

Mirabel's Missing Valentines



written by Janet Lawler



illustrated by

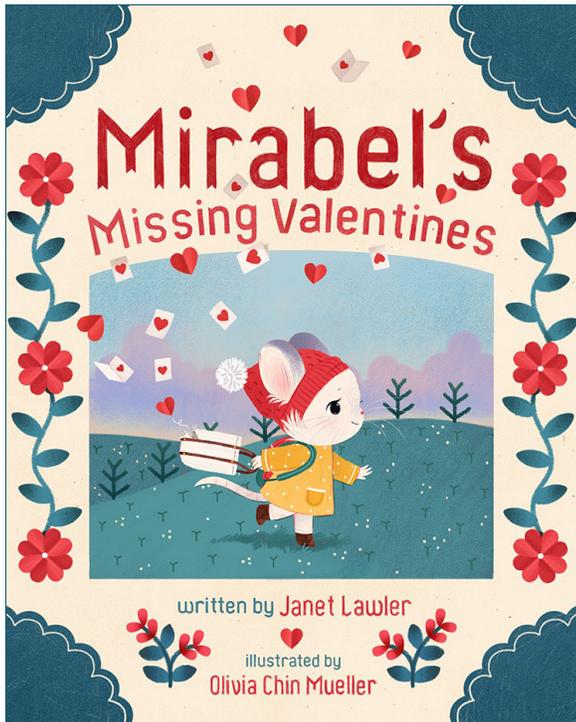
Olivia Chin Mueller



Curriculum/Parent Guide

[relevant Common Core Standards are noted]

ABOUT THE BOOK



Shy Mirabel is nervous about the upcoming holiday party at school. She makes valentines for everyone, but she dawdles before setting out on Valentine's Day. Her homemade cards fall out of a hole in her bag on the way to school, to the delight of townsfolk who find them. Friendships form when the cards are returned, and Mirabel gains the courage to participate and enjoy the party at school. On her way home, the folks she cheered up in the morning tuck more valentines in her bag.

Olivia Chin Mueller's adorable animal community complements the upbeat, rhyming text in this Valentine's Day story that shows that the more you give, the more you receive.

Mirabel's Missing Valentines can serve as an enjoyable read-aloud and/or as a tool for developing literacy and math skills. These skills can also be developed in the context of multiple curriculum content strands. Following are some suggested approaches for sharing/teaching this book for K–2 students.

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

Text provides many opportunities for understanding: print; spoken words, syllables, rhymes, and sounds; phonics awareness; and vocabulary in context.

[ELA.RF.K.1–4; ELA.RF.1.1–4; ELA.RF.2.3–4]

Text and activities suggested below provide many opportunities to teach and reinforce Language standards (conventions).

[ELA.LS.K.1–5; ELA.LS.1.1–5; ELA.LS.2.1–5]

PRE-READING DISCUSSION

Show cover and read title.

What is this book about?

What is happening to Mirabel's valentines?

What word in the title gives a clue about what the book is about?

Have students name author and illustrator and discuss their roles.

[ELA.RL.K.6; Math.K.MD.A.1]

Ask students how Valentine's Day and its traditions make them feel.



SUGGESTED APPROACH TO TEXT

Comprehension (Key Ideas and Details)

Read the story. Have students ask and answer questions, such as:

Who is the main character in the story?

Why doesn't Mirabel want to go to school on Valentine's Day?

What does Mirabel do that morning to delay leaving for school?

What happens to Mirabel's valentines as she walks to school?

What does Mirabel do when she realizes her valentines are missing?

What do the townsfolk do when they heard her?

Does Mirabel enjoy Valentine's Day at school? How do you know?

What happens on the way home from school that makes Mirabel's day more special?

[ELA.RL.K.1–3; ELA.RL.1.1–3 ELA.RL.2.1–3]

[ELA.SL.K.2; ELA.RL.1.2; ELA.SL.2.2]

Craft and Structure

Discuss any unfamiliar words, such as *routine*, *dawdled*, *gooey*, *enduring*, *dawned*.

Use illustrations to assist with comprehension.

[ELA.RL.K.4]

Discuss common types of text. This is a storybook, but it is also a poem.

[ELA.RL.K.5]

Choose a couplet of text to re-read out loud and analyze the beats, alliteration, and rhyme in text; ask students to do/discuss the same with another couplet.

[ELA.RL.2.4]

Explain story structure and ask students to discuss events of beginning, middle, and ending of story.

What is Mirabel's problem at outset?

What problems/difficulties take place in the middle?

How are Mirabel's problems solved at the end?

[ELA.RL.2.5]

Relationship of Text and Illustrations

Pick a spread (2 facing pages) and ask students what the illustrations show. Read related text and discuss relationship between illustrations and the story. Discuss how story/plot can be conveyed by illustrations alone, text alone, or both. For example:

Read text on final full spread (“*Skipping home when school let out, she paused atop the hill and realized, to her delight, her sack was fuller still.*”) Point out how illustrations can give you more information. What is happening on the left-hand page that lets readers know why Mirabel’s sack is “fuller still” at the end?
[ELA.RL.K.7; ELA.RL.1.7 ELA.RL.2.7]

MIRABEL WRITING ACTIVITIES

About the Book

Have each student write a review about *Mirabel’s Missing Valentines*:

- the title and what the book is about.
- an opinion about whether or not student liked or disliked the story and why.

