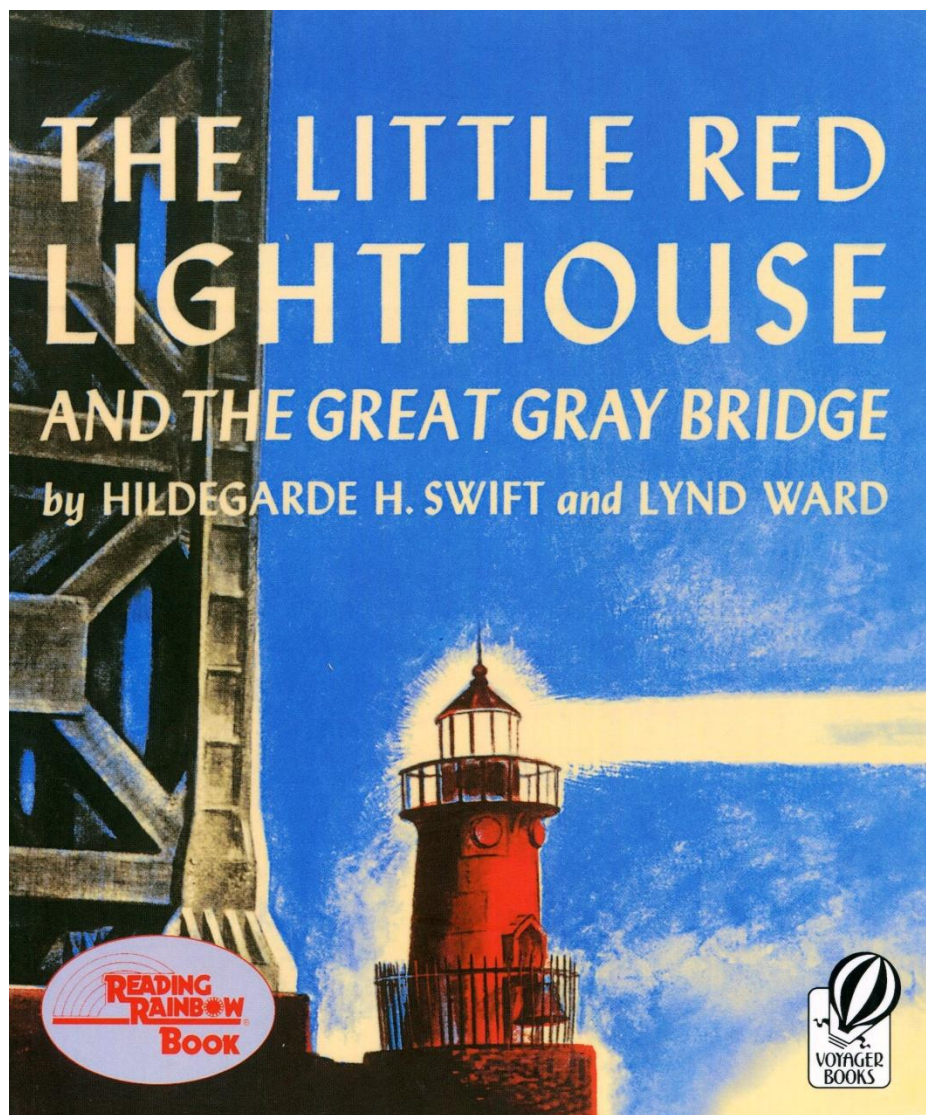


# Activities for Fun & Learning!



This classic story is a great read for any age, but preschoolers and primary grades really love it. This document gives adults lots of ideas for using the book as a learning tool for little kids.

## Technology Tips—

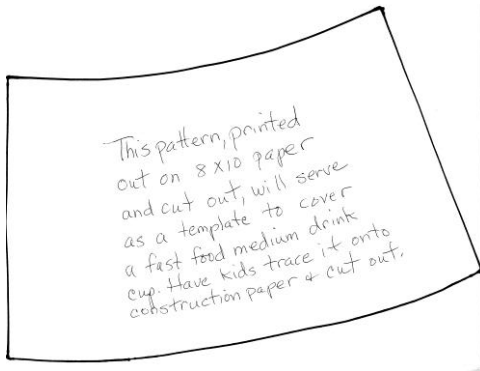
- For a group or classroom, use an overhead projector to project the book on a screen or white wall so all children can see it clearly while it is read aloud.

