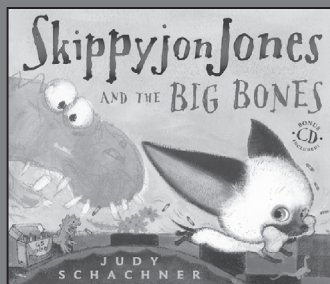
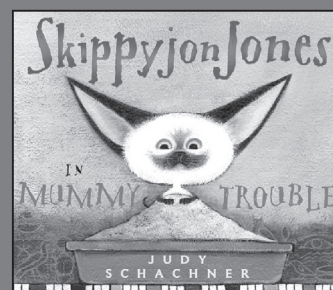
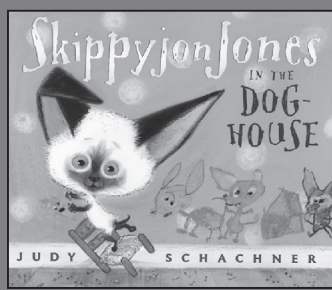
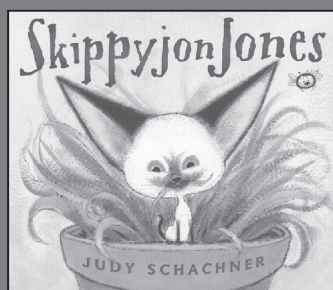


Curriculum Connections

Teaching Suggestions
& Classroom Activities
for the Skippyjon Jones Books
by Judy Schachner

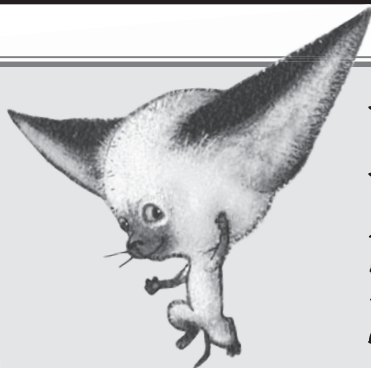


Available
September
2009!

DUTTON CHILDREN'S BOOKS • PUFFIN BOOKS

Divisions of Penguin Young Readers Group

www.penguin.com/teachersandlibrarians • www.judyschachner.com • www.skippyjonjones.com



His ears are too big for his head...
His head is too big for his body...
But Skippyjon Jones is just the right size—
For classroom lesson plans!

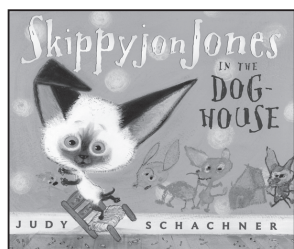
Judy Schachner has written and illustrated five hardcover books featuring the rollicking adventures of Skippyjon Jones, the adorable Siamese cat who thinks he's a Chihuahua. His ears are too "beeg" for his head and his head "ees too beeg" for his body. Each story is "ay caramba, mucho fun," for children whether they are in kindergarten or fifth grade.

Each of the suggested activities included in this booklet is appropriate for all grade levels with some adaptation or revision. At times, an activity may be successful when generated as a whole class or small group, while other times, individual students will pounce on the opportunity to create their own response. Have *mucho* fun!

ABOUT THE BOOKS

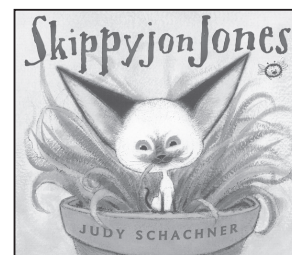
Skippyjon Jones

"I am not a Siamese cat . . ." says Skippyjon Jones, a rambunctious kitty boy with an overactive imagination. He would rather be El Skippito, his Zorro-like alter ego. Skippito, the great sword fighter can do anything. And he knows just how to save a roving band of Mexican Chihuahuas from a humongous bumblebeeto that is tormenting them. Skippito gets the job done—yes indeed-o.



