



The Booklist Project

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Focus: Elisa Kleven

Developed by: Micaela Folan

Grade Span of List: K-3

SU I 2012

Elisa Kleven

Author Study

By Micaela Folan

TESL Program 2012



Elisa Kleven was raised in Los Angeles. As a child she dreamed of imaginary worlds and magical personification. She felt overwhelmed in a busy city and confined by the mountains and ocean. The streets were filled with smog and noise. She preferred to visit quiet places and dream of a carefree world. This is portrayed in many of her books with the ability of children to fly.

Kleven's favorite childhood book was *Charlotte's Web*. She enjoyed the characterization of the farm animals. Other favorite books were the *Wizard of Oz* and *Peter Pan*. She found the solitude for her day dreams in places such as the library. At home, Kleven would create mini 'worlds' which she fantasized about. She would be resourceful using random household items to create objects for her 'worlds'. Walnut shells could be used as a

bassinet. Stamps were utilized as portraits in her model homes. Kleven could find a piece of wool and find many purposes to bring her daydreams to life. Elisa Kleven's childhood was consumed of desires to live in her mini worlds. Her bicycle became her 'horse;' she taped treats to her parent's car and pretended to discover a ginger bread house.

Many inspirations came to Elisa throughout her life. While her childhood daydreams were dictated by books, as an adult she used more realistic motivations. Many of the characters in her books take on qualities of her own children. Her dog is depicted in many illustrations. Her landscape paintings incorporate actual landmarks.

Kleven's goal through writing her stories is to foster the frustrations of the real world and provide a comfortable place to escape for children ranging from Pre-K to third grade. She often describes difficulties and shows through perseverance how one can overcome obstacles.

Elisa Kleven is also an acclaimed illustrator. She uses watercolor, gouache, ink, colored pencils, pastels, markers, crayons, etc. to depict children and animals throughout all of her work. She also illustrates Jewish greeting cards.

Elisa has authored and or illustrated nearly 30 children books. She has many notable achievements including: ALA Notable Books, *School Library Journal* Best Books of the Year, *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book of the Year and Junior Library Guild Selections.

Adapted Biography from the author's website:

<http://www.elisakleven.com/>

Achievements listed from:

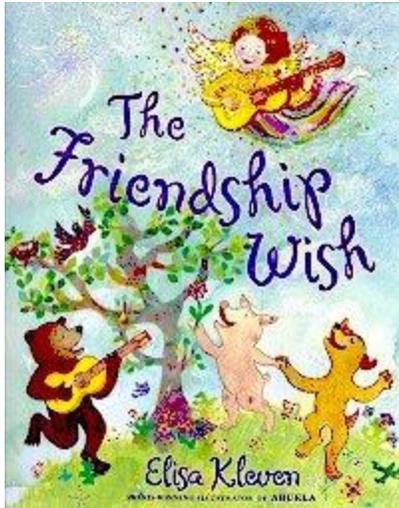
<http://www.thereadingbug.com/event/authorillustrator-elisa-kleven>

To watch a brief interview with Elisa Kleven:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS8DFHLu01A>

To watch a Youth in Arts special exhibiting Kleven's work:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKyrvlepiP0>



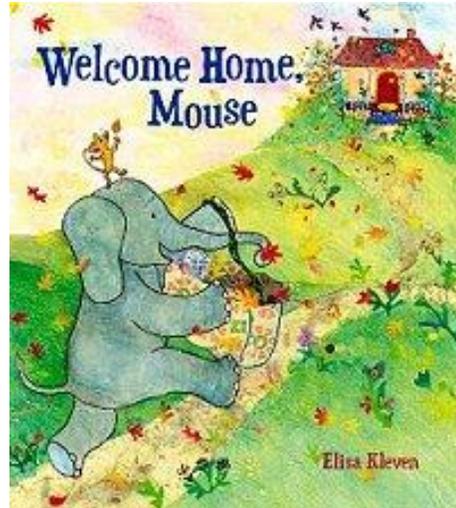
Kelven, E. (2011). *The Friendship Wish*. New York: Dutton Children's Books.
ISBN: 9780525423744

