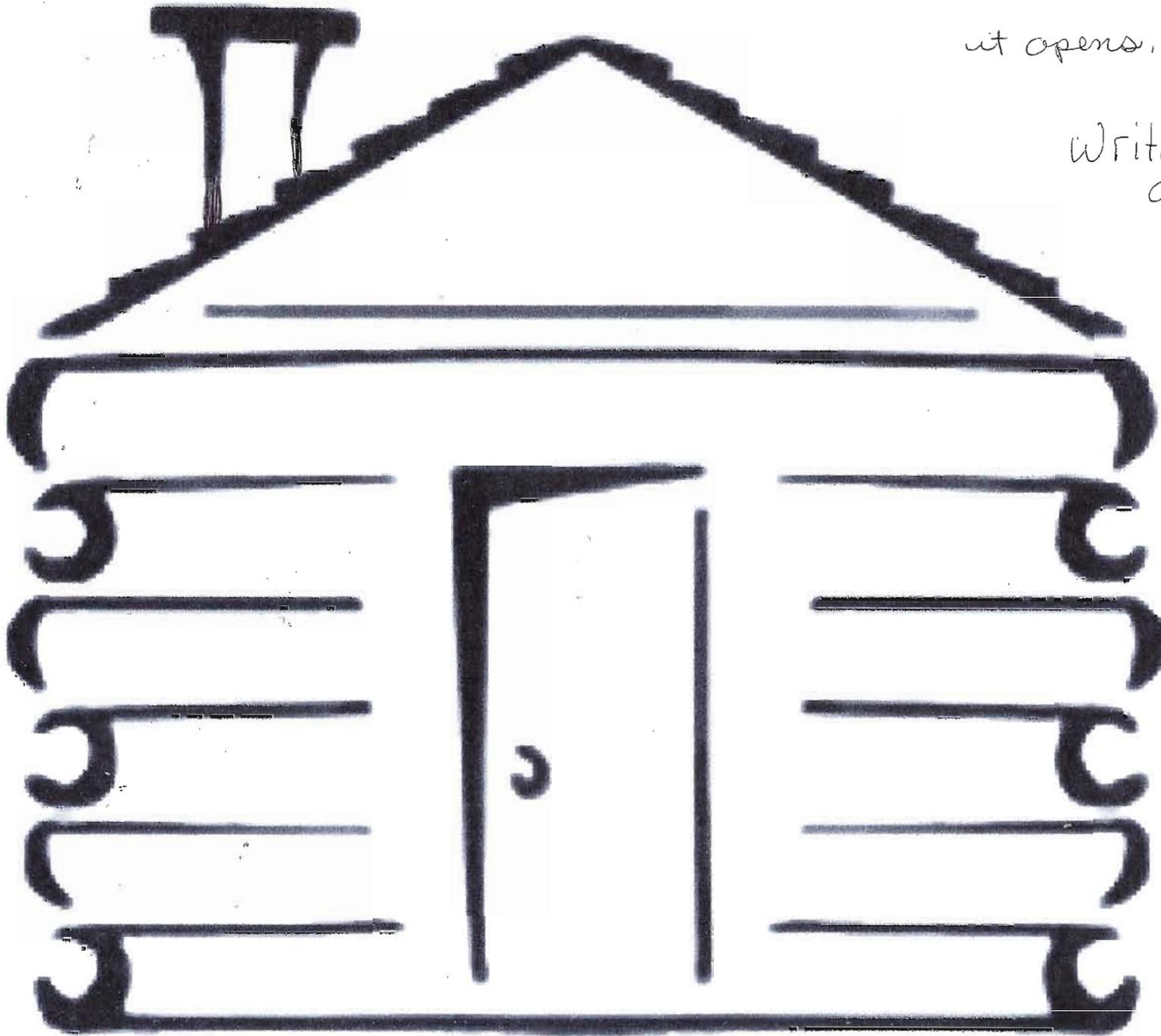


Run off on Brown  
Construction  
Paper

Cut out door, so  
it opens. Put child's photo  
in Door way.

