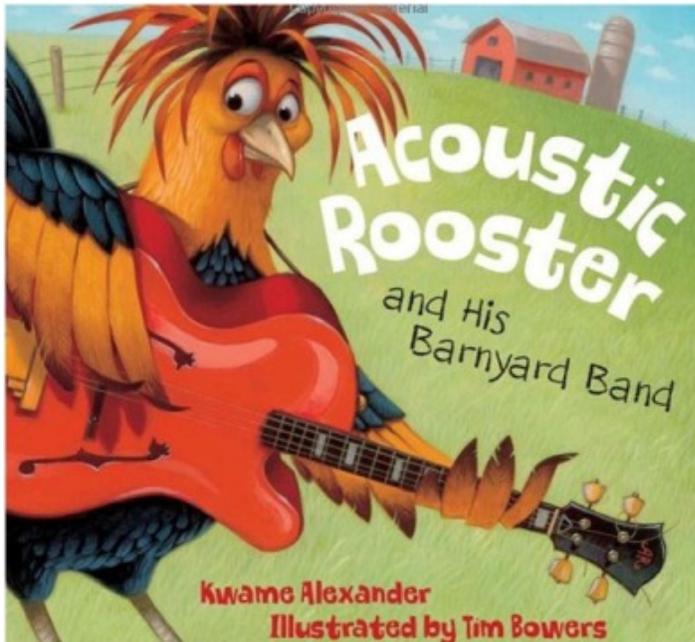


Acoustic Rooster and His Barnyard Band

by Kwame Alexander (author)
and Tim Bowers (illustrator)

A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit



About the Book

When a jazz-loving rooster sets his sights on winning a barnyard talent show, he realizes he can't do it as a solo act. He's up against the talents of Mules Davis's cool duo and Ella Finchgerald's singing group. Acoustic Rooster calls on friends like pianist Duck Ellington, singer Bee Holiday, and percussionist piggy Pepe Ernesto Cruz. Together, the foursome makes beautiful music as they rock the barnyard. And while they may not win first prize, Acoustic Rooster realizes he has the world's best jazz band and that's all that matters. Colorful artwork from artist Tim Bowers

(Memoirs of a Goldfish) ensures this story doesn't miss a beat. A glossary of musical terms and instruments rounds out this perfect introduction to jazz for young readers.

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Book Details

Acoustic Rooster and His Barnyard Band by Kwame Alexander, illustrated by Tim Bowers. Sleeping Bear Press, 2011. ISBN 9781585366880. Ages 4-8.

<http://www.sleepingbearpress.com/>

About the Illustrator

Tim Bowers has illustrated more than 25 children's books, garnering such awards as the Chicago Public Library's "Best of the Best" list and several Junior Library Guild selections. His work for Sleeping Bear includes **First Dog** and **First Dog's White House Christmas**.

Even at a young age, Tim Bowers' artwork reflected a strong sense of humor and an interest in animals. Prior to illustrating children's books, Tim worked as an artist for Hallmark Cards, where he helped launch the popular Shoebox Greetings card line. His first children's book, **The Toy Circus**, was published in 1986. Tim's artwork has been included in the Society of Illustrators Annual Art Exhibition and the S.I. Humor Exhibition. His artwork has been featured in children's magazines and has appeared on hundreds of greeting cards. Original paintings from several books are in private and institutional collections across the country. Tim lives with his family in Granville, Ohio, and travels to schools and libraries to share his work with students.



Biography and photograph courtesy Sleeping Bear Press; used with permission.

Illustrator Resources:

Tim Bower's Official Website

<http://www.timbowers.com/>

Illustrator page on Sleeping Bear Press website:

<http://sleepingbearpress.com/contributors/1312>

Tim Bowers' biography from the Ohioana Book Festival

<http://ohioanabookfestival.org/2011-authors/>

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:

Please contact Audrey Mitnick at Sleeping Bear Press:

audrey.mitnick@cengage.com

Additional contact information may be found at:

<http://www.timbowers.com/pages/contact.html>

About the Author



Kwame Alexander is a poet, publisher, and award-winning producer of literary programs. He has written for television and the stage, and authored 13 books. ***Acoustic Rooster and His Barnyard Band*** is his first children's picture book. Kwame presents at conferences around the country. He conducts writing workshops at schools around the world through the non-profit, Book-in-a-Day. Kwame lives in the Washington, D.C. area.

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Author Resources:

Kwame Alexander's official website

<http://bookinaday.org/>

Author page on Sleeping Bear Press site

<http://sleepingbearpress.com/contributors/1294>

Interview with Kwame Alexander from NPR's "Tell Me More"

<http://www.npr.org/2010/12/22/132259075/In-Your-Ear-Poet-Kwame-Alexander>

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Get Ready To Read!

Encouraging early literacy skill-building in young children.

