



# The Big Aquarium Adventure

Learn About Frogs, Fish, Turtles, Sharks, and Skates!

## Why Developmental Books?

“The act of reading opens doors and unlocks access to the world. I designed a book format for children who are *not* successful with traditional books. Developmental Texts gives special attention to the sensory, social, emotional, and academic needs of neurodiverse readers.” --Nancy Roop

### How do developmental texts help with comprehension?

#### 1. EMBEDDED TEACHING STRATEGIES

Connecting the text to the reader with "Think Aheads", "Think Behinds", and "I Wonder..." builds the story in the student's memory centers. Keywords, definitions, statistics extend vocabulary and content knowledge.

#### 2. STORY IS RELATABLE AND RELEVANT

Readers will feel comfortable digging deeper into fun adventures that they can relate to in their own life. The story can also prepare someone for a visit to an aquarium.

#### 3. SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The plot follows a character who has personal struggles with anxiety. Coping skills are explained and reinforce emotional self-regulation which supports all learning.

#### 4. LANGUAGE ARTS RESOURCES

Backmatter has "How to Interview" and "Create a Story Mountain." "Look Back Questions" teach how to explore the text to find answers to content questions.

#### 5. ADAPT THE BOOK TO THE READER

Developmental texts adapt the book to the child--like educators in small groups or one-to-one teaching.



### Informational fiction

Alex and Jordan are fifth graders who use journalism, research, and storytelling to explore and report on Stephen's adventure.

#### CHAPTER 1: INTERVIEW

- Alex asks Stephen about his visit to the aquarium
- Easy to read for new learners
- Graphic novel style

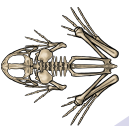
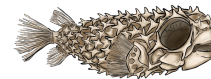
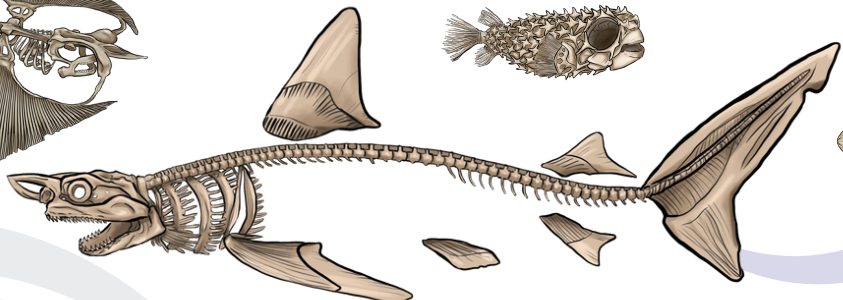
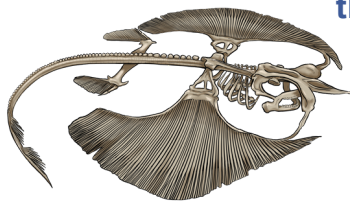
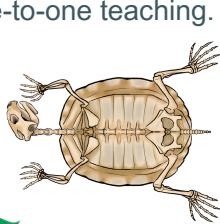
#### CHAPTER 2: NONFICTION

- Jordan researches five animals
- 4th grade common core
- Expository nonfiction style

#### CHAPTER 3: STORY

- Retelling of Stephen's experience
- Social/emotional learning
- Picture book style

Readers will be pulled in with their favorite genre and once comfortable, they will explore the rest!





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## Connect and Q & A



@Developmental\_Texts | @DevelopmentalTexts | @NancyRoop

**DevelopmentalTexts.com**

call or text 248-821-0415

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**info@DevelopmentalTexts.com**

### Q. Why did you decide to write this book?

One day, my fourth-grade student sat patiently on the floor next to my feet, leaning her arms and head on a shelf; the room was bright, and the books were a variety of genres, levels and interests. I scanned all the way to the top of the tall bookcase. I was trying to find a book at her reading level, meeting her very particular tastes—reading about dancing frogs and aliens in spaceships can be too confusing for someone who takes in every word literally. In complete frustration I thought, somebody needs to write books for neurodiverse kids!