WIDA Proficiency: Developing
Reading Level: 3.1
Interest Level: K-3
Hardcover, 32 pages

Summary:

Farley is new to his neighborhood. He sets out trying to make friends, but everyone is too busy. In his dreams an angel plays ball with him, dances, sings and makes him pancakes. In the morning he shares his dream with pig, bird and bear who offer to help relive his dream to bring back the angel. They play ball, dance, sing and eat pancakes. That night that all fall asleep dreaming of this angel. This story is comforting to ELL students who move to a new community and are anxious about making friends. It reminds students that friendships will happen without effort.

The Friendship Wish is a recommended text on a booklist which is themed around making friends. Visit: <http://thatslifejill.blogspot.com/2012/04/childrens-books-on-friendship.html> for the booklist.

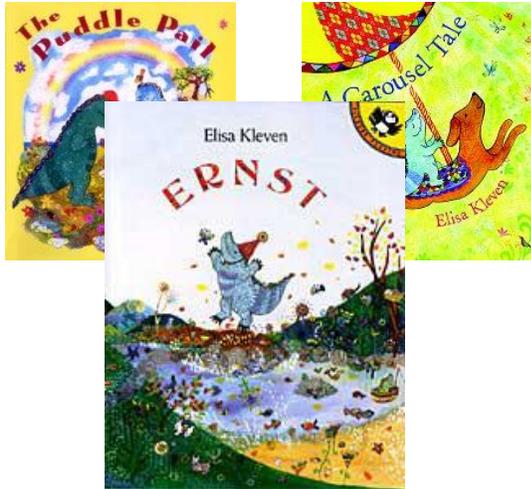


Kleven, E. (2010). *Welcome Home Mouse*. New York: Random House.
ISBN: 9781582462776

WIDA Proficiency: Developing
Reading Level: 2.7
Interest Level: K-1
Hardcover, 32 pages

Summary:

Stanley the elephant is very clumsy. He tries to help his mother cook, but knocks ingredients over. On his walk to the store he accidentally ruins a mouse's home. He takes the mouse with him and promises to make a new home. Store owners don't let Stanley in their stores in worry that he may have more accidents. Stanley starts to feel really sad. Suddenly he has an idea. He has collected materials from walking around that day and decides to make the mouse his new home. ELL students can connect with the mouse in this story whose home is ruined and moved which was extremely upsetting. However, in the end, Stanley was able to make him a new beautiful home which the mouse was very happy with. When changes can seem scary, they may work out well.



Kleven, E. (2002). *Ernst*. New York: Tricycle Press.
ISBN: 0525445153

WIDA Proficiency: Developing
Reading Level: 3.9
Interest Level: K-3
Hardcover/Paperback, 32 pages

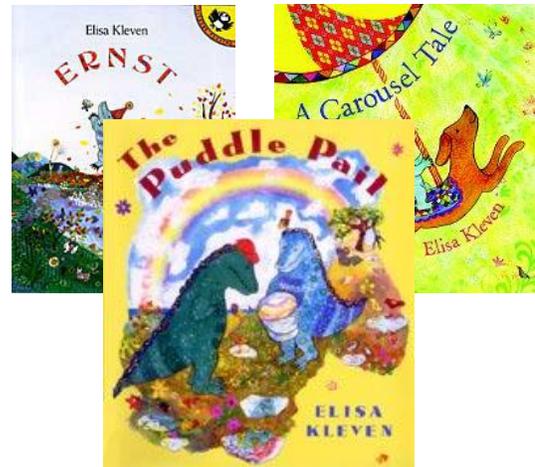
Summary:

This is the first book of three which feature the character Ernst, a very curious blue crocodile. Ernst goes around daydreaming ‘what ifs?’ He imagines things such as sand that resembles fudge, young grandmothers and large stars. The entire book continues in this manner until Ernst wakes one morning and realizes that he is extremely grateful for the life he actually has. ELL students can use this book to remember the life they have and how grateful we all should be for what we already possess.