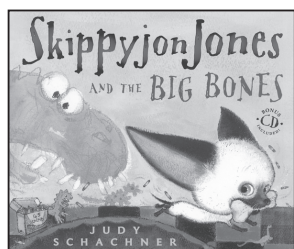
Skippyjon Jones in the Doghouse

Skippyjon Jones and his gigantico imagination still dream of becoming El Skippito, who is really a Chihuahua. Skippito gets to speak with a Spanish accent; he gets to wear a mask and cape. And he gets to help out his Chihuahua friends down in Old Mexico by driving a scary monster called the big Bobble-ito out of their doghouse. The tale of how Skippito chills the Chihuahuas and banishes the Bobble-ito is perfect for story time or anytime—mucho fun!



Skippyjon Jones in Mummy Trouble

Skippyjon Jones just can't stop his overactive imagination. This time, it takes him to Egypt. Who should be waiting for him there but his old Chihuahua chums. They want to visit the Under Mundo—the underworld—where mummitos "rest in peas." But they need the brains and bravery of El Skippito to answer the Finx's riddle and enter the oldy, moldy tomb of the mummy. Rhymes and riddles and rollicking wordplay await readers. ¡Vámonos!



Skippyjon Jones and the Big Bones

Holy guacamole, Skippyjon Jones is crazy-loco for dinosaurs! The Siamese kitty boy who thinks he's a Chihuahua is hunting the rarest dino of them all, the fabled Skipposaurus. Skippy disappears into his closet—it's a jungle in there!—where he meets up with his old friends, the Chimichango gang. Even a prickly T. Mexito is no match for the brave Skippito, who can rumba and roar with the best to drive the big baddie away. Dino-dudes of all shapes and sizes will rattle their funny bones on Skippy's rollicking dino-r-r-rific adventure.



Skippyjon Jones Lost in Spice

Skippyjon Jones knows that the Planet Mars is red because it's covered with spicy red pepper. Dressed in his space—uh, spice—suit, he lifts off to Mars to investigate. There, Skippito Friskito discovers his pals, the Chimichango gang, rolling in the *rojo*. But that's not all he finds. There are green Martian-itos there, too. And when they start getting bossy, it's up to Skippy to show those aliens who the real top dog is. With one small step for Chihuahuas, El Skippito takes a giant leap in a rollicking romp that is simply out of this world.



Available
September
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READING ALOUD

All of the books in the Skippyjon Jones series beg to be read aloud with gusto! The hardcover editions (except the first Skippyjon Jones) include a CD with author Judy Schachner reading each story aloud. This allows all children to engage in this experience independently, in a small group, or with the entire class. It also provides for repeated read-alouds for children who want to hear the story again and again.

READ-ALOUD TIPS:

- Read the book to yourself first before reading it aloud to children. This will ensure that unfamiliar words are pronounced correctly, rhyming passages are read expressively, and opportunities for pausing for comprehension are identified.
- Read with expression. Be as dramatic as the protagonist and bring the story alive for children.
- Hold the book so that children can view the illustrations as you read. Judy Schachner's art tells as much of the story as her text.
- Pause when unfamiliar words are in the text or to assess comprehension. Make sure that the children understand the play on words and the plot of the story.
- Engage listeners by familiarizing them with repetitive phrases that invite them to participate in the story-telling.

MUSIC & DANCE

Judy Schachner uses the tune to the Mexican Hat Dance when Skippyjon Jones dons his mask and cape to embark on his next imaginary adventure. *My Name is Skippito Friskito* (clap, clap) . . . begins this song. Locate the music for the Mexican Hat Dance and have students warm up by learning when to clap to this familiar tune. This is a great way to introduce the stories before beginning to read them aloud so that children will know the musical pattern and can then clap when the time is appropriate. Children could also create their own dance in response to the various rhymes and rhythms in the text such as the "Itchee Gitchee Gumba" dance of the dinosaurs in *Skippyjon Jones and the Big Bones*.