Acoustic Rooster is a good book for preschoolers as well as early elementary aged children. For pre-readers and early readers, many of the activities, ideas, and discussion questions included in this toolkit incorporate the **five practices** that help young children get ready to read:

Reading - Writing - Talking - Playing - Singing

Reading to and with a child is the single most important way to help children get ready to read as it helps develop six key early literacy skills: print motivation, phonological awareness, vocabulary, narrative skills, print awareness and letter knowledge. **Writing** (including drawing and scribbling) helps children learn about print, letters, and vocabulary, and helps establish pre-reading skills. **Talking** helps children learn oral language – a critical early literacy skill – and also increases vocabulary and comprehension. **Playing** helps children think symbolically, learn self-expression, and put thoughts into words. **Singing** slows language down so children can hear the different sounds that make up words and develop letter knowledge and phonological awareness. All of these components lead to children being ready to learn how to read when they begin school.

Parents, teachers, and librarians are encouraged to utilize these activities with children whether at home, in the classroom, or at the library.

The Five Practices are featured in **Every Child Ready to Read** (<http://everychildreadytoread.org>), a library-based early literacy outreach initiative of the Public Library Association and the Association for Library Service to Children. For more information, please visit **Ohio Ready to Read** at <http://www.ohreadytoread.org/>.

Talk About It!

*Topics to share when discussing **Acoustic Rooster and His Barnyard Band** with children.*

- Before reading **Acoustic Rooster**, talk to the children about what they already know about farms. What types of animals live on farms? What are crops and what crops are grown on farms? Have the children ever seen a farm animal? If so, where?
- Acoustic Rooster had fun competing in a talent show and doing what he loved, even though he did not win first prize. Why was Acoustic Rooster satisfied with this outcome? Have you ever competed for something but lost? How did it make you feel? Did you give up or keep trying?
- Acoustic Rooster enjoys playing his bass guitar and practicing all summer long. What do you love to do in your free time? Do you practice music, sports, dance, crafts, etc.?



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- Acoustic Rooster and his band performed so well together because they worked as a team. Talk to the children about the importance of working with others to accomplish tasks, and allow them to share a time they had to work with someone to succeed (housework, working with siblings, school work, etc.).

Learn and have fun!

*Here are some fun ideas for extending the experience of reading **Acoustic Rooster**.*

- **Acoustic Rooster** includes a glossary of musical instruments (cow bell, baby grand, bass guitar, percussion, etc.) Create instrument cut-outs and instrument labels. After the children have learned about the different instruments, test their knowledge by having them match the labels to the pictures.
- **Acoustic Rooster** makes analogies to famous jazz musicians. Have children research Ella Fitzgerald or any other musician mentioned in the book. Children can work individually or in groups and provide a brief biography of that person. (This activity would work best with 2nd and 3rd graders).
- There are many musical terms in this book. Let children experience the music firsthand. Play selections by the jazz musicians referenced in the book. If your school has music education, invite the music teacher to talk to the students about different instruments, and ask him or her to demonstrate the various sounds they make. Afterward, have students discuss which instrument they liked best and why.
- Throughout the book we see a cat, a bee, a monkey, and several barnyard animals. Assign a different animal to each child and have them do some basic research (what they eat, their habitat, physical characteristics, etc.).
- Is there is a farm nearby that would be willing to give a class or group a tour? Have the farmer discuss day-to-day activities, why farming is important, and what people can do to support farming. (Field trip best suited for 2nd and 3rd graders.)
- One of the factors bringing **Acoustic Rooster** to life is the vibrant and imaginative illustrations. Have children draw a picture of their favorite animal and tell a story about it.
- Fun storytimes to associate with **Acoustic Rooster** might include:
 - Farms
 - Animals
 - Crops and agriculture
 - Music/Jazz
 - Teamwork



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Kid Songs: Farm Animals

"On a Farm"

(Sung to "London Bridge is Falling Down")

Animals live on a farm, on a farm, on a farm.
Animals live on a farm, with the farmer.

Cows and pigs live on a farm, on a farm, on a farm.
Cows and pigs live on a farm, with the farmer.

Goats and sheep live on a farm, on a farm, on a farm.
Goats and sheep live on a farm, with the farmer.

Hens and chicks live on a farm, on a farm, on a farm.
Hens and chicks live on a farm, with the farmer.

"Five Little Ducks"

Five little ducks
Went out one day
Over the hill and far away
Mother duck said
"Quack, quack, quack, quack."
But only four little ducks came back.

Four little ducks
Went out one day
Over the hill and far away
Mother duck said
"Quack, quack, quack, quack."
But only three little ducks came back.

Three little ducks
Went out one day
Over the hill and far away
Mother duck said
"Quack, quack, quack, quack."
But only two little ducks came back.

<http://www.dltk-kids.com/animals/farm-songs.htm>



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Tie It In!

Using this book with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.

Educators: Here are examples of activities using **Acoustic Rooster** that align with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards at the Pre-Kindergarten level (3-5 years). Other standards may also apply.