- Share the PowerPoint program from U.S. Lighthouse Society called “Lighthouses for Kids.” It’s a great way to see the diversity of lighthouses. As the late Ken Black used to say: “Lighthouses are like people. They come in all shapes, sizes, and colors.” You’ll find the PowerPoint on the society website.

## Hands-On Learning

- Use any of the printable coloring pages, mazes, and dot-to-dot pictures provided. Research now tells us that coloring and other focused, quiet, pleasant activities are “mindful” behaviors that allow the brain to ramp down and rest. These activities are associated with low blood pressure and lack of stress. Children should have a chance to talk about and display their work.
- Have children try drawing their own lighthouses. Give them a simple geometric guide (triangle top, square lantern, conical tower), or show the “How to Draw a Lighthouse” worksheet on the screen. Ask them to draw The Little Red Lighthouse, or have them come up with their own lighthouse design—perhaps a striped lighthouse or one with a single band, etc. The color and pattern on a lighthouse is called its *daymark*.
- Lynd Ward, the illustrator of the book, used only three colors—red, blue, and black. Have kids use these three colors to make illustrations of their own.
- Make Paper Cup Lighthouses. All materials are free or inexpensive. Use a balled up piece of aluminum foil for a quick and easy beacon inside the lantern, or use a tea light that can be turned on and off. Use the Paper Cup Cover template pictured below to trace and cut out construction paper covers for paper cup lighthouses. For step-by-step visual instructions, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vznZrOIUWks>





- An easy design is this one below, created with red plastic cups, empty pudding cups, black paper, and battery-powered tea lights. Kids can even put little plastic people or animals inside. Add a small pompom to the top. This is the *vent ball* on the real Little Red Lighthouse. It allows heat to escape from the lantern. Imagine how hot it gets insider the lantern on a sweltering summer day! On top of the vent ball is a *lightning rod*. This object can really extend kids' learning with discussion of weather, safety for the lighthouse, etc.

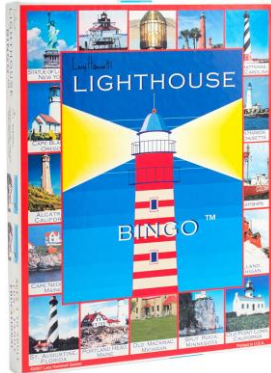


## Lighthouse Bingo

Bingo is an excellent game for teaching kids visual skills and memory skills. It's a good vocabulary game too. And it's fun! You can make your own Bingo boards. Use Microsoft "Tables" (under the Insert tab) to make a 5x5 table with equal-size squares. (For very young children, a 3x3 board works well.) Decide what images should go in the squares. You'll need 24 images, plus a free space in the

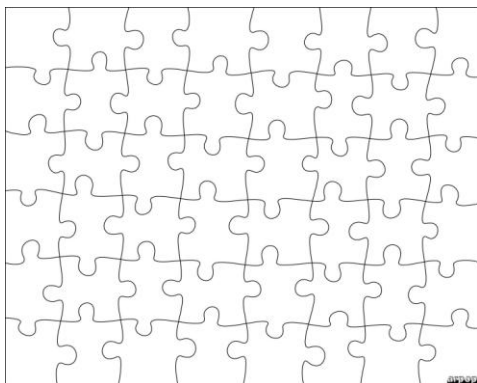
middle. (On a 3x3 board you'll need 8 images plus a free space.) Some ideas for the squares: the Little Red Lighthouse, the bridge, a tugboat, a fogbell, a keeper, the lantern, the cupola, the vent ball, the beacon light, the river, fish, rocks, a fog picture, a car and a truck (these go over the bridge), a lightning rod, kids, adults, and whatever else you can imagine. Once you've chosen images and cut them to size, create the board using a color copier. Shuffle the images for each copy to make a different board.

