



The Little Island

Unit Study & Lapbook



The Little Island

Book by Margaret Wise Brown

Unit Study prepared by Shannon Cook

Bible -- Faith

The little cat does not understand how the Island is part of the land. Because the cat cannot follow the fish underwater to see how the two are connected, the fish tells the cat he will have to “take it on faith” that what the fish has told him is true. The fish’s definition of faith is “to believe what I tell you about what you don’t know.” When we believe what God tells us in His Word, the Bible, we have faith in Him. There are many Bible stories of people who had faith in God. Here are a few you could read with your child this week:

Genesis 6:12-22: Noah believes God and builds the ark.

Joshua 6:2-20: Joshua and the battle of Jericho

I Samuel 17:1-50: David and Goliath

John 4:49-54: Jesus heals the nobleman’s son.

John 9:1-11: Jesus heals a man born blind.

A good Scripture memory verse to go along with these stories is Proverbs 3:5-6:

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.*

Choose a memory verse and record it in the matchbook provided.

Language Arts

Describing Words

Margaret Wise Brown uses many descriptive words, or adjectives, to paint vivid pictures and engage four of the reader’s senses – sight, smell, hearing, and touch. See if your student can find some of these describing words and phrases as you read the story. Talk with your student about some of the words the author uses such as, “tickly – smelling pear tree” or the “howling, moaning, whistling wind.” Do these words make you think about how the wind sounds during a storm or how a

pear tree might smell?

Ask your student to choose an object to describe. Have some items available for him from which he can choose. Some items from nature would be especially fitting for this story - perhaps a flower, a pinecone, or a leaf – things that will be easy for your student to describe with more than one of his senses. For the younger student you may need to guide him in describing his object with more than just his sense of sight. Let your student make a list of words that describe the object he has chosen.

Record descriptive words on the fan.

Vocabulary

Ledges - A cut or projection forming a shelf on a cliff or rock wall

Shed - To lose by natural process

Prowl – to roam or walk around in a stealthy manner

Secret – something that is kept hidden from view; concealed

Island – a piece of land entirely surrounded by water and smaller than a continent

Create a small dictionary with the template provided.

Pseudonyms

Sometimes when an author doesn't want his/her true identity known they will use a name other than their own, called a pseudonym. The word pseudonym means "false name" and is also called a pen name. The author of *The Little Island*, Margaret Wise Brown, used the pseudonym Golden MacDonald when she wrote the book in 1946.

One of the most famous pseudonyms in literature is Mark Twain, which was assumed by Samuel Clemens. Ask your child if he can think of any reasons an author might choose to use a pseudonym. Sometimes when an author is just starting out, they may be afraid their book won't be a success. They don't want to use their real name, because it is easy enough to change a pseudonym and get a fresh start. Sometimes, authors just don't care for their names, and they want something that people will remember.

Ask your child what pseudonym he would use if he were writing a book.

Compare and Contrast (Alike and Different)

After a few readings of *The Little Island*, read *Grace for an Island Meal* by Rachel Field. This is a beautiful, rhyming story about a day on one of Maine's coastal islands. Talk about the islands in both stories. They share several things in common, but they also have some differences. Help your student make a list of things that are alike and different about each island.

Science

Islands

An island is a piece of land that is completely surrounded by water but is not large enough to be a continent. Check out a book about islands to look at together. Show your student how the islands are completely surrounded by water. You might also want to show them this on a map. Explain to your student that even though an island is surrounded by water, it is still part of our earth because it is attached down at the bottom of the ocean. This may be a hard concept to grasp. You might want to draw a simple sketch showing the side view of island and what it looks like beneath the water. Check out the book *Islands* by Philip Steele for more information and pictures.

There are many different kinds of islands. Some are flat with sandy beaches, some have rocky beaches, others (like the one in the story) have rocky cliffs and ledges, and others are mountainous. Islands are formed in different ways. Some, such as the British Isles, were part of large continents but became separated from the continents when sea levels rose and land was flooded. Some other islands like New Zealand were formed because they became separated from large continents when movements in the Earth's plates caused the land to break off and drift away. Others, like the Hawaiian Islands, are the result of volcanoes erupting under the ocean. The deposits of molten rock and lava grow larger until eventually an island is formed. The world's smallest island, Surtsey, in Iceland, was formed in this way over a period of days in 1963.

Read the book *An Island Grows* by Lola M. Schaefer. This is a fun, rhyming picture book that shows how a volcanic island is formed.

Since some islands are formed from volcanoes, make and erupt your own volcano.

Materials:

- empty juice or two-liter pop bottle
- baking dish or foil pan (to set the volcano in if you do this inside)
- funnel
- baking soda
- liquid dishwashing detergent
- vinegar
- red food coloring
- playdough or mud (if you want to do this outside)

Use playdough or mud to mold the volcano around the bottle.

Use the funnel to pour the following into the bottle: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water, 4 to 5 tablespoons baking soda, and a few drops of dish detergent.