Librarians, parents, and others: The Ohio Department of Education adopted Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards in 2012 to describe key concepts and skills that young children develop during the birth-to-five year period. The purpose of these standards is to support the development and well-being of young children and to foster their learning. The standards for ages 3-5 describe the developmental skills and concepts that young children should know and be able to do by the end of their preschool experience. For more information, including the complete set of standards, follow this link to the Ohio Department of Education site: <http://goo.gl/IE0xp>.

These activities may also be used in library programs, family activities, and other projects.

Language and Literacy

- *Reading – Phonological Awareness.* **Acoustic Rooster** is written using rhyming words and a rhythmic style. Giving modeling and support, help children recognize how the words in the story rhyme, then practice producing rhyming words on their own.
- *Reading – Letter and Word Recognition.* **Acoustic Rooster** features a fun cast of barnyard characters who bring Rooster's musical dreams to life. Use each of the characters' names (like Bee Holiday and Pork Chop) to help children recognize and identify the letters used to spell the name, and to begin to recognize the sounds associated with the letters of the names and sound them out.
- *Writing – Writing Application and Composition.* Begin pointing out the punctuation used in **Acoustic Rooster**, such as periods and commas. Encourage children to notice punctuation in books and try using punctuation in writing exercises.

Cognition and General Knowledge

- *Mathematics – Geometry: Identify and Describe Shapes.* The musical instruments used by Rooster and his band are full of different shapes. Point out the shapes you see in the illustrations (like circles, triangles, and squares) as you read the book with children. Encourage them to recreate the shapes using pencils, crayons, paint, etc.
- *Science – Science Inquiry and Application: Inquiry.* Let children join in the musical fun of **Acoustic Rooster** and develop their inquiry skills by exploring musical instruments. Using real instruments or household items, have children explore how different sounds are created with different instruments.



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- *Social Studies – History: Heritage.* The jazz music featured in **Acoustic Rooster** was born out of European and African musical traditions. Help children begin to develop awareness and appreciation of family cultural stories and traditions by singing favorite songs together, creating special customs, and telling stories.

Additional Activities and Ohio's New Learning Standards

Educators: Every Choose to Read Ohio book for children may be used to support Common Core Reading Standards. Here are examples of activities using **Acoustic Rooster** that align with additional content standards. These are examples. Other content standards may also apply.

Librarians, parents, and others: These activities may also be used in library programs, family activities, and other projects. Academic Content Standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade. They are included for teachers who want to use this book in school. For more information, see the Ohio Department of Education website, <http://education.ohio.gov>. Click on "Academic Content Standards" in the Educators section.

Science

- *Life Science – Physical and Behavioral Traits of Living Things.* Develop students' understanding of what it means to be living and how living things grow and acquire energy. Choose a few of the different animals featured in **Acoustic Rooster** (pig, duck, chicken, etc.) and talk about each animal's eating habits, living environments, and various characteristics. Share age-appropriate informational texts books to expand their knowledge of these living creatures. (Kindergarten).

Social Studies

- *History – Historical Thinking and Skills.* Demonstrate to students how time can be shown graphically on calendars and timelines by examining the timeline found at the end of **Acoustic Rooster** which chronicles the evolution of jazz music. Have students create a timeline of their lives, using pictures, words, maps, and knick-knacks to demonstrate change and special events. (Grade 2).

Math

- *Counting and Cardinality – Count to Tell the Number of Objects (K.CC.4).* Develop students' understanding of the relationship between numbers and quantities by counting different items on each page of **Acoustic Rooster**. Practice counting the number of animals you see, the number of instruments, etc. Help them understand that the last number they count indicates the total number of objects counted and that each object is paired with one and only one number. (Kindergarten).



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English Language Arts

- *Reading: Literature – Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (RL.1.7)*. After reading **Acoustic Rooster** together as a class, examine each page's illustration/scene. Ask students to describe what is happening in the story at that moment, based upon their knowledge of the story and the ideas generated from the illustrations. As they respond, help them describe the relationship between illustrations and story so that they can learn to use illustrations as cues for the written text as they develop early reading skills. (Grade 1).

Explore More!

*Additional ideas and resources to use with **Acoustic Rooster**.*

Watch this!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gR5wGCxzVYU>

Watch Kwame Alexander read **Acoustic Rooster and His Barnyard Band**.

Farm Crafts: Fun for the Class

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/farm/>

Choose from a variety of activities including a paper plate duck craft, cardboard box barn, and numerous printable activities.

Ohio Farm Bureau: For Teachers

<http://ofbf.org/education-and-reference/for-teachers/>

The OFB's Agriculture in the Classroom program offers activities, workshops, tours, and curricular materials.

Word Search Activity

http://bogglesworldesl.com/files/easy_wordsearch_farmanimal.jpg

As an additional activity for children, complete a farm animal word search.

About Choose to Read Ohio

Choose to Read Ohio, a project of the State Library of Ohio and the Ohioana Library Association, encourages public libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation of Ohio authors and literature. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits: <http://library.ohio.gov/ctro>.

This toolkit created January 2012, rev. November 2012.