If you prefer not to make your own boards, you can purchase a lighthouse Bingo game from Amazon, com— <https://www.amazon.com/Lucy-Hammett-8277-Lighthouse-Bingo/dp/B001XREJ24>



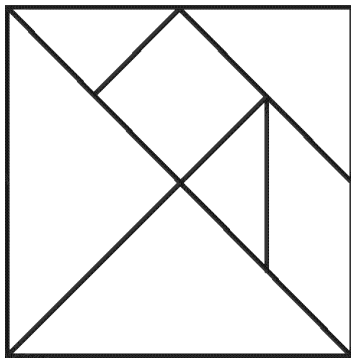
## Lighthouse Jigsaw

This is really an easy activity. Kids can do most of the work themselves to create the puzzle. They'll need a piece of heavy oak tag or cardboard and a photo of the Little Red Lighthouse downloaded from the Internet. Each child should have a different photo. Glue the photo securely to the cardboard, sealing all edges with glue. Glue a jigsaw pattern to the backside of the cardboard. Be sure it's securely glued too. Kids then cut out the jigsaw pieces using the backside jigsaw pattern as a guide. Have them check all the pieces to be sure they're securely glued. (Glue sticks work best.) When the glue is dry, all the pieces then go in a Ziploc bag that is labeled with the child's name. Have kids swap bags and solve each others' puzzles.



# Tangrams

This Chinese puzzle provides excellent problem-solving practice and exercises creativity. It's also fun for beginning geometry. If you don't have a set of plastic Tangram pieces, photocopy the printable Tangram below. Children should cut out the pieces and orally identify as many shapes as they can. *Parallelogram* and *quadrilateral* could be new words. When assembled in its simplest form, the Tangram makes a perfect square using all the pieces. Very young children can practice assembling it by laying the shapes over the template. First and second graders will persist and problem-solve to put together the perfect square. Encourage kids to make a lighthouse using all the pieces. Some examples are included in the resource file. Remind children that some pieces can be used as an entry space into their lighthouse, the keeper's house, a doghouse, etc. Not all pieces have to go into the design of the tower.



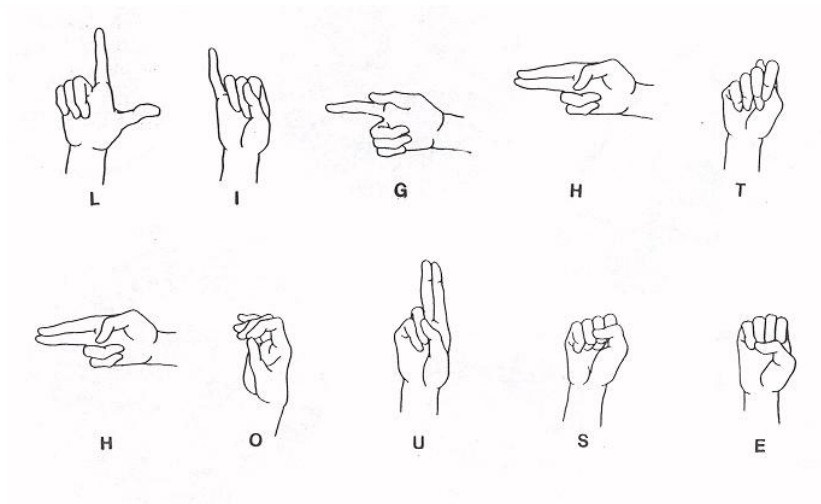
## The RRR Rule

Why is the Little Red Lighthouse Red? Its color obeys the "Red on Right Returning" rule. This means as a ship *returns* from sea and heads into the Hudson River channel, all buoys and lighthouses on the right side of the channel (*starboard*) are *red*. On the left side (*port*) they are *green*. Children might learn some new vocab with the RRR Rule. Also, very young children can learn right and left. Have them trace their right hand, as seen below, paint it *red*, and then spell out the word "right" on the fingers.



## Sign Language

This is good kinesthetic fun. Children will mimic an adult and quickly learn the hand signs to spell “lighthouse.”