The next day, while reflecting, it dawned on me that I could. This encounter led me to pursue interdisciplinary research to design and ultimately author books for these students with unique learning needs with concrete language and real storylines.

### Q. Is this a true story?

The characters, scene and plot are all inspired by my life experiences. I love collecting ideas from my life and reimagining adventures that are accessible to all readers. However, chapter 2 is expository nonfiction and a magnet for kids who love facts!

### Q. Is this limited to neurodivergent readers?

No way! Anyone who is ready for early chapter books will enjoy and learn from this book. It will build confidence in all new readers, including English language learners. Also, read alouds are great for all listeners which helps build background knowledge which is key to comprehension.

### Q. Tell me about the illustrator.

Mariana Boune is an amazing artist! She lives on the west coast with her family and is originally from Argentina. I love collaborating with her because she has fresh ideas for the characters and scenes. Her work in nonfiction, shows the research and dedication she has to creating accurate and beautiful animals. For more information, go to <https://mryboart.wixsite.com/portfolio> or follow on Instagram: @M.RYBO.

### Q. What is next for you as an author?

Alex and Jordan will explore adventures to museums, a library, and a zoo. Then, I will develop books two and three for each topic. Book two will dive deeply into researching what animals eat--along with more fun and unusual facts. Book three will expand on writing. Also, I look forward to interacting with readers on my website.

### Q. Where can readers get in touch with you?

My website is the best place. Alex and Jordan have a message board where readers can post their own stories or artwork. A link to my email is there, and parents can sign up for my newsletter. I provide book news and resources for neurodiverse learners.





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## Author Bio and Neurodiversity

Nancy Roop promotes neurodiversity and inclusion by publishing developmental books and speaking at reading and special education conferences—or to *anyone, anywhere*. Her early chapter books have embedded comprehension strategies, so readers learn how to extract meaning from books. These developmental books look like traditional books, but are sensory-friendly, model social connections, and support self-regulation.



**NANCY ROOP**  
AUTHOR & PUBLISHER

Roop is also a favorite Substitute Teacher in local Special Ed classrooms. She lives with her family near Detroit, Michigan and has a BA in Integrative Studies from Oakland University. Her thesis, *Developmental Texts for Students with Autism; a Safe Space in the Written World*, is available at [DevelopmentalTexts.com](http://DevelopmentalTexts.com).

Being neurodivergent provides the problem solving and big picture thinking needed for spearheading the developmental book format. As a trainer, speaker, and blogger, she promotes inclusive learning focusing on emotional regulation while providing behavioral and academic support to neurodiverse learners.

### WHO ARE NEURODIVERGENT READERS

**Kids who have differences with learning, working memory, executive function skills, or emotional regulation/anxiety.**

#### MAY BE DIAGNOSED WITH:

- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Dyslexia and other learning disorders
- Speech and language disorders
- Sensory processing disorder
- Brain injury / trauma /PTSD
- Developmental delays



### WHAT IS SENSORY FRIENDLY DESIGN?



- Illustrations are calming and realistic.
- Graphics are organized and predictable.
- Text is on a plain ivory background to limit glare.
- Rounded fonts and spacing are dyslexia friendly.
- Storylines are based on real life scenarios.
- Depictions of children using sensory tools.
- Available in spiral bound to lay flat on desk.
- Supports emotional and sensory self-regulation.