Write name on line  
above door.

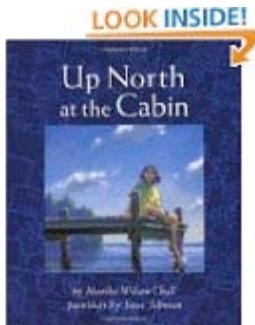


Diane's column





Lessons and Ideas to go with the book *Up North at the Cabin*  
by Marsha Wilson Chall



**The Gist:** A young girl goes up to her grandparents cabin to spend some time with them during the summer.

**Why I LOVE It:** Chall conjures up special thoughts of my favorite childhood memories, and although she is writing about a lake in Minnesota it could be a cabin located just about anywhere and certainly "painted pictures" in my mind of special summers up north in Wisconsin.

Her adept use of language brings to life the local flora and fauna as viewed through the eyes of a young city girl...*"a moose stands like a house on stilts..."* and *"cabins are built with logs like pretzels."* There is no real story line, you just flow through this young vacationer's sweet summer as she baits her fishing pole with *"peanut butter and worm sandwiches"*, canoes *"through the wilderness"* seeming to hear the drums of the long since silenced Indian drums or thrills at slicing through the *"silver waves"* while waterskiing.

The textured oil paintings by Steve Johnson add to the lazy-hazy days of summer, suggesting past and shadowed memories, a recollection of quiet times and the mysteries deep within the cool woods that will warm her when *"frosted windows cloud the sun."* All of this happily takes you into the book, especially if you too have enjoyed and savored these same special moments as I have.

The other reason I love it, is my daughter Kelli bought me this book while she was on a class trip.



### Storytelling Tips:

Before you begin the story, tell the children to close their eyes and picture their favorite place to go for the summer. Then have them open their eyes and toss a beach ball or some other summery object and whoever is holding it gets to share their favorite place to go.

Show a map of the United States and ask the students where their state is. Now ask them if anyone knows where Minnesota is, then show them where the state is and tell them a little bit about it.

Ask the children what they think "sunnies" are on the page that's across from the picture where the family is eating. (I believe she is referring to eggs sunny side up.)

The paintings are just lovely in this book. Choose 3 to 5 and ask the children, which is their favorite and why they chose it. My personal favorite is the one where the girl is on the dock in her bathing suit. She is looking out at the sparkling water. I often did that as a little girl. I love the way the sun shines like diamonds glittering on the water.

Ask for a show of hands to see how many children have gone to a cabin or a lake. You can graph these results as well as several other things in the book



### Magic Tricks:

Using a change bag, I show the children that it is empty. I pass out several worms. I ask them what they think will come out of the bag. We say the magic words: ***Happy summer vacation!*** or ***Up North at the Cabin*** and I produce a fish puppet that helps me do whatever I want him to do like introduce the story, or review parts of the book etc.

Minnesota is known for the loons that cry out with their haunting calls especially in the evening. I bought one of the Audubon stuffed birds that make bird sounds. I put it in my red box or you can also use a duck pan.

I show the children that the box/pan is empty, I sprinkle in some silver glitter, shut the box/put the lid on; we all call out like a loon and then I produce the stuffed bird who answers our call when I squeeze it.

### **Writing Extension:**

Make an Our Summer Class Book where your students trace and complete the sentences: *My favorite place to go for the summer is...* and *My favorite thing to do during the summer is...* Click on the link to view/print a copy to make with your class/child.



**Art Project:** Run off a copy of my master of a log cabin. Make a sample so that you can show your students how to cut the door so that it opens and shuts.

To make it more of a keepsake, take a photo of your students wearing summer attire, print them off and have them glue "themselves" inside the cabin, coming out of the door.

Students should write " \_\_\_\_\_'s cabin" on the line above the door. If you want, you can have children glue skinny pretzel sticks to the lines on their cabin as the simile described cabins in the story.