## Simple Geo-Fun

Photocopy a map of the United States, a map of New York, and a map of New York City. On the U.S. map help children find New York State. Have them color it red for the Little Red Lighthouse’s color. Then ask them to draw a star or place a sticker star on their home state.





Help them locate New York City with a New York State map. Find the Hudson River too.

From there, a good map of the city will show the Hudson River Greenway running up the western side of Manhattan to the George Washington Bridge in Washington Heights. The approximate location of Fort Washington Park and the lighthouse can easily be found. You also can show this on an overhead screen using a computer and the Internet. Google maps will show the location if you search for “George Washington Bridge, New York City.” Show the Google map view and then the Google Earth view. Zoom in on the Earth view, and you can see the lighthouse! Its cupola looks greenish-blue from above, due to the bright sunlight. This also is a chance for children to see that the Hudson River serves as the border between New York State and New Jersey.

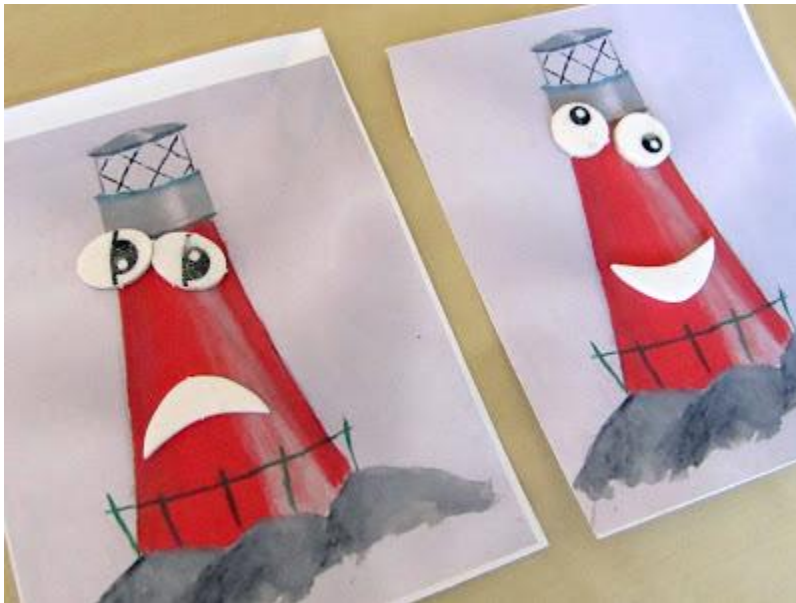
## Auditory Learning

- Read-alouds and discussions are important for children who learn easily by listening to others and to themselves. Poems, songs, and stories all meet this need. The theme of Swift’s classic book reassures readers that being small is okay; even little things have purpose and a job to do. Have children talk about their experiences with being small. Most kids can’t wait to get bigger. But there’s a certain charm in being little. Discuss things that are small and the value of being small.
- As a group, sing and act out the song “I’m a Little Lighthouse.” This is fun on “Wear Red Day,” when all the kids look like little red lighthouses themselves. They can make black cupola hats. (Trace a large dinner plate onto black paper. Cut halfway into the circle, and then curl it into a cone and tape it shut. Excellent black cupola hat!)
- Have a discussion about the sounds that might be heard around the lighthouse—
  - Water splashing
  - Seagulls calling and birds chirping
  - People talking and laughing
  - Cars moving on the bridge deck and horns blowing

## Emotional Intelligence

Hildegard Hoyt Swift's story contains many emotions. So do the illustrations of Lynd Ward. The lighthouse is presented as "alive" and able to think and talk and express feelings. It is *personified*. Most kids won't know that word, but they do understand what it means. Cartoon characters they love are given human characteristics and emotions. Their stuffed toys also have personalities.

