

## Activity and Teacher's Guide: **Seldovia Sam and the Very Large Clam**

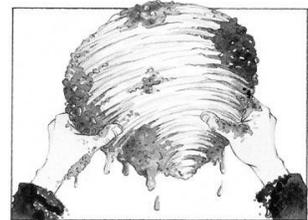
Story by Susan Woodward Springer, Illustrations by Amy Meissner  
Alaska Northwest Books®  
ISBN: 0-88240-570-5, \$6.95 SB

*Seldovia Sam and the Very Large Clam* introduces children ages 6 to 10 to the exciting Alaskan wilderness where young Sam Peterson explores and finds adventure and a little misadventure in his tiny corner of the world called Seldovia. Students will have the opportunity to learn more about Sam's world using the following ideas and activities. Happy reading!

### Reading/Writing/Language Arts

1. Read *Seldovia Sam and the Very Large Clam* and answer the following questions:

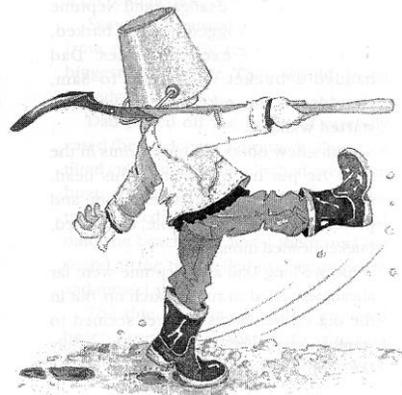
- 🍪 Where is Sam going with his dad and what is he looking for?
- 🍪 Who doesn't Sam like very much and for what reason?
- 🍪 What kind of trouble does Sam find himself in?
- 🍪 How does he get out of it? Who helps him?
- 🍪 Do you think Sam learned his lesson?
- 🍪 Why is Sam so happy at the end of the story?



2. Write what you would have done in Sam's situation. Would you have done the same, or would you have done something differently? Explain.
3. Have you ever experienced your own misadventure? Write or draw what happened to you.
4. Do you have a favorite pet you like to do activities with? Write or draw about an adventure you had together.

### Science/Natural History

1. What terrestrial animals can be found in Seldovia?
2. Besides a clam, identify marine life that can be found in Seldovia.
3. Are clams and oysters the same thing? If not, what's the difference?
4. What is a tide? Can it be dangerous? Why or why not? What controls tidal movement?



5. What is a spit? How is it formed? Have you ever been to a spit? Name it and tell where it is located.

## Geography

1. Where is Seldovia located? Can you find it on the map?
2. Seldovia is located on the \_\_\_\_\_ Peninsula. Define *peninsula*.
3. Where are clams found?
4. What natural resources are found in Kachemak Bay?
5. Learn about the mountain ranges in Kachemak Bay. Is a volcano a mountain? Why or why not?
6. Can you figure out which place-names in the story are real and which ones are made-up using a map?



## Math



1. Determine how many miles there are between Seldovia and the city where you live.
2. Determine how many miles Sam's mother would have to fly in her Bush plane if she flew from Seldovia to Homer and then back to Seldovia.
3. If Sam caught 150 clams and he wanted to share them with his 30 classmates, how many clams would each student get?
4. If Sam's new hip-waders will cost \$30.00, how much allowance money a week will he have to earn in six weeks' time in order to pay for them?

## Art

1. Have each student or a group of students draw a picture of a different marine creature and label its parts. Share in a group what each student or group discovered about this creature.
2. Design your entire classroom to look like the sea! Go to [www.myschoolonline.com/page/0,1871,24742-145616-27-2545,00.html](http://www.myschoolonline.com/page/0,1871,24742-145616-27-2545,00.html) for great ideas!
3. Have each student create their own *Seldovia Sam* mobile that will hang from the ceiling over their seats. Have them pick 5 to 10 of their favorite things from the book and draw them. Go to [www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/mobiles/](http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/mobiles/) for ideas about construction.

## Other Activities

### 1. Make Peanut Butter Cookies! (Makes about 3 dozen cookies.) Preheat the oven to 350°F.

1¼ cups all-purpose flour  
¾ teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon baking powder  
¼ teaspoon salt  
½ cup peanut butter  
½ cup vegetable shortening  
½ cup granulated sugar  
½ cup brown sugar  
1 egg

Resift the flour with the baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Cream the peanut butter, shortening, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until well mixed and fluffy. Beat in the egg, and stir in the dry ingredients. Roll the dough into 1-inch balls and space them apart on ungreased baking sheets. Flatten the cookies with a fork, making a crosshatch pattern, and bake 10 to 15 minutes, or until light browned. Enjoy with some hot cocoa!

### 2. Make Clam Chowder!

1 quart water  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 pint diced, unpared potatoes  
4 stalks celery, finely chopped  
6 medium-size bay leaves, whole  
1 cup instant nonfat dry milk  
1 pint fresh or canned clams,  
with juice

Cook potatoes, celery, onion, and bay leaves together in salted water until tender. Remove bay leaves; add milk powder, clams and their juice and cook 10 minutes longer. When serving, garnish with butter and a sprinkling of fresh-ground black pepper. Enjoy!



### 3. Go on a Field Trip to the Aquarium!

Sam lives in one of the most diverse areas on the planet for marine life. If your class plans a trip to the aquarium, learn all about clams, crabs, starfish, eels, salmon and more! Discuss as a group how they all live together in their own unique environment.

#### *About the author*



Susan Woodward Springer grew up in a fishing village on the coast of Maine and has lived in Alaska since 1981. She operated a mercantile in tiny Seldovia, a town that's accessible only by boat or plane. As an author, artist, and historian, some of her previous publications include *Seldovia, Alaska: An Historical Portrait of Life in Herring Bay*, and *Alaska...Pure Poetry*, associated with Alyeska's environmental education program and selected by the Smithsonian Museum gift shop to complement the Alaska Pipeline exhibit. A portion of the author's proceeds from the *Seldovia Sam* series, which is her first children's book, has been earmarked for the Alaska Children's Trust. She now resides in Sun Valley, Idaho where she enjoys getting into the backcountry with her two Springer spaniels.

Amy Meissner lives and works in Anchorage, where she is pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Her adult fiction has been praised by the annual University of Alaska Anchorage *Anchorage Daily News* Creative Writing contest. She won first place in the College Fiction division with her short stories, *Canal* in 2001, and *Forgiving Eva*, in 2002, which was also awarded the contest's Grand Prize. Her story *Violet and the Rotten Ballerinas* is published on [www.litsite.alaska.edu](http://www.litsite.alaska.edu) for the first time, followed by two other developing stories in first illustration form. She also illustrated *Ollie Jolly*, *Rodeo Clown* and *Salt & Pepper at the Pike Place Market*. [www.amymeissner.com](http://www.amymeissner.com)

Don't miss Sam's next misadventure in *Seldovia Sam and the Sea Otter Rescue!* To learn more about the city of Seldovia visit: [www.seldovia.com](http://www.seldovia.com)  
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#### *About the illustrator*

