

A decorative banner at the top of the page features a string of colorful triangles in shades of pink, orange, and purple, some with white polka dots and stars. To the right, several pink and orange balloons are tied together. The entire scene is set against a light pink background with a subtle vertical stripe pattern.

EDUCATOR GUIDE

A teacher's guide created by Caitlin Stigall based on the picture book written by Heather Stigall and illustrated by Natallia Bushuyeva.

A central illustration of a cheerful rabbit ballerina with long ears, wearing a red polka-dot leotard and a white tutu. She is holding a large pink balloon with hearts and a striped party popper. Confetti is falling around her. The illustration is framed by a purple wavy border.

PAISLEY'S BIG BIRTHDAY

Written by Heather Pierce Stigall
Illustrated by Natallia Bushuyeva

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SCAN HERE FOR DIGITAL VERSION & OTHER LINKS!



ABOUT THE CREATORS

AUTHOR: HEATHER STIGALL

...uses her experience with children and her degrees in Child Development, Psychology-based Human Relations, and Social Work to create stories that speak to kids. She is the Critique Group/Meet & Greet Coordinator for the Eastern PA SCBWI Chapter, a member of the Iaxia Picture Book Challenge, and a wife and parent to five children and one pup. When she's not writing, you can find Heather hanging out with her kids (hopefully at the beach), reading, eating chocolate, baking, or creating all sorts of treasures. She is the author of PAISLEY'S BIG BIRTHDAY (Clavis Publishing, 2023) and GILBERT AND THE GHOST, (Beaming Books, 2026).



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Website



ILLUSTRATOR: NATALLIA BUSHUYEVA

...is an artist living in Paris with her dear husband and daughter. Her artistic talents started at a young age under the influence of her granny for whom painting was a favorite pastime. She was born and grew up in Belarus in a small town surrounded by lakes and forests, the beauty of which affected her imagination and gave an impetus for her future creative work. She chose the career of an architect because it was a serious and creative profession. On graduating from the institute, she worked mostly as an interior designer for many years. Curiously, most of her projects looked like illustrations for fairy tales. The decisive turning in her bio happened after the birth of her dear daughter who opened a fantastic world of joy, bright colors and rich imagination that only children have. Her dream is to illustrate books for children and make them feel happy in this world. Her other passions are traveling, taking photographs and collecting picture books.



EDUCATOR GUIDE CREATOR: CAITLIN STIGALL

...is a 6th grade math teacher with a B.A. in Elementary Education, and daughter to author, Heather Stigall. Before teaching 6th grade, she taught 4th grade for 3 years. One of her favorite aspects about teaching is creating and sharing resources with others!

ABOUT THE BOOK

PAISLEY'S BIG BIRTHDAY

Age Range: 4 – 7 years

Grades: Preschool – 2nd

Publisher: Clavis Books

Published: August 22, 2023

ISBN-13: 978-1605377308



A sweet story about having patience as we grow. For everyone ages 4 years and up.



Paisley's birthday is today. Finally, she's a big bunny! Then why doesn't she feel any older? She still has trouble reading, still has trouble jumping in the Hopstacle Course, and is still in Bunnygarten. Luckily, Pip is there to help show her how big she's really become.

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This educator guide was designed for teachers and parents of students in kindergarten through 2nd grade. It includes discussion questions, activities, and resources to integrate PAISLEY'S BIG BIRTHDAY into the English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science curricula, as well as support Social Emotional Learning. Common Core and NGSS connections are included, but are not limited to the list provided. All activities can and should be modified to best fit student needs and abilities!

ELA

READING COMPREHENSION: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



BEFORE READING

- Look at the front cover. What do you notice?
- What predictions can you make? What do you think the story will be about?
- What clues does the cover give us to tell us it's Paisley's birthday?
- What other birthday items might you see in the story?