Mix a few drops of food coloring with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar. When you're ready to erupt the volcano, use the funnel to pour in the vinegar. Pour quickly and then get out of the way! For an even larger eruption, use more baking soda and vinegar.

Record island facts on the file folder shape book.

The Four Seasons

Many changes take place on the little island as the seasons come and go. See if your student can point out some of the things that mark each season on the Island.

Then discuss what the four seasons are like in your area. Talk about what the weather is like during each one, what type of clothing people wear, holidays or family birthdays that occur in each season, and the months that each season spans. Does your student know in which season he was born?

Use the shutterflap book provided to reinforce this lesson.

Weather

The little Island experiences many different kinds of weather as the seasons pass. Can your student point out some of these? (sun, clouds, fog, wind, rain, snow)

Ask him what his favorite kind of weather is and why? What about his least favorite?

If your student brings up thunderstorms and is possibly afraid of them, talk with him about things you do to stay safe during a storm. Remind him that God is always watching over us and caring for us. Consider reading *Thunder Cake* by Patricia Polacco.

Have your student begin a daily weather journal. It can be something as simple as drawing a symbol on a calendar. After several days or weeks, it will be interesting for your student to look back at his journal and see the different types of weather that he has experienced. After a couple of months, your student might begin to notice some patterns. (ex. Snowy weather began to disappear in the month of March, and the sun came out more than it did in the winter months.)

Here are some other fun weather books you might enjoy reading together:

[*Cloudy with A Chance of Meatballs*](#) by Judi Barrett

It Looked Like Spilt Milk by Charles G. Shaw

[*The Snowy Day*](#) by Ezra Jack Keats

[*Thunder Cake*](#) by Patricia Polacco

Animals and Migration

In the story many animals come to the island for different reasons. When animals travel to a different area at certain times of the year in order to survive, this is called migration.

Talk about the different animals that migrate to the island and their reasons for coming there. (The lobsters come there to molt, the seals come there to raise their young, and the kingfishers come there to build their nests.) See if your student can name any other animals that migrate to the little island. (butterflies, moths, etc.)

If your student seems really interested in the topic of migration, here are two great books that tell about other migrating animals:

Do Lobsters Leap Waterfalls? A Book About Animal Migration by Laura Purdie Salas

The Journey: Stories of Migration by Cynthia Rylant

Let your student choose three different animals to research and use the tab book provided to record the information she learns.

Animal Classification

A wide variety of animals take part in the story. Everything from insects to birds to mammals to crustaceans to fish makes up the community of creatures living on and around the little Island.

For any students who are interested in learning more about the crustaceans in the story, here is some information to get them started.

Lobsters are invertebrates, which means they do not have a backbone. They do not have a skeleton on the inside like we do, but they do have a hard exoskeleton, or outer shell, that protects them and gives them their shape. Because they have an exoskeleton, they are also called crustaceans. Lobsters usually live at the bottom of the sea and like to hide in rocks and weeds. They like to eat crabs, clams, small fish, and sometimes even other lobsters! A lobster chews its food with teeth, but its teeth are in its stomach instead of its mouth. Most lobsters are a greenish-brown color. Some lobsters are other colors such as blue, yellow, or white, but this is not common. Most lobsters turn red when they are cooked. When lobsters need to grow, a new exoskeleton is formed underneath the old one. Then they shed their outer hard shell (exoskeleton), and their body grows to fit the new, larger one. This is called molting. While the lobster is molting, it is helpless and unable to protect itself, so it usually hides for several days until its new shell has hardened. A lobster molts many times throughout its life. The largest lobsters ever seen were about four feet long. Lobsters can live to be over one hundred years old!

Social Studies

Geography: Determining Location

The author does not reveal to us the exact location of the little Island, but we do know that this island was visited by lobsters and seals and had rocky ledges and fir trees – just like the islands off the coast of Maine. Also, Margaret Wise Brown had a home on an island in the Gulf of Maine, so we would probably be safe to guess that this story is set in the coastal Northeast. If you'd like, make a story disk and

place it on your map.

Geography: Map Skills

The directions North, South, and Southeast are mentioned in the story. (The seals travel from the north, the kingfishers from the south, the wind blew from the southeast, etc.) Look at a world map that has a compass on it, and introduce the concept of north, south, east, and west to your student. Show them that north is up, south is down, etc. You could also explain the concept of northeast, southwest, etc. if there is interest. An aid for helping your older student to memorize the directions on the compass is the phrase “Never Eat Soggy Waffles” – starting with North at the top of the compass and moving clockwise around it as you say each word.

Let your student label the compass rose provided. Add the mini-book to your lapbook.

Math and Art

There are many opportunities in the story for counting. On page 31 we read that the Island had seven big trees, seventeen small bushes, and one big rock. Your student can practice his counting skills while enjoying a fun art activity that reinforces the concept of an island

There are two versions of this activity, so you can choose the one that best suits your student’s art interests.

