

Steve Light Author Study

A Little about Steve Light:

Steve Light grew up in an enchanted place called New Jersey. He always loved to draw as a child and to this day always has a sketchbook with him. Steve loves to draw.

Steve always wanted to live in New York ever since he was seven years old and his family came to the city. They came to see Pete's Dragon and they walked through Rockefeller Center and he saw the beautiful Art Deco artwork. He then decided when he grew up that he would live in this great city surrounded by beautiful artwork. He now lives in New York with his wife and cat. They all love Manhattan and art. When he is not drawing and working on books, he is telling stories and teaching 3.5 to 4 year-olds at Temple Shaaray Tefila Nursery School.

Steve usually starts a book with something he likes to draw. All of his books are planned out with pictures first. Then the words to the story are written. He gets a lot of help with the words from his editor, Joan. Steve fills up sketchbooks and sketchbooks with drawings and even makes models of things that might help the story. Once the story is worked out in pictures and the words are written, he can start on the final art. Steve takes his pencil sketches and puts them on a light box. Then he inks them with a fountain pen, (Steve loves fountain pens.) After the drawing is inked, it is colored with chalk pastels and sometimes colored pencils and colored inks. Coming up with ideas and drawing in his sketchbook is Steve's favorite part, but he also likes seeing the characters come alive in the finished art.

Three Things You Might Not Know about Steve:

1. Steve loves fountain pens. Fountain pens are pens that have a metal nib or point and hold ink in the barrel. Steve has a large collection of forty pens! Each one draws differently, and he likes to pick out the right pen for each project he's working on.
2. Steve always has a sketchbook with him so he can draw. He even carries a small one in his pocket.
3. Steve loves to make things out of wood. Steve usually carves models of things from his books. He carved a wood model of the flying machine from Zephyr Takes Flight that is now hanging in the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art. If you visit there look for it in the library!

For each book I have given just a spark of an idea to help start your ideas flowing. Please make them your own and make them work for your class and curriculum. I hope it helps. I hope your class has as much fun exploring my books as I did in making them.

All of Steve Light's books are available at Steve's Amazon Author Page- Link below.

LINKS:

Steve's website: <http://stevelightart.com>

Steve's Wikipedia page: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Light

Steve's Amazon Author Page: <https://www.amazon.com/-/e/B001KHVDKI>

Candlewick Publishing: <http://www.candlewick.com/authill.asp?b=Author&m=bio&id=4668&pix=y>

The two links below have videos of my studio and me drawing and reading my books:

All the Wonders: <http://www.allthewonders.com/?s=Steve+Light>

KidLit TV: <https://kidlit.tv/?s=Steve+Light>

ALL SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS ARE CHILD FRIENDLY AND BOOK RELATED—SOMETIMES CAT OR FOUNTAIN PEN RELATED!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/steve.light.90>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SteveLight>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/stevlight/>

A List of Steve Light's Books

- The Shoemaker Extraordinaire Abrams Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0810942363
- Puss in Boots Abrams Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0810943681
- I Am Happy Candlewick Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0744585780
- The Christmas Giant Candlewick Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0763646929
- Zephyr Takes Flight Candlewick Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0763656959
- Have You Seen My Dragon? Candlewick Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0763666484
- Have You Seen My Monster? Candlewick Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0763675134
- Have You Seen My Lunchbox? Candlewick Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0763690687
- SWAP! Candlewick Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0763679903
- Lucky Lazlo Candlewick Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-0763688257
- The Bunny Burrow Buyers Book Pow! Publishing **ISBN-13:** 978-1576877524
- Trucks Go Chronicle Books **ISBN-13:** 978-0811865425
- Trains Go Chronicle Books **ISBN-13:** 978-0811879422
- Diggers Go Chronicle Books **ISBN-13:** 978-1452118642
- Planes Go Chronicle Books **ISBN-13:** 978-1452128993
- Boats Go Chronicle Books **ISBN-13:** 978-1452129006
- Cars Go Chronicle Books **ISBN-13:** 978-1452150673
- To be published in 2018:
- Blackbird, Yellow Sun Candlewick Publishing
- Builders and Breakers Candlewick Publishing



Steve Light



Steve drawing in his studio.