WHILE READING

- Who is Paisley? What do we know about her?
- What other characters are in the story?
- Why doesn't Paisley feel like it is her birthday? What examples can you find in the story to support your claim?
- What do you notice when Paisley is playing hide and seek with Pip?

AFTER READING

- The title of the story is Paisley's Big Birthday. At the beginning of the story, Paisley says, "But today is my birthday. I'm a big bunny now." What does Paisley mean when she says she is "big"?
- In the beginning of the story, does Paisley feel "big" on her birthday? How do you know? What examples can you find in the story?
- Do Paisley's feelings change throughout the story?
- At the end of the story, Paisley says, "You're right! I am big!... I guess it is my birthday!" What causes Paisley's feelings to change? Find an example in the story.

WRITING PROMPTS

BIRTHDAY MEMORY (see printable)

Think about one of your favorite birthday memories. Write a story describing the memory and why it is your favorite. Draw a picture to support your writing.

THE PERFECT BIRTHDAY (see printable)

Imagine what the perfect birthday would look like for you.

- Who would you be with? Why did you choose these people?
- Where would you want to be on your birthday? Why?
- What activities would you do?
- Are there any other details you would like to add?

LANGUAGE: ALLITERATION

Introduce Vocabulary - Definition and Purpose

- **Alliteration:** When two or more nearby words have the same beginning sound.
- Authors use alliteration to add rhythm to their writing or to help describe things in more detail.

The author of PAISLEY'S BIG BIRTHDAY uses many alliterations! Turn to the page where Paisley is setting up for her party and read the first line aloud.

- "At home, Paisley put on her party hat." Paisley and put both start with the same sound. What other word in the sentence also starts with the "p" sound? (party)
- Read the next line: "...and blew up balloons." Are there any words that begin with the same sound in this line? Which words?
- How many more alliterations can you find on the page?

Extension Activities:

- Underline the Alliteration (see printable)
- Have students create their own alliteration.



MATH

BIRTHDAY GRAPH

Create a bar graph of your class' birthdays.

- Large classroom display (example shown)
- Student version (see printable)
 - Students will color in the bar graph to show the number of birthdays in each month.
- Discussion Questions:
 - What month is your birthday in?
 - How many people in the class share the same birthday month as you?
 - In what month(s) does our class have the greatest number of birthdays? How many birthdays do we have in that month?
 - In what month(s) does our class have the least number of birthdays? How many birthdays are in that month?
 - How many more birthdays do we have in ____ than ____?



COUNTING

Paisley and Pip play hide and seek. It is Paisley's turn to hide, and Pip's turn to seek. He counts, "One, two, free, six..."

- Where did he make a mistake?
- (Pk-1st grade) Help Pip count correctly up to 10.
- (1st-2nd grade) It is Paisley's turn to count and Pip's turn to hide. Now that Paisley is a big bunny, she wants to make the rules more challenging. Help Paisley count by...
 - 5s up to 50
 - 10s up to 100
 - 100s up to 1,000





SOCIAL STUDIES

TIMELINE

In what order will we celebrate the birthdays in our class? Create a class timeline.

- Vocabulary: Timeline- An arrangement of events in the order of which they occurred or will occur.
- Show students the order of the months/ days (calendar) and put those months on a number line on the board.
 - What month are we in right now? What month comes next?
- Students will write their birthday on an index card and plot their birthday.
 - Which month's birthdays will we be celebrating first? Raise your hand if you have a birthday in this month. Call on students with their hand up to share their birth month and day. Who's birthday is first? Next?
 - Model how to place the index cards in chronological order.
 - Students will then place their index cards on the timeline in the correct spot.

BIRTHDAYS AROUND THE WORLD



How are birthdays celebrated around the world?