Version One:

Cut out the shape of an island from poster board or a large piece of butcher paper. (Let your student color it green for the land or use green colored paper.)

Glue or tape it on top of a piece of large blue paper (the ocean). Gather a rock, some large twigs with leaves attached for the trees, some small leaves or twigs for the bushes. Little clusters from a pine or other evergreen tree would work well here. Now your student can make a model of the little island by counting out the correct number of trees, bushes, and of course the one rock! Let him use small lumps of brown or green playdough to anchor the twigs and rock to the poster

board. If he'd like, he can also draw pictures of the different animals, flowers, and other details mentioned in the story.

Version Two:

Make a salt dough model of the little island.

Recipe for Salt dough:

3 cups of flour

1 cup of salt

1 tablespoon of cream of tartar

1 1/2 cups of water

food coloring

Mix the flour, salt and cream of tartar together. Mix a few drops of green food coloring into the water and then mix the water in. This evenly distributes the color. (Another option for color is to leave out the food coloring and let your student paint the island after it dries overnight.)

The dough dries hard and sticks together well. If you make it and it feels really sticky or grainy, there is too much salt. Just add flour until the dough has the consistency of playdough.

Shape and mold the island on a piece of cardboard that has been painted blue. Then arrange the correct number of twigs (trees and bushes) and the rock, gently pressing them down into the dough. Let dry overnight.

Time

On page 39 we read that, "Nights and days came and passed..." Talk with your student about the length of a day and night equaling twenty-four hours, one hour equaling sixty minutes, one minute equaling 60 seconds. To help your student get a feel for the length of these units of time, set a timer for one minute. After the timer goes off, talk about whether the minute felt long or short. You might also want to watch a minute pass on a clock with a second hand. Then set the timer for one hour and continue with other activities. At every quarter hour, ask your student how many minutes he thinks has passed. Tell him how many have passed and how many are left to complete the hour. When the timer goes off, talk about whether the hour felt like a long or short period of time and also discuss all the

things that took place during the hour. For example, we ate lunch, cleaned up the kitchen, and read a story.

Tint / Shade / Monochromatic Art

Look through the illustrations in *The Little Island*. When an artist uses shades and tints of one color to illustrate a scene it is called **monochromatic**. *Mono* means one, and *chromo* means color.

Help your child make a monochromatic picture, demonstrating how to shade and tint colors. Fold a piece of paper in thirds. Using tempera paints (or other mixable paints), choose one color from the color wheel. Color the center section of the paper with the color. Now, mix a bit of white with the color and paint the bottom section, explaining that this is tint. Tint is adding white to lighten the color, or "value". Then, mix a bit of black with the color and paint the top section, explaining that this is shade. Shade is adding black to darken the color, or "value". You can mix more or less black or white to get different values of the same color. Now have your child paint a monochromatic picture using different values of just one color.

Caldecott Medal

The Caldecott Medal is awarded to the illustrator of the most distinguished children's picture book of the year. The award was named after Randolph Caldecott, a nineteenth-century English illustrator. The committee who awards the medal chooses a book with excellent pictures – pictures that are drawn or painted exceptionally well and do an outstanding job of telling the story.

Let your student design his own medal to award to a children's book. He could even name the medal after himself! Bring out some of his favorite picture books for you to look at together. After reminding him of the criteria for the Caldecott winner, have him select one book to give his newly designed award to.

Just for Fun

Have an Island Picnic!

Spread a blue cloth or blanket on the floor for the ocean. Pile some large cushions in the center for the island. You could even make a pretend boat with chairs or

large blocks to travel in. Pack some fun picnic food and “sail” out to your island and enjoy your picnic! (And if you have a stuffed cat, bring him along to help you act out the story while you enjoy your snack or lunch!) Of course if it’s a pretty day, you can make your island picnic an outdoor adventure!

Library List of Recommended Books:

An Island Grows by Lola M. Schaefer

Cloudy with A Chance of Meatballs by Judi Barrett

Do Lobsters Leap Waterfalls? A Book about Animal Migration by Laura Purdie Salas

Grace for an Island Meal by Rachel Field (also set on a Maine Island)

Island Boy by Barbara Cooney (also set on a Maine island)