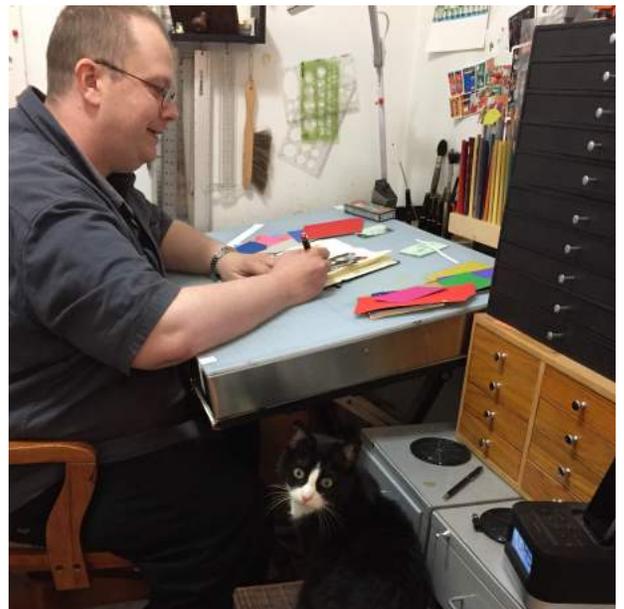
Steve Loves to visit museums and draw all the cool stuff there. It gives him lots of story ideas.

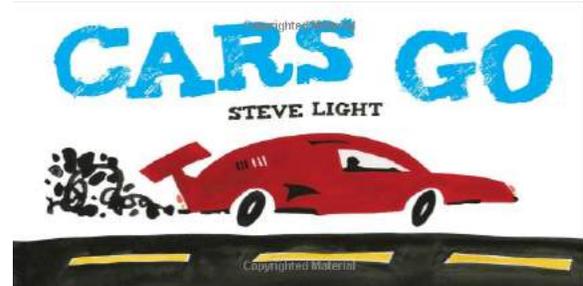
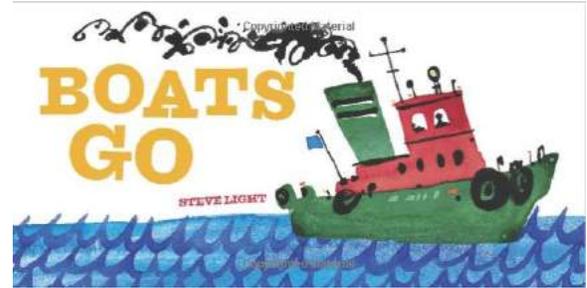
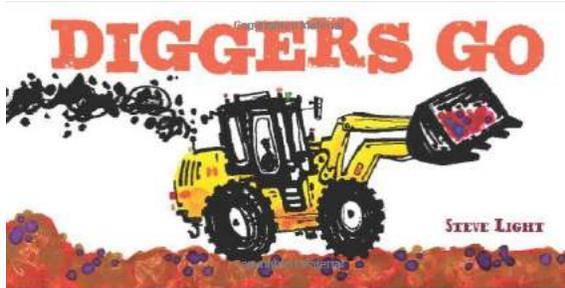
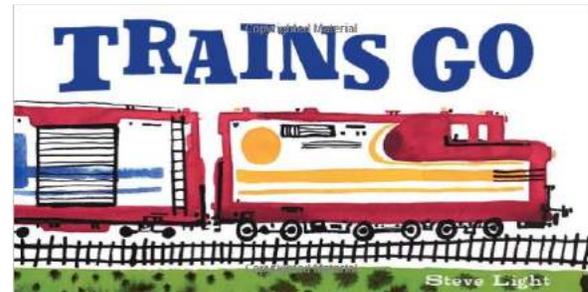
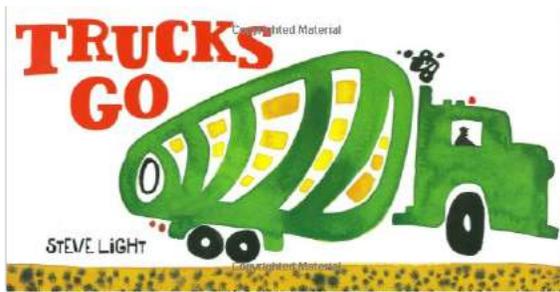


Steve loves to draw outside also.



This is a portrait Steve drew of himself. His cat Madie always sits on a little stool next to his desk when he draws.





“GO” Series

Six popular vehicles grumble, roar, and crunch their way through this very simple, graphically appealing board book. Perfect for the young vehicle enthusiast. Great for toddlers through Kindergarten. Although a board book, most kindergarteners love these because beginning readers can read them and have fun doing it.