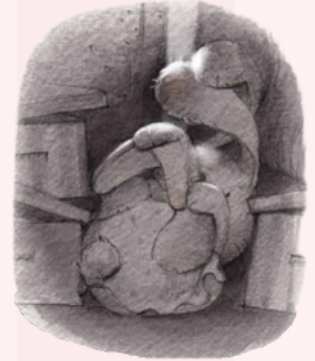
- Opening discussion questions:
 - How do you celebrate your birthday?
 - What are some common birthday traditions in the United States?
- Read about how birthdays are celebrated around the world. (see printable)
- Venn Diagram - similarities and differences between your country's birthday traditions and another country's traditions. (see printable)
- Choose one country and write 3 things you learned about how birthdays are celebrated there.

SCIENCE

ENGINEERING/ DESIGN

Design a new hide and seek spot for Paisley

- Opening Questions:
 - What problem does Paisley run into when she is trying to hide?
 - What does Paisley say is the key to hide and seek?
- Activity- Help Paisley design a new perfect hiding spot.
 - What does the hiding spot need to be successful?
 - What will it look like?
 - What is it made out of?
 - Draw a picture or build a model of your design.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

PLAY HIDE AND SEEK!





SEL

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When you think about birthdays, what emotions come to mind?
- What emotions is Paisley feeling at the beginning of the story? How do the illustrations help show her emotions?
- What does anger look like, feel like, sound like?
 - Activity: Create an anchor chart using examples from the story.
- Can you relate to Paisley? Have you ever felt sad or angry on your birthday? Have you ever felt like it wasn't your birthday, even though it was? Why did you feel that way?
- What is the main problem Paisley is facing? What challenges does she experience throughout the story? How does she react to those challenges?
- How do you react when something doesn't go the way you expected it to?
- How does Paisley feel at the end of the story? Is Paisley actually any bigger at the end of the story compared to the beginning of the story? What changed?
 - Paisley expected to magically feel bigger, older, and smarter on her birthday, but quickly realized she didn't feel any different than how she felt the day before. Her mindset changed when she was playing hide and seek with her little brother. She realized how much she has grown since being his age!
- What is something you used to not be able to do, but now it is easy for you? Did you learn it overnight?
- We are growing, getting older, and getting smarter every day, but sometimes it is hard to notice! Think about a time where you realized how much you have grown (physically, mentally, or emotionally). What made you realize?
 - Examples: measuring your height each year, growing out of clothes, helping a younger sibling, looking at pictures of yourself as a baby, reading a book that you used to not be able to read
- What or who helped Paisley feel better on her birthday? How can you help a friend or family member that is feeling sad or angry?



STANDARD CONNECTIONS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- RL.1.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
 - RL.1.2: Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson
 - RL.1.3: Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.
 - RL.1.4: Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
 - RL.1.7: Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.
 - RL.2.4: Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.
 - W.1.1: Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.
 - W.1.2: Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.
 - W.1.3: Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
 - SL.1.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
 - SL.1.2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media
 - SL.1.3: Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
 - SL.1.4: Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly
 - SL.1.5: Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
-

MATH

- K.CC.1: Count to 100 by ones and by tens.
- 2.NBT.2: Count within 1000; skip-count by 5s, 10s, and 100s.
- 2.MD.10: Draw a picture graph and a bar graph (with single-unit scale) to represent a data set with up to four categories. Solve simple put together, take-apart, and compare problems⁴ using information presented in a bar graph

SOCIAL STUDIES

- 6.1.A.2. Apply terms related to time including past, present, and future.
- 6.1.A.5. Develop simple timelines.
- 6.2.E.2. Identify traditions and celebrations of various cultures (e.g., Chinese New Year, Cinco de Mayo).

SCIENCE

- K-2-ETS1-2. Develop a simple sketch, drawing, or physical model to illustrate how the shape of an object helps it function as needed to solve a given problem.
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BIRTHDAY MEMORY: BRAINSTORMING

SETTING: WHICH BIRTHDAY WAS YOUR FAVORITE?

How old were you turning?

Where did it take place?

What characters are in your story?

PLOT: WHAT HAPPENED?

What happened first?