READING COMPREHENSION & ACTIVE THINKING

Students can benefit from opportunities to listen and discuss books read aloud to them by adults. During a read-aloud, teachers should model thinking strategies and skills to enhance students' comprehension of the story. Modeling and guided practice during such activities will provide students with the tools needed to deepen comprehension when reading independently. Try your hand at incorporating some of the thinking strategies listed below into your daily lesson plans and use them to guide your read-aloud and teaching techniques:

- **Ask your readers to make predictions about the text.** They should focus on the characters' feelings, events in the plot, and problem/solution situations.
- **Readers can become involved in the story by visualizing the scenes that take place throughout the book.** Ask students to draw their own versions of the story action before seeing the real illustrations.
- **Guide your students in formulating questions** about specific characters or events in the text. Read on to answer their questions by finishing the book.
- **Readers should try to infer or draw conclusions** about characters' feelings or actions as you read the text aloud.

“THINK” ALOUD

The purpose of a “think” aloud is to model for students the thought process that occurs when difficult text is being read. When using think alouds, teachers verbalize their thoughts while reading aloud. Students will gain an understanding of comprehension strategies as the teacher models this process.

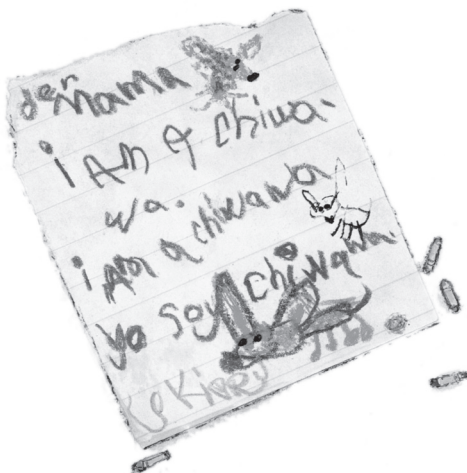
Use the following steps to model a think aloud:

1. Read sentences or passages that contain unknown words.
2. Stop to verbalize the thinking that occurs when difficult or confusing material is encountered. Students listen as the teacher thinks through the trouble spots.
3. Pair students to practice think alouds as they take turns reading sentences or passages and sharing their thoughts.



“BEEG” QUESTION CHART

Before, during, and after reading each Skippyjon Jones story, generate a list of questions from listeners on large chart paper. These might be questions whose answers are revealed later in the story, wonderings that linger following the tale, or discoveries that encourage children to return to the book. These questions also provide suggestions and ideas for oral language experiences or creative writing. Sticky notes are a great tool for marking pages during the story where questions arise, new words are identified, or an illustration captures the eye of the listener. The “beeg” question chart should be ongoing and added to for each Skippy story that is read so that children may observe questions that occur frequently or to revisit ones that are still remaining.



CONTEXT CLUES

All of the Skippyjon Jones stories contain Spanish words, which some children may not know. Judy Schachner always provides context clues that are hints to help in understanding a difficult or unusual word. These clues generally appear within the same sentence as the word to which they refer, or it may be in a preceding or subsequent sentence. Because a lot of children's vocabulary is gained through reading, it is important that they are able to recognize and take advantage of context clues. In reading aloud a Skippyjon Jones book, teachers or parents should read to the end of the page and then before continuing, ask the children if they know what the unfamiliar word might be. If listeners are unsure, reread the sentences and assist them in recognizing the context clues that will support them in their reading of this story as well as others.

PICTURE WALK

Before reading a Skippyjon Jones story or when revisiting it, conduct a picture walk that is focused on the illustrations. Also, introduce children to terms such as book cover, dust jacket, spine, endpapers, title page, and double-page spread. Point out the illustrations that occur before the text begins and have children predict what might happen in the story. Finally, linger over each page to discuss the use of white space, size and shape of the font, and the perspective or point of view.

Increase children's visual literacy by asking:

- What do you see?
- What catches your eye first?
- How do the colors make you feel?
- What point of view does the illustrator give you?
- What do you think the illustrator used to create the art?
- What do you wonder?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Students are able to comprehend stories better when they make connections. Every child has knowledge, opinions, experiences, and emotions that they can draw upon in responding to a book.

Prompts that will assist in helping students make connections are:

- This part reminds me of . . .
- I felt like the character of . . . when I . . .
- If that happened to me I would . . .
- This book reminds me of . . . (another story) because . . .
- I can relate to . . . (part of story) because one time . . .
- Something like that happened to me when . . .

