

the plot, opening the door for future discussion between child and parent or teacher.

In *Maddie in goal*, also by Louise Leblanc, the protagonist is told that "Girl's can't be goalies!" At least this is the message Maddie gets from her family—all except Grandma. Grandma encourages Maddie to be whatever she wants to be and to try her best. *Maddie in goal* shows us the special relationship a little girl and her grandmother can have. Maddie works hard at achieving her goal of being a goalie, but she also finds out that sometimes when you get what you most desire, in the end the cost may be too great.

Swank talk by Bertrand Gauthier portrays the unique closeness of twins. The parents discover they are unable to understand what their twins are saying and thus seek professional help. The younger beginning reader may become easily frustrated with parts of this novel, especially where the twins are having a conversation in "their" language. The vowels are interchanged, making the flow of reading difficult. Near the end of the book, the twins reveal how they are able to Swank Talk. More mature reader may take this vowel changing idea one step further and try their hand at creating secret messages.

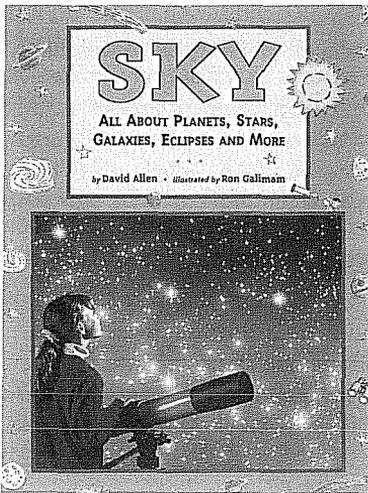
Overall, the books in this First Novel series by Formac are new, interesting and funny. They offer an easy bridge from bright picture books to full-length novels.

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ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS FOR CHILDREN

Sky—all about planets, stars, galaxies, eclipses and more. David Allen. Illus. Ron Galimam. Greey de Pencier/Books from OWL, 1993. 32 pp., \$5.95 paper; ISBN 1-895688-04-3. **Earth—all about earthquakes, volcanoes, glaciers, oceans and more.** Carol Allen. Illus. David Pearson. Greey de Pencier/Books from OWL, 1993. 32 pp., \$5.95 paper. ISBN 1-895688-06-X; **Air—all about cyclones, rainbows, clouds, ozone and more.** David Allen. Illus Gordon Bain. Greey de Pencier/Books from OWL, 1993. 32 pp., \$5.95 paper. ISBN 1-895688-08-6; **The nature book—animals, people, plants, and the earth we all share.** Sylvia Funston. Illus Daniel Sylvestre. Greey de Pencier/Books from OWL, 1991. 48 pp., \$7.95 paper. ISBN 0-920775-66-7.

The series of books, *Sky*, *Earth* and *Air*, is directed at the eight-to-twelve age group. The information is presented in a language that is age-appropriate but can also be enjoyed by younger children with parental assistance. These authors excel in the use of simple examples, analogies, and fun activities. Throughout are colourful comic-book style illustrations and diagrams with clear handwritten captions and explanations. These serve to demonstrate concepts, explain the activities, or simply enhance the text. An excellent feature is the printing of terminology relating to the subject under discussion in boldface style with the definitions incorporated into the text. The authors do not fall prey to oversimplification but rather use this method to help expand the reader's vocabulary.



In *Sky* the subject matter is more adequately expressed in the sub-title as the book's major focus is our solar system and activity in space. In *Earth*, our planet is examined from its birth to the changes it has undergone over the eons. The author explains land features, the importance of water, earthquakes and other natural phenomena. In *Air*, David Allen succeeds in making air a tangible topic by explaining air pressure, wind, temperature, cloud formation, and pollution. All books in this series provide good reference material for young readers.

As a further compliment to the study of our environment, we have an addition to the Green World Series, *The nature book*. This entertaining book encourages children to observe and explore the immediate world around them and to familiarize themselves with the plants, animals, and "green" concepts. Factual information is combined with a hands-on approach to learning by using puzzles, games, activities and experiments. Compatible gardening, animal behaviour, and other topics are addressed in simple, well-focused lessons. All the illustrations and diagrams are in black and white and the book is printed on recycled paper.

These books educate, promote scientific inquiry, and instill an awareness of our place in the world and are therefore highly recommended.

Jo-Anne Mary Benson is a reviewer for several magazines, newspapers and journals.

SEAFOOD FOR THOUGHT

Chung Lee loves lobsters. Hugh MacDonald. Illus. Johnny Wales. Annick Press, 1992. Unpag., \$14.95, \$4.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 1-55037-217-3, 1-55037-100-2;

Silversides: the life of a sockeye. Hubert Evans. Illus. Kim Lefave. Nightwood Editions, 1991. Unpag., \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-88971-152-6.

Chung Lee loves lobsters is a picture book set in Charlottetown P.E.I. In this story two young brothers follow Mr. Chung Lee down to the harbour expecting to see him cook and eat the live lobster he has just bought at their mother's restaurant. Instead, Chung Lee sets the lobster free explaining to the mystified boys that he cooked lobsters for many years to earn a living and now "... every month I buy one live lobster and give it its life to please the spirits of its ancestors that I have hurt."

I found this to be a gentle, touching story. Without being didactic it addresses the need to respect the lives of all creatures, and to avoid causing unnecessary