**Skill Sheets:** I've designed 6 fun skill sheets that incorporate different standards and skill levels, themed around the story.

Our Summer

Class Book

By

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My favorite place  
to go during the  
summer is

Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

My favorite thing  
to do during the  
summer is

Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

My Summer

Book

By

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# Graphing Time

Have you ever gone to a cabin?

	
yes	no



# Graphing Time

Have you ever visited a lake?

	
yes	no



# Graphing Time

Have you ever seen or heard a loon?

	
yes	no



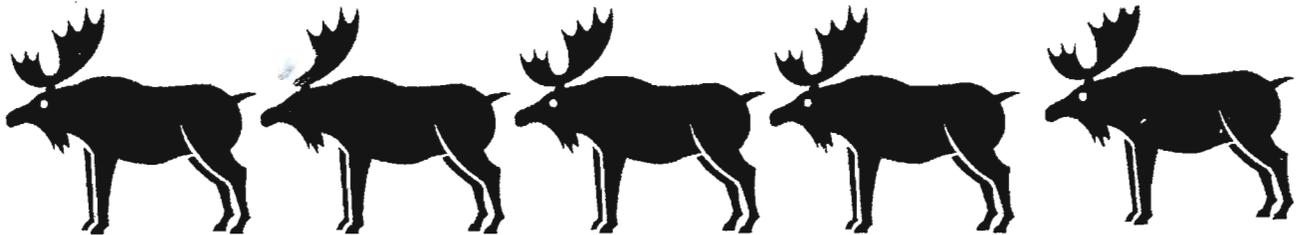
# Graphing Time

Have you ever gone fishing?

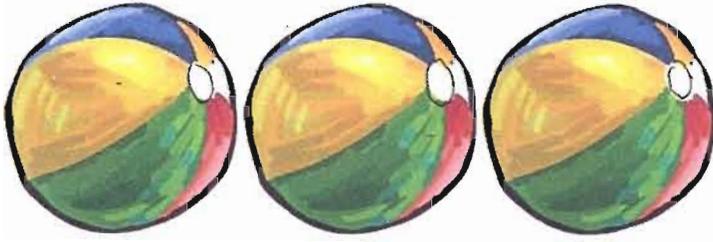
	
yes	no



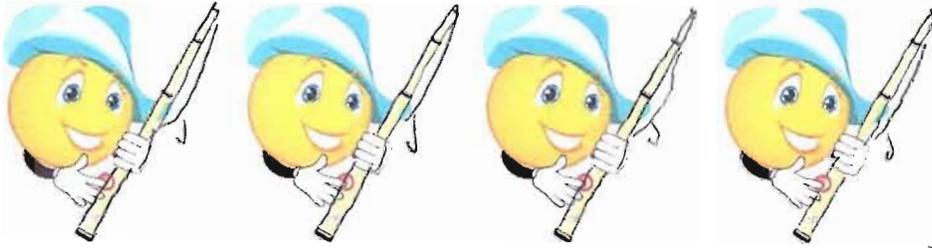
There is a spy in each row. (One that is different.) Find it and “zap” them with an X.



Count how many and then write the number on the line.



\_\_\_\_\_



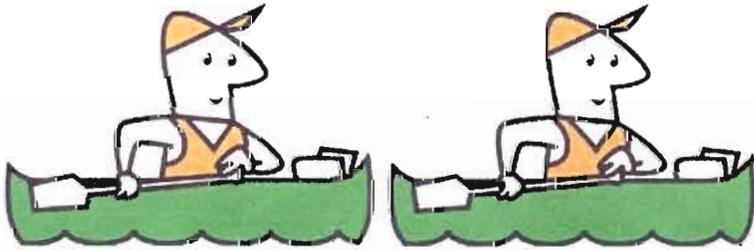
\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

Put an X by the rows of things that were NOT mentioned in the story.

