



## Activities for Grades K–2

Compliments of Teacher Created Materials and CrossCan Educational Services

# April Fools' Day

April 1st



## Background Information

April Fools' Day is not an official holiday. However, it is a favorite day among the young at heart. Historians speculate that the recognized practice of playing pranks dates back to approximately, 1582, in France, when Charles IX adopted the Gregorian calendar. New Year's Day moved from the last week of March to January 1. Because it took weeks for the change to be fully communicated to rural areas—and because some countries resisted adoption for many years—there was confusion regarding the real New Year's Day. (England did not adopt the calendar until 200 years later.) Gifts were historically exchanged during New Year week. Supposedly, pranksters tried to convince people that April 1 was still New Year's Day by giving out mock gifts. Others were reluctant to accept the news about the changes. Those who continued to celebrate on April 1 were called fools.

Another theory is that nature tricked us into thinking spring had arrived with its variable weather. Some speculated that it originated with an ancient New Year

festival celebrating the arrival of spring. Others speculated that it began with recognition that Hilaria, the goddess of nature, could indeed be fickle.

Most pranks in the United States are harmless—clocks are set wrong, children are told that there is no school, people are told their shoelaces are untied, etc.

## Around the World

In France, the fool is called a *poisson d'avril*, meaning “the April fish.” In Scotland, an April fool is called an April *gowk*, which means a cuckoo. The Iranian practice of playing jokes on Norouz, the first Irani calendar month, dates back thousands of years. In England, where playing pranks wasn't established until the 18th century, an April fool is called a *gob*, a *gawby*, or a *gobby*. Indeed, many of the best nationwide pranks have been launched by the British. The most famous is the report about Switzerland's spaghetti harvest, complete with video footage of Swiss farmers harvesting spaghetti, carefully grown to be the right length!

## Recommended Books

Bateman, Teresa. 2004. *April Foolishness*. New York: Albert Whitman.

Brown, Marc. 1985. *Arthur's April Fool*. New York: Little Brown.

Hill, Susanna Leonard. 2011. *April Fool, Phyllis*. New York: Holiday House.

Stevenson, James. 1998. *Mud Flat April Fool*. New York: Greenwillow.

# April Fools' Riddles

**Directions:** Can you solve these hink pink riddles? Hink pinks are words with one syllable that rhyme. Hint: Each puzzle uses *pig* or *hog* in the answer.

**Example:** What do you call a hog on a run? A hog jog.

1.



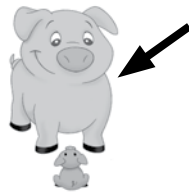
What is it called when a pig looks for something in the dirt?

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

2.



What do you call a huge pig?

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

3.



What do you call a piece of wood for a hog?

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

# Funny Word Connections

**Directions:** Draw a line to match the funny word parts. Use the pictures to help you.



**brain**



**car**



**cup**



**lady**



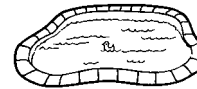
**eye**



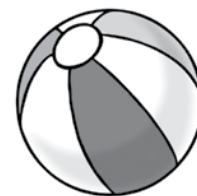
**cake**



**storm**



**pool**



**ball**



**bug**



## Joke Match-Ups

**Directions:** Cut apart the jokes and the answers. Turn them facedown. Turn two cards over to find a pair.

What kind of hair do oceans have?

wavy

Why does the flamingo only lift up one leg?

If it lifted up two it would fall over.

What is a volcano?

a mountain with hiccups

What runs but never walks?

water

Why did the clock get sick?

It got run down

What is a tornado?

Mother Nature doing the twist

How do you make a milk shake?

Give it a good scare.





# April Fools' Search

**Directions:** Find and circle the funny words in the Word Bank hidden in the puzzle.

**Word Bank**

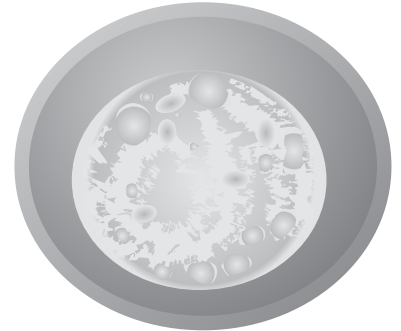
funny	giggle	prank	silly
chuckle	laugh	trick	surprise

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

## My Late Day!

**Directions:** Give each student one line to learn. Have everyone read the last line together.

- Reader 1:** I got up late that morning.
- Reader 2:** Mom was in a rush.
- Reader 3:** She said, "Get dressed for school.
- Reader 4:** And don't forget to brush!"
- Reader 5:** The toothpaste tasted like salt.
- Reader 6:** "April Fool's!" said Dad.
- Reader 7:** I ran downstairs for breakfast.
- Reader 8:** I thought the joke was fun.
- Reader 9:** I was pretty hungry.
- Reader 10:** But Mom and Dad weren't done.
- Reader 11:** Mom handed me a plate.
- Reader 12:** The scrambled eggs were blue.
- Reader 13:** I poured myself some milk.
- Reader 14:** They'd made the milk blue, too.
- Reader 15:** Mom handed me my lunch.
- Reader 16:** By now, I was scared to look inside.
- Reader 17:** "Now it's time for school.
- Reader 18:** Go sit on the front porch.
- Reader 19:** And wait for the car pool."
- Reader 20:** I sat there for an hour.
- Reader 21:** And then I shouted, "Hey!"
- Reader 22:** My folks had *really* tricked me.
- Everyone:** It was Saturday!



# Happy April to You Poem

**Directions:** Write an acrostic poem using words that describe April Fools' Day.

A P R I L F O O L S	_____
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	_____
	-----
	_____
	-----
	_____
	-----
	_____
	-----
	_____
	-----

April Fools' Day





# Trick Card

**Directions:** Have fun with one of these cards.

## Materials

- colored construction paper
- markers or crayons
- glue



## Steps

1. Fold the construction paper in half.
2. Choose a message, or think of your own (*Happy April Fools' Day, Happy Spring, Happy April*)
3. Write the message on the front of the card. Decorate with flowers, a rainbow, or something fun.
4. Decorate the back side in the exact same way.
5. Glue the card closed.
6. Give it to someone and watch them try to open it.
7. Shout, "April Fools!" when they are unable to open it.