

# **It's a Farmer Jason!**

## **Meet Farmer Jason!**

Farmer Jason is the brainchild of rock music legend Jason Ringenberg of Jason and the Scorchers. An Americana Music Association Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Ringenberg is one of the pioneers of the modern Americana and alt-country genres. In 2002 he created Farmer Jason to educate and entertain children about farm life and the wonders of nature. The character is based on his own farming background and love of the great outdoors. As Farmer Jason he has released 3 records and a DVD. He has starred in the "It's a Farmer Jason" video interstitial program, which airs on several public broadcasting stations around the United States and won an Emmy Award in 2009, plus an Emmy nomination in 2010. Farmer Jason's records have won numerous awards, including the Parents' Choice Gold Award and the Los Angeles Times' Children's Record of the Year list.

Farmer Jason has performed several thousand concerts in venues ranging from rural fairs on the Alaskan tundra to posh European performance halls. The highly acclaimed live show involves sing-alongs, dancing, and discussions about nature appreciation, ecology, and farm animals. Farmer Jason performs solo with just his acoustic guitar (no backing track gimmickry), which adds to the spontaneous, high energy nature of his concerts. Although aimed at children ages 2 to 10, everyone is invited to get involved, and they do! Farmer Jason draws his musical influences from folk, country, and rock 'n' roll with a dash of DIY punk rock.

The music found on the Farmer Jason CDs and DVDs is grounded in the natural world, teaching children that nature is something to appreciate and enjoy and that animals are our friends. While listening to these CDs and watching the DVD, children will learn lessons as diverse as how Native Americans made arrowheads, what a tadpole is, or why an old oak tree is good to have around. Coordination and music skills are improved due to the rhythmic nature of the songs. Rich language and nature facts are included for older children.

<http://www.farmerjason.com>

## Performance Etiquette:

The audience members play a role in helping the performer give his best performance possible. There are some accepted rules of etiquette when you are an audience member.

- Follow the directions of your teachers and the M.C. prior to the performance.
- If you are visiting a theater, arrive at least 20 minutes ahead or as instructed by the theater staff.
- Visit the restroom before the performance begins.
- If you have a cell phone please turn it off.
- Pay attention to announcements that are made prior to, and after, the show.
- Stay silent during the performance unless it is an emergency, then whisper.
- Keep your feet on the floor not on the seats or balcony rail or on the seat in front of you.
- Participate when the performer asks that you join in or play a role in the performance. Laugh if you are amused, sing along when asked, and especially applaud when you see or hear something you enjoyed.
- Remain in your seat for the entire performance. At the close, you may clap to show your appreciation or even stand and clap, called a standing ovation, if you really enjoyed the show.
- Most theaters and performance spaces ask that you do not eat or drink in the theater or take pictures.

## **Performance Description: (For Pre K – 2<sup>nd</sup>)**

**FARM AND FOREST** is the K-2 school show starring Emmy Award winning family music star Farmer Jason. This show features Farmer Jason singing songs about farm life and animals from our lovely American farms and forests. The show is highly interactive, encouraging the kids to get physically and mentally involved in their outdoor world. Farmer Jason introduces each song with a short fun lesson about the song's subject. With catchy internationally acclaimed songs like "The Tractor Goes Chug Chug Chug", "Punk Rock Skunk", and "Guitar Pickin' Chicken" the kids will have so much fun they may not realize they are receiving some important education!



**Curriculum Areas:** Language Development, Music, Listening/Communication Skills, Science

## **Common Core Standards:**

### **Kindergarten**

Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). Recognize and produce rhyming words.

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

#### **1<sup>st</sup>**

Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

#### **2nd**

Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).

## **Vocabulary:**

**Rhyme**

**Opposites**

**Attribute**

**Toad**

**Frog**

**Amphibian**

**Tadpole**

**Hypothesis**

**Catfish**

**Tractor**

**Compound**

**Topic**

**Title**



Opossum

## Playing with Words

- Listen to the song *Forest Rhymes*.