Recommended teaching activity:

<http://www.elisakleven.com/teacher.html>

Create your own ‘what if?’ books and create stories to go along with them.



Kleven, E. (1997). *The Puddle Pail*. New York: Dutton Children's Books.
ISBN: 0525458034

WIDA Proficiency: Developing
Reading Level: 3.1
Interest Level: K-3
Hardcover/Paperback, 32 pages

Summary:

This is the second book featuring the character Ernst, a very imaginative crocodile. Throughout the story, Ernst and his brother Sol set out to find things to collect. His brother Sol collects object such as feathers, rocks and shells from the beach. Ernst decided that he rather collect things like the clouds and stars, and finally starts collecting puddles as he admires the reflection each produce. Sol does not agree with his collection and wonders what Ernst will be able to do with it. Ernst finally decides to draw the images he had seen in the puddles while using the water for his paintings. Sol admires the art and together they collect blackberries for breakfast. ELLs can appreciate the differences between the two brothers while witnessing the respect they maintain and seeing differences as something to appreciate in one another.

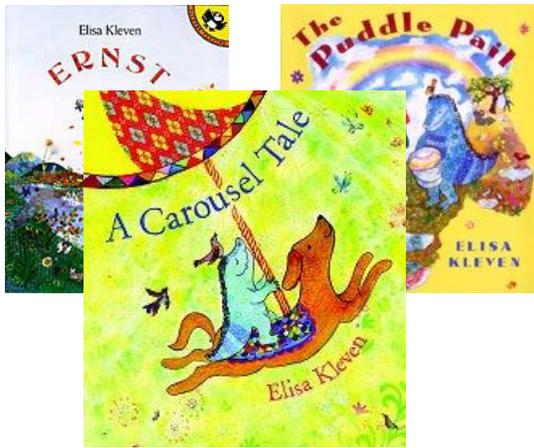
Recommended teaching activity:

<http://www.elisakleven.com/teacher.html>

What do you like to collect?

For an audio summary please visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1X74mlpTj0E>

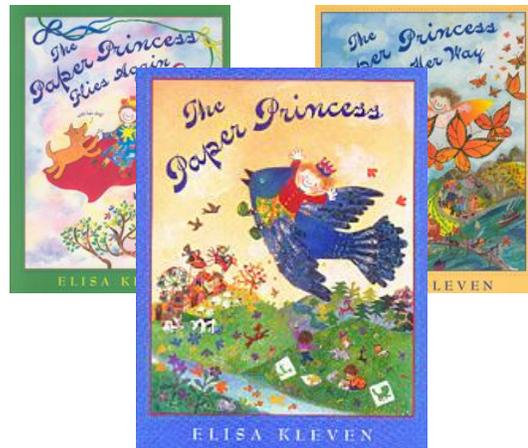


Kleven, E. (2009). *A Carousel Tale*. New York: Tricycle Press.
ISBN: 9781582462394

WIDA Proficiency: Developing
Reading Level: 2.6
Interest Level: K-3
Hardcover, 38 pages

Summary:

This is the third book featuring the character Ernst, a very creative crocodile. In this book he is asked to look over the tail of his favorite carousel animal after the carousel is locked up for winter and the tail was left aside. Ernst decides the tail looks too lonely in its plain, unattached version. He decides to decorate the tail and turn it into a bird knowing he is responsible to return the tail to the carousel in the spring. In the end, the carousel master is not upset and Ernst is able to find a branch in which they turn into a dog's tail to attach to the wooden dog on the carousel. This book can encourage ELLs to create something beautiful out of an object that may appear broken at first. They can appreciate the power of imagination.



