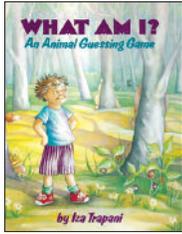


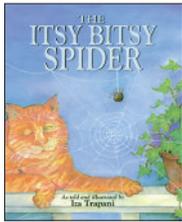
Classroom Activities for Iza Trapani's Books



What Am I? An Animal Guessing Game

Students Create Their Own Riddles

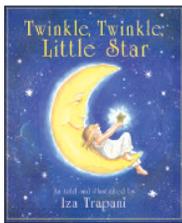
Discuss the characteristics of a riddle and the importance of clues. Model writing a riddle or two, then ask your students to give it a try, individually or as a class. Students can share their riddles with their classmates or other classrooms at the school. Post the riddles outside your classroom or send them home to parents. Keep everyone guessing!



The Itsy Bitsy Spider

Be Persistent!

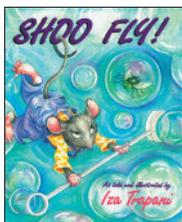
This spider never gives up. Discuss all the obstacles the spider has to overcome to spin her web. Have your students discuss, draw, and write about a time they tried really hard to do something and didn't give up.



Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Take a Journey with a Star

The little girl in this story goes on a journey with a star. Have your students draw and/or write about the journey they would take. Where would they go? What would they see?



Shoo Fly!

Students Say, "Shoo!"

Put the words of this story on chart paper. After reading and singing this story several times, your students will not be able to resist joining in. Discuss how they would feel if they were the mouse. Would they tell the fly to "shoo" in a nice voice or an angry voice? Encourage your students to sing the verses with the appropriate emotion.

Have students write and/or draw about an annoying experience they had and how they dealt with it.



Froggie Went A-Courtin'

Details! Details!

The illustrations in this book are rich with detail. We know what Froggie is like and how he is feeling just by looking at the pictures. Have your students draw their own pictures of Froggie, then write words or sentences describing this wonderful character.

You're Invited!

Have your students pretend they are invited to the wedding. Have them draw and/or write about a gift they would bring. Discuss why the gift they choose would be appropriate for the frogs. Students could design a card for the happy froggies.

(For more information about Iza Trapani and to download an award certificate, go to www.charlesbridge.com, click on *Downloadables*, then click on *Iza Trapani Award Certificate*.)

Classroom Activities for Iza Trapani's Books

Compare and Contrast

Create a class chart of books by Iza Trapani that you read with your class. Have your students brainstorm the characteristics of each story. Are they real or make believe? Are there animals? Can the stories be sung? As the chart continues to grow, create another chart that lists similarities and differences in the books.

Real or Make-Believe?

Many characters in the books are animals, and many of these animals are personified. Create a chart for students to identify what actions the animals might do in real life (i.e. the frogs in *Froggie Went A-Courtin'* really do hop) versus make-believe actions (i.e. frogs don't ride bicycles).

Retelling

After students listen to Iza's books, have them demonstrate comprehension by retelling the story.

Sing!

Many of Iza's stories can be sung. Music and lyrics are included in the back of the books. Write the lyrics on chart paper or overhead transparencies. Teach your students the melody.

Write a Letter

Iza loves to receive mail from students. After reading several of her stories, have students brainstorm what they would like to tell Iza or ask her about her books. Have students write individual letters or a class letter. Send letters to:

Iza Trapani
130 Carney Road
Ulster Park, NY 12487





A Little Bit About Me

When I was seven years old my mother and I sailed across the Atlantic Ocean from Poland to America. Upon arrival our relatives gave me a big book of *Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes*. I fell in love with the book and actually started to learn English by reading the verses. Little did I know then that some day I would take those very rhymes and extend them into books for children. It is a dream that I held onto all my life—to someday make picture books, and I feel very blessed that it came true.

Still, my childhood in America was not the easiest. When my parents died, I was separated from my older sister and brother for many years and spent a few years in an orphanage. It was a sad time in my life. In the following years I finished college and worked at various jobs until my dream of making books for children came true. Luckily, my siblings and I were eventually re-united, and we are in close contact. Now I live on a beautiful farm with my loving husband and our dogs and cats. I also have a wonderful stepson. These days I am happy as a clam!

I have always loved children's books and am inspired by many great authors and illustrators. I especially love the wacky brilliance of Dr. Seuss and the sweet and gentle classics of Beatrix Potter and Margaret Wise Brown.

I am also inspired by nature and animals. In fact, the idea for my first book, *What Am I? An Animal Guessing Game*, came to me one day when a turtle crossed the trail while I was riding a bicycle. I also wrote a book called *My Jack*, which is about my oversized chocolate Lab. Many of my stories are extensions of well-known children's nursery rhymes and songs. Those are lots of fun to work on.

I often think about story possibilities when I go hiking. There's something about being out in the fresh air that gets my creative juices flowing. Long car rides are also good for brainstorming. I always have a notebook with me to jot down ideas. Once I have the story written (and there are many revisions!) I go to my studio to work on the illustrations. I start out with rough sketches in pencil, make many changes, and then finally paint the pictures in watercolor with a little bit of colored pencil and ink here and there. Sometimes I will repaint entire scenes if I'm not happy with the way they turned out. I am not satisfied until I know that I've done my best. It takes me a year or more to write and illustrate a story. Then I have to be patient for it takes another year for the book to be printed.