Other prompts include:

- I think . . .
- I notice . . .
- I wonder . . .
- I predict . . .
- I imagine . . .



WORD WALL

A word wall is a list of words that are related to each other in some way. Word walls can be used to teach a language concept or new vocabulary. Generally, words are displayed in large letters on a wall and used in collective classroom exercises, but smaller printed word lists can be used for a variety of individual learning activities. As each Skippyjon Jones book is read, a word wall could be created and added to using Spanish words and their English translation such as *fuego/fire*, *rojo/red*, *cinco/five*, *cabeza/head*, *gato/cat*, *calor/hot* and many others. Showing the words side by side reinforces both Spanish and English vocabulary.

COMPARE & CONTRAST

Using a Venn diagram, have children compare and contrast two or more Skippyjon Jones books. This provides them with an opportunity to see which characters are similar across books, the same or different names that Mama Junebug Jones uses in referring to her son, the many places Skippy visits when he enters his closet, and to find the commonalities and differences in the story plots.

CAUSE & EFFECT

Skippyjon Jones is *muy muy* imaginative. His actions create a variety of circumstances that he must confront once he dons his mask and cape. Generate a cause and effect chart for one or several of the stories to illustrate how Skippyjon's actions result in interesting situations.

For example, in *Skippyjon Jones in the Doghouse*:



VISUAL LANGUAGE

Each Skippyjon Jones title continues distinctive words and phrases that lend themselves to visualization. A great internet tool to use is www.wordle.net. As a whole class, generate a list of words or phrases from one or several books. Next, type the list into the box on the Wordle website which will create a unique configuration using the words or phrases. Different fonts or colors can then be chosen. Below is an example of a Wordle using names that Mama Junebug Jones uses to refer to her son throughout the various stories.



Mr.Beans
FuzzyBug
BunnyBoots
Mr.Cocopugs
SkipperDoodle
Mr.Doodlepaws
Mr.Fluffernutter
Mr.McPooh
MajorTom
PinkyPie
Dumplin'
LittleDigger
RedRover
KittenBritches
Mr.FuzzyPants
Picklepants
KittyBoy

SKIPPYJON JONES MYSTERY BOX

A **story mystery box** contains items that are referred to in a story. The box can be used before reading to introduce a story, during reading to follow plot episodes as they unfold, or after reading as a response activity such as retelling the story. Locate a box or an opaque container that has a lid. Decorate the box with bright colors and put the name "Skippyjon Jones" on it. Collect items that refer to the story in some way. For *Skippyjon Jones and the Big Bones* you might place a stuffed dog, a dog's chew bone, marshmallows, plastic dinosaurs, a band-aid and of course a mask and a cape. To introduce the story, pull out the mask, the cape, and the stuffed dog. Children can brainstorm what new adventure is in store for Skippyjon Jones. Then as the story is read aloud, stop when appropriate and pull out the next item for children to predict what might occur next.

ELEMENTARY POETRY LESSONS

Each book in the **Skippyjon Jones series is language-rich and includes many examples of word play and simple poetry.** Explain what rhyming words and poetry are to your students. Ask them to identify which words rhyme with which throughout the stories. Give examples of other places where rhymes are used, such as songs ("Twinkle Twinkle Little Star") or other books. One of the easier forms of poetry to write is the cinquain ("cin-kain") which is a five-line form that usually follows this organization:

LINE 1: One word that tells what the poem is about

LINE 2: Two adjectives that describe the subject of the poem

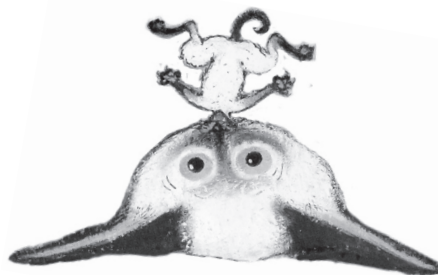
LINE 3: Three words ending in "ing" that described something the subject does

LINE 4: A four to six word phrase that describes the subject further

LINE 5: One or two words that rename what the poem is about (a synonym for the word in the first line)

