

# Better Homes and Gardens®

MAY 2006  
www.bhg.com

Win  
\$25,000  
See page 68

Plant once for all-summer

## Get Gardening

New Annuals to Try Now  
Big Ideas for Small Front Yards  
Keep Cut Flowers Fresh Longer

## Show Off Your Style

Vintage Marries Modern  
Decorating Tips From a Pro  
Prints Are Back

## Surprise Family & Friends

What Mom Really Wants  
Outdoor Fun with Our Reading Club  
Gal-Pal Getaways

# color

plus:  
Enter Our Family Cook-Off

\$3.49 U.S./\$4.49 CANADA

0 5 >



0 14005 14060 9







OUTDOOR

# Reading adventures

Take your next *Better Homes and Gardens*® Reading Club meeting outside. Books and activities that take place outdoors will entertain all ages. BY BRIDGET NELSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDY LYONS

With summer approaching and the weather warming up, it's the ideal time to head outdoors and let imaginations flourish. Follow *Alice in Wonderland* outside for a magical meeting of the *Better Homes and Gardens*® Reading Club. Alice and other fictional characters, who have adventures in nature, can be the inspiration for reading and activities about the great outdoors.

Kids can keep their reading skills sharp during leisurely summer days. "Every child should be encouraged to read

through the summer, so when school starts they aren't playing catch-up," says Janet Carlson, a children's librarian at the John C. Hart Memorial Library in Shrub Oak, New York. The key is to keep it fun.

To get started, check out these outdoor-theme books and activity ideas that will keep kids excited about reading. Pack a reading club picnic basket (such as the ones on pages 154, 156, and 158), find a shaded spot, and set out on a reading adventure.



READING CLUB >> from 156

## ADOLESCENT READERS (12 and older)

Kids in this age group enjoy the challenge and excitement of epic novels and series, such as *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis. Books in this category also spark discussion about character values and choices. Asking questions such as “What would you have done in this situation?” is sure to engage everyone in your reading club gathering. The following activities help readers apply concepts from the book to their own lives.

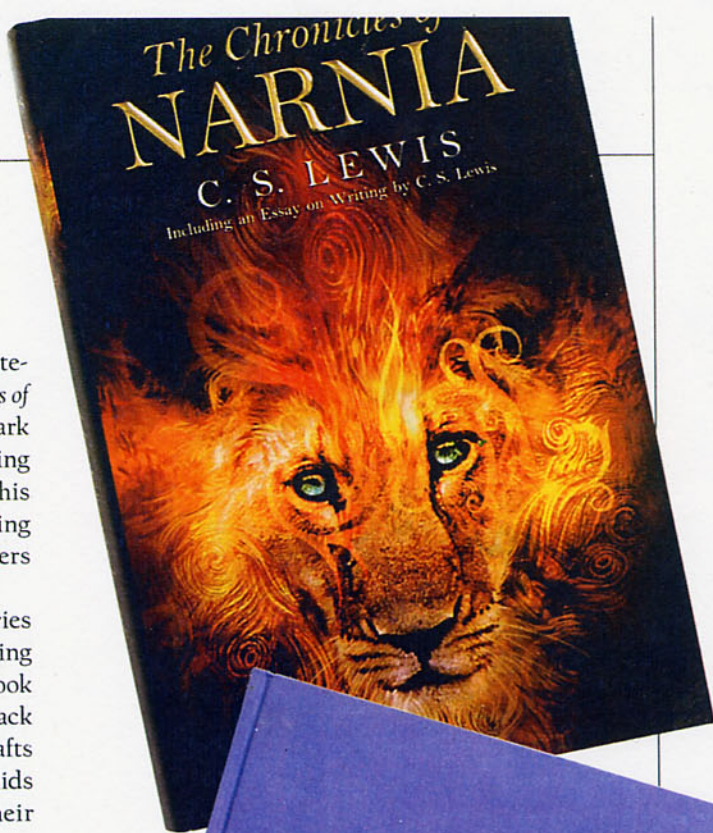
■ **ANIMAL ADMIRATION** When the children in Lewis’s series enter the land of Narnia, they discover magical talking animals. Have each child choose an animal; let him look around the outdoor reading spot for inspiration. Pack construction paper, glue, tape, scissors, and other crafts supplies to make a face mask of that animal. As the kids work, they can share which characteristics of their chosen animal that they admire.

■ **JOURNAL OF MAKE-BELIEVE AND REAL** Fantasy and reality are major concepts in Lewis’s series. Mark one section of a notebook “Fantasy” and another section “Reality.” Encourage kids to journal or draw about how fantasy and reality relate to their daily lives. Ask questions to get them started, such as “What do you daydream about?” or “What are some goals you want to make a reality?” Kids can use their journals long after the reading club meeting ends.

■ **SYMBOLS OF SELF** In the Narnia series, Peter is given a shield with a coat of arms. Kids can design their own coats of arms to represent themselves or their families. Talk about the ideas certain colors and images represent. For example, white is usually associated with peacefulness, and a lion represents courage.

Ask kids to choose characteristics they’re proud of, and brainstorm ways to put those into symbols.

■ **DREAM LAND** Dreams are an underlying theme in Lewis’s series. When the children are in Narnia, they can only remember their home of England as if it’s just a dream, and many scenes in Narnia are dreamlike. Ask kids to share different dreams they’ve had: the funniest, the scariest, or the strangest, for example. Start a fun discussion about where dreams come from—when we’re thinking about something before we fall >> on 160



With seven books in the series, *The Chronicles of Narnia* offer a multitude of ideas for activities and discussion. The series presents serious topics, such as ideas of trust, friendship, and betrayal—great conversation-starters for you and your adolescent reader.