Sensory Friendly ✓

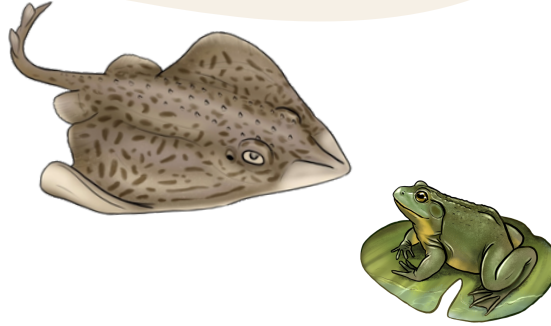
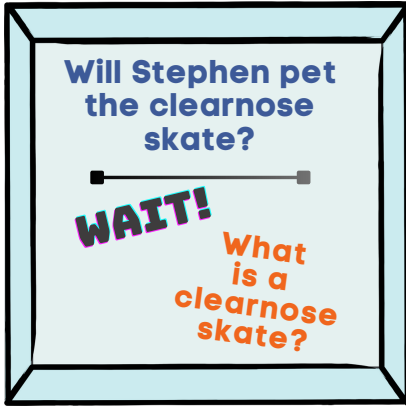
**The first book designed for neurodivergent readers!**



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## Story Summary



Stephen pauses to assess the situation; then returns to the frogs.

**Alex:** Tell me more about that, please.

**Stephen:** I walked a little closer to get a better look, but my hands started shaking, and my body felt scared all over.

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**Alex:** And then what?

**Stephen:** The tank was about 3 feet tall, and it was open on top. The expert held up 2 fingers and said, "Reach into the tank and lightly touch the skate's back with 2 fingers."

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**Alex:** Yep, I get what you mean.

**Stephen:** Someone asked me if I wanted to pet the skate. I didn't know that person, and I was so scared. I felt like running away. I almost screamed!

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**Alex:** So, what did you do?

**Stephen:** I remembered to hit PAUSE in my head—like in my video games, so I could think about what to do instead. I wanted to stop my hands from shaking.

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**STEPHEN'S QUICK TIP FOR STAYING CALM**

When I start to feel too much in my body, I can take deep breaths. I breathe in with a deep belly-breath and count to five: 1 2 3 4 5. I focus on the numbers and remember to go slowly. Then, I exhale slowly and count backwards from five: 5 4 3 2 1. I repeat these two more times. I look at frogs, squeeze a toy, or listen to music.

## IF ALEX AND JORDAN WERE TO PITCH THEIR STORY, IT MIGHT SOUND LIKE THIS:

### Stephen visits an aquarium & explores frogs, fish, turtles, sharks, and skates.

When an aquarist asks Stephen to touch a clearnose skate; his body feels so scared that his hands tremble. He wants to scream and run away. But like a video game, he pauses his fears, and navigates to the frogs where his body calms down—breathing steady and smooth like a frog through his skin.



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## Testimonials

"The Big Aquarium Adventure is a perfect high-interest book (sea life, sharks, and frogs) to engage upper elementary students who struggle with reading. The format very cleverly builds in repetition of vocabulary and science concepts in a way that involves the reader in problem-solving strategies and thinking activities that neurodiverse students need to learn to use. This book provides an excellent departure from the typical middle level chapter books."

**Linda Hodgdon, CCC-SLP, author, Visual Strategies for Improving Communication [www.UseVisualStrategies.com](http://www.UseVisualStrategies.com)**

"To describe this as a chapter book does not do it justice. The integration of comprehension prompts enables young readers to engage actively with the text and strengthen their comprehension skills in a natural, accessible way. By combining genres, Roop allows readers to approach the text in a way that is consistent with their strengths and preferences, while inviting them to expand their comfort zone.

The backmatter and online resources add another layer of support. This is a chapter book for all readers and a useful resource for those who are supporting young, reluctant, or developing readers. Well done!"

**Patty Ruhfus, MEd., Reading Specialist at PGR Teaches**

"I can't wait to use this book in my ASD classroom! It provides a training for staff on what questions to ask during shared reading.

This book is wonderful for guiding para educators through the process of shared reading. Emotional regulation and shared experiences are key for students to be able to learn in the classroom, and Stephen is a great role model!"

**Megan Cavanaugh, MA.SPEd., QBHP, Special Ed Teacher**

"Yay! Sea Animals!"

**Alison Coates Tashich, High School Science Teacher**

