

## **Martin & Sylvia: Saturdays!** All Story Descriptions by Season

Saturdays are special days for our creative brother and sister. From enormous art projects in their own backyard to “explorers” adventures up Mooseberry mountain; from mornings of quiet building along the creek, to whole-family canning adventures in the kitchen, the children find fun and inspiration at every turn. Each story is accompanied by a craft or project inspired by the story, and a printable project page for more creative fun.



### **Autumn Season:**

*This is a collection of 13 autumn stories, for the 13 weeks of autumn.*

### **True Colors**

One autumn morning, Momma tells brother and sister that the oranges, reds and yellows of autumn leaves are actually their true colors — that the green actually masks those colors until the fall. This reminds Sylvia of something she has been masking — and gives her the courage to tell the truth.

### **Lunch Box**

One afternoon Martin notices that the construction workers downtown, as well as the children from the local school, all have little lunch boxes they carry around. This makes him wonder — “Why don’t I have a lunch box? And if I had one — what image would I want on the outside?”. This sets brother and sister off on a fun adventure of finding, adapting and decorating their own lunch boxes.

### **Medals**

When Daddy tells Martin and Sylvia about a former student who is winning running medals, Martin is inspired to win a few of his own. The only problem is he needs to create a competition as well as the first place medals! They decide on creating a ‘medal event’ that gives everyone a chance to win a medal for doing something they really enjoy — and the medals turn out to be much tastier than traditional gold medals.

### **The Great Scarecrow Mystery**

When Daddy takes brother and sister into town one day, they see scarecrows everywhere! How did this happen — and why? Jerry the baker explains that there is a scarecrow of the day and if they can find the one in the photo by the town hall, they could win a little prize. Of course Martin and Sylvia are excited, but the mystery only begins!

### **Super Silks**

When Sylvia insists that she and Martin need new costumes, Daddy suggests that any costume could be made by using silks. Sylvia doesn't believe him so Daddy suggests a costuming challenge where brother and sister use the costumes they have — and Momma and Daddy use only silks. The result is some very creative costumes and a LOT of laughs.

### **Waiting for the Sparkle**

Now that Martin can write full sentences, he decides he wants to write an entire book. He gets his paper and pencil, and he sits down to begin; but he can't think of anything to write! Daddy sympathizes and encourages him to be patient. Sometimes the sparkle of an idea takes a while to arrive — but it always comes!

### **Like Cats and Dogs**

As Daddy helps brother and sister understand the difference between “Dog People” and “Cat People”, all three realize that they have traits that are like both dogs and cats. In fact, they can think of all sorts of animals they are like at different times of the day!

### **A Hunting Morning**

Laura is visiting the Browns next door and Martin and Sylvia are invited over for buttered popovers. Mr and Mrs. Brown then decide to set up a ‘popover treasure hunt’ for the three children where they need to use their noses to find them. When the hunt begins, however, they are surprised to find they are not the only ones doing the hunting!

### **The Tree Key**

Momma needs to find a green ash tree for some of her research and invites brother and sister to join her. At first Sylvia is confused because most of the trees have dropped their leaves — “How can you find a tree without its leaves?” , “With this”, Momma responds — and then she shows them a little book that makes finding trees magical and fun!

### **Around the World**

Brother and sister are taking a class in their town hall called “Around the World” where they get to do projects based on a country of their choice. Martin wants Mexico but is discouraged when his sister chooses it before him. He quickly chooses a country he has never heard of — but is so glad that he did.

### **Three Little Fairy Houses**

There is a big storm coming, and Sylvia is worried about the fairy houses by the brook. Since they just read the “Three Little Pigs” story, she wonders what natural materials would be best for certain kinds of fairies. She and Martin get to work creating all about the yard and are delighted to discover which houses endure the “huffing and puffing” of the storm.

