

# The Early Years Count Literacy Connection



## Lion Lessons

Written and illustrated by  
Jon Agee

*Preschool edition*

### Overview of Book

A boy decides to earn his Lion Diploma. He takes lion lessons from a "professional" lion. He has to learn several new techniques in order to truly know how to be a lion. Does he make it through the lessons and earn his diploma?

Genre: Fiction

### Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Lion Lessons* to introduce in your classroom:

lessons	invisible
ferocious	prowling
faraway	pounce

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

### Connecting with the HighScope Curriculum

*COR Advantage 1.5*

Approaches To Learning  
Item A (*Initiative and planning*)

Creative Arts  
Item Z (*Movement*)  
Item AA (*Pretend play*)

Science And Technology  
Item BB (*Observing and classifying*)

### Reading Tips

Point out the bold, upper case text detail when the boy roars loudly as he sees the kitty being chased by the dog. Ask, "How should I read this word here?" Add, "It says, 'I let out a **ferocious** roar.'" Let the children know that this big, boldly printed word is telling us all to do it LOUDLY! Also, notice the lion's reaction to the boy's roar this time compared to the last time. Ask, "Was Lion impressed now?"

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

At the end of each reading, display the book in the book area so children can read it on their own.

### **Throughout the Routine**

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

At **Small Group Time**, provide both pictures and figures of meat-eating / plant-eating animals (carnivore/ herbivore) and what they eat for children to sort.

Practice the lion stretches that the boy and the lion do together for part of **Large Group Time**. Don't forget to have them shake their manes!

Play hide-and-seek during **Outside Time**. Encourage children to prowls and creep around and try to be invisible.

### **Around the Room**

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Gather a range and variety of materials to help children create lion costumes in the **House Area**.

Post labeled pictures of lions in the **Book Area**. Have other lion books available there as well. Look for informational as well as storybooks with lion characters. Examples include *Library Lion* by M. Knudsen, *The Tawny, Scrawny Lion* by K. Jackson and Aesop's *The Lion and the Mouse*.

### **Open-ended Questions**

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one "right" answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *Lion Lessons*:

Why does the boy want to take lion lessons?

What do you think it would be like to be a lion?

Have you ever taken lessons for something?

If you could take lessons to be an animal, what animal would you choose?

For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact **The Family Connection:**

website—  
[www.famconn.org](http://www.famconn.org)

Facebook—  
@famconnsjc

phone—  
574-237-9740

### **@ Home**

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Lion Lessons* with their children. Here's a sample message you can send:

Can you imagine taking lessons on how to be a great lion? *Lion Lessons* has us all thinking about how that might be! As you read this book with your child, imagine what it would be like to be a lion.

Explore the world of lions—look up facts about lions, Google pictures of lions, find more books at the library about lions, visit lions at the zoo. South Bend's Potawatomi Zoo has two lions that are brothers. If possible, visit these lions. Then check out the nearby tigers and the Amur leopard to compare how similar and different these amazing big cats are to each other. The lions roar often. If you are lucky, you will get an opportunity to hear them!