-- How many words can you think of that rhyme with these words from the song?

Deer

Squirrel

Snake

Farmer Jason

-- Can you think of other rhyming word pairs from the forest, farm or nature?

- Listen to the song *Opposites*.

-- What is the opposite of these words?

Day

Zero

Loud

Craziness

Sad

Compact Car

-- Wow, there are some big words in that song! Can you make up a definition for these words by understanding the opposite word?

Serenity

## Infinity

### About Animals (Animal Attributes)

- Listen to the song *Ode to a Toad*.

-- Now that you've heard the song, answer these questions.

Toads live on mounds of \_\_\_\_\_.

What do toads eat?

How do toads catch their food?

A baby toad is called a \_\_\_\_\_.

Where would you go to find a baby toad?

-- Use your new knowledge about toads and the facts below to write an *ode* (a story) about the life of a toad. Be sure to develop your character with name and details. You might add other characters to your story in addition to the toad. Include the toad's birth and early years as well as his adventures both in and out of the water.

#### Toad Facts:

Toads are amphibians. Amphibians live on land and in the water.

A baby toad is a tadpole.

Tadpoles live only in the water.

Tadpoles have a tail that disappears as they grow and is replaced by legs, allowing the toad to jump from the water to the land.

Listen to the *Catfish* song.

-- Scientists of all ages learn by gathering information, observing their subject (in this case, the catfish) and making a hypothesis. A hypothesis is an educated guess based on the information gathered and observations of the scientist.

Can you create a hypothesis about why trash thrown into our streams and rivers will harm the catfish?

First, list the facts you learned about catfish from the song.  
(Teachers, here are some catfish facts:  
Catfish live in the water.  
Catfish eat from the bottom of rivers and streams.  
Plastic bags and soda can rings can harm catfish.  
Catfish have whiskers.)

Second, is there a place in your community where you might go to observe catfish to gather information for your hypothesis? You can find more information about catfish and National Catfish Month (August) at:  
<http://filebox.vt.edu/users/idavis/catfact.html>  
<http://www.uscatfish.com/>  
[http://www.tnaqua.org/Newsroom/catfish\\_month\\_presskit.asp](http://www.tnaqua.org/Newsroom/catfish_month_presskit.asp)

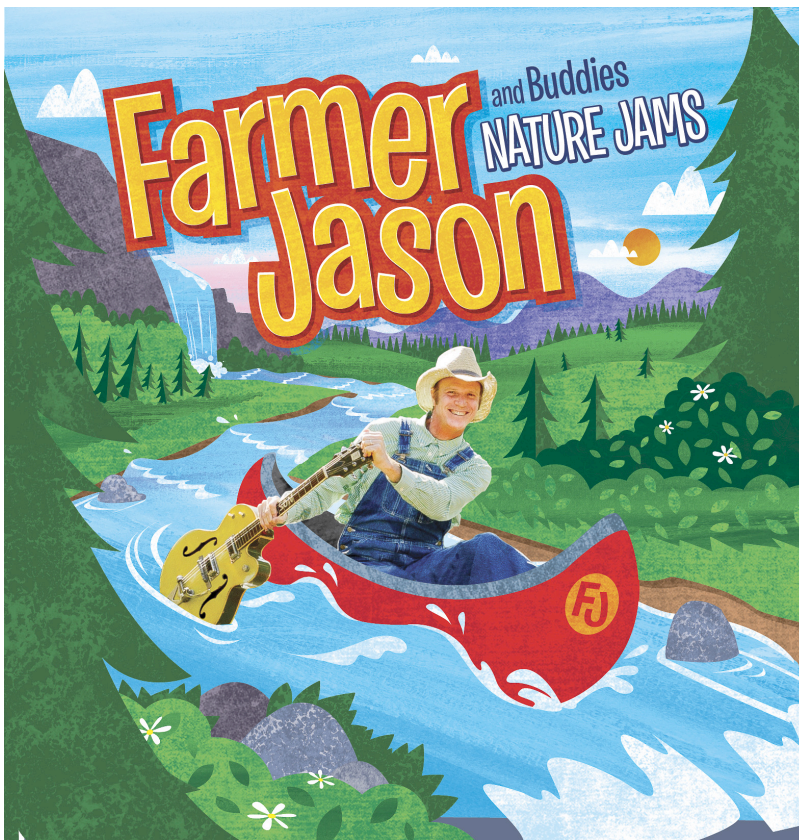
Compound words: Catfish is a compound word. A Compound word is one word made of two such as cat + fish = catfish. In the Appendix of this study guide, there are some fun activities for learning about compound words shared by other educators around the world for educational use.