\_\_\_\_\_

TRACE and then WRITE the words from the story. Put them in alphabetical order as you write them.

cabin

toons

dolphin

canoe

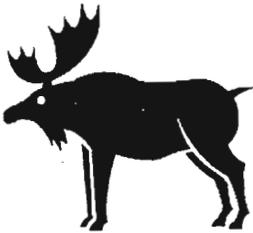
moose

skiing

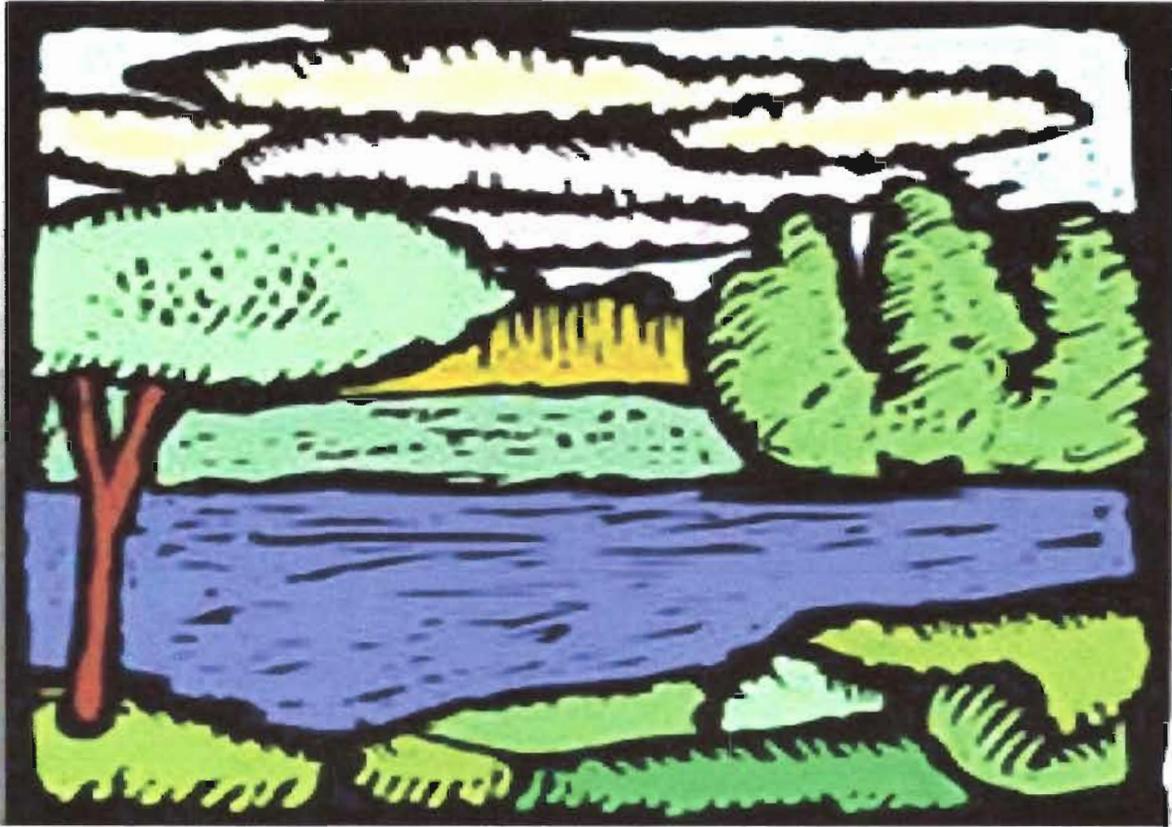
fishing

swimming

TRACE to pre-write.  
Use a DIFFERENT color for each row and  
TRACE the lines from LEFT to RIGHT.



Send a postcard to a friend. Cut out the rectangles. Glue them back-to-back over an index card, and write something. Put a stamp on it and mail your postcard to a friend.



Dear  
I am having fun this summer.  
I am

What are you doing?  
I miss you.

Your Friend,



The little girl has been hiking in the woods.  
Get her back to the cabin. There is more than one way.  
How many can you find?