- Ask children to listen for places in the story where the lighthouse speaks and feels emotions. Have them point out pictures where this is shown. Lynd Ward gave the Little Red Lighthouse a personality! What other objects speak in the story? The fog bell? The boats? The river "looks for the sea." The bridge speaks to the lighthouse.
- Ask kids to share experiences when they felt small or not useful. Then ask them to share experiences where their size and age proved very helpful. Discuss pride and how the lighthouse felt about over the course of the story.
- Have kids write some dialog between the lighthouse, the boats, the river, the birds, the bridge, or others. They can illustrate their dialog and share it with others.
- Children can create emotion pictures of the lighthouse, like these:



## Compare & Contrast

Find pictures of other lighthouses that look much different from the Little Red Lighthouse. Present these next to an image of the Little Red Lighthouse. Have children use a Venn Diagram or Three-Column T-Chart to compare the two and contrast them. Remind kids that human-made structures, like lighthouses, can have the same function but look different.

The lighthouse is small, and the bridge is huge. But the lighthouse is older than the bridge. Ships go by the lighthouse, but they go under the bridge. Give children a chance to compare and contrast these two important characters in the book. Both the bridge and the lighthouse have jobs related to the

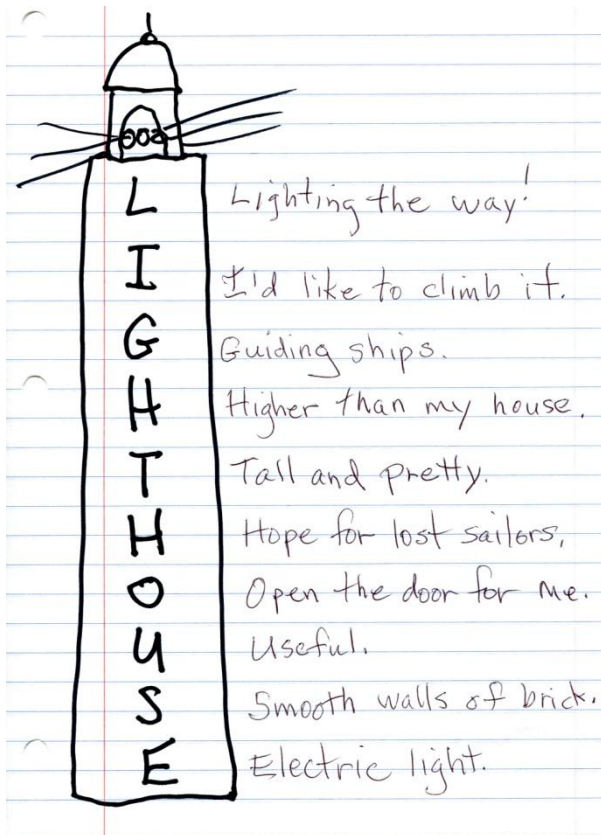


water. They both have lights. They both do important work. Discuss their work and relationship with each other. The bridge calls the lighthouse “Little brother.” How does Little Red feel about that?



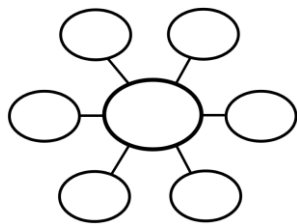
## Acrostic Writing

This stresses language skills! Younger kids will choose one or two words, while older ones may write an entire sentence.



## Web or Cluster Thinking

Use a web to have students think about the Little Red Lighthouse. They should place the lighthouse in the middle—perhaps make a small drawing of it. In each circle around the lighthouse, add a fact or a feeling about Little Red. Webs, of course, can become quite large and detailed. They also serve as writing guides or talking guides. Thus, kids can use them to write about the lighthouse or to orally share information about the lighthouse.



**Just for Fun!**

- Purchase some very small plastic red drink cups and have someone bake mini-cupcakes with yellow cupcake papers and dark icing on top. (White icing is pictured.) Use a smudge of icing as glue to connect the cupcakes to the drink cups, as shown. The red cup is the tower and the cupcake is the lantern. Also have juice on hand. Then, have a fun snack! Kids can eat the lanterns first and then have drinks in the small cups.



- Purchase inexpensive wooden lighthouses kids can paint. (These are cheap at craft stores.) Encourage children to paint expressions on their lighthouses—smiles, sad faces, surprised faces, etc. Let kids talk about their lighthouses to the group and explain what the expression shows and how it connects to the story.