Islands by Philip Steele

It Looked Like Spilt Milk by Charles G. Shaw

Jenny’s Surprise Summer by Eugenie

The Journey: Stories of Migration by Cynthia Rylant

The Reasons for Seasons by Gail Gibbons

The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

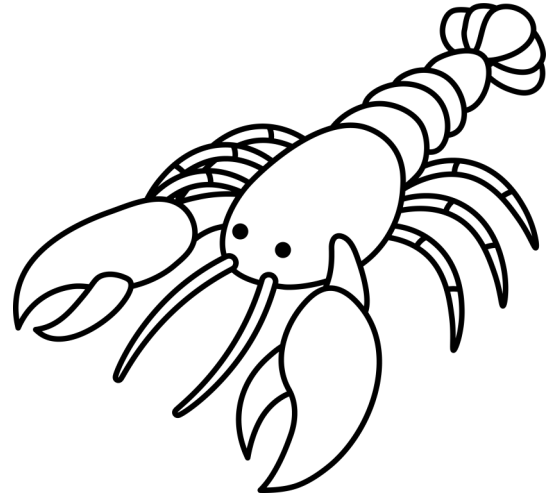
Thunder Cake by Patricia Polacco

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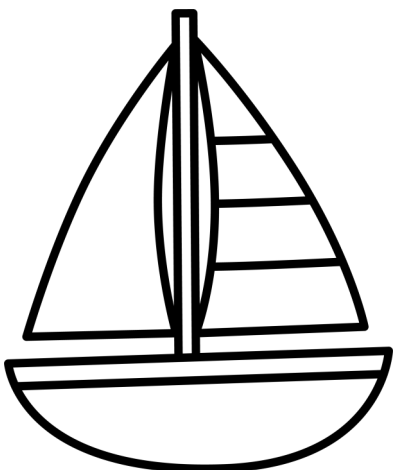
Directions: Cut on the solid black lines, removing gray areas next to tabs. Stack tab book in order with cover on top and staple on the left side. Add one animal name to each tab. Write information about that animal's migration on the page.

Migration



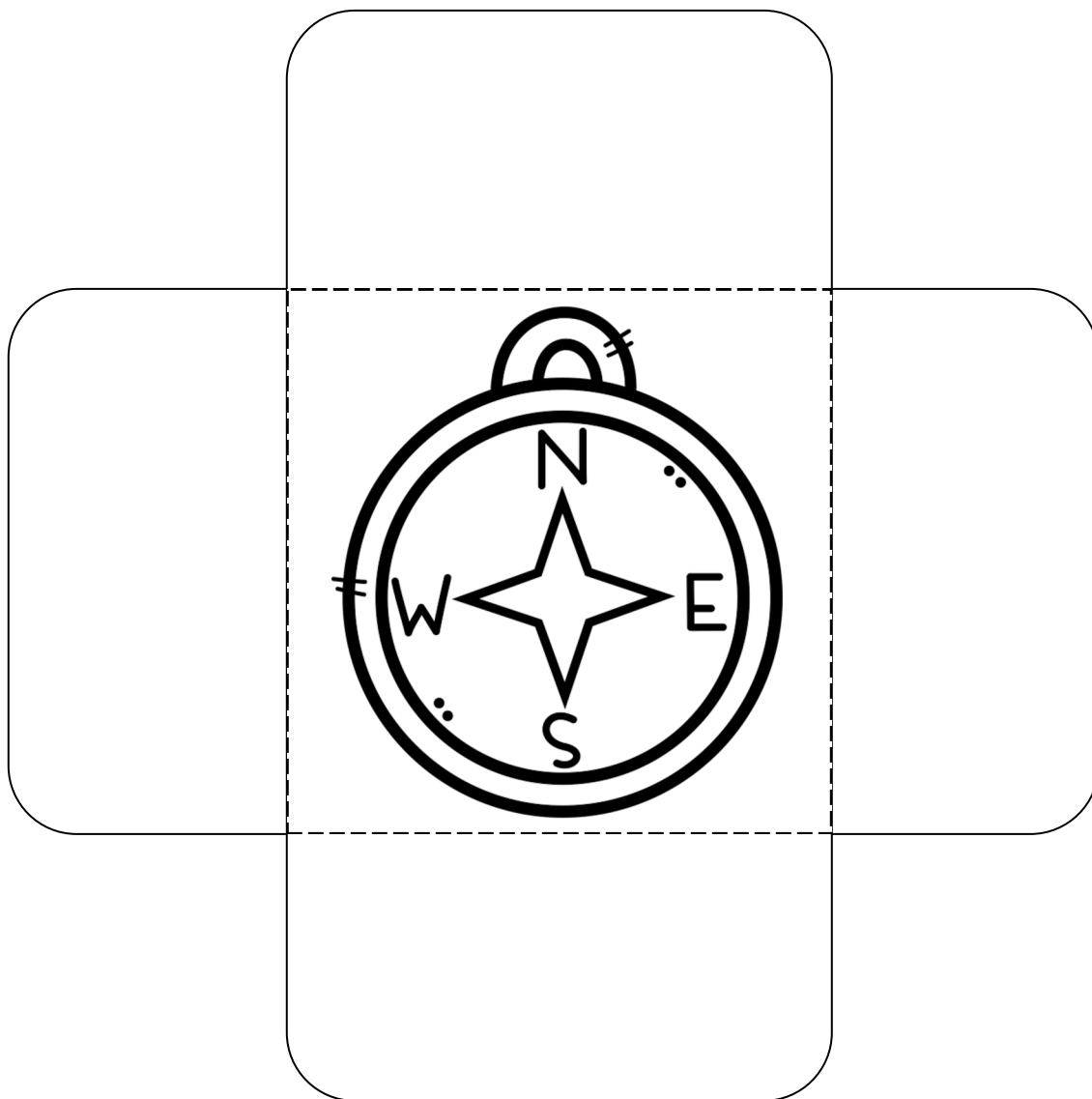
Animals on the Move

Directions: Cut on the solid lines. Write in definitions. Stack pages together with cover on top and staple on the left side.

