

EDUCATOR GUIDE

Out the Door by Christy Hale

★“A charming, detailed primer for easing children into new routines and spatial phrases.”
—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★“Prepositions are delightful. Highly recommended.”—*School Library Journal*, starred review

“In short phrases that emphasize directional words . . . the narrator gives readers a taste of daily urban experience.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

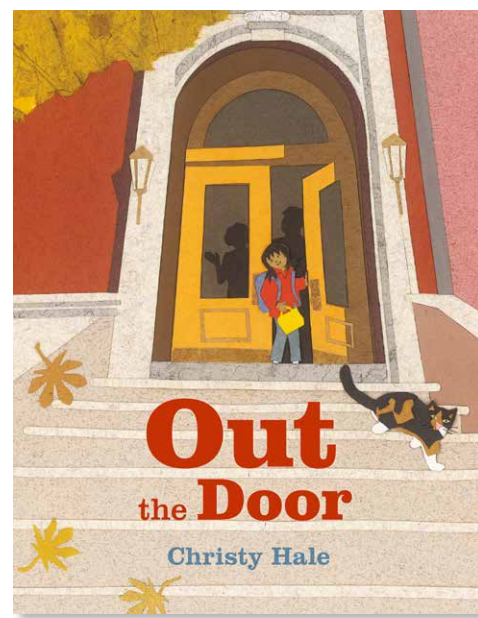
“Youngsters will be riveted by the sights and sounds of Hale’s city. *Out the Door* is a charming read that will prompt readers to reflect on their own daily rituals.”—*BookPage*

About the Book

Out the door,
down the stoop,
past the neighbors,
along the block . . .

Follow a young girl as she travels to school in a busy city—through tree-lined streets, onto a crowded subway car, into the classroom with friends, and finally, retracing her steps back home again. There’s so much to see in Christy Hale’s warm, richly textured artwork and simple, evocative text.

Watch the book trailer at <https://bit.ly/33TfooT>



NEAL PORTER BOOKS / HOLIDAY HOUSE
ISBN 9780823446445 • Ages 3–6

Activate and Build Background Knowledge



Ask students:

- What might you see in a city?
- Have you ever ridden the subway? What was it like?

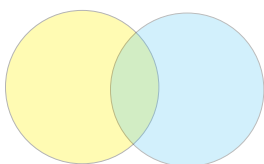
Help the book’s urban setting come alive by sharing photos of Brooklyn and the subway. Check out https://kids.kiddle.co/New_York_City_Subway to learn more about the New York City subway system!

Use *Out the Door* to Explore These Themes

Journeys to School



- Help students **create a Venn diagram**. How is this girl's journey to school like yours? How is it different?



- Have students **conduct a survey** about how classmates got to school that day. Create a bar chart with your findings.
- **Learn about how children travel to school around the world.** View the pictures in this *New York Magazine* article <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2016/09/how-kids-around-the-world-get-to-school.html> or compare this book to other titles about kids' journeys to school: *School Bus* by Donald Crews, *This Is the Way We Go to School* by Laine Falk, and *This Is the Way We Go to School* by Edith Baer, illustrated by Steve Björkman.

* Learning at home?
These ideas could work
well for remote learning
or homeschool, too!

Neighborhoods

- **Take a walk.** Narrate your walk in prepositional phrases like the book. Notice what's around you—the buildings, the people, nature, and more!*
- **Brainstorm different buildings** you'd find in a neighborhood. Have individual students draw, paint, or use cut paper collage to make each one and combine them to make a neighborhood mural. (For remote learners, create a neighborhood art virtual slideshow!)*
- **Build a neighborhood** out of blocks or recycled boxes and containers. Add labels and signs.*



- **Set up a pretend subway station.** Collect fares, make a turnstile, look at the map, drive or ride the train, and announce stops!
- **Study artists who celebrate neighborhoods** through art, such as Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence, and Faith Ringgold. Have students create artwork celebrating their neighborhoods in a similar style.

Mapping & Directions



- Have students **create a map** that shows their route between home and a familiar destination. Include landmarks and sights. Or, have students make videos or photo slideshows to explain their routes.*
- Look at a subway map or local street map together. **Find familiar landmarks and draw routes between places.***
- Have students work in pairs to **give each other directions** to get from one spot to another in the classroom or on the playground. Try reversing the directions to get back!
- **Code the way to school!** Create a grid and have students write a simple algorithm to help a figurine get from "home" to "school." (See <https://teachyourkidscode.com/category/coding-unplugged/> for simple ideas using magnetic tiles, egg cartons, chalk and more.)*

Use *Out the Door* as a Writing Mentor Text

- Choose a page from the book to **practice labeling**. Together, write labels on sticky notes for items in the picture. Encourage students to label details in their own pictures using invented spelling.*
- **Have students write their own “Out the Door” stories** about familiar journeys, or write one together using shared or interactive writing.*
- This story is based on the author’s daughter’s trip to school each day. **Help students brainstorm ideas for oral and written stories about their everyday lives.***
- **Explore how the book stretches out just one part of a day into its own story**—and how students can do the same in their writing. Notice how some pages have an extra detail added, like “aboard the train on a seat” and try that, too!*



- **Use the story as inspiration for a procedural text**, “How to Get to School.” Use the illustrations to get ideas for including safety tips and helpful hints.

