous and inquisitive cats are about to have an exciting afternoon. They pack some books and kitty chews. They choose a spot. And they spot some ewes. With each new word, the cats’ journey gets sillier and sillier. Soon they are ducking shoes and shooing naughty gnus, fleeing steers and steering planes. As they go farther and farther, each word leads them back home, too . . . until the next adventure. *Cat Tale* is a funny, innovative, and unforgettable journey through wordplay!

Five carpenter ants at home in their tree stump hear a noise. What is it? One ant thinks it is a hungry aardvark lurking outside the stump, just waiting to eat them. One ant makes a hole in the stump to see. Orange light floods the stump—it’s not an aardvark, proclaims the ant chorus. It’s orange! So what is lurking outside the stump? *It’s an Orange Aardvark!* is a very funny picture book featuring die-cut holes on almost every page, suspenseful page turns, a wonderful surprise ending, and an introduction to a rainbow of colors.



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BEFORE READING

Show the students a photograph of an aardvark and ask if they know what animal is pictured. Discuss the aardvark's physical features (long snout, rabbit-like ears, powerful feet and claws, and a long, sticky tongue), its diet (ants and termites), and its habitat (African grasslands). Then show a photograph of carpenter ants and discuss why they are given this name (they can damage wood used in the construction of buildings and can leave behind a sawdust-like material). Ask students why ants would be fearful of an aardvark. Then begin reading the story.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read the first page of the story ("Boom! Rumble, rumble.") and ask students what they think is making those sounds.
- Ask students why the ants are wearing construction helmets.
- Pause after the ant makes the first peephole and ask students if they think this is a good idea. Why or why not?
- Pause after each page when a color is added. Ask students to predict what is outside the stump. Discuss why making predictions based on a small amount of information is challenging. Ask if they think it is wise to make assumptions based on only one piece of information. Why or why not?
- Near the end of the book, why does the yellow ant assume that the next color he sees will be purple?

- Ask students to name some character traits of the yellow ant (e.g., curious, adventurous) and the orange ant (e.g., cautious, anxious). Do the blue ants have individual personalities? What happens to them? Why? Discuss the surprise ending.

Common Core State Standards (Reading Standards for Literature): RL.PK.1, RL.PK.3, RL.PK.7, RL.K.1, RL.K.3, RL.K.7, RL.K.11, RL.1.1, RL.1.3, RL.1.7, RL.1.11, RL.2.1, RL.2.3, RL.2.5, RL.2.7, RL.2.11, RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.5, RL.3.7

Common Core State Standards (Speaking and Listening): SL.PK.1, SL.PK.4, SL.PK.6, SL.K.1, SL.K.4, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.4, SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.3.1, SL.3.2



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

- **Sound Off!** There are many sound effects used in this story ("Boom! Rumble, rumble." "Wrrrr . . ." "Thunk!"). Have students write a narrative that includes sound effects to enhance their story. Then have students read their stories aloud to a partner or small group. After they read, have students explain why they used the sound effects in the way they did. The listeners should provide feedback and discuss whether the sound effects successfully enriched the story.
- **Puppet Play.** Have students create ant puppets using such materials as cardstock cutouts on craft sticks, socks, or paper bags. Then have them create a backdrop of the tree stump. Prompt students to act out the story in small groups for the rest of the class or for another class. Remind students to speak expressively to convey each ant's emotions.
- **What's Your Favorite Color?** Read aloud the comments that the blue ant makes about each color that the yellow ant sees ("Like an orange orange," "blue like the ocean," "red like a fire truck," "green like grass," and "yellow like the sun").

Ask students to choose their favorite color and write a poem about it. Students should also illustrate their poems. Display these projects in the classroom to create a rainbow of poems!

- **By Design.** Visit Michael Hall's website: www.michaelhallstudio.com. Select "Design" and then "Michael's design work" to view his logo designs. Then tell students they will be designing a logo for themselves. The logo must represent the students in some way by showing something about themselves. Have students present their logos to the class and describe why they chose to design them the way they did.