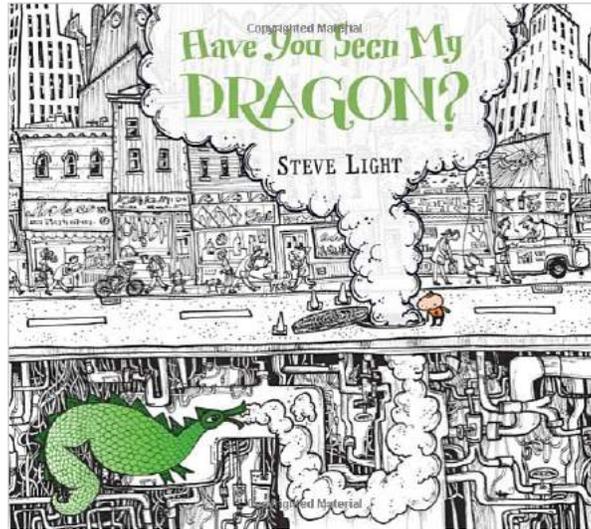
Did You Know? Steve Light painted the first pictures for Trucks Go on his mom’s kitchen table with only 4 colors? He wanted to recapture the joy he had drawing as a kid. All the “Go” books are painted in watercolor using brush and a stick dipped in black ink for the black lines. Steve found the stick on his mom’s front lawn.

Art: Paint with cars! Roll toy car wheels in paint and then roll it onto paper.

Math: Number your train cars and have the children put them in the right order before the train can leave the station. This is fun if each child is given a number and they have to line up to make a train. Then once in order they can Choo-Choo around the room.

Science: Boats Go is great for sink and float lessons. Toy cars are great to show gravity on a track. “Why does the car only go down the ramp, not up?”

Writing: Have children write using inventive spelling to come up with the sounds of the different vehicles. This is a great exercise for children who are learning the letter sounds.



Have You Seen My Dragon?

Enter a fascinating, ornately drawn cityscape and help a boy find his dragon while counting objects from hot dogs to traffic lights. Counting up to 20! There are lots of things to find and explore in this book especially relating to the city.

Read this Author's Note for how Steve Light came up with the idea for this book: Authors Note: http://www.candlewick.com/book_files/0763666483.ban.1.pdf

Did You Know?: This whole book was drawn with one pen. A fountain pen. It was then colored with fountain pen inks. Pssst- Here's a secret-On the six monkeys page one of the monkeys is stealing the keys from the zookeeper using a stick! He escapes and can be seen on the back of the dust cover on the top of a store that sells fountain pens. Look for him he is tiny! The monkeys are snow monkeys, that's why they don't have tails.

Art: Have children draw city scenes and only color one thing that is repeated many times. How many times did they repeat that item?

Social Studies: Does your class live in a city? How is your city different from the city in Dragon? How is it the same? Can you hide paper dragons throughout the school for children to find? Look for all the people working? What jobs do you see?

Math: Count! There is so much counting in this book that can spill out into the classroom. On the seven boxes page boxes are getting delivered in a building. Have children deliver boxes to children in the classroom. Tell them how many boxes each child gets. Hide a dragon in one box-who ever gets the dragon delivered to them gets to deliver the boxes next.

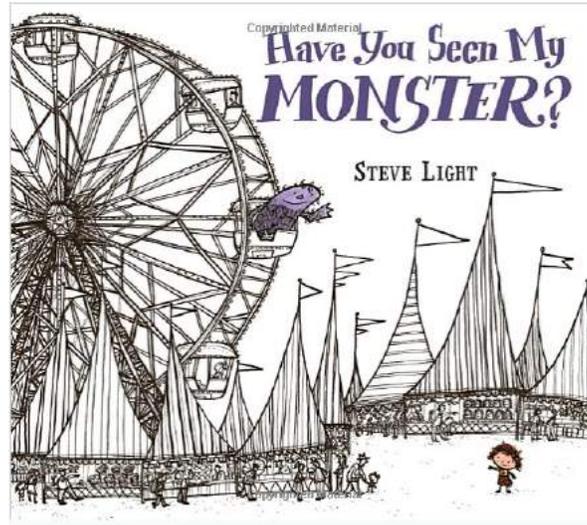
Science: Dragon's breath. Make dragon's breath by adding a small amount of dried ice to water. {Be careful dry ice can burn bare skin-this is a teacher supervised experiment NOT for children to play with} This can pair nicely with a unit on solids, liquids and gas.