Standards Alignment

These activities align with many states’ Early Learning and Development standards and the Common Core State Standards for Kindergarten and Grade 1, for instance, the *Key Ideas and Details & Integration of Knowledge and Ideas* strands for Reading, the *Conventions of Standard English* and *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use* strands for Language, and the *Text Types And Purposes* strand for Writing.

This guide content was provided by Lindsay Barrett. Lindsay is a PreK-2 educator, literacy specialist, and freelance writer. Find out more about her work at <https://lindsay-barrett.com/>.

Use *Out the Door* to Build Language Skills— for ELLs and All Students!

- **Invite students to use their bodies to show the main character’s actions** as you read. “Open” the door and step through, walk “down the stoop,” wave to the neighbors, “pay” your subway fare, etc. Act out the reverse trip at the end of the book, too.*
- As you walk through school, **narrate your journey in prepositional phrases**. (“Out the door, past the lockers, around the corner, etc.”)
- Have students **act out prepositional phrases** using an empty tissue box and a small toy or another object. Ask them to move the toy or object “across the box,” “behind the box,” “below the box,” etc. Imagine the box is a subway car and move it with the toy inside!*
- **Set up a treasure hunt**. List the prepositions in the story and brainstorm others. Write a series of clues with prepositional phrases, like “Look *below* the sink” or “Walk *around* the trash can and *out* the door.”*
- **Use the illustrations to get ideas for a word list or concept map** about “Transportation” or “Neighborhoods.” Get ideas and templates at https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/concept_maps.*

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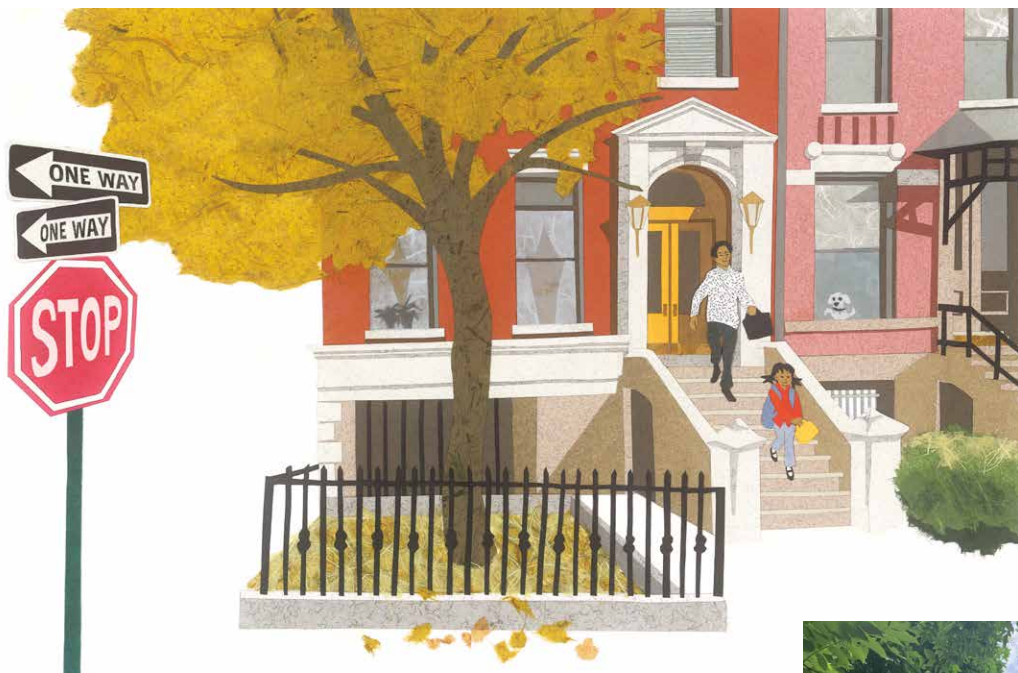
Photo credit: Jenna Cole



About the Creator

Christy Hale has illustrated numerous award-winning books for children, including four that she also wrote: *The East-West House: Noguchi's Childhood in Japan*; *Dreaming Up: A Celebration of Building*; *Water Land: Land and Water Forms Around the World*; and *Todos Iguales: Un Corrido de Lemon Grove / All Equal: A Ballad of Lemon Grove*.

An art director, designer, and educator, Hale teaches Writing for Picture Books at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. She now lives with her family in Palo Alto, California, but spent many years in Brooklyn, New York, where this book is set.



Illustrations © 2020 by Christy Hale from *Out the Door*