<div data-bbox="261 380 277 464" style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 40px;"></div> <div data-bbox="324 371 797 569" style="text-align: center;"><h1>My Little Island Dictionary</h1></div> <div data-bbox="365 575 755 1041" style="text-align: center;"></div> <div data-bbox="261 961 277 1050" style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 42px;"></div>	<div data-bbox="846 380 862 464" style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 40px;"></div> <div data-bbox="909 470 1377 1050" style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 0 10px;"><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/></div> <div data-bbox="846 961 862 1050" style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 42px;"></div>
<div data-bbox="261 1106 277 1190" style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 40px;"></div> <div data-bbox="324 1194 794 1778" style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 0 10px;"><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/></div> <div data-bbox="261 1690 277 1778" style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 42px;"></div>	<div data-bbox="846 1106 862 1190" style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 40px;"></div> <div data-bbox="909 1194 1377 1778" style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 0 10px;"><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/><hr/></div> <div data-bbox="846 1690 862 1778" style="border-left: 1px solid black; height: 42px;"></div>

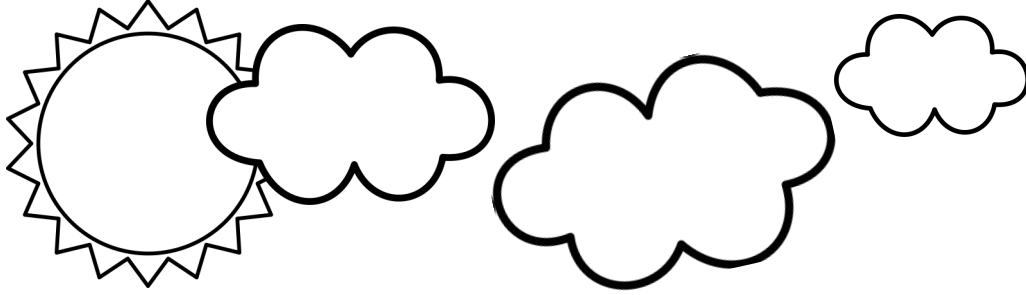
Directions: Cut on the solid lines. Write in definitions. Stack pages together with cover on top and staple on the left side.

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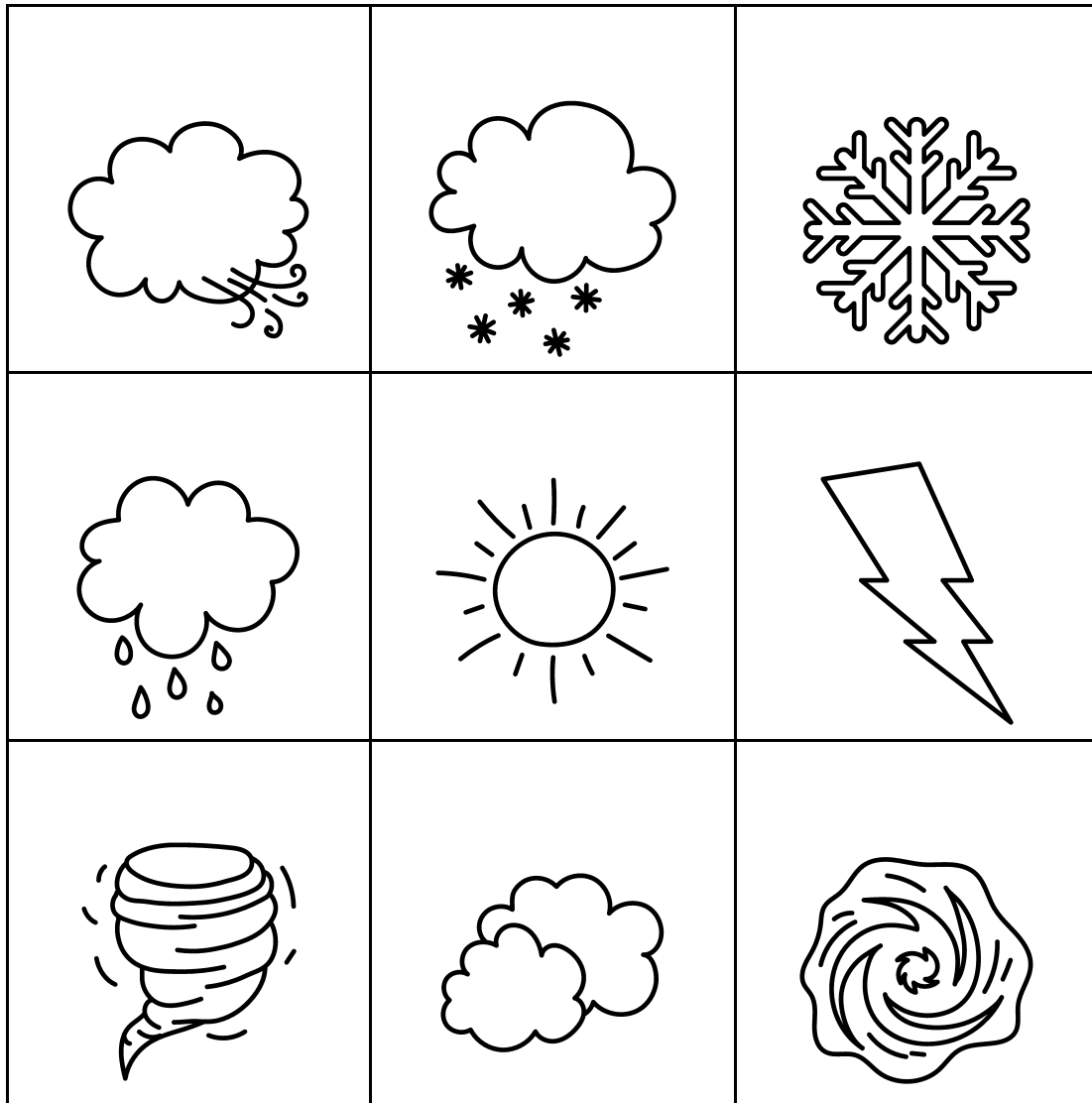
Directions: You are looking at the inside of the book. Cut shape out as one piece. Write the cardinal directions on the flaps.

