Children's Books


Elsa Geskus, Western Michigan University

Noise, noise and more noise! Sam and Laura pretend to be many characters or animals — always with appropriate sounds. Each selection, whether cow, monster, jack-in-the box or rooster is accompanied by a loud *moo, gr-r-r, pop,* or *cock-a-doodle-doo.* Sam and Laura’s mothers try persuading the children to be *quiet* animals. They visit a library, restaurant and store but each time are asked to leave. The mothers are very discouraged, but have an idea; they go to a park where Sam and Laura can pretend and make noise to their hearts’ desire. Primary children will easily identify with Sam and Laura — teachers might ask children to predict a noise Sam and Laura will make. The second reading could include children actually acting out the noises — at an appropriate decibel level!


Far more than a book of riddles, *Lightning Inside You* offers readers a detailed description of the art form of riddling in Native American cultures, a glossary of the tribes whose riddles are represented, and an extensive list of sources. Evocative black and white drawings enhance the text. Two riddle stories — in which one character challenges another with a story composed entirely of riddles — conclude the book. Individual riddles about animals include these intriguing items —

*What is it? A black stone with its head to the ground, listening to the sounds of the underworld.*

*Wonder, wonder, what can it be? An upside-down house with fifty thousand owners.*

*Who's the good-looking young person in the striped blanket?* — to which the answers are: a beetle, a beehive, a skunk. There's much here to delight and much to learn from. (JMJ)