## Listen and Learn (for Younger Students)

- From the concert or CDs, can you answer these questions:  
What do you do on the farm in the morning?  
Where does a baby opossum live?  
What does the kitty in the song like to do?  
If you scratch a kitty on the head, he will do what?  
What sound does the tractor make?  
What is some of the work the tractor in the song could do to help the farmer?  
Did the tractor have a name?  
What are some of the things the doggie in the song liked to do?
- Every song, story or sentence has a topic. These are some of the topics of Farmer Jason songs. Draw a picture of one of the topics of Farmer Jason's songs.
- Most songs and stories have a title. What are some of the titles of Farmer Jason's songs. Can you create a title for your picture?

## Performance Description: (For 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>)

**NATURE JAMS!** is the highly interactive elementary school concert inspiring kids to appreciate and actively enjoy the wonders of nature. Performed by Emmy Award winning family music star Farmer Jason the NATURE JAMS! school show features songs from his internationally acclaimed cds. Farmer Jason will take the children on a musical journey through the forests and wetlands of our diverse American natural heritage. Through rockin' songs such as "Ode to a Toad", "Forest Rhymes", "Take a Hike", and "Bayou Boogie" the kids will be entertained, educated, and inspired to experience the wonders of the great outdoors. (Grades 3-6 but the show can be adapted to K-6 if needed.



**Curriculum Areas:** Music, Science, Geography, Social Studies, Listening/Communication Skills

## **Common Core Standards:**

Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., as pretty as a picture) in context.

## **Vocabulary:**

**Factor**

**Identification**

**Observe**

**Research**

**Product**

**Conservation**

**Spelunker**

**Stalactite**

**Stalagmite**

**Topography**

**Echo**

**Prairie**

**Bison**

**Plains**

**Antelope**

**See The Appendix for a Word Search with these vocabulary words.**

## Question, Wonder, Observe and Research

- Listen to *The Old Oak Tree*. Then answer these questions.

Oak trees grow from an \_\_\_\_\_.

How do acorns get into the ground?

How old was the tree in the song?

What does a tree need to grow?

When the old oak tree in the song was young, how did the people travel?

Farmer Jason tells us we can be everything we want to be if we:

- Learn more about trees. You can take rubbings of a tree's bark by putting a white piece of paper against the bark and gently rubbing the area with a crayon. Leaf rubbings can be gathered the same way, by putting the leaf under the piece of paper and rubbing with a crayon. Bark and leaves are two *identifying factors, or attributes*, unique to each species of trees.

-- Find an oak tree and take rubbings from the bark and leaves.

-- Identify three other tree species in your schoolyard or your home yard or neighborhood park.

-- There are many good books about trees in your school and neighborhood library. These questions may help you in your reading and research.

What do trees and books have in common?

What type of tree is an oak tree?

How do trees help us breathe?

What are some of the products you use each day that are made from trees?

What are three things you can do to help conserve our forests?



## Stalactite and Stalagmite Experiment for Kids

In this stalactite and stalagmite experiment for kids, you can accomplish in your kitchen what it takes Mother Nature years to do in a cave. All you need are a few simple household items.