## Make Some Fog

The Little Red Lighthouse had a fogbell because fog was a big problem on the Hudson River. The bell tolled to warn ships of the location of the shore during periods of fog. If you have a source of dry ice (WalMart, Costco, and grocery stores have dry ice), make some fog for children. They will be amazed! Here's a YouTube site with instructions. It's easy and will definitely impress the kids!

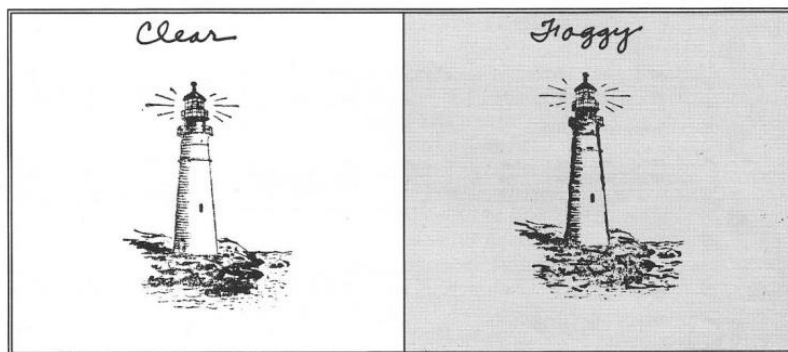
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsO1B-FWD6I>

Also have children make the fog picture included with the printables, or with a drawing they have done.

### *Make a Fog Picture*

**Materials:** Sketch paper and markers, tape, waxed paper.

**Directions:** Create your own sketch of a lighthouse along the shore. Add lots of details and color. When your sketch is complete, cut a piece of waxed paper large enough to cover the entire picture. Place the waxed paper over the sketch and tape the edges securely. You've got a misty-looking picture!



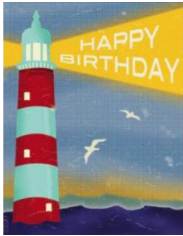
## Start a Lighthouse Fund

Hildegard Hoyt Swift's book launched a successful effort to save The Little Red Lighthouse. Children of the 1940s who read the book and loved the lighthouse, saved their change and donated it to New York City's parks department. The effort was praised by local newspapers, and it helped kids feel as if they had a voice and a mission.

Is there a lighthouse near you or a favorite of the children? Find one that has a nonprofit group caring for it. Adopt the lighthouse and collect pennies, nickels, or dimes for it. Give the effort a catchy name, such as "A Little Light Change," or "The Lighthouse Piggy Bank." Invite a member of the nonprofit you've chosen to come to your classroom or group to talk about their lighthouse and collect the change. Have kids make cards or drawings for them.

## Birthday Celebration for the Author

Hildegard Hoyt Swift's birthday is January 10<sup>th</sup>. Celebrate her work and success—she earned the prestigious Newberry Medal for another one of her books—with a birthday celebration for her. This might incorporate the easy-to-make cupcakes, notes of thanks to her for helping save the Little Red Lighthouse, artwork displays, a performance of the song “I’m a Little Lighthouse,” and more. An adult might answer the notes of thanks, as if she or he were Swift. Swift died in 1977, but her legacy of writing lives on. This fact is a chance to discuss a person’s life work and how it endures after death.



## Miscellaneous Ideas

- **A Lighthouse Portfolio**

Children may do much work with a unit on lighthouses or The Little Red Lighthouse in particular. They love to see their papers compiled in a portfolio.

- **A Performance**

Sharing with another group or class, or with parents and other adults, is important. Kids want to share what they’ve learned. Have them present a poem, a song, or something they’ve made.

- **Intergenerational Fun**

Invite grandparents and older adults to a read/share hour. Have other books about lighthouses on hand for the older adults to read to the kids. Have kids share a book as well, and their work.

- **Visit a Lighthouse**

Is Little Red nearby? A group visit can be arranged through the New City Dept. of Parks. (<https://www.nycgovparks.org>) September is usually open house at Little Red. Check the parks website for information.

**Or visit a lighthouse near you. Call it a Sister Sentry or Big Brother Lighthouse. All lighthouses share common characteristics. This is a chance to see how Little Red is like other lighthouses and how it is different.**