Fold flaps in using the dotted lines as your guide. Tuck the last flap under so that book will stay closed.



Types of Weather on the Island

Directions: Cut out shutterfold book as one piece. Fold flaps to the front. Use the images on the next page to complete the mini-book.



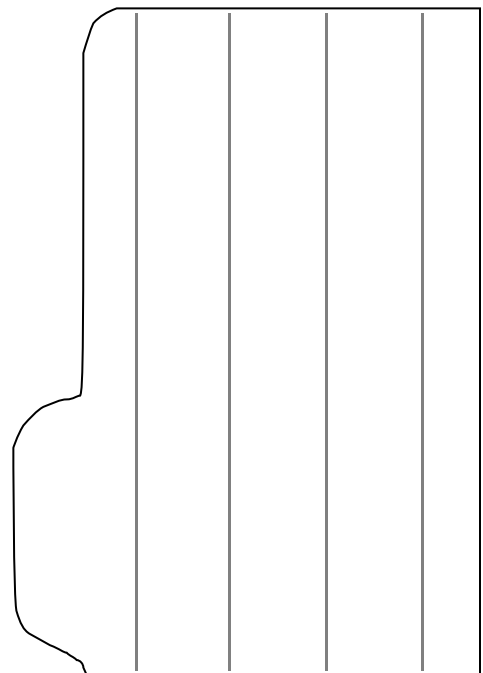
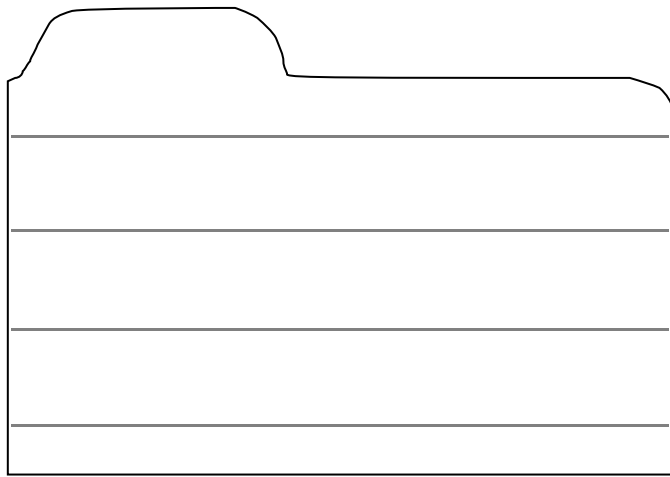
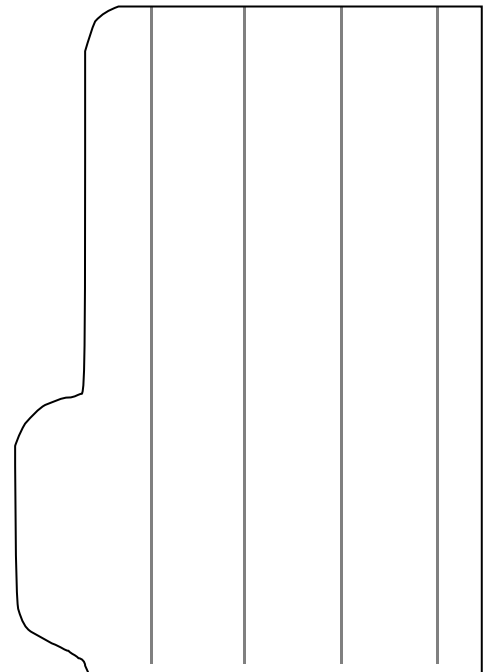
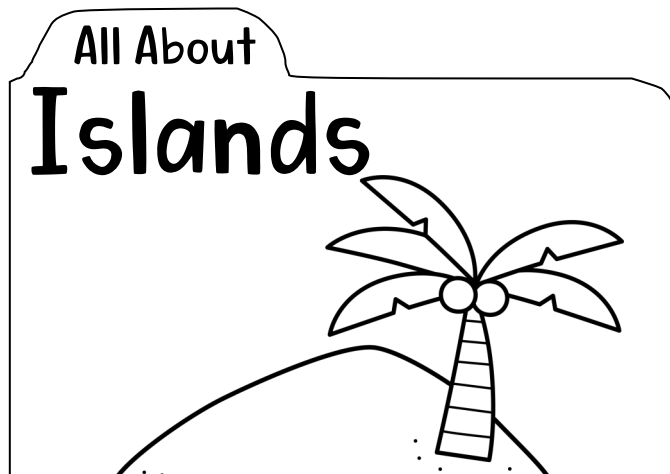
Directions: What kind of weather did the little island experience? Color, cut, and paste the appropriate pictures to the inside of the shutterfold book on the previous page.

