

**ABOUT THE BOOK**

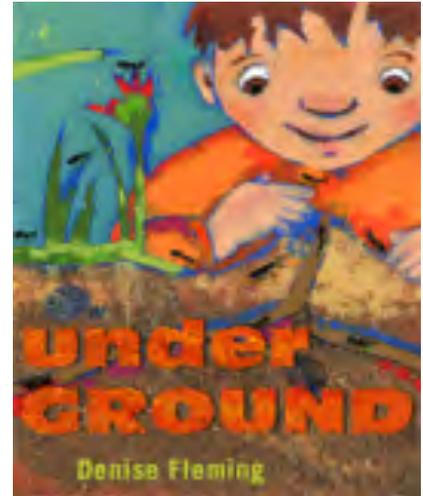
Discover the down and dirty secrets of underground creatures. What young child doesn't love playing in the dirt? And who hasn't wondered what goes on in the lives of all the creatures who live underground?

Interest Level: Preschool-3

Lexile Level: BR – Beginning Reader

Themes: Animals burrow underground

Beach Lane Books • ISBN 9781442458826

**Talk****Sing****Read****Write****Play**

**Talk, Sing, Read, Write, and Play** are the 5 practices put forth by the Public Library Association (PLA) and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) to encourage parents and caregivers to support early literacy. These 5 practices nurture pre-reading skills.

**Talk** - about which animals live above ground and which animals live below ground. Compare and contrast is crucial for comprehension. What can you find in the dirt? (Thimble, sock darter, wrench, chain, clamp, toy car, key, skate key, penny, button, bone, hinge, nails, key chain, medal, toy tractor or truck, and others)



**Sing** - song (tune: Farmer in the Dell)

*The worm went underground, the worm went underground, hi-ho let's go below, the worm went underground.*

And so on.... Pair with the writing, change to a more interesting word, write it on a board, act it out.

**Before Reading** - point out the Creature Identification page, so as the children go along and don't know what a critter is, they can check it out at the end.

**Read** - straight through once. Then later, go back and read through more slowly to point out more, talk about more and really delve into this amazing book.

**Write** - what words can be substituted for **went** in the song? Worm – crawl: skitter, squirm, wiggle, slid, swooped, the list goes on and on. It's substituting

for how the creature moves.

**Play** - make a wall mural of underground and have the students make paper animals. The students will come back again and again to move the animals around in the new underground world on the wall.

## Early Literacy Skills

**Print Awareness** refers to a child's understanding of the nature and uses of **print**. A child's **print awareness** is closely associated with his or her word **awareness** or the ability to recognize words as distinct elements of oral and written communication.

**Print Motivation** is a child's interest in and enjoyment of books and reading. Children who enjoy books are more likely to want to learn to read and to keep trying even when it is hard. *Underground* has tons kid appeal with its vibrant colors and its exuberant words. The earth comes alive as critters interact with dirt, roots, and all things underground.

**Vocabulary** is knowing the names of things:

- |                  |             |                     |
|------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| 1. Rabbits       | 7. Dog      | 13. Trapdoor Spider |
| 2. Garter Snakes | 8. Robin    | 14. Fox             |
| 3. Moles         | 9. Squirrel | 15. Woodchuck       |
| 4. Yellow Jacket | 10. Beetles | 16. Chipmunk        |
| 5. Ants          | 11. Grubs   | 17. Toad            |
| 6. Earthworms    | 12. Shrew   | 18. Salamander      |
|                  |             | 19. Deer Mouse      |
|                  |             | 20. Box Turtle      |
|                  |             | 21. Cicada Nymph    |



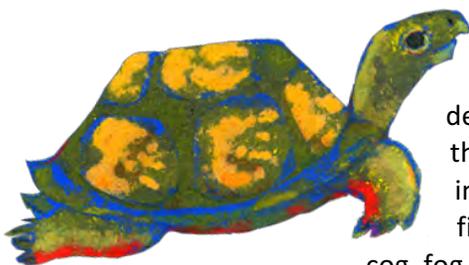
Be sure to check the Creature Identification guide in the back of the book. Did you know all the names of the animals? Which did you need to look up?

**Letter Knowledge** is one of the early literacy skills that researchers say is important for children to have in order to learn to read. **Letter Knowledge** is knowing that the same **letter** can look different, that **letters** have names and are related to sounds. For your child, Shaquawn, you might pick squirrel to expand on because both begin with the letter S. Children begin to identify letters from their name first in reading and writing.

**Narrative Skills** are all about **storytelling** and understanding how stories work. Children should begin to understand that stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Being able to describe things and tell events in order, as well as being able to re-tell stories, aids in later reading **comprehension** skills.

This book is informational, as well as being a picture book. It gives us a terrific storytelling opportunity to write a class story together. Put all the animals (name, picture, stuffed animal) in a basket or bag, draw one out. Start the story, "One spring day a child went to plant some trees. "A [ask children for a describing word] [Pull an animal from the bag] [ask children for an action word] and [ask children for another action word] ." The child bent down to look at the ground and saw a [Pull another animal from the bag] and a [Pull another animal from the bag] . They [ask children for another action word] and [ask children for another action word] ."

This can go on like a Mad Libs, filling in with a describing word (adjective) or an action word (verb—how the animals move underground or what they are doing).