## The Let Go Approach

It is gift giving season for Martin and Sylvia's family and Martin has a particularly magical gift for his sister. It is so magical that he wants to give it to her in a magical way. When all his ideas don't seem to work, Daddy suggests he use the 'let go approach'. And what is the 'let go approach?'

## Snow that Sticks

It is almost officially winter and there is still no snow. Brother and sister think about ways they can encourage the snow to come — and in addition to a snow dance and song, they make lots of paper snowflakes. When they bring the paper flakes outside, they are dazzled by what happens.

## Winter Season:



*This is a collection of 13 winter stories, for the 13 weeks of winter.*

## Free Sledding

Brother and sister love sledding: they love sledding sideways, backwards, slow, fast, like animals and like bowling balls. When they visit a new sledding hill and try sledding with other children, Sylvia realizes that not everyone knows how to 'free sled.' Her ideas turn a frustrated competition into a delightful sledding adventure for all.

## Sudden Story

During a visit to Grandma's, brother and sister are inspired by some street performers who create a "flash performance" in the park. They too want to tell a story publicly — and suddenly — without any announcement. When Momma suggests they tell a 'sudden story' at Mrs. Brown's birthday party, Martin knows just the right story to tell.

## Our Own Town

Daddy is asked to be on the town planning committee. When he tells Martin and Sylvia about some of the town hall and library renovations, they ask if he can show them what it will look like. Daddy pulls out the clay and toothpicks and begins to create a model, encouraging the children to fashion their own additions!

## Mouse Houses

Martin discovers an abandoned mouse nest in the woodpile, and Sylvia wishes to preserve it. Momma suggests she make her own mouse houses and place them in spots around the forest. The two of them work together to imagine what a mouse might want for a house and where the best locations might be.

## Picture Thank You Cards

Momma encourages brother and sister to make thank you cards for Grandma, and Sylvia insists that she cannot. "I don't know how to write," she says. Daddy then recalls something they saw in a children's museum: Egyptian hieroglyphics! Inspired, brother and sister start to make their own picture words.

### **Can't Wait to Wait**

When Jonathan invites brother and sister to his birthday dinner at a french restaurant in town, Sylvia can't help but worry that she will have to wait forever while the food arrives. Mr. Weber, however, knows just how to making waiting lots more fun.

### **The Organizing Bug**

Martin notices that Momma has several little files of note cards, and he wonders what they could be for. She explains that she caught the organizing bug when she was little and likes to make files of cards that tell her where everything is. Soon Martin and Sylvia catch the organizing bug too — but brother and sister have very different ways of organizing!

### **Four in One Snow Forts**

A sudden snow storm results in two feet of perfect packing snow — and brother and sister want to make snow forts. When their friends Jonathan and Sasha join them, the four of them start on four very different forts. By day's end, however, they decide to collaborate on one fort — a fort that has all four different styles.

### **The Gift of Sweetness**

It is maple sugaring season and this year is a special year for the Browns: this year's sap will be boiled using firewood cut from an old maple tree that was cut down last year. The tree was called Sweetness, and Sylvia and Mrs. Brown find that the old tree has more than sap and firewood to give.

### **How to Be a Fire Fighter**

Ever since Sylvia saw a fire fighter in action, she has wanted to be a fire fighter. When she and her family get to visit the fire station and see the life of a fire fighter first hand, she learns that she can start her training right away.

### **Spring Seeing**

Brother and sister take themselves on a Spring Seeing walk where they hunt for signs of spring. As they wander through the forest, they talk about the fairy life and Sylvia wonders if maybe this time she can see a fairy with her own eyes.

### **Pet Portraits**

When Sylvia looks at the 'family wall' of portraits she realizes that there are two family members missing: Billbill, their old dog, and Pickles, their cat. Daddy suggests they make portraits of their pets which opens up the question — does the picture have to look like them?

