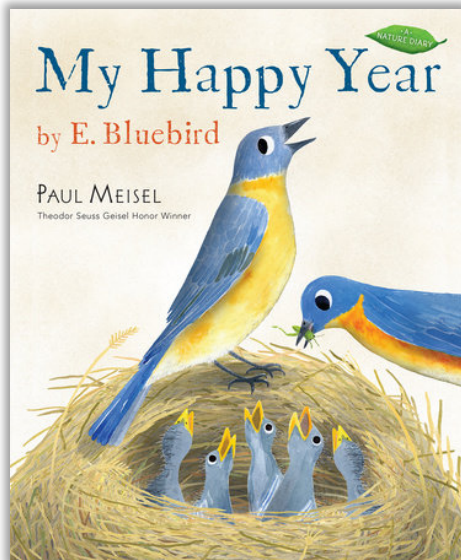


LESSON PLAN

STEM



HC: 9780823438372 / PB: 9780823446780

Ages 4–8

MY HAPPY YEAR BY E. BLUEBIRD

written and illustrated by Paul Meisel

In journal format, from the point of view of E. Bluebird, learn about the life cycle, behaviors and characteristics and special adaptations, and migration of this interesting bird, the Eastern Bluebird. Front and back matter are factual.

Objectives: Students will be able to read for purpose and understanding, identify text type, answer comprehension questions using text support, identify the “who, what, where, when, and why” of a text, and sequence events.

Guided Reading Level: N

Grade Level: 3

Interest Level: 1–5

Instructional Standards

Reading Literature: RL.2-4.1,3,4,5,7

Reading Informational Text: RI.2-4.1,2,3,4,7,8

Reading Foundation Skills: RF.2-4.4,4a

Writing: W.2.,2,3,4,7,8,10/W.4-5.2,3,4,7,8,9,10

Speaking and Listening: SL.2-4.1,2,3,4,6

Language: L.2-4.1,3,4,5,6

NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS

3-LS2-1 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics

3-LS3-1 Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits

3-LS4-1 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

3-5-ETS1-1 Engineering Design

3-LS1-1 From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

BEFORE READING

1. Discuss the front- and back-cover illustrations and the book title.
2. Do you think this book is fiction or nonfiction?
3. Why might E. Bluebird have a happy year?

Take a picture walk through the book.

1. Identify and discuss the illustrations.
2. Point out the text in the illustrations that indicates E. Bluebird is speaking and narrating the story.



This book has elements of both fiction and nonfiction. We call this a “hybrid text.” As students read, they will learn true facts and information about the life cycle, behaviors and characteristics, and the origin and unique adaptations of the Eastern Bluebird told from the point of view of E. Bluebird.

1. Why is the book *My Happy Year by E. Bluebird* a hybrid text?
2. What is a journal or a diary? How are they structured?
3. Why do you usually find dates in a journal or diary?
4. Why do people keep journals and diaries?
5. What do you notice about the way Paul Meisel structures the story? (Informational front matter including a migration map; pages are dated like a journal/ diary; back matter has more facts.)

Create a KWL Chart

- What do you already **know** about Eastern Bluebirds?
- What do you **want** to learn about the Eastern Bluebird?

DURING READING

First reading/shared: Teacher reads aloud and models as students read along.

Second reading/independent: Students read silently.

Read to find out:

1. From what point of view is the story told?
2. How does the point of view affect the text type?
3. Is the story organized around a specific topic or idea? Does it teach you facts and give you information?
4. When does the Eastern Bluebird hatch?
5. What do they eat?
6. How do young bluebirds protect themselves?
7. What behaviors and characteristics help them survive?
8. When is E. Bluebird mature enough to fly?
9. What creatures are predators of the Eastern Bluebird?
10. What does E. Bluebird like to eat?
11. What information do you get from the Migration Map?
12. How does Paul Meisel create humor in the story?
13. Identify difficult vocabulary words or phrases. Predict the meaning of new vocabulary words in context.

New vocabulary word	Where I found it	Inferred meaning	Clue words	Actual definition



14. How do the illustrations and details enhance meaning?
15. What is the main idea of the story? Take notes about the details as you reread.
16. Determine the sequence of events in the life cycle of an Eastern Bluebird.
17. Identify the author's purpose. (Was it to entertain, to explain, to persuade?) Why do you think the author chose to write this book?

AFTER READING—Make Connections

1. What did you **learn** about the Eastern Bluebird? Record on your KWL.
2. What did you find interesting?
3. Create a pictorial timeline of E. Bluebird's first year.
4. Why was it a happy year?
5. Investigate your first year. Interview family members, collect pictures, and talk about how your first year of life was happy.
6. What did you learn from the main character? Retell the "story elements," including setting, plot, and character development.
7. What information did you get from the front and back matter that was not in the story?
8. Create a true-or-false quiz for your classmates using ten facts from the book.
9. Math: How long is the life cycle of an Eastern Bluebird from egg to adult (old enough to lay eggs and reproduce)?
10. Create a map of the life of an Eastern Bluebird through the seasons.

Spring (May 1)	Winter
Summer	Fall

11. Write a paragraph about what E. Bluebird will do next.
12. The Eastern Bluebird is the state bird of New York and of Missouri. Find those two states on the map.
13. What is your state's bird?
14. Research the life cycle of another bird. Write a story from the point of view of that bird. Share with the class



15. Read another book by Paul Meisel in The Nature Diary series. Compare and contrast the animals in each story on their:
 - behaviors
 - physical characteristics
 - adaptations
 - origin (Where do they come from?)
 - life cycles
 - habitats
 - predators and prey
16. Visit audubon.org/field-guide/bird/eastern-bluebird to discover the climate threat to the Eastern Bluebird.
17. How does climate change affect E. Bluebird?
18. What happens when bird boundaries change?
19. How can you help the Eastern Bluebird?
20. Research, plan, design, and create a “cavity nest” for an Eastern Bluebird.

FURTHER RESEARCH & PROJECTS

Bluebird Boxes

- Read about the history and the importance of Bluebird boxes. How can you get involved?
- Visit the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center for more information about bluebirds and bluebird monitoring: serc.si.edu/citizen-science/projects/bluebird-monitoring

Guide written by Marla Conn, reading/literacy specialist and educational consultant.