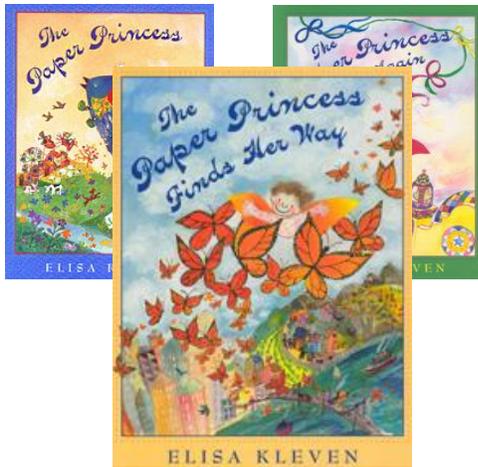
Kleven, E. (1994). *The Paper Princess*. New York: Dutton Children's Books.
ISBN: 0525452311

WIDA Proficiency: Developing
Reading Level: 3.2
Interest Level: K-3
Hardcover/Paperback, 40 pages

Summary:

This is the first book featuring a character which was drawn from paper. She is a princess created by a little girl who blows away in the wind. The story depicts the princess's journey to get back to her creator. While there is little hope and sometimes danger, the princess never loses faith and finally finds her way back home with the help of a blue jay. The story can lend itself to ELLs as motivation. The world can be scary and unpredictable at times, but we can always find ourselves safe at home. A second message one can take from this book is how a single object can be viewed by people in many different ways. In the story, this princess is a friend to her creator, an unfinished ruined doll to a girl, a piece of nest paper by a bird and a piece of drawing paper to a boy.

Recommended teaching activity:
<http://www.elisakleven.com/teacher.html>
What can you make from a box?

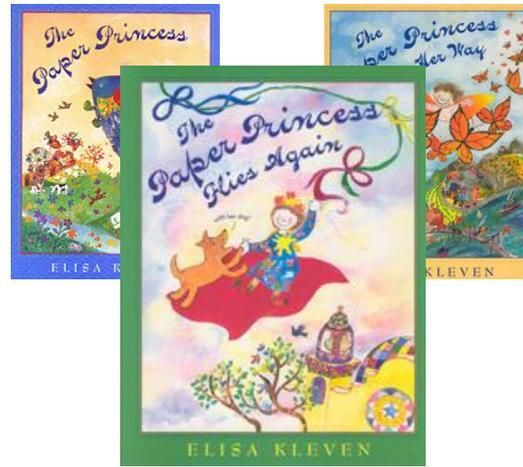


Kleven, E. (2003). *The Paper Princess Finds Her Way*. New York: Dutton Children's Books.
ISBN: 0525469117

WIDA Proficiency: Developing
Reading Level: 3.6
Interest Level: K-3
Hardcover, 32 pages

Summary:

This is the second book featuring the paper princess character. It continues from the home of the girl who had drawn her. The princess is now neglected as her creator has grown up and can no longer hear her toys speaking to her. The princess purposely jumps into the wind and finds herself in yet more dangerous situations while trying to find a new home. Again she is seen in many different ways from all she encounters and a young boy gives her wings. Butterflies come and save her from the Christmas tree in which she sat all winter and take her to a warmer place where she is discovered by yet another young girl who brings her home and loves her. This book can support an ELL who may have experienced great changes. The princess is looking for a place where she belongs and accepts life's changes.

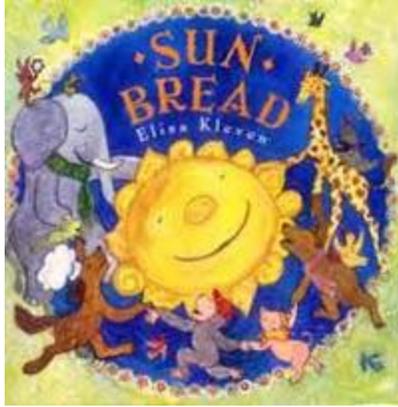


Kleven, E. (2005). *The Paper Princess Flies Again*. New York: Tricycle Press.
ISBN: 1582461465

WIDA Proficiency: Developing
Reading Level: 3.0
Interest Level: K-3
Hardcover, 32 pages

Summary:

This is the third and final book featuring the adventures of a princess doll. The story continues from the second book, with the doll living with a little girl in Mexico. The girl has also created a paper dog for the princess to have. The little girl loves her paper dolls and the paper dolls love her. The dolls try to find a gift for the girl and are swept up by the wind. Together, the princess and her dog find themselves in many more dangerous situations, but work together to find their home once again. This story could be particularly special to ELLs from Mexico. The little girl mentions some of the traditions they are preparing for the fiesta that night, including spicy chocolate and a piñata. This is also a story of teamwork, loyalty and friendship. The dolls have a feeling of belonging even far from home.