Common Core State Standards (Writing Standards): W.PK.3, W.PK.11, W.K.3, W.K.11, W.1.3, W.1.11, W.2.3, W.2.11, W.3.3, W.3.4, W.3.11

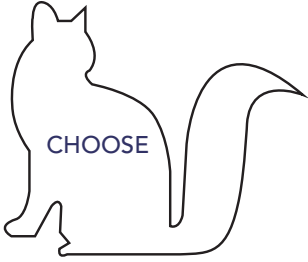
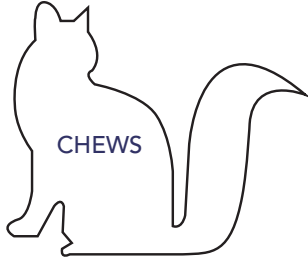
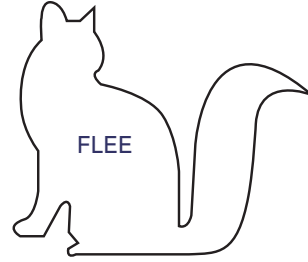
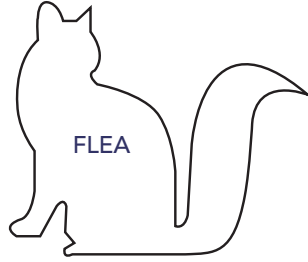
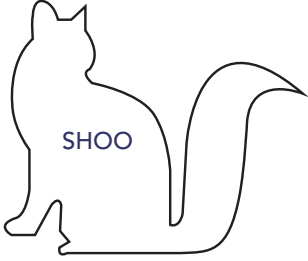
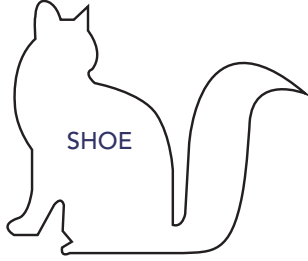
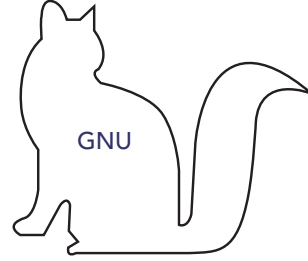
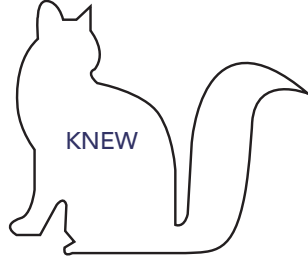
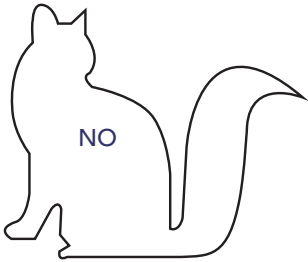
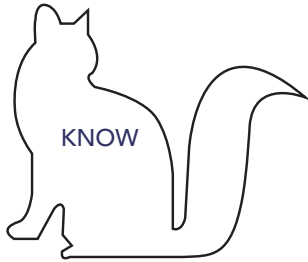
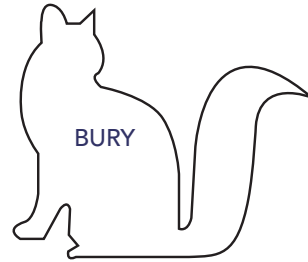
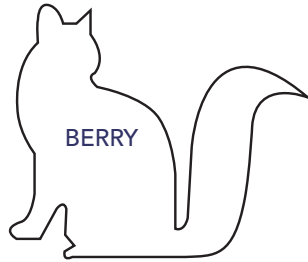
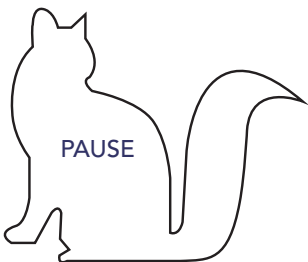
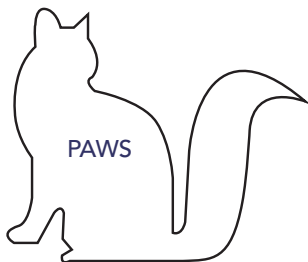
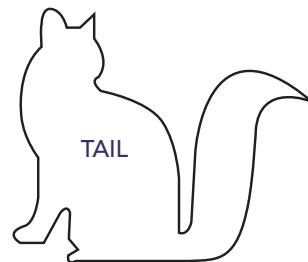
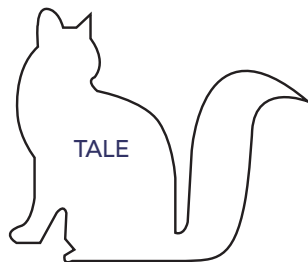
Common Core State Standards (Speaking and Listening): SL.PK.1, SL.PK.6, SL.K.1, SL.K.4, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.4, SL.1.5, SL.2.1, SL.2.3, SL.2.6, SL.3.1, SL.3.3, SL.3.6