Here is an example:

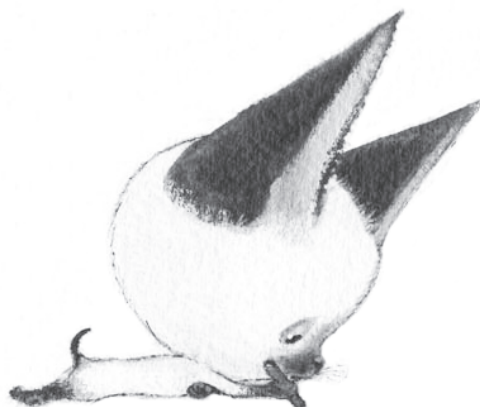
Skippyjon Jones
Crazy-loco, imaginativ-o
Bouncing, pouncing, rocketing
Wearing a mask and a cape
Skippito Friskito



SHARED WRITING

Skippyjon Jones loves to pretend that he is El Skippito and with a simple walk into his closet, he can go anywhere his imagination wants to take him. Invite your students to use their own powers of pretend to imagine that there is a secret portal to a lonesome desert road, far, far away in old Mexico or a portal to space or the doorway to a jungle full of dinosaurs or the entrance to a pyramid in ancient Egypt, filled with mummies, in your classroom! Brainstorm different adventures as a class and record the ideas on the board or on large chart paper. As a group, write about the adventure your class would have and have each student individually create a picture of their own favorite part in the adventure. Hang these in the hallway to share with the rest of the school!

Show your students all five books in the Skippyjon Jones series. Explain what a series is and how the same characters—as well as new ones!—appear in each of the books about Skippyjon Jones. After you've read the books to your class, invite your students to brainstorm about what Skippy's next adventure should be. As your students call out suggestions, record them on the board or on large chart paper. Select one or two ideas from the list and write a paragraph or two as a group detailing what happens to Skippy in your class's new story.



**Or record your students' ideas in a letter to Judy!
Send them to her at:**

Judy Schachner
C/O Dutton Children's Books
Penguin Young Readers Group
345 Hudson Street, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10014

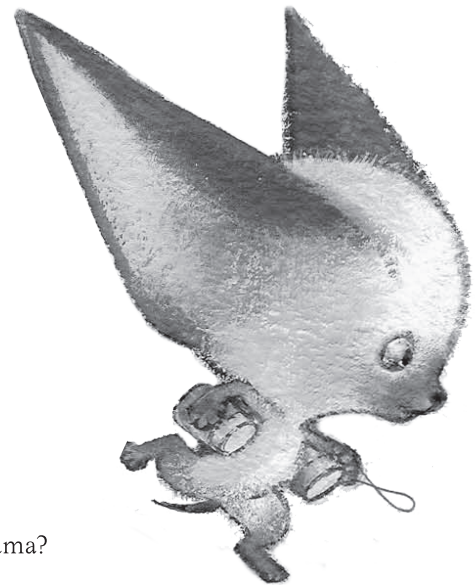
OR

Visit
www.judyschachner.com
for more information.

Readers' theater offers students an opportunity for interpretive oral reading as they use voices, facial expressions, and hand gestures to interpret characters in stories. Readers' theater builds readers' confidence, brings stories to life through performance, animates content areas, and improves reading ability, comprehension, and oral reading skills. Whether they are in the cast or in the audience, children often enjoy being part of readers' theater. Readers' theater scripts are easy to create from Skippyjon Jones books because of the narrative text. The following is a readers' theater script from *Skippyjon Jones: Lost in Spice*.

by Judy Schachner
Adapted for Readers' Theater

- *Narrator*
- *Skippyjon Jones*
- *Mama Junebug Jones*
- *Jilly Boo Jones*
- *Jezebel Jones*
- *Ju-Ju Bee Jones*
- *Poquito Tito*
- *Don Diego*
- *Martian-ito*



Narrator: Skippyjon Jones went to his bedroom and began bouncing and pouncing and rocketing in the rusty red dust.