### **Messages**

There's a "white out" at Martin and Sylvia's house! The snow is falling so heavily that the children can barely find their playhouse. This is quite exciting, but there's one problem: their grandparents are due to

arrive on an airplane that day. Martin wants to get a message to Nanni and Poppi — and so combines magic and paper-folding to make an airplane that might just do the trick!

### **Spring Season:**



*This is a collection of 13 spring stories, for the 13 weeks of spring.*

### **Silly Speak Songs**

Brother and sister attend a song writing workshop with a visiting children's musician and even though Martin is at first resistant, they both learn the silly way she writes songs.

### **The Meeting Spot**

When Momma's friend Karen brings her daughter Haylie over to play, Sylvia isn't sure what they could do together. What did she like to do? Will she enjoy playing the things Sylvia enjoys? Momma encourages them to find a meeting spot — find something that they both enjoy — and it doesn't take long for them to find the perfect one.

### **Spring Thaw Paddle Tour**

Martin and Sylvia's family decides to join the 'spring thaw paddle tour' on town lake this year — but oh no! Martin gets a fever and has to stay in bed. Sylvia decides she doesn't want to go without him and instead creates a paddle tour just for her brother ... in the bath tub!

### **Lemons and Mud**

Brother and sister are inspired one warm spring morning to make the year's first lemonade stand. When they realize they have no lemons — Daddy encourages them to look around and see what is available. All Sylvia can see is mud — and thus the year's first 'mud pie stand' is launched!

### **Ramps and Rapunzel**

On a springtime nature walk, Momma, brother and sister discover a gathering of wild leeks or ramps. When Momma suggests they carefully harvest a few for some ramp pesto, brother and sister wish to return later for more. After they take a few too many, Momma reminds them of a fairy tale where too many ramps were taken — and what happens next!

### **When Pigs Fly**

Sylvia is upset when Martin's friend Julian starts to tell an "Explorer Pig" story about the Sylvia's favorite new piglet Explorer Pig. She insists to Mrs. Brown that only she can tell those stories. Mrs. Brown, who writes poetry, lets her in on a secret: stories sometimes enjoy hearing how other people might tell them. This is difficult at first for Sylvia to accept, but soon she realizes what fun it can be to share a story.

### **When You Need Your Numbers**

Martin isn't sure math is so important. He can't think of when he ever uses it. When Momma challenges him to count how many times he uses numbers in his day, however, he is not only surprised but grateful for all that math offers him.

### **Calling It Done**

When Mr. Brown asks Martin if he would invent a new way to carry chicken eggs, Martin jumps into the challenge with excitement. After a full day of working, however, he starts to question what he made and wonders if he could do better. Daddy recognizes that there are always room for improvements but eventually one has to stop and call it complete.

### **Peg Doll Party**

It's spring cleaning time and Martin and Sylvia are not so excited. Momma invites them to join her in the attic reorganization and everything changes when they discover a box of old wooden pegs. Why did Momma have this box? Well, brother and sister are surprised and delighted by her answer.

### **Important to Us All**

When Daddy takes brother and sister downtown and they see a public mural being painted on a back wall of the town hall, they wonder if perhaps they can paint one at their home. "What should we paint?" asks Martin. "Something that is important to the whole family," suggests Daddy. And thus the Saturday project begins.

### **Trail Art**

When Martin and Sylvia join their friends, Sasha and Jonathan, for a hike up Mount Mooseberry, they learn that sometimes people make little markers along the trail. Some of them are simple, and some are complex, but all are beautiful. Sylvia decides to call it "Trail Art," and all four children spend the rest of the hike making lovely sculptures out of stones, sticks, and leaves.

### **Silly Sun Hats**

When Martin and Sylvia are invited to go sailing with the Webers on Town Lake, Momma asks that they both wear sunhats. Martin really wants to wear his red cardinal hat but Momma suggests he decorate his hat so that he enjoys it more. This excites Sylvia and then brother and sister design and decorate the silliest, specialest sunhats they ever wore.