Words to Describe a

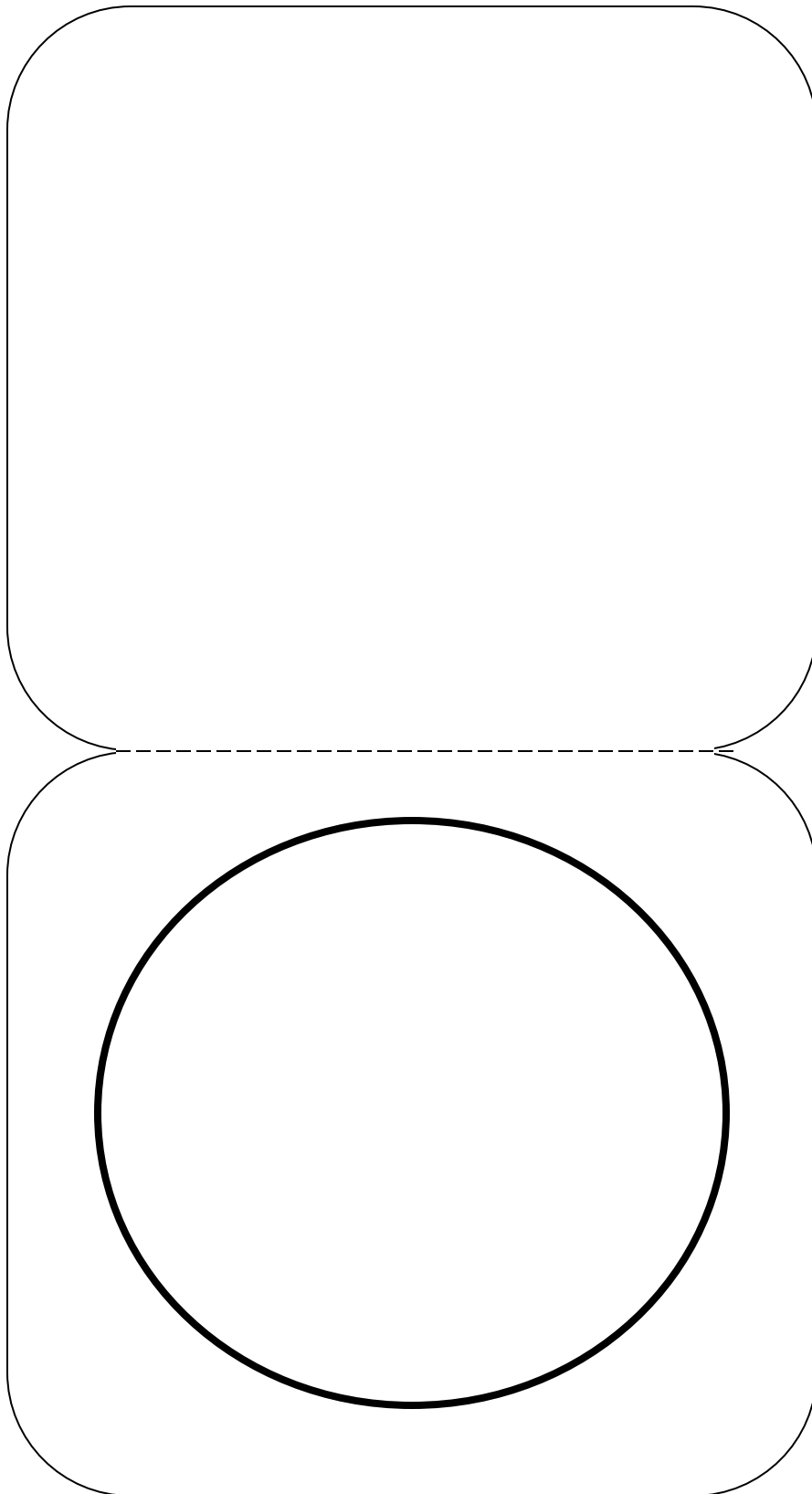


PRINT ON CARDSTOCK. Cut each piece out on the solid black lines.