Writing: If you had a mystical pet what would it be? If you lost your pet where do you think it would hide?

Links:

Candlewick activity kit: http://www.candlewick.com/book_files/0763666483.kit.2.pdf

Authors Note: http://www.candlewick.com/book_files/0763666483.ban.1.pdf



Have You Seen My Monster?

A little girl gallivants through a county fair, searching for her furry friend. Readers will surely spot the friendly monster as well as twenty shapes, identified here by their proper names—trapezoids, ellipses, kites, and more. There are 20 different shapes to find. The geometric shapes are the same shapes found in the Montessori shape cabinet—from Steve’s years teaching at a Montessori school.

Did You Know?: Steve visited a real Country Fair in the Berkshires where there was a real Oxen Pull! This a contest to see who has the strongest Ox. Each Ox has to pull a sled with weight on it, they keep adding more weight till they can’t pull it any more. How many building blocks can each child in your class pull? Count them! Make a chart. This is a great way to integrate gross motor into the classroom.

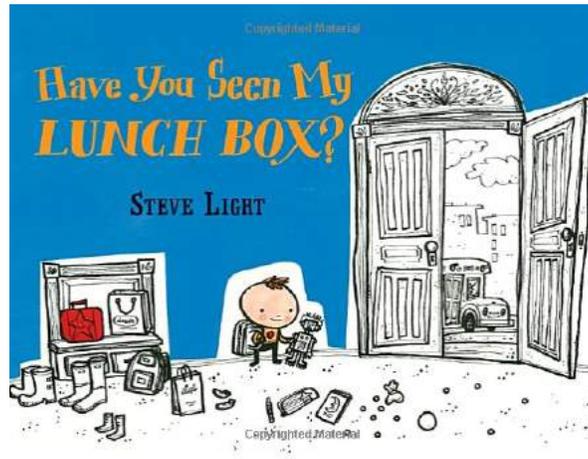
Art: Drawing shapes is always fun. Take a “spin” on the ferris wheel—Try doing “Spin Art” in an old salad spinner then cut the art into different geometric shapes. Draw your own roller coaster.

Social Studies: There are different people in the side show, like the bearded lady. Talk about how everyone is different and alike. Everyone deserves our love and respect. When doing the shape scavenger hunt below pair up kids to help each other.

Math: Shapes! 20 of them! Learn them all. Shape Scavenger Hunt! Download the activity sheet at Candlewick Publishing’s website and hide shapes around the class room or school. Children can check off the shapes they found on the check list. Here is the link: http://www.candlewick.com/book_files/076367513X.kit.1.PDF

Science: The fun house has a hall of mirrors. Talk about reflective and non-reflective and translucent material. Using small mirrors and plasticine to prop them up how many times can you reflect a beam of light from a flashlight? You can magically transform a brown paper bag from opaque (light not being able to pass through) to translucent (letting light through) by rubbing oil on the bag. Hold it up to the light before and after to see the different amount of light let through.

Writing: What is your favorite ride? Write about your experience at a country fair or theme park? If you were to invent your own park ride what would it be? Draw a picture of it.



Have You Seen My Lunchbox?

It's almost time for school, and one small boy's things are strewn all over. Can he collect everything he needs in time to hop on the bus? This is a fun search and find board book for younger children helping them learn their colors.

Did You Know?: Steve hand painted the colored papers used in this book? The black lines were drawn with fountain pen. Steve had a Snoopy and Evil Knievel lunchbox growing up. They were made of metal then!

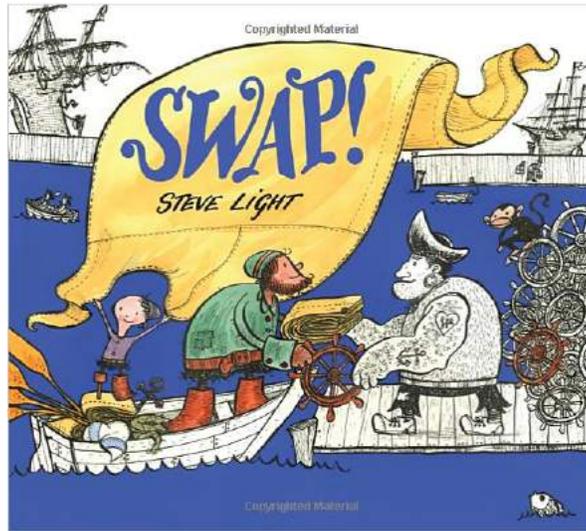
Art: Make your own colored papers and collage them. Leave some areas white to draw on, then draw with black ink in those areas. Make the black ink drawing as complicated as possible.