What you'll need:

Two jars

Water

Epsom salts

String

Small weights

Plate

### How to Conduct the Stalactite and Stalagmite Experiment

**Step One:** If you sat in a cave for thousands of years, you could watch stalactites and stalagmites form. Or you could make your own in a matter of days.

**Step Two:** Fill two jars with warm water. Mix in Epsom salts until no more will dissolve. Wet the string and tie a weight to each end. Drop one end of the string into each jar.

**Step Three:** Put a plate between the two jars, with the string hanging over the plate.

Check your "cave" at least once a day to see if stalactites and stalagmites have formed.

By the way, if you're wondering which are 'tites and which are 'mites: Stalactites have to hold on tight to stay on the ceiling of the cave. Stalagmites have to be mighty to stand up on the floor of the cave.

## Lyrical Writing

Farmer Jason writes most of his own songs, both the music and the lyrics. On his CD, *Nature Jams*, he shared some of the writing with various musical friends including Tom Peterson from Cheap Trick, Iris Dement, Victor Wooten, Todd Snider, Tommy Ramone, Suzy Bogguss, and Mike Mills from REM.

*Song lyrics* are poetry set to music. The *lyricist* uses *lyrical devices* to help make the words appeal to the listener's ear.

One tool is a *repeating refrain*. Can you find the *repeating refrain* in the lyrics of *The Moose Lives Where?* In *Prairie Riddles*?

Another device is *rhyme*. Can you find the rhyming words in the lyrics for both songs? What is the *rhyming scheme* in each song?

Look for an example of *simile* in *Prairie Riddles*.

Can you find an example of *personification* in this song?

What is some of the imagery that Jason uses in these two songs to paint a picture for the listener?

The lyrics in these songs are meant to teach and encourage curiosity. For example, Jason mentions several cold climates. Can you find all of these cities, provinces, states and countries on the map? How many kinds of prairie plants can you name?



**The Moose Lives Where? [Jason Ringenberg]**

1) The moose likes to live where the water runs cold

Like Montana or Minnesota

He can stand all day in the clear blue lake

Eating water plants like its no mistake

How he loves to be wandering free

Out among the trees so tall

The moose likes to live where the winds blow cold

Like up in Maine or Manitoba

It has antlers that are six feet wide

When he bellows his call he is filled with pride

How he loves to be wandering free

Out among the trees so tall

3) The moose likes to live where the weather is cold

Like Norway near Oslo

See him standing tall in the morning sun

Or munching on plants when the day is done

How he loves to be wandering free

Out among the trees so tall

## Prairie Riddles

(Jason Ringenberg)

Chorus: Prairie riddles see if you

Can guess the answers fast and true

Make your mind work like a plow

Prairie riddles guess them now

1) She runs so fast and jumps so high

With two straight horns and big brown eyes

She's colored like a cantaloupe

The answer is an antelope.

The answer is an antelope

2) He lives in holes with lots of buddies

Who build big mounds and get real muddy

He'll dig right through a hairy log

The answer is a prairie dog.

The answer is a prairie dog

3) The Sioux would use her golden feathers

In ceremonies for good weather

When she flies she looks so regal

The answer is a golden eagle

The answer is a golden eagle

4) They send up shoots two feet long

For buffalo to graze upon

They sort of look like disco pants

The answer is prairie plants

The answer is prairie plants

Last chorus: Prairie riddles all of you

Have guessed the answers fast and true

You made your mind work perfectly

You guessed the answers easily

## **Definitions:**

**Rhyme** - a word agreeing with another in terminal sound

**Rhyming scheme** - assigning the same letter to each line of the lyrics that end in words that rhyme with one another

**For example:**

The crocodile cried.      A

The lion sighed.      A

The leopard sneered.      B

The jaguar jeered.      B

The antelope shouted.      C

The panther pouted.	C
Everyone screamed	D
"We never dreamed	D
that ever could be	E
in history	E
a tiger who loves	F
to wear white gloves."	F

Gwendolyn Brooks

**Simile** - directly comparing two words usually using like or as

**Repeating Refrain** - a few words or lines sung after each verse of a song

**Personification** - giving human characteristics to other animals or objects

**Imagery** - using sensory qualities in lyrical writing

**Can you write your own definitions and examples of these lyrical devices?**

# Appendix

## Bibliography

Here are a few online and print resources for your classroom.