Skippyjon Jones: Oh, I'm Skippyjon Jones,
And I'm in a big race
To be the first dog
To bounce into space.

“aaaah-cah-
CHOOEY!”



Narrator: Then a bit of spice tickled his nose and . . .

Skippyjon Jones: *(sneezes)* aaaah-cah-**CHOOEY!!!**

Narrator: Skippyjon Jones suddenly saw his reflection in the mirror.

Skippyjon Jones: Holy **HOT** Tamales! What's up with that doggie in the mirror? You are not a Siamese cat, dude. You are a weck-ed **RED Chihuahua!**

Narrator: And quicker than you can say “jumping jacks on Jupiter,” the kitty boy found his mask and cape, a mirror, a marble, and his sock monkey. He stuffed these things into his space suit, which looked a lot like a snow suit, and sang in a *muy muy* soft voice.

Skippyjon Jones: My name is Skippito Friskito *(clap-clap)*
And I think there are Martian perritos. *(clap-clap)*
Some say the green creatures
Share all of my features
I hope it's not just fable-itos *(clap-clap)*

Narrator: Soon, Skippyjon was all suited up and ready for liftoff. The astronaut-ito took one small step into his closet for Chihuahuas and one giant leap into the universe for Los Chimichangos. He was well into his orbit when a comet covered in crazies cruised by.

Skippyjon Jones: *(yelling)* **Who goes there?**

Poquito Tito: Martian!

Skippyjon Jones: Martian Who?

Poquito Tito: Martian to your closet and get us some *frijoles*, dude.

Skippyjon Jones: Poquito Tito! Is that **YOU** *amigo*?



Poquito Tito: Sí, it is all of us, Los Chimichangos. We are going to build a chili *polvo* pipeline from Mars to Earth, puppito.

Skippyjon Jones: Not the chili powder pipeline!

Poquito Tito: ¡Exactamente!

Skippyjon Jones: ¿Por qué?

Don Diego: Because, *amigo*, the chili powder on Mars is *muy caliente* and it will keep us very warm *en el invierno*.

Narrator: Then off they zoomed. The cuckoo comet and the kitty boy made it to Mars with a soft landing.

Don Diego: No offense, *poco coco*, but why the suit *de la nieve*?

Skippyjon Jones: It's not a **SNOW** suit, it's a **SPACE** suit.

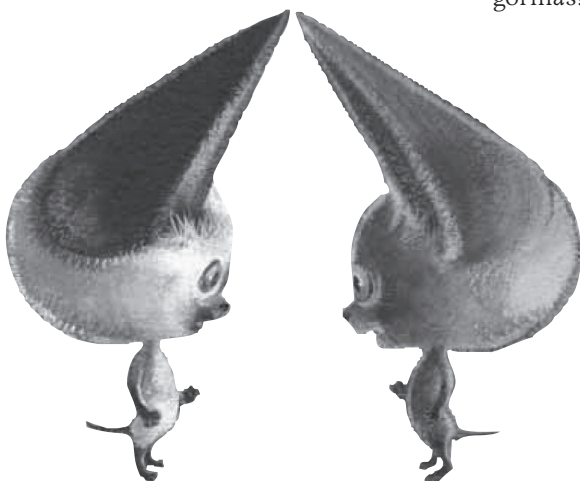
Poquito Tito: Dude, you don't need a space suit up here. You need a **SPICE** suit. Mars is covered in the chili powder, *chico!*

Poquito Tito & Chili-roo, chili-ree, chili-rito (*clap-clap*)

Don Diego: It's a wag of the tail for Skippito (*clap-clap*)
For there's nothing as nice
As a roll in hot spice
In the light of the Martian moon-itos (*clap-clap*)

Narrator: But a roll in the *rojo* should have been a no-no because quicker than you can say "monkeys making meatballs," Skippito rolled in the opposite direction from his pipeline *poochitos*. When he stopped, the astronaut-ito was so *calor* under the collar that he had to take off his space suit.