Social Studies: This book is great for children just starting school. Discuss what they do each morning to get ready for school? Have they ever lost something? What color is their lunchbox? Graph it.

Math: How many lunch boxes are in your classroom? How many pairs of socks is the class wearing today? Graph it. Talk about how a pair is two. If ten kids have socks then there are twenty socks.

Science: Would a toy robot freeze in the refrigerator? What does freeze and where? The little boy draws with chalk on the pavement. Make your own chalk! Using child safe pigment powder, talc, calcium carbonate, soap flakes and water. You can even find your own natural pigments and grind them up. This is a great tutorial video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsajhz6Z7Jg> I have made this with 4-5 yr olds working one on one and it is great fun and you can name your own colors.

Writing: What is something you have lost that you miss? List the things you do to get ready for school in the order that you do them.



SWAP!

In a young scalawag's first tale of bartering, a peg-legged youngster sets out to help his captain repair his vessel. One button for three teacups. SWAP! And so it goes until his friend's ship is all fixed up. Great fun involving pirates, trading, mermaids and monkeys.

Did You Know?: Steve could not stop thinking about the blue color of the water in this book. He even plotted out how much blue would be used on each page. Steve considers the blue color one of the characters in the book! The blue color is called Smalt Blue.

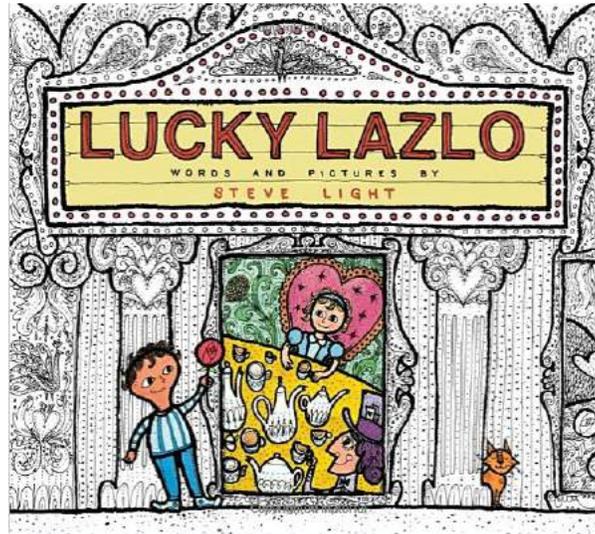
Art: How many shades of blue can you mix? Give each student some blue, white, and black, how many different shades can they mix?

Social Studies: People used trade for things they needed. Why don't we trade anymore? What is a good trade? make a classroom bazaar and trade things in the classroom.

Math: If I have 6 buttons and trade 2 buttons for 1 lego, how many buttons to I have left? This book is fun to act out asking math questions along the way.

Science: Sink and Float. What makes a boat float or sink? Why if I put a hole in the bottom of a boat does it sink? Why does a sail move a boat on the water but not the land? Make small sail boats and blow them across the water basin.

Writing: Have you ever helped a friend? How? If you had a ship where would you sail to?



Lucky Lazlo

Lazlo is in love. He selects the perfect red rose and sets off to the theater to present it to his beloved, an actress currently starring in *Alice in Wonderland*. When a naughty cat snatches the flower, Lazlo gives chase. Through the stage door, round and round backstage, through the orchestra pit they go, wreaking havoc along the way. Steve's author's note tell of all the theater superstitions that actors and theaters believe in. Steve hid pictures of them through out the book.

Did You Know?: Steve loves to draw with fountain pens. He uses them to draw most of his books. Lazlo was drawn with a special nib (the metal point that you draw with), it produces the thick and thin lines you see in the book. It was made by his friend Richard Binder who repairs old fountain pens. Steve told him what kind of line he wanted to draw Lazlo with and Richard made a nib with a bend in it. He called the nib a Hane Fude Nib.

Art: Draw a rose using only red and black. Try using only very thick lines and very thin lines. Experiment with a Sharpie Magnum marker first for the super thick lines then a Sharpie Extra Fine marker for the thin lines now use red watercolor to color your rose.