What happened next?

What happened last?

REFLECTION:

Why was this your favorite birthday? How did you feel on this day?

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THE PERFECT BIRTHDAY: BRAINSTORMING

Imagine what the perfect birthday would look like for you...

Who would you be with?

Why did you choose these people?

Where would you be?

Why would you want to be here on your birthday?

What activities would you do?

Are there any other details you would like to add?

Name: _____

Date: _____

UNDERLINE THE ALLITERATION

Directions: Underline the example of alliteration in each quote from PAISLEY'S BIG BIRTHDAY.

Alliteration:

When two or more nearby words have the same beginning sound.

Example: "She scampered and shimmied."

1. "She twisted and tunneled."
2. "When she came to the High Hop, Paisley sprang! She soared!"
3. "Paisley slowed to a shuffle."
4. "At home, Paisley put on her party hat and blew up balloons."
5. "She strung streamers and filled favor bags."
6. "She carried out cakes and cups."
7. "But when she poured the punch... Butterpaws!"

BIRTHDAY'S AROUND THE WORLD

Read about how birthdays are celebrated in different countries around the world.

JAPAN

In ancient times, children often died at a young age, so children celebrate their birthdays on specific milestones to represent good health. Shichi-go-san represents 7-5-3, lucky numbers in Japan. When children reach 3, 5, or 7 years old, they are taken to a religious shrine to give thanks for their health. They are given chitose ame, a long rope of candy, decorated by turtles and cranes, animals representing longevity to hope for a long life.



AUSTRALIA

Most birthday parties in Australia are outdoor barbecues because of the warm weather. Children eat fairy bread, which is a thick slice of white bread (not toasted), with butter and candy sprinkles, and cut into pizza-style triangles to eat. The sprinkles are called "hundreds and thousands" in Australia. Children also celebrate with cakes, candles, and balloons, similar to the United States.



THE NETHERLANDS

In Holland, the person who's birthday it is will be greeted with the phrase "Gefeliciteerd," meaning congratulations, and a series of alternating cheek kisses. After a meal, tea, and cake, the guests sing the traditional happy birthday song. Then, a few people shout "Hieperdepiep" and the rest of the crowd responds "HOERA!" Hip hip hooray!



JAMAICA

Birthdays in Jamaica are celebrated with a party, cake, music, and games. People will also throw flour at you on your birthday when you are least expecting it. Sometimes the birthday child is "floured" several times in a day.



BRAZIL

In Brazil, people decorate their house with banners and brightly colored paper flowers when it is someone's birthday. There is a large feast including salgadinhos (Brazilian dumplings), docinhos (bite sized sweets), and cake. Family and friends will sometimes pull the ears of the person who's birthday it is, one tug for each year old. This tradition is to wish that the child will live so long that their ears will touch the ground.



MEXICO

Mexican children celebrate their birthday with a party, called a fiesta, with food, drinks, and a piñata. The piñata is made out of paper mache and is decorated to look like a bright colored, festive object or animal, and is filled with candies, treats, and small toys. Party goers are blind-folded and take turns trying to hit and break open the piñata so that they can enjoy what is inside. Everyone watching sings The Piñata Song: "Dale, Dale, Dale"



INDIA

Indian children start their birthdays by visiting a shrine with their parents for blessings for the year ahead. That's followed by a party of food, desserts, dancing, and gifts. After singing the birthday song, the birthday person cuts a small piece of cake and feeds it to all the guests. After everyone has had a bite, the guests take turns feeding the cake to the birthday boy or girl.



EGYPT

Family and friends are invited to a birthday party, or hafla, that includes singing and dancing to popular songs. Parties are decorated with flowers and fruit, which are symbols of growth and new life. Egyptians don't send each other birthday cards, but they do typically celebrate with a cake.



Name: _____

BIRTHDAY TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD:

Use the venn diagram to compare and contrast how birthday's are celebrated in two different countries.