Skippyjon Jones: (*yelling*) Mooo-chaaaaaaa-chos! Uh-oh. I'm lost in spice. (*looks around*). Holy green gorillas! (*he sees the Martian*). It's a Martian-ito. Dude. Your ears are too big for you head. And your head is too big for your body.

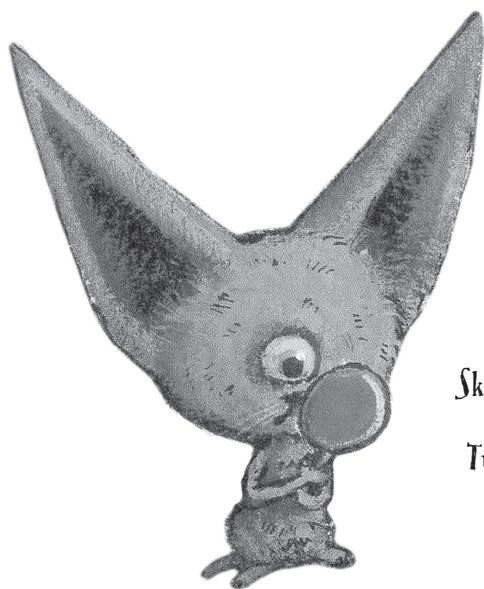


Martian: Dude! Your ears are too big for *your* head.
And your head is too big for *your* body.

Skippyjon & Martian: (*said together*) You are not a Martian.

Skippyjon Jones: I know I'm not a Martian, dude. I am a Chihuahua. Just like you!





Narrator: To prove his point, Skippito pulled out the little *rojo* mirror and held it so that both their faces showed. Soon, kitty boy wanted to find his *amigos* but the Martian wanted to just stare at his image in the mirror. So Skippito took off and in less time than it takes to tickle a termite, he found his cuckoo-ritos inside a crater, afraid of the men from Mars they have spied.

Skippyjon, Poquito: Knock, knock. Who goes there?

Tito & Don Diego: Verde Martians everywhere!
Slurping sloppy ice-green cones,
Speeding in the spicy zones.
Mossy Martians on the move,
What do they think they have to prove?
We did not come here for a fight.
We want to build, we will not bite!

Narrator: Then Skippito saw that the Martians had all of his stuff.

Skippyjon Jones: **MONKEY!** That's my sock monkey!

Narrator: Skippito picked up his monkey's paw but the Martian pulled it the other way. It was a tug-o-monk-ito! But soon the Martian let go and kitty boy went flying, hurtling headfirst back to Earth and out through his closet door.

Mama Junebug Jones: **Skippyjon Jones!** What on earth are you doing?

Skippyjon Jones: I didn't do anything on Earth, Mama. I did everything on Mars.

Narrator: Later that night as Skippyjon looked at the starry sky he began to bounce.

Skippyjon Jones: Oh, I'm Skippyjon Jones,
and I like my red jammies,
'cuz they're made from the wool
of green Martian lambies.

Mama Junebug Jones: Stop bouncing Pinky Pie.
Just go to sleep.

Narrator: And that's exactly what he did.



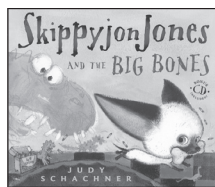
Hey, Amigos!

Have you read all the Skippyjon Jones Books?



Skippyjon Jones

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PB: 978-0-14-240403-4 • \$6.99
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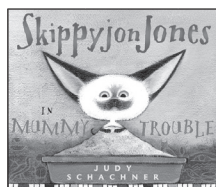
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Skippyjon Jones Lost in Spice

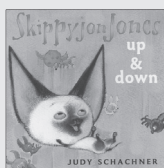
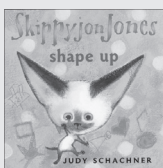
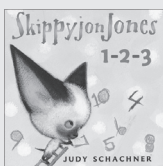
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The Great Bean Caper

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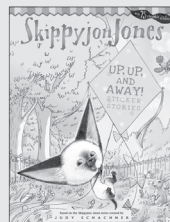
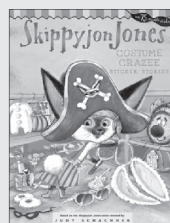
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