### **Animal Hospital**

Billbill, their old dog, has a stomach ache and brother and sister are very excited to help him. They collect herbs and make teas and hope to not only heal Billbill but any sick or injured animal that needs it. Unfortunately for them however, all the animals seem fine and don't need their help!

### **Summer Season:**



*This is a collection of 13 summer stories, for the 13 weeks of summer.*

### **Rainbows**

Martin and Sylvia's family is planning a barbecue. But on the morning of the event, they are discouraged to see that it is raining. Brother and sister are adamant that they can make the rain stop if only they can get a rainbow to come. They wear rainbow clothes, sing rainbow songs and then finally make rainbow food. Will it work?

### **Explorer Pig**

Mr and Mrs. Brown's pigs have had piglets, and Martin and Sylvia get to name them! Of course, by the end of the naming process, they all have delightful names. The littlest pig of all is named Explorer Pig — because he keeps escaping the pen. One morning Sylvia imagines where the piglet goes when he escapes; this serves as the seed for a fun Saturday project!

### **Let's Do Everything**

Daddy asks brother and sister to plan a play date with their friends Sasha and Jonathan. Martin has ideas and Sylvia has ideas — how to choose? Daddy suggests they make a list and let their friends choose. Everyone is surprised and delighted when Jonathan says, "Let's do everything!" But how to do that?

### **Mother's Helper**

Mr. and Mrs. Brown's granddaughter Laura is coming over, and Momma asks brother and sister to be "Mother's Helpers". At first they don't feel qualified for such a responsibility, but after some games, some stories and some tasty snacks, they realize that being a mother's helper is not only work — it is fun!

### **Sports from Scratch**

Martin wants to join the town soccer league. He tells Daddy that he wants to be on a team, to have a uniform, and to play games. Daddy then suggests they get what Martin wants, but in reverse: start with the name, then make the uniform, and then create the game to play. The result is surprising and lots of fun!

### **The Picky Day**

Brother and sister wake up in a touchy mood and start picking on each other. Momma gives them a task that will make use of all this picking: making a flower braid. She also gives them a riddle that Martin and Sylvia must work together to solve.

### **The Tiny House**

Martin and Sylvia want to set up the tent, and in addition to sleeping bags, they want chairs, a work and dining table, as well as a reading and craft area. They quickly realize that it will take some careful planning to make it all fit?. By day's end have a beautiful and functional little house.

### **What Sandcastles Like**

When Martin and Sylvia's family visits Momma's friend Kaylee on the coast, they discover a tidal river bank with sand perfect for sandcastles. They build what they hope will be a long lasting sand castle, but quickly learn what the ocean, the sand and sandcastles prefer.

### **Sock Puppets**

Daddy intends to throw out his old single socks because he believes there is nothing one can do with them. Well, brother and sister's babysitter Ellie knows just what to do with them — sock puppets!

### **A Better Way**

When Martin and Sylvia realize that school for them starts the following week, they go to the supplies cabinet to see what they need for the year ahead. They discover that the cabinet is a mess. "Perhaps there is a better way to store our school supplies," suggests Momma. And oh what fun it is to create cups, bins, pouches and boxes for all their things! Well, almost all their things.

### **Nippy Knitting Day**

Martin and Sylvia wake one late summer morning and feel a chill in the air. It is the first nippy morning of the year and they both start to imagine all the cool weather things they could do. Eventually they decide to knit scarves to help them stay warm. By the time they finish, however, the temperature has changed.

### **Protectors**

During a trip downtown, Martin and Sylvia meet a police officer who helps them better understand and appreciate the role of the police in their town: in some ways they are like a parent and in other ways they are like a super hero!

### **Apple Faces**

It is apple season where Martin and Sylvia live and while they are collecting apples for apple sauce, Momma suggests to Martin that no two things in nature are exactly the same. Martin can't believe this and spends the day looking for two apples — and then two apple faces — that are identical.