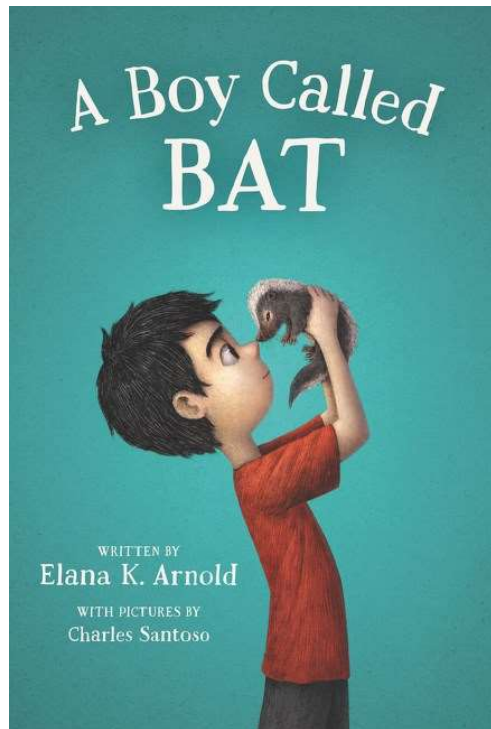


Family Fun Pack

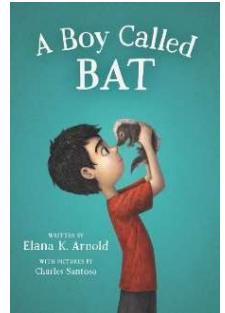


A Boy Called Bat
by Elana K. Arnold



Read Aloud Tips For Families

A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold



- ✓ **Make reading time a priority** – Sit down as a family and decide on a daily reading time, and then consider it an appointment that needs to be kept. Some families might find that right before bed is the best time, but early risers might enjoy reading at breakfast. For younger listeners, bath time can be great! Build it into your daily routine and soon you will find that everyone is ready and waiting to hear what comes next in the story.
- ✓ **Show emotion that matches the story** – All of the books from **Read to Them** capture a range of emotions over the course of the story. When reading aloud, mirroring the emotions felt by the characters will make the story more meaningful to your listener.
- ✓ **Vary your rhythm** – Have fun with the language in your book. During suspenseful sections, *slow down* and let the suspense build. During a particularly meaningful moment, *pause* and let the impact settle. During emotion-packed scenes, drop your voice to a *whisper*. When you are reading aloud, you are performing the story. Authors don't want their stories performed in monotone!
- ✓ **Don't be afraid to be silly** – Accents, funny voices, and sound effects are all great tools to use to make reading aloud more engaging. Character-specific voices or mannerisms also help listeners follow the dialogue. It might be a challenge, but it's worth the effort to make your story come alive.
- ✓ **Stay engaged with your listener throughout your reading time** – Stop from time to time to explain an unfamiliar vocabulary word, discuss an important point, or ask your child to make a prediction. You don't want to derail the story too much, but you do want to make reading together interactive.
- ✓ **Expect some fidgeting** – Listening during reading time does not have to be a stationary activity. Some listeners will sit still as stones with eyes and ears fixed on you, and that's great. But other listeners stay more engaged with something in their hands like a small toy, some crayons, or a stuffed animal. Some children might listen better if allowed to walk around the room, or even bounce on the bed a bit. Work together to find the way that works best for your child.

B

Use the [Connection Guide](#) to contact the author and let her know you're reading *A Boy Called Bat*!

Discuss a favorite scene.

Create a scrapbook page profile of one of the characters from the book.

Hot Seat!
Pretend to be a character from the book and let someone interview you.

Build a reading fort together!
bit.ly/readfort

I

Draw a map of your room showing where you like to keep your stuff.

Design a new cover for the book.

Get your whole family to read together in your pajamas!

Learn 3 new facts about skunks.

Find a picture book about veterinarians at your local public library.

N

Write a poem about your home. Try a haiku, acrostic, or limerick!

Get out of your house and read a chapter out "in the wild" together!



Try some yoga poses like butterfly, tree, or downward facing dog.

Draw a picture of your eyes using just the right colors – look carefully!

G

Learn about the saw-whet owl at allaboutbirds.org.

Find a quote in the book that's worth sharing. Put it on a banner, poster, or t-shirt!

Play charades!
Reenact a scene from the book without using words.

