

## Playing School - for Hannah, who has always (since she was 3) played school



### Titles:

*Mice Make Trouble* by Becky Bloom  
*Teacher's Pets* by Dale Anne Dodds  
*Dog Day* by Sarah Hayes  
*Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes  
*Dear Mr. Blueberry* by Simon James  
*Once Upon an Ordinary School Day* by Colin McNaughton  
*Minerva Louise at School* by Janet Stoeke

### Extensions:

You will have to bring a mouse or a dog or a whale or a chicken to storytime; maybe even bring them all!

### Easy Craft:

Follow the music in Colin's School Day and let the kids draw what they hear, or ask them to write a letter to Mr. Blueberry (parent's can dictate, if needed)

### Simple Play:

(to the tune of "Did you Ever See a Lassie")

Here we are together,  
Together, together,  
Here we are together,  
Back at school again  
There's \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_,  
Here we are together,  
Back at school again.

### Poetry Corner:

Hello School: A Classroom Full of Poems by Dee Lillegard is filled with paint, clay, easels, blocks, dress-up clothes, cubbies and lots of other little things you would expect to find in a young child's classroom. Read:

#### Letters:

They stand in line from A to Z  
longing to be wild and free,  
to fly away like breezy birds...  
in flocks of words!



### Early Literacy Skills:

**Language and vocabulary:** *Chrysanthemum* isn't an *ordinary* word. You will need to define and play with both. Are there school words that are new? *recess* or *cubbies*?

**Phonological Awareness:** The dog talk in *dog day* will give you lots of audio fun – how many words for bark can the kids sound out? ruff, woof, arf, and even a growl or gr.

**Letter knowledge:** T is for teacher. Look at all the teachers in these stories, Mr. Blueberry, the dog, Mr. Gee, what a cast!

**Print Awareness:** Look at the letters that Emily writes to Mr. Blueberry. How is the print arranged? What are the common words dear? Love, Emily.

**Narrative Skills:** Parents have a perfect opportunity to practice open questions. Asking, "how was school," will give you a *great* or *bad* response. Try asking, "tell me one good thing that happened at school?" Want more? "Tell me one bad thing," will have them from the beginning to end.

**Print Motivation:** When gathering the props for playing school or preparing for a real school day, don't forget the books and library card!