

INTERACTIVE
READING GUIDE

***I Survived
Hurricane Katrina***

by Lauren Tarshis

In *I Survived Hurricane Katrina*, Barry and his family can't evacuate even though the Category 5 hurricane is headed directly for their home town of New Orleans. Now they're stuck in their house listening to the storm rage outside. Barry's parents assure him that everything will be fine and it was... until the levees break and the flood waters come in through the front door.

Help your child increase their reading skills by engaging in the literacy activities in this guide. Encourage your child to explore new words, make connections, and engage in conversations about the book. This guide will show you how!

Explore these activities with your child over many days. As your child becomes more familiar with the book, refer back to this guide for more activities you can do together and questions you can ask. Your child will be able to complete more activities as they progress through the book. Be sure to include friends and family in discussions about the book. Engage in discussions around *I Survived Hurricane Katrina*!

If you enjoyed this book, there are plenty more like it to read! Ask your local or school librarian for more exciting survival stories and historical fiction.

CREATE SUCCESSFUL READING HABITS

You can help your child look forward to reading time by following these three steps:

- 1. Help them get comfortable.** Make sure your child has a comfortable spot with good lighting. Provide a fan or a blanket if needed. Find a nice spot to sit or lie down. Especially active kids might appreciate a rocking chair or other active seating.
- 2. Give them a choice about what to read.** Make sure they have a selection of books available. Whenever possible, allow kids to pick for themselves. If you need suggestions, your local librarian will be happy to suggest additional stories.
- 3. Make it a daily habit.** Pick a time and keep it clear for reading. Turn off the phones and the TV. Try to read at the same time every day.

FIGURE IT OUT

The author of this story uses literal language and figurative language to bring her story to life. Literal language only uses facts and figures. Figurative language on the other hand uses comparisons and exaggeration to create feelings and create drama. Take a look at these figurative language examples from the first few pages of the story. Discuss with your child a way to say the same thing literally and decide which way improves the story.

Figurative language:







- Makes comparisons
- Exaggerates
- Gives inanimate objects human characteristics

Figurative Language	Page
"Almost tearing him to pieces"	2
"With every bit of strength in his body"	2
"It was just the wind shrieking. Even the sky was terrified of this storm."	3
"The splintered wood looked like teeth in a wide-open mouth."	3

As you continue to read, look for more examples of figurative language. How does it improve the story?

ASK QUESTIONS TO CHECK UNDERSTANDING

Whether you read this book with your child or they read it independently, it is important to pause at the end of each chapter to help children reflect on what they have read. Here are some prompts to help older readers reflect during and after reading:

-  This story starts with a cliffhanger! What questions does it bring up for you? How does it make you feel?
-  How does the author describe Barry's neighborhood in the Lower Ninth Ward?
-  Do you feel that people in New Orleans are taking the storm seriously? Why or why not?
-  What do you think is going to happen to Barry and his family? What do you think will happen to his neighbors?
-  Barry's situation keeps changing. What do you think is going through his mind? How would you feel if you were in his situation?
-  What do you think Cruz understands about what happens during the storm?

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Making personal connections with a story helps children deepen their understanding of what they've read and improves reading comprehension. This book is historical fiction and discusses the events of Hurricane Katrina. Use prompts like the ones below to start a conversation with your child.

- This story focuses on a real event, but the people involved are made up by the author. Have you read other stories that focus on events that happened historically? What did you think about them?
- Before reading this story, what did you know about hurricanes? What new facts did you learn from this story? What do you still wonder about hurricanes?
- Barry and his family made plans and preparations for Katrina. What kinds of preparations do you make when a storm comes your way? Have you ever experienced a tropical storm or hurricane? What was it like?

TALK ABOUT NEW AND INTERESTING WORDS

When children encounter new words, take a moment to talk about the words using child-friendly explanations. As kids improve their vocabulary, they become better readers and thinkers and are better able to express themselves. Here are some child-friendly definitions for some important words in the book:

shrieking (pg. 3)

When you **shriek**, you make a high-pitched cry or yell. Barry thought he heard his parents, but it was just the **shrieking** sound of the wind.

mandatory (pg. 13)

When something is mandatory, it is required by law or rules. Barry's family knows they will need to leave town because of the mandatory evacuation order.

scraggly (pg. 13)

Something **scraggly** is thin and ragged looking. The **scraggly** and thin grass was shaded by the giant oak trees.

ferocious (pg. 58)

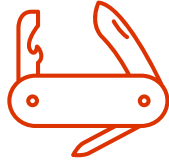
Something that is **ferocious** is savage, cruel, or aggressive. Cruz, the killer dog, had a **ferocious** bark that frightened Barry.

PICK TWO

Barry didn't have time to grab anything from his house when it began to flood. What if he'd had a moment to grab something? Using the list below, pick two things you think would have helped Barry and explain how he could have used them.



DOG FOOD



ARMY KNIFE



LIGHTER



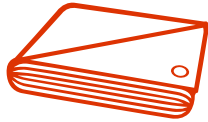
ROPE



CELL PHONE



AXE



TARP



MATCHES



FIRST AID KIT



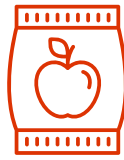
FLASHLIGHT



SLEEPING BAG



CANDY



PACKAGED FOOD



WATER BOTTLE



RAFT