Cat Tale Homophone Matching Game

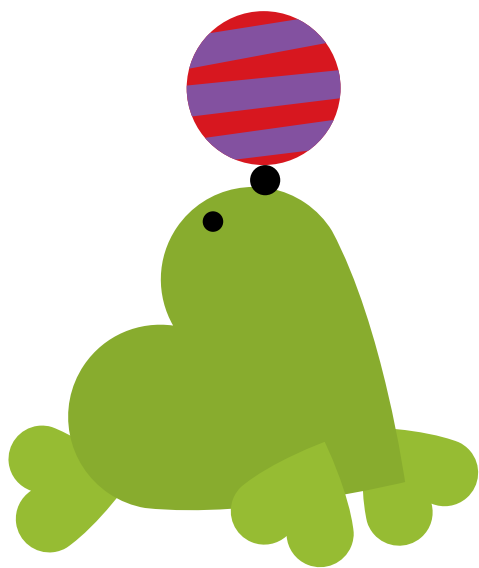


These words from *Cat Tale* are homophones, which means they are spelled differently and have different meanings even though they are pronounced the same way. Copy this page and cut along the dotted lines to make homophone cat cards for students to use for a matching or memory game. Divide students into pairs or small groups and distribute one set of cards per group. The first player should turn over two cards and read the words aloud. If they sound the same, the player has a match and can keep the cards. If not, the player should turn them back over and let the next person take his/her turn. Keep playing until all the cards are picked up. The student with the most pairs is the winner. As an extra challenge, have students use each word correctly in a sentence before completing their turns.

 CHOOSE	 CHEWS	 FLEE	 FLEA
 SHOO	 SHOE	 GNU	 KNEW
 NO	 KNOW	 BURY	 BERRY
 PAUSE	 PAWS	 TAIL	 TALE

Count the Hearts

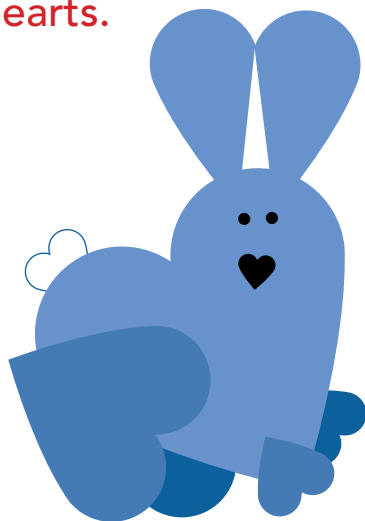
Welcome to the ZOO!
How many hearts can you count in these animals?



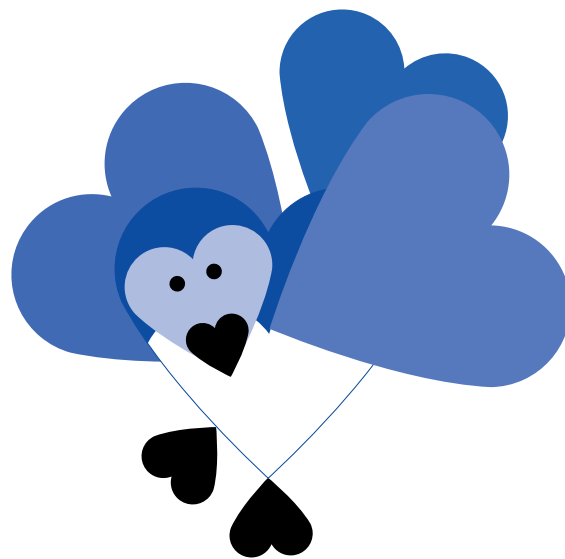
Seal has ____ hearts.



Penguin has ____ hearts.



Rabbit has ____ hearts.



Jay has ____ hearts.



Count more hearts in Michael Hall's *My Heart Is Like a Zoo*, available wherever books are sold.

ANSWERS: seal: 5; penguin: 4; rabbit: 7; jay: 8

www.harpercollinschildrens.com



What can you make with a square?

The perfect square can make itself into many different things!

When it was torn into scraps, the square made itself into a garden.

Cut out this square and tear it into scraps. What can you make with the pieces?



Tear Me!



See what else you can do with a square in Michael Hall's
Perfect Square, available wherever books are sold.

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