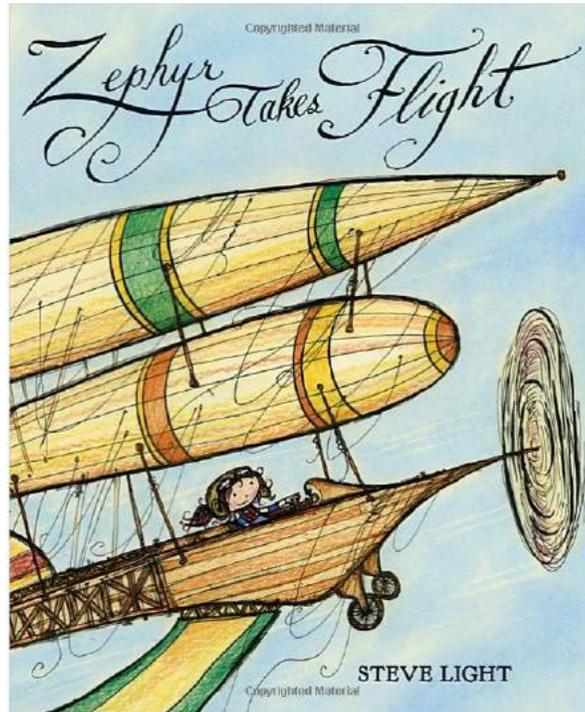
Every play that is put on needs costumes for the actors. Draw some costumes for your favorite characters. Paint your designs on some old large T-shirts-act out your story.

Social Studies: Talk about all the people that work in the theatre. It is much more then just the actors on the stage. Lots of people help behind-the -scenes, who are some people in their lives that help them "behind-the -scenes" of their lives?

Math: How many Alice in Wonderland characters can you find?

Science: What color is the flower? Change the color of carnations by placing white carnations in water colored with food coloring. In a few days the flowers will change color to match the water. Talk about how the plant sucks water from the ground from its roots just like we drink from a straw. In plants it is called transpiration. Water evaporates from the leaves pulling more water up the stem.

Writing: Write a play. How many acts are there? How many characters? Make a playbill.



Zephyr Takes Flight

Zephyr is a girl who loves airplanes. But when Grandma, Daddy, and Mom are too busy to play airplane with her, Zephyr's excess enthusiasm gets her sent to her room — where she discovers a secret door that leads to the most wondrous place she's ever seen! This is a great fantasy that will empower girls and boys to help others.

Did You Know?: Steve sometimes builds models for his books. For Zephyr he built a wooden model of the flying machine Zephyr flies. It is hanging in the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in MA. If you visit there look for it in the library.

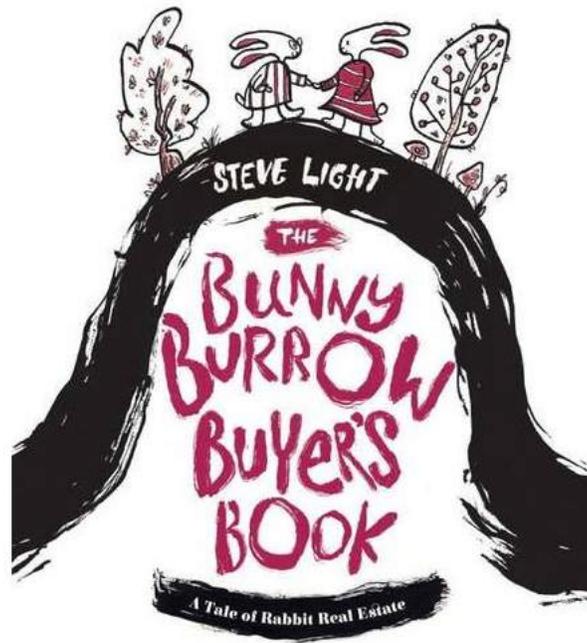
Art: Draw! Invent! Flying machines! Make flying machines out of junk and found materials just like Zephyr in the book.

Social Studies: How do you think the little pig who can not fly feels? Would you help him to fly with his family like Zephyr?

Math: Zephyr does a triple loop-de-loop. Single, double triple these are other number words. What are other number words? First, second, third.

Science: The science of flight. Make paper airplanes-why do they fly? Why do helium balloons fly but not the ones you blow up with your breath?

Writing: Zephyr loves airplanes, what do you love? If you flew to a distant magical land, who would live there? How would you get there? Who would you meet?