For preschool to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students, download Farmer Jason's independent activity pack:

<http://www.farmerjason.com/play-do/activity-packs/>

To learn more about sustainable agriculture:

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/agnic/susag.shtml>

[http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/AFSIC\\_pubs/k-12.htm](http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/AFSIC_pubs/k-12.htm)

There are many free resources for using gardening as a study in the elementary school. This link from the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project is one source.

<http://www.growing-minds.org/lessons.php>

The National Wildlife Federation has excellent magazines for nature studies: Ranger Rick and Rick, Jr and Your Big Backyard. These are filled with age appropriate stories, facts, activities and ideas for further study.

<http://www.nwf.org/Kids.aspx>

Richard Louv, author of "Last Child in the Woods" and "The Nature Principle", founded the Children and Nature Network. Their website and much research, resources and activities around the importance of getting children back into nature.

<http://www.childrenandnature.org/>



## Compound Words

- The words listed have been selected because of their suitability for the 4 to 8 age range.

A compound word is a word created by combining two or more other words.

afterbirth	airbrush	aircraft	airfield	airline
airman	airport	airship	anybody	anyhow
anyway	anywhere	armchair	armpit	

backdrop	backfire	background	backhand	backlash
backlog	backside	backstroke	backtrack	backward
bagpipes	ballroom	bankroll	barnyard	bathroom
bedridden	bedspread	bedtime	billboard	blacklist
blackmail	brainstorm	brainwash	breakfast	briefcase
broadcast	bulldog	bulldozer	bullfrog	buttercup
butterfingers				

chairman	championship	clockwise	clockwork	copycat
corkscrew	countdown	courtyard	cowboy	crackdown
crossbar	crossbones	crossroad	crossword	cutback

daredevil	darkroom	dashboard	daybreak	daydream
daylight	daytime	deadline	dishwasher	doorknob
doorman	doormat	doorway	doughnut	downcast
downfall	downhearted	downhill	downpour	downright
downstairs	downstream	downtown	downwind	drainpipe
drawback	drawbridge	driveway	dropout	drumstick
dustpan				

earache	eardrum	earphone	earring	earthquake
earthworm	elsewhere	endless	evermore	eyeball
eyebrow	eyeglass	eyepiece	eyesight	eyesore
eyestrain	eyewitness			

fairway	fallout	fanfare	farewell	farmhouse
farmyard	farseeing	fatherhood	featherbed	featherweight
feedback	fellowship	figurehead	fingernail	fingerprint



tooth	paste
play	ground
foot	ball
grass	hopper
hair	dresser



## Compound Words (1)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Join each word in the first column to its partner in the second column to make a new 'compound' word. List the words you make.

book

rain

class

ear

home

earth

day

hair

sun

water

room

worm

light

coat

cut

shelf

work

ring

fall

hat

bookshelf

# Nature Jams

n i e z e a x k w e a g s r e  
q o t l y i r q t e n c e o c  
n p i w s o r i k u t s t c h  
b a t t t p m i t d e a a k o  
k s c c a g e u a a l u n s y  
a z a b a v e l r r o l t i v  
l f l l i k r c u m p t c d g  
e e a j c s h e c n e a u b m  
w t t i c i o f s m k b d g g  
s b s p l a i n s n g e o c a  
t o p o g r a p h y o o r y z  
e v r e s b o r u s g c p e o  
q v l s o g x o v n f p d p h  
o r x s m p f z i m r m l k d  
n o i t a c i f i t n e d i l

antelope  
bison  
conservation  
echo  
factor  
identification  
observe  
plains  
prairie  
product  
research  
spelunker  
stalactite  
stalagmite  
topography

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