Try out one of the activities in the [Family Fun Packet](#).

Write a book review of *A Boy Called Bat* for your teacher or school librarian.

O

Make bookmarks together!
bit.ly/diybmarx

Write a letter to your teacher asking for a classroom pet like Babycakes.

Write a letter to one of the characters in the book.

Make a list of new words you discover while reading together and learn their definitions.

Share a picture of your family reading with [@readtothem](#).

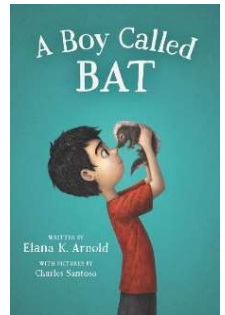




Family Fun Cards

Pages 1-71

A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold



What do you know?

What kind of yogurt does Bixby hate?

A baby skunk is called a *what*?

How does Bat's mom say good-bye on Every-Other Fridays?

What do you think?

"Every-Other Fridays made Bat uncomfortable, like his skin was on too tight." (pp. 35-36) Have you ever had that skin-too-tight feeling? What makes you feel that way? Would you describe this sort of discomfort a different way?

What can you do?

Breathe in slowly...Breathe out slowly...

"Bat felt a ball of anger rising up in his chest, hot and hard and loud..." (p. 14)

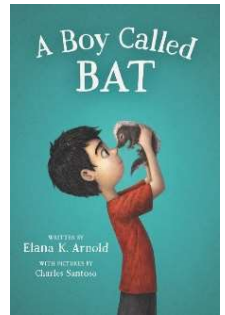
Everyone gets angry sometimes. Next time you feel like Bat did, try *Starfish Breathing*. Hold up your left hand with fingers out wide like a starfish. With your right index finger, trace along the arms of the starfish as you breathe *slowly*. Inhale as your right index finger goes up the outside of the left thumb, and exhale as you go down the thumb. Inhale as you trace up the left index finger, and exhale as you go down. Continue, ending on the outside of your left pinky. The combination of the deep, slow breaths with the tactile sensation is very soothing and helps settle the brain. Try doing it as a family and see if you can sync up your breathing.



Family Fun Cards

Pages 72-125

A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold



What do you know?

Thor is the Nordic god of *what*?

Who does Bat want to send an email to?

Bat thinks Thor might eat spaghetti someday because skunks are *what*?

What do you think?

"Sometimes, Janie was annoying. Sometimes, she was a mean tease. But sometimes, Bat thought, she was brilliant." (p. 84) Bat has to admit that Janie came up with the perfect name for the kit – Thor. It has all kinds of significance. Does your name have any special significance? Who decided on your name and why?

What can you do?

A Sling for a Kit

"Snug as a bug in a rug." (p. 109)

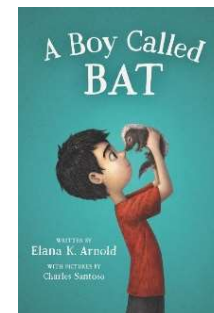
Laurence made a sling for little Thor out of an old t-shirt to keep the skunk kit warm and cozy. Bat uses the sling to keep his animal friend close by, even at dinner. You can make a sling like Bat's for a favorite stuffed animal. Cut an old t-shirt across the body, right below the armholes to make a big loop of fabric. Put the loop over your head and nestle a stuffed animal in the bottom of the loop. Or, you can use a long scarf tied into a circle and looped over your head. Try doing your daily activities with your animal friend in the sling, like Bat carries Thor.



Family Fun Cards

Pages 126-192

A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold



What do you know?

“Baby skunks are easier than *what*”?

Bat thinks Thor’s eyes are the color of *what*?

What does Bat look at to be sure Israel can be trusted with Thor?

What do you think?

“Some people say you can tell a lot about a person by *looking into their eyes*.” (p. 161) Bat isn’t so sure. What do you think? Bat’s mom tells him what she sees when she looks in his eyes. Try this with your family.

What can you do?