Attach with brass fastener where indicated.



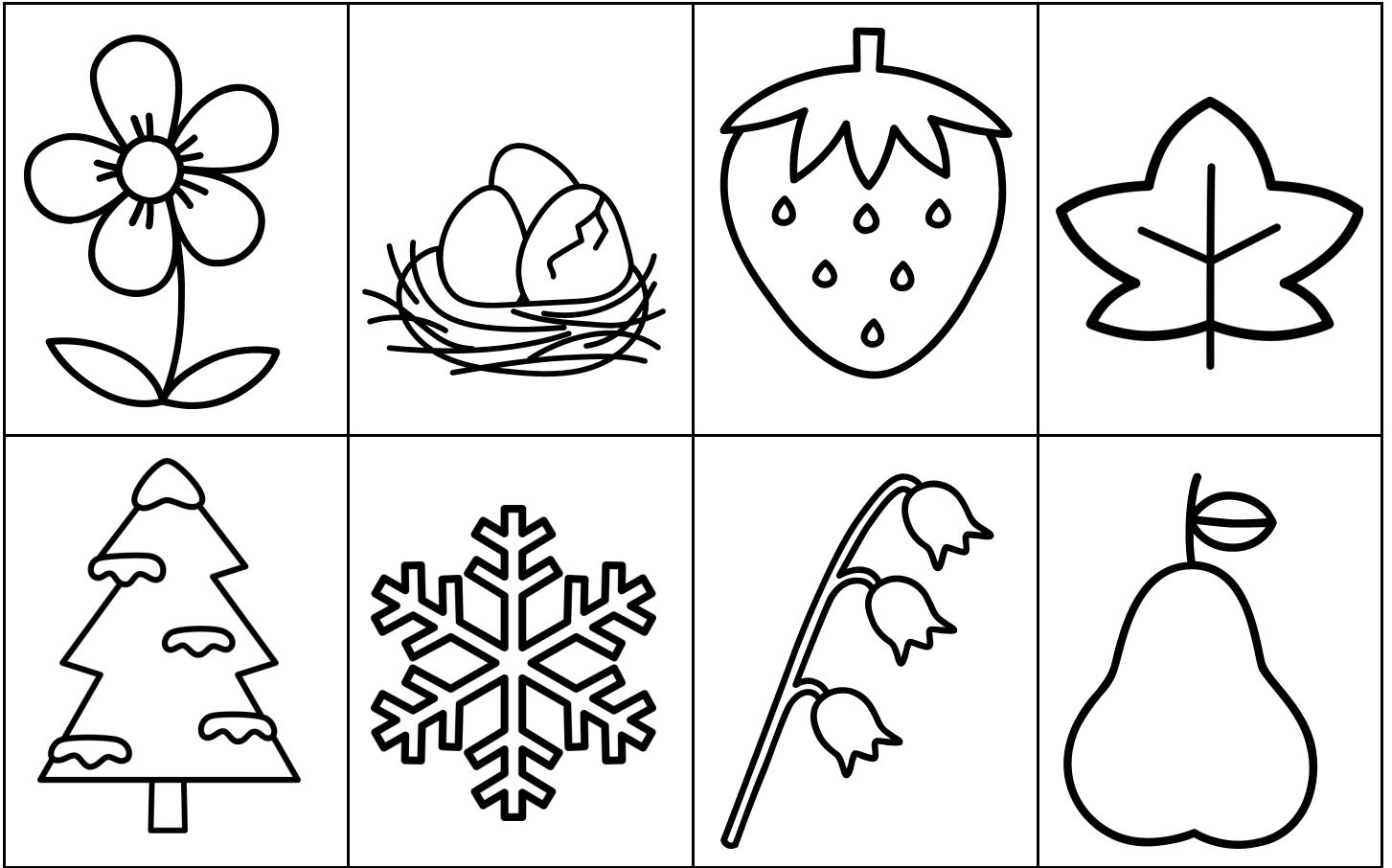
Directions: Cut out file folder shapes. Write information about islands on the shapes. Stack together with cover on top and secure with a staple.



Directions: Use this minit book with Caldecott Medal lesson. Cut minit book on solid outside lines as one piece. Fold on dotted lines. Use circle area to draw the medal. Use inside of book to write title or paste picture of book student chooses.

Directions: Cut on solid lines. Fold on dotted. Color and paste the images under the flaps.

Spring		Fall
Summer		Winter



Cut out book. Fold on lines (matchbook style).

		<p>My Bible</p> <p>Memory Verse</p>
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