The Bunny Burrow Buyer's Book

This saga of a swiftly increasing family of rabbits in search of a new place to call their own. Rendered in exquisitely detailed artwork featuring cut-outs and gatefolds. A perfect book for small children whose families are moving to a new home.

Did You Know?: Steve painted this whole book on one long single piece of paper? It was 6 feet long. The black brushstroke that acts as the ground line is one single 6 foot long brushstroke! This book also only has two colors black and red.

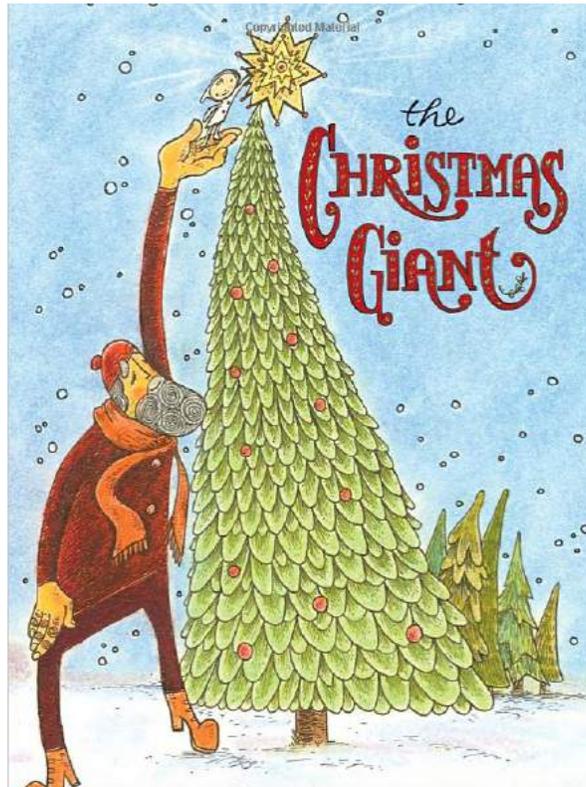
Art: Try to make your own very long brush painting on a very long piece of paper. Make one brushstroke that goes from one end to the other. Then draw with a pen making the brushstroke into the ground line for castles, forts or anything you can think of. What if your brush stroke was blue and was water with boats on top and fish below.

Social Studies: This is great for children that are moving or have moved. Talk about where they moved from/ to discuss how people live in all different places and homes.

Math: Count the baby bunnies! There are a lot of bunnies in this book.

Science: Talk about how some animals live underground. Make some burrows out of clay or paper-mache.

Writing: Write about a place you would like to live or move to with your family. How many siblings do you have, tell a short story about each of them.



The Christmas Giant

Humphrey is a giant, and Leetree, his best friend, is an elf. Together they love making wrapping paper for all of Santa's presents. But this year Santa has asked them to grow a Christmas tree, and the pair couldn't be more excited!

Did You Know?: Humphrey is a compound of two old english words meaning giant and peace. From the old english name Hunfrith. That is why the giant has that name. Leetree is a name Steve made up.

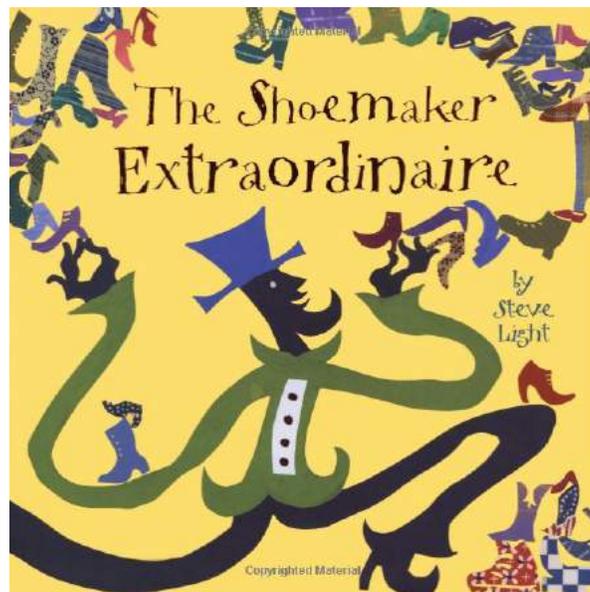
Art: Humphrey and Leetree make wrapping paper. Make some wrapping paper by printing found objects. You can cut sponges into shapes or carve potatoes to stamp. Even the ends of paper towel rolls make great stamps. Wrap some rubber bands around the paper towel roll for stripes or ink up the wheels of a toy car to make stripes!