**Phonological Awareness** is the ability to hear sounds that make up words in spoken language. This includes recognizing words that rhyme, deciding whether words begin or end with the same sounds, understanding that sounds can be manipulated to create new words, and separating words into their individual sounds. A good CVC word to rhyme in this text is dig (big, fig, gig, jig, pig, rig, wig, zig). Other good CVC words to rhyme are dog (bog, cog, fog, hog, jog, log) and bug (dug, hug, jug, lug, mug, pug, rug, tug).



**Art**

**Working with Letters**

Have the students cut out a giant light brown U. Glue it on a darker brown construction paper. Take scrap pieces of blue for sky and green for grass and make the above ground. The U is the underground tunnel. Now have students draw, color, and cut out pictures of the underground animals or print out pictures. Have the children glue the pictures of the animals coming and going in and out of the “U” tunnel.

**Wall Mural**

From the Play section above, have students draw a mural to put on the wall about animals that live underground. You can make this from construction paper, paint on a huge piece of paper, or have the kids help by drawing on the computer.

**Crayon Relief Painting with Found Objects**

Using crayons, draw the plants and animals that you would find underground. Color in with the crayons. Use watercolors to paint the dirt and sky to make a crayon relief painting. Finally, use wintergreen oil to transfer photocopied images or make crayon rubbings of objects you might find in the dirt (keys, coins, toys).



**Everyone loves to sing**

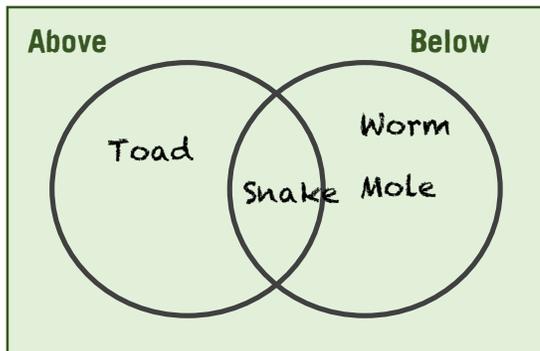
Have the students sing to the tune of “The Ants Go Marching”:  
 The worm goes squirming one by one, hurrah, hurrah / The worm goes squirming one by one, hurrah, hurrah / The worm goes squirming underground / she’s happy to see the others around and they all go underground in the dirt to live, dum, dum, dum / The ants go marching two by two  
 hurrah, hurrah / the moles go tunneling, three by three, hurrah / the fox goes scurrying, the rabbits go hopping, the squirrels go digging, the chipmunks go hiding, etc.



**Connect with Denise**

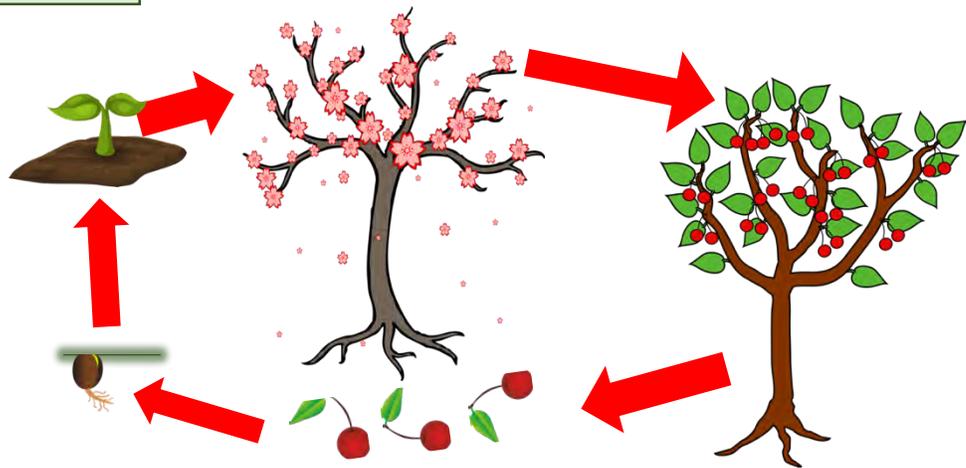
Find Denise Fleming online at her website, [www.denisefleming.com](http://www.denisefleming.com). There are activities for all of her books, as well posters, book information, a travel schedule, and more. Additional *underGROUND* activities, including a snack and a climbing mole, are available at [underground.denisefleming.com](http://underground.denisefleming.com).

**Math & Science**



Using the previous list of animals in the book, use a Venn diagram to play the Above/Below Game. Draw two intersecting circles on the whiteboard or chart paper. Talk about each animal on the list and put them in the appropriate place. Do they live above ground? Do they live below ground? Do they use both? Those animals would go in the intersecting parts between the circles. To expand on this, you could enlarge these circles and do some classification as well. The robin, a bird, doesn't live underground, but uses food

from underground. A rabbit, a mammal, digs a nest for young, but doesn't use the underground in any other way. Find out which animals are more likely to use some source of the underground and which are more likely to live underground and depend on the underground for more than a nest or food source.



**Life Cycle of the Cherry Tree**

**Common Core Standards Used**

**KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.1 - With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.2 - With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

**CRAFT AND STRUCTURE:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.4 - With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.5 - Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.6 - Name the



author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.

**INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.7 - With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.8 - With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.9 - With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

**RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.10 - Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.