

READ★PRAY★WONDER★PLAY

A GUIDE TO SHARING STORIES WITH CHILDREN

Arthur and the Forgetful Elephant

By Maria Girón



This is a tender story about memory loss and how a friend can be a companion, helping to make connections to memories still held within. Arthur, the child in the story, explores what it means to forget and how that is different from what his elephant friend is experiencing. On one level, this story can be enjoyed by all ages as simply about a young boy and a forgetful elephant friend, a creature who is often known as one who “never forgets.” On another level, children who are aware of the memory loss of a loved one—a grandparent, neighbor, or church member—may understand that person’s deeper loss and find new ways to relate to these special people in their lives.

Your child may feel sad as they recognize the grief someone experiencing memory loss may have. The act of friendship and presence, as well as moments of recollection, permeate this story with joy.

★ ★ WONDER TOGETHER ★ ★

- What is your favorite part of this story? Why?
- What feelings do you have when Arthur first meets the elephant, when he spends time with the elephant, and when the elephant remembers he has a family?
- Why is the elephant sad and what does Arthur do?
- How do the elephant’s feelings change and why?
- What would you like to do with an elephant if you had a chance to play with one?
- Have you ever spent time with someone who is experiencing memory loss? What is that like? What might you like to do with them?

★ ★ EXPLORE THE STORY ★ ★

- Play a memory game. Place some objects on a tray (fewer for younger children and more for older children) and have your child observe them. Then have your child close their eyes or turn away. Remove one or more objects. Ask your child to identify the missing objects.
- Note how Arthur understands forgetting and wonder how you and your child may be forgetful. Point out that memory loss may occur with certain illnesses, injuries, and aging. Wonder how the elephant shows signs of forgetfulness or memory loss.
- Arthur creates memories and taps into some of the elephant’s memories through experiences. Name the experiences in the story. Create some memories together using these experiences as inspiration: playtime, swimming, hide and seek, snack time, time with friends, coloring, and time with family members.

PRAY

Loving God, sometimes we forget to think of you, but you never forget to think of us. You love us always. Thank you for the people around us who love us and show us your love. May we be loving and kind to others, always showing your love. Amen.



THE
PC(USA)
STORE

DISCOVER MORE

www.pcusastore.com/FlyawayBooksGuides

★ ★ DIG DEEPER ★ ★

Memory plays a key role in our lives and in our faith. Explore memory with the following ideas:

- Our Christian faith is based on remembering what God has done. This begins with the creation of the world and all that is in it and includes calling people to be faithful, saving them and leading them from being enslaved, guiding them through good times and difficult times, and calling them back to faith when they have turned away. It also includes entering the world as a baby to grow up and preach, teach, heal, bless, feed, and forgive us so that we might know God's love. Jesus said to his disciples, and to us through the ages, "Remember me."
- Read stories together from a children's story Bible such as *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Flyaway Books, 2018). Together share your favorite stories about God, God's people, and Jesus. Ask others what their favorite Bible stories are to hear their memories.
- Read the book, or watch a read aloud video on www.youtube.com, *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox, illustrated by Julie Vivas (Kane Miller, 1989). Wonder how you, your child, and others might describe what a memory is. Like Wilfred, what objects might you gather together to represent memories? Share these memories with one another. If you know a person who is experiencing memory loss, share these items with that person and see what memories they might evoke for them.
- Do an internet search for "memory activities for children" and try out some different activities together.

MORE TO READ & DO

CLICK THE LINKS BELOW TO LEARN MORE

ADDITIONAL DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES FOR *ARTHUR AND THE FORGETFUL ELEPHANT*

- Download the [Discussion and Activity Guide](#)
- Download the [Coloring Page](#)

ADDITIONAL BOOKS THAT SHOW FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- [One Thursday Afternoon](#), by Barbara DiLorenzo
- [Simon and the Big, Bad, Angry Beasts: A Book about Anger](#), by Ian De Haes
- [Grandpa's Window](#), by Laura Gehl and Udayana Lugo
- [Apple and Magnolia](#), by Laura Gehl and Patricia Metola
- [For Beautiful Black Boys Who Believe in a Better World](#), by Michael W. Waters and Keisha Morris

Guide written by Meg Elliot Rift and created in partnership with PC(USA)'s initiative "[Around the Table](http://www.pcusa.org/aroundthetable)" (pcusa.org/aroundthetable).



THE
PC(USA)
STORE

DISCOVER MORE

www.pcusastore.com/FlyawayBooksGuides