Social Studies: Talk about friends. How they help each other. How some people are good at some things that others are not so good at.

Math: Measure how big or little things are in your classroom. Talk about symmetry and make snowflakes, using folded paper and scissors.

Science: Grow some seeds! What do plants need that Humphrey and Leetree gave their christmas tree? Water, sun, soil and love.

Writing: Make predictions of what you think is in the box BEFORE you finish the story. Where do you think the first tree went?



The Shoemaker Extraordinaire

Hans Crispin, a traveling shoemaker extraordinaire, has a very unusual talent. When he arrives in a village, he crafts one-of-a-kind shoes for the villagers to make their lives easier and more fun. But in town, the local cobbler becomes jealous and tricks Hans into paying a visit to a hungry giant, claiming he needs a new pair of shoes. But what the giant really wants is to have Hans for dinner!

Did You Know?: This was Steve's first picture book. Even though Puss in Boots was published first. The original idea was for it to be an alphabet book and a pop-up book! The artwork is cut paper and paper printed using the bottoms of shoes!

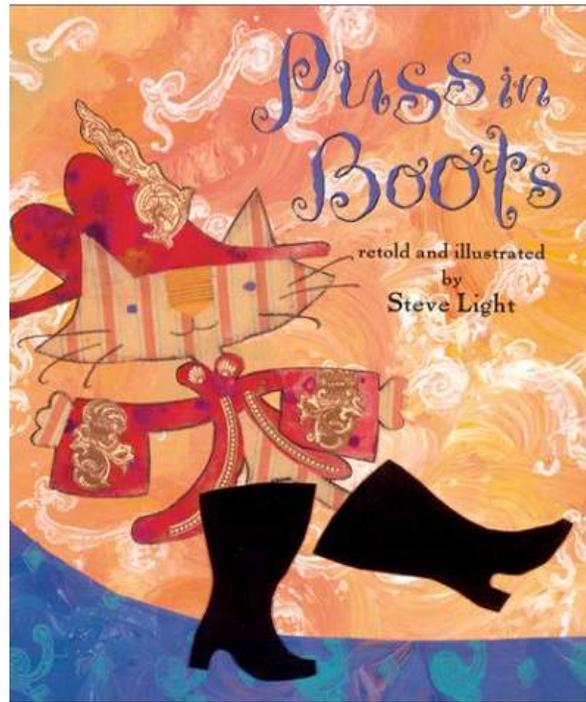
Art: Make your own printed paper using shoes! Get some old shoes. Brush paint on the bottom. Then stamp the painted sole of the shoe onto paper. There are so many different designs on the bottoms of shoes. Once your printed papers are dry, collage a picture with them.

Social Studies: Talk about how everyone is different and unique. Sometimes people get jealous of others. What are different ways you can help others.

Math: Make a chart of who has laces on their shoes and who does not. Talk about a pair being 2. Count how many shoes are in the book! How many shoes does everyone in the class own add them all together.

Science: Traction. Shoes verse socks. Have one child wear shoes, the other only socks. Have children try to move them from their spot. Who sticks to the floor and who slips?

Writing: If you could get a pair of shoes from Hans what kind of shoes would they be? Where do you think Hans goes next? What kind of shoes does he make first?



Puss in Boots

When a miller leaves his son nothing but a cat, the young man's prospects don't look promising. But Puss has an outrageous plan for turning her master from pauper to prince. Make way for the Marquis of Carabas —and the wildest, boldest, most enterprising cat of them all!

Did You Know?: Puss in Boots was one of Steve's favorite stories growing up. He had two different versions. It is fun to look in the library at all the different versions of the story. The first written version was published in 1550! In most versions the cat is male.

Art: Make a collage out of fabric and painted papers like the artwork in the book. Design your own pair of boots. The Ogre turns into a lion then a mouse in the story. Draw an animal you would like to turn into like the Ogre.

Social Studies: Talk about caring for pets. What kind of town does Puss in Boots live in? How is it different from the one you live in?

Math: Map the route that Puss takes. How far a distance did he travel? Could you travel this distance? Measure the students stride. Graph the sizes of each students steps. How large of a step would Puss take?

Science: People walk on two legs. Are there any another animals that walk on two legs? What creatures walk on more then two or four legs?

Writing: If you could have a pet that does things for you what kind of pet would it be? If you faced an Ogre what would you do?