Kleven, E. (2001). *Sun Bread*. New York: Dutton Children's Books.
ISBN: 0525466746

WIDA Proficiency: Beginner

Reading Level: 3.3

Interest Level: K-3

Hardcover, 32 pages

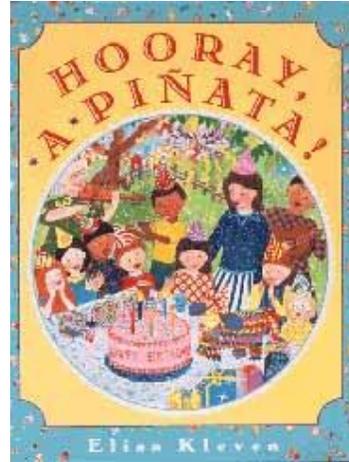
Summary:

This story is about a community of animals all snuggled away in their homes watching the winter conditions outside. The baker gets the idea of baking a loaf of sun-shaped bread to brighten everyone's spirits. The sun bread rises in the over and makes everything bright. All of the animals leave their homes and come enjoy the bread while singing, playing music, dancing and flying around. Suddenly it's warm out and the animals thank the sun for coming out. The baker bakes through the night and the next day the sun appears again. The baker decides to bake every time it is cold and grey. The entire book is written in poem. This book can be helpful to ELLs in many ways. It sends the message to keep your head up and look for the positive when things don't look well. It could also teach English phonemes, rhythm and intonation.

Teaching activity:

<http://www.elisakleven.com/teacher.html>

Bake bread with your students!



Kleven, E. (1996). *Hooray A Piñata*. New York: Dutton Children's Books.
ISBN: 0525456058

WIDA Proficiency: Beginner

Reading Level: 2.9

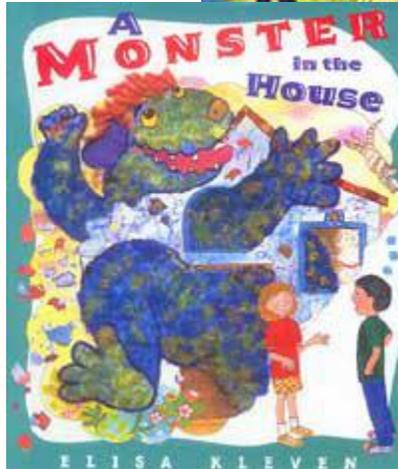
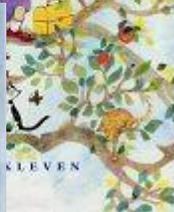
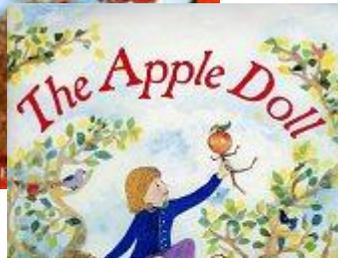
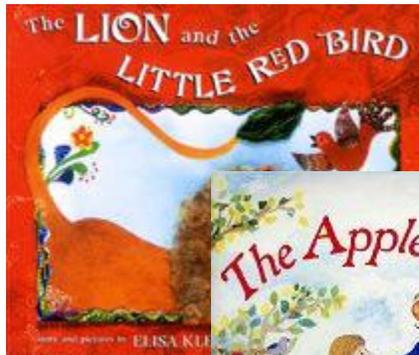
Interest Level: K-3

