

## Play is the most powerful way young children learn.

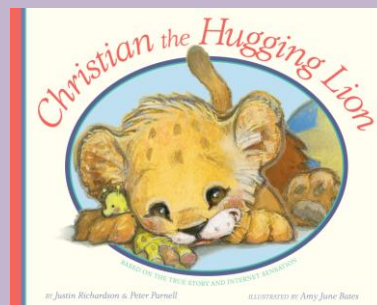
- Every time you play, sing or read with young children they are learning about language.
- The following activities have been designed for early childhood professionals to use as a starting point for developing children's early literacy skills through play.
- Please feel free to adapt them for the home and with children of different ages.
- Don't forget to record your own ideas, activities that worked really well, relevant songs and rhymes in the Notes section opposite.
- Visit our website [www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au) for more fun printable activities based on this book.

## Engaging with Language and Literacy

*Promise me you'll always remember: You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem and smarter than you think. - AA Milne*

Taking the time out to read with preschoolers is a great way to strengthen your bond with them. This book is perfect for reading with preschoolers and discussing friendships and feelings. Try and incorporate activities into your daily play and routine that celebrate friendships and happy feelings.

- The story of Christian the hugging lion is based on a true story. You may want to search YouTube where there is some amazing footage of the story. Please note we cannot be held responsible for content on other internet sites and strongly advise you to view any such clips prior to sharing with children.
- As you are reading the story talk about the friendship between Christian, Ace and John. Do the children think they could be friends with a wild lion?
- Look closely at the illustrations:
  - What differences can the children see between lion cub Christian and big Christian?
  - Talk about the expressions on Christian's face when Ace and John visit him in Africa. How do you think he feels?
- After reading story, share the Authors note (at the back of the book) with the children.



## Christian The Hugging Lion

Justin Richardson & Peter Parnell and Amy June Bates

### Notes

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- Lions are big cats. Can the children think of other big cats?
- Talk to the children about pets. What sort of pets do they have? Brainstorm with children what sort of unusual pet they would like? Maybe a giraffe or a hippo? What things might they need for their pet? Eg a pool for a hippo or a very tall house for a giraffe?
- Make a collection of books and pictures about lions and other African animals for the children to read.

## Being Creative Through Play

### Make A Lion Mask

- Do the children know what the hair around a lion's face is called?
- Can they make their own lion mask with a mane using
  - A paper plate
  - Orange or yellow paper cut into strips or yellow, brown or orange wool

The following website has instructions on how to make a lion mask:

[http://www.ehow.com/how-does\\_4867444\\_making-lion-masks-kids.html](http://www.ehow.com/how-does_4867444_making-lion-masks-kids.html)

There is also a free, printable lion mask on The Little Big Book Club website.

### Lion Snack

- Using rice cakes or similar the children can make their own lion to eat.
- Spread the rice cake with cream cheese or dip.
- Use cherry tomatoes, olives or sultans for a nose and eyes.
- Grated cheese/carrot or spouts are great for the lion's mane.

### Animals, Animals Everywhere

- Make a collection of African animals for the children to play with in the block corner, water tray, sand tray or with clay/play dough.

## Exploring Our World

### Map

### More Feel Good Stories:

*My Mum's the Best* by Rosie Smith

*Little Humpty* by Margaret Wild

*Samuel's Kisses* by Karen Collum

*You Are My Special Baby* by Carol Chataway

*Count My Kisses, Little One* by Ruthie May

*Guess How Much I Love You* by Sam McBratney

### Useful Websites and Links:

#### For Printable Activities:

[www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au)

- Christian starts his life living in London and then Africa.
- Using a large map show the children the places where Christian lived.

### Safari Maps

- Do the children know what the word safari means?
- The children can make their maps, just like they are going on safari. They can either draw or cut out pictures from magazines of the animals they will see on safari.
- Try using brown paper for the children to draw their maps
- Travel brochures are a great source of pictures.

### Zoo Excursion

- Organise an excursion to zoo to observe the lions.
- The zoo will be able to provide you with feeding times and you may like to coordinate with your excursion with the feeding times.
- Don't forget to take a camera to photograph the lions.
- The photos can be used to make a book for the children to share.

## Enjoying Dramatic and Musical Play

### Out of Africa

- Create a mini Africa in the home corner.
- The children can help paint a large mural to hang on the wall. What colours can the children see in the illustration/pictures of Africa?
- Pillows and blankets can be used to create a lion's den.
- Small tents for the children to camp in just like Ace and John.
- The children can wear the masks they have made and pretend to be lions.

### Move Like A Lion

- As a fun movement activity laminate pictures of different African animals.
- Hold up a picture and the children can move like that animal.
- How does a lion move? How does a rhino move?

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### Sing Songs About Lions:

- *Leo the Lion*
- *In the Jungle (The Lion Sleeps Tonight)*

### Songs and Rhymes

*Leo the Lion*

Leo the Lion  
Is the king of the jungle  
His jaws are open wide!  
Roar!  
Leo the lion  
When he roars it's a warning  
That you better run away and hide!  
Roar!

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