Looking Carefully with Artist’s Eyes

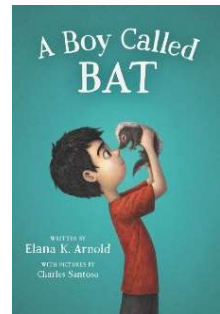
“Her eyes were golden brown with little flecks of green and yellow in them.” (p. 160)

Chapter 23, Windows, has lots of detailed information about colors in the sky, Thor’s eyes, and Mom’s eyes. Look carefully at the colors of familiar things, using artist’s eyes to notice details. A red apple might have some gold spots, green streaks, and brown near the stem. Get out your art supplies and see if you can replicate the colors you see when you look closely. Pastels, crayons, and colored pencils are perfect for this project. You can do this activity outside, too. Look carefully at a flower, a leaf, even the bark of a tree. Is it just one color, or are there many shades to see?



Family Fun Cards Answer Key

A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold



Pages 1-71

What kind of yogurt does Bixby hate?

The kind with fruit on the bottom

A baby skunk is called a *what*?

A kit

How does Bat's mom say good-bye on Every-Other Fridays?

With three light, happy honks

Pages 72-125

Thor is the Nordic god of *what*?
Thunder

Who does Bat want to send an email to?

Dr. Jerry Dragoo

Bat thinks Thor might someday spaghetti because skunks are *what*?

Omnivores

Pages 126-192

"Baby skunks are easier than *what*"?

Sisters

Bat thinks Thor's eyes are the color of *what*?

Outer Space

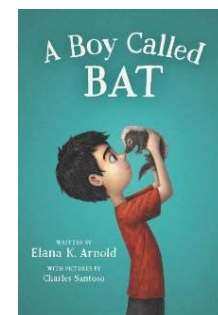
What does Bat look at to be sure Israel can be trusted with Thor?

Israel's hands



Connection Guide

A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold



Connect with Read to Them

Hashtags: [#ReadtoThem](#), [#1School1Book](#), [#1District1Book](#)

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, & Pinterest: [@readtothem](#)

Email: programs@readtothem.org

Website: <https://www.readtothem.org/>

Connect with author Elana K. Arnold

Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram: [@ElanaKArnold](#)

Website: www.ElanaKArnold.com

Connect with illustrator Charles Santoso

Twitter: [@minitreehouse](#)

Instagram: [@charlessantoso](#)

Website: www.charlessantoso.com

Connect with the publisher, Walden Pond Press

Twitter: [@HarperChildrens](#)

Instagram: [@HarperKids](#)

Facebook: [@HarperKidsBooks](#)

Website: www.walden.com/books

Creating a culture of literacy in every home.

www.readtothem.org

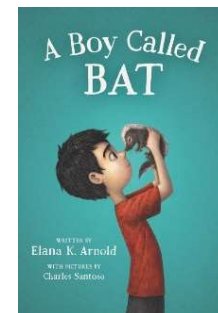
[@readtothem](#)





Next Book Connections

A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold



If you loved *A Boy Called Bat*, here are some other books your family might enjoy reading together...

Other books by Elana K. Arnold:

- *Bat and the Waiting Game* (sequel)
- *Far from Fair*
- *The House That Wasn't There*
- *An Ordinary Day*
- *The Question of Miracles*
- *What Riley Wore*

Picture books with similar themes:

- *The Old Man and the Penguin* – Julie Abery
- *Wild Animal Rehabilitation* – Jessie Alkire
- *Ivan: A Gorilla's True Story* – Katherine Applegate
- *The Skunk* – Mac Barnett
- *Melvin and the Boy* – Lauren Castillo
- *Skunks!* – David T. Greenberg
- *Borrowing Bunnies* – Cynthia Lord
- *A Boy and a Jaguar* – Alan Rabinowitz

Novels with similar themes:

- *The Space We're In* – Katya Balen
- *Monster and Boy* – Hannah Barnaby
- *Saving Winslow* – Sharon Creech
- *The Lemonade War* – Jacqueline Davies
- *We Could Be Heroes* – Margaret Finnegan
- *There's an Owl in the Shower* – Jean Craighead George
- *Olga and the Smelly Thing from Nowhere* – Elise Gravel
- *The Categorical Universe of Candice Phee* – Barry Jonsberg
- *Skunked!* – Jacqueline Kelly
- *Because of the Rabbit* – Cynthia Lord
- *Rain Reign* – Ann M. Martin
- *Lulu and the Duck in the Park* – Hilary McKay
- *Juana & Lucas* – Juana Medina
- *Rascal* – Sterling North
- *The True Story of Stellina* – Matteo Pericoli
- *Badir and the Beaver* – Shannon Stewart