Paperback, pages 32

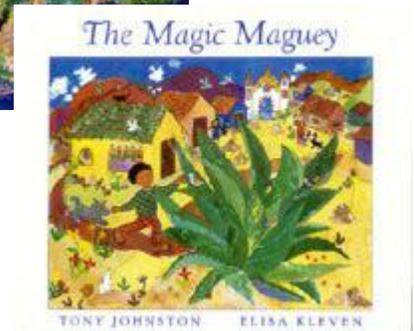
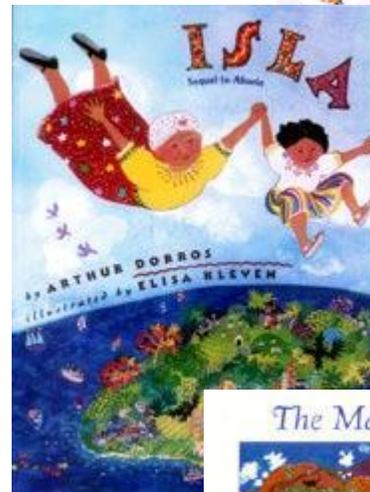
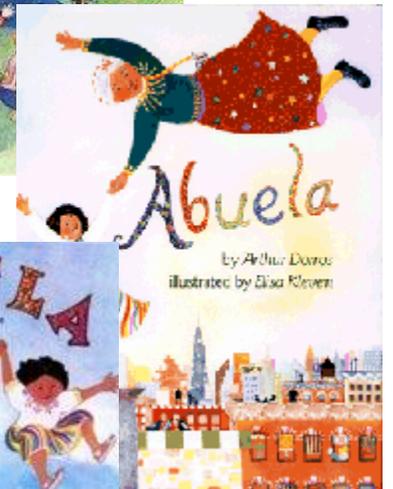
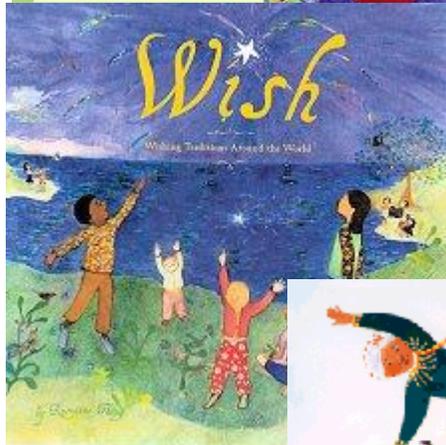
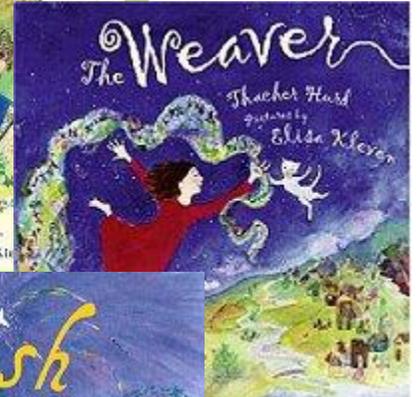
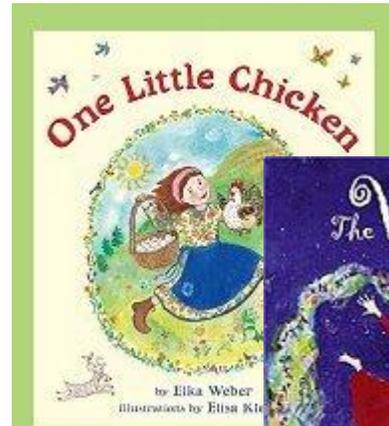
Summary:

The main character of this story is Clara. She has a best friend named Samson and they go to the store together to get a piñata for Clara's birthday. She picks out one shaped like a dog and she begins to treat it like a real dog. She takes him for walks, feeds him, and digs him in sand. When Samson reminds her that people will hit it at her party she becomes very sad. The day of her party Samson surprises her with a new piñata and warns her not to fall in love with this one, too. This book models for ELLs good friendship and clever solutions. It also connects to students the tradition which originated in Italy and is more popularly known in Latin America. There is a page in the back of the book which supplies some history of the piñata and customary materials used.

Elisa Kleven has several more published books:



Elisa Kleven has illustrated many books:



Additional books illustrated by Elisa Kleven:



To purchase any of the above mentioned books, please visit:

www.bankstreetbooks.com

www.amazon.com

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