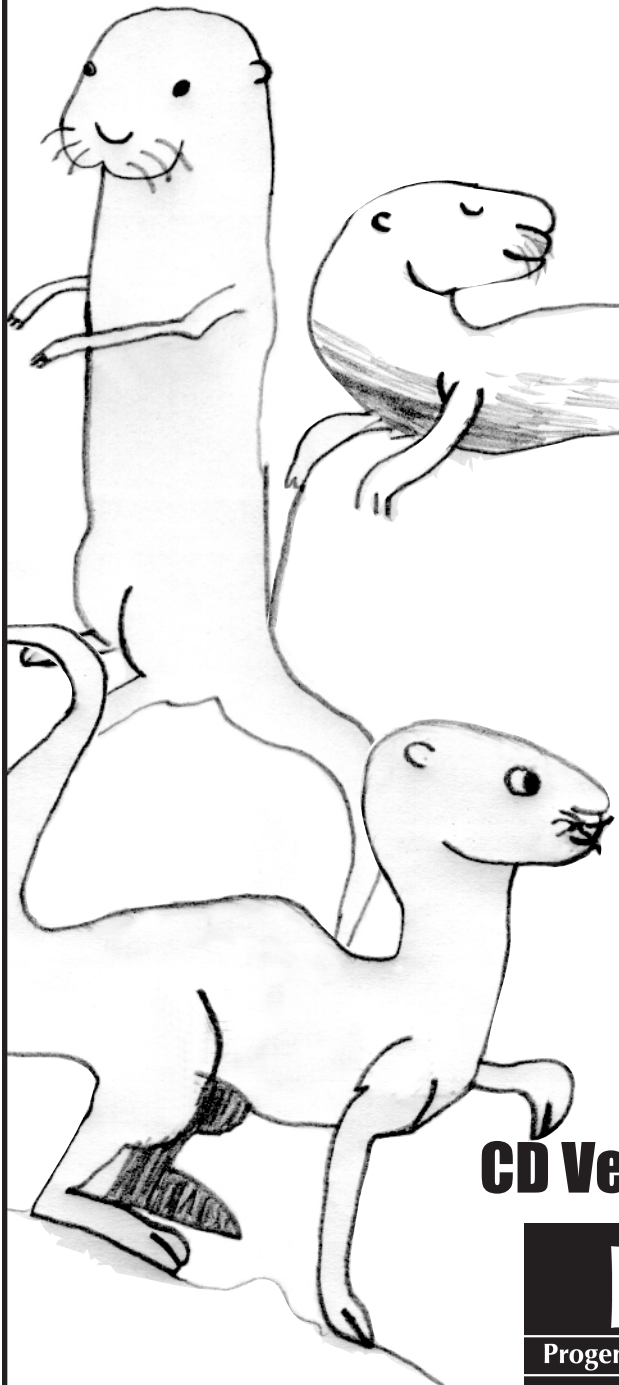


Prereader Study Guide

by Rebecca Gilleland

Oscar Otter

by Nathaniel Benchley



Henry & Mudge in Puddle Trouble

by Cynthia Rylant



CD Version

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Oscar Otter: **Synopsis**

Oscar Otter is a young otter who loves to play on an otter slide. One day a busy beaver chews down a tree that falls and blocks the slide. Oscar is annoyed. His father tells him to build another slide, but to stay close to the water so that other animals won't catch him.

Ignoring his father's advice, Oscar builds a secret slide way up to the top of the mountain. But when Oscar decides to explore, he gets lost and attracts the attention of a fox, a wolf, a mountain lion, and a curious moose.

This short, funny story will have children laughing as they learn the importance of following their parents' advice.

Henry and Mudge in Puddle Trouble: **Synopsis**

Here are three short stories for young readers about everyone’s favorite boy and dog duo, Henry and Mudge.

In “The Snow Glory,” Henry finds a flower growing outside. He wants to pick it, but his mother tells him to let it grow. He watches the flower every day, and the temptation to pick the Snow Glory soon becomes too much to bear. But before Henry can pick the flower, Mudge steps in in a surprising way.

In “Puddle Trouble,” Henry and Mudge venture out into the rain without asking permission. They find a huge puddle and immediately jump in. When Henry’s father goes outside to look for them, he finds Henry and Mudge covered with mud. How will Henry’s father react?

Finally, in “The Kittens,” the cat next door has a litter of five kittens. Mudge is fascinated by the kittens and treats them gently. When a new dog shows up in the neighborhood, Mudge senses the threat. Can he rescue the kittens before the new dog hurts them?

11. How does the beaver help Oscar escape?

The beaver makes a ramp with his tail, and Oscar slides over the tree and into the water. The other animals crash into the tree, just like Oscar did at the beginning of the story.

12. After Oscar slides to safety in the water, his father asks him why he is late for supper. Does Oscar tell the truth? What does Oscar say?

Yes, Oscar does tell the truth. He says he almost was supper, a fox's supper!

Dig Deeper:

13. Read these two verses to the student(s):

Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies. (Psalms 34:12–13)

The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful. (Proverbs 12:22)

What do these verses tell us? Try to say it in your own words.

These verses tell us to always tell the truth because lying is wrong.

14. What does Oscar's father mean when he asks, "Next time, will we try to be not quite so smart?"

His father means that Oscar should not think he is so smart or that he knows better than his father.

Dig Deeper:

5. Henry told Mudge that he *needed* the Snow Glory. Did he really *need* it or did he just *want* it?

Henry didn't really need the flower. He just wanted to have it.

6. What is the difference between *needing* something and *wanting* something? Name some things you want. Name some things you need.

When you need something it means you cannot do without it. For example, to be healthy and strong, you *need* to eat good food. When you *want* something it means you feel you must have it and own it. For example, you may *want* a new bike, but your old bike may work just fine.

7. Henry gets mad when Mudge eats the Snow Glory, but then he realizes that the Snow Glory wasn't his. It wasn't anybody's. It was just a thing to let grow. He forgives Mudge for eating the flower.

Is it easy to forgive someone who takes something you want? Why or why not?

Responses will vary.

8. Read this verse to the student(s):

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”(Luke 6:37)

What does this Bible verse teach us about forgiving?

It teaches us to not judge, nor condemn, and it tells us we need to forgive others if we want to be forgiven.