[ELA.W.K.1; ELA.W.1.1; ELA.W.2.1]

Writing with Support from Text

Create one or more questions for students to answer by reference to text, such as:

- Describe Mirabel’s morning at home before leaving for school. Why did she have to hurry down the road?
- Who was the first person to find a dropped valentine? Describe that person. Why do you think the card made that person happy?

Discuss sequencing and have students tell or write about key story events. Have students list, in order, the townsfolk who find Mirabel’s valentines (lonely lady, construction workers, busy papa, jogger, and garbage man).
[ELA.W.K.3; ELA.W.1.3; ELA.W.2.3]

Mirabel Writing Workshop

Ask students to think about who else Mirabel might give a valentine to that day. Ask students to write a story about that with a beginning, middle, and end.

Model/brainstorm an example, or for younger students, brainstorm a class-created story and write the story as students develop details. Prompts may include questions such as: Does Mirabel want to give a valentine to a family member, another friend, a pet? Does she want to hide the valentine? What is the setting? At her house, a restaurant, someone else’s house? What problem could she have delivering this valentine (maybe the dog eats her valentine)? How does she solve the problem?

Have students revise and re-write with supervision. Have students create a title for their story and illustrate a cover.
[ELA.W.K.3; ELA.W.1.3; ELA.W.2.3]



MIRABEL MATH ACTIVITIES

Basic Counting

Look at the picture of Mirabel on the first page. Count how many valentines are in the thought bubble above her head.

Look at the page with construction workers. How many construction workers do you see? How many are digging? How many are eating?

[Math.K.CC.B.4a–4c]



Mirabel Counting Cards

Create a sheet of paper with six sections. Have students draw a valentine heart in each section.

Have students cut sheet into six cards (or use two sheets to have 12 cards for greater challenge).

Alternatively, provide students with *Mirabel's Missing Valentines* Valentine's Day Cards. Go to: <https://janet-lawler.com/book/mirabels-missing-valentines-picture-book/> for a free download. (Note: print 2-sided on card stock. Have students keep cards and bookmarks.)

Addition and Subtraction

Have students use their set of six (or 12) cards to undertake simple addition and subtraction problems. Have students write problem out with numbers, such as:

3 valentines + 1 valentine = 4 valentines; 5 valentines - 2 valentines = 3 valentines; etc.

[Math.K.OA.A.1-5]

More Practice in Pairs

Pair up two students. Have students use both sets of cards to count together up to 12 or 24. Give students a list of other numbers to count to. Have students write down how many cards are left over each time they count out a number.

Using their cards, have each student create counting, addition, and subtraction problems for their partner to solve.

[Math.1.OA.C.6]

Mirabel Math Word Problems

Create valentine math word addition and subtraction problems. Have students illustrate and show numeric solution. For example: Joe put three valentines in a tree. One blew away. How many valentines were left? $3-1=2$.

[Math.K.OA.A.2]

For students doing multiplication, create problems such as:

Maria has three brothers. She wants to give each brother two valentines.

How many valentines must she make? 3 (brothers) \times 2 (valentines) = 6

[Math.2.OA.C.3]



FURTHER MIRABEL EXPLORATION

Writing Informational Text

Have students draw/dictate/write text explaining the steps necessary to create a Valentine's Day card.

[ELA.W.K.2; ELA.W.1.2; ELA.W.2.2]

Citizenship/Community

Discuss how Mirabel's cards help create a sense of belonging and friendship in her community.

What if the townspeople had kept the cards instead of returning them? Would that have made them happy?

How would Mirabel have felt going into school without her cards?

Ask students how they feel when they find and return something that someone has lost.

How else can you show friends that you like them on Valentine's Day besides giving cards?

Non-fiction

Discuss differences between fiction and non-fiction texts. Is *Mirabel's Missing Valentines* fiction or nonfiction?

Examples of Valentine's Day nonfiction (history and facts about the holiday):



The Story of Valentine's Day (HarperCollins)
by Clyde Robert Bulla, illus. by Susan Estelle Kwas

Celebrate Valentine's Day with Love, Cards, and Candy (National Geographic)
by Carolyn Otto



Art/Writing Activity

Create a _____ School Valentine's Day Tree on wall or bulletin board. Have each student create/design/ decorate a valentine on which they write a statement of something they love about their school. Attach completed valentines to the tree.

REVIEWS of MIRABEL'S MISSING VALENTINES

"[R]hyming stanzas keep the pace peppy, while cute, vibrant cartoon illustrations depict the doe-eyed animal characters in idyllic settings. This entertaining read showcases relatable worries about valentine giving, and offers supportive messages about finding confidence and how the holiday can lead to serendipitous new friends." **–BOOKLIST**

"[A] snug community...in this kind story about overcoming anxiety through practice."

–PUBLISHERS WEEKLY



COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS KEY

Standards for Kindergarten (K), First Grade (1), and Second Grade (2):

English Language Arts (ELA) / Math (Math) / Reading: Foundational Skills (RF)

Counting and Cardinality (CC) / Reading: Literature (RL) / Operations and Algebraic Thinking (OA)

Writing (W) / Language Standards (L) / Speaking and Listening (SL)

(Example: ELA.RL.1.1–3 is: English Language Arts: Reading: Literature. First Grade: standards 1–3)

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