

# Educator’s Guide for Baro Af-Soomaali (Learn Somali)

**Publisher** Applewood Books, Published 2018

**Summary** This is a children’s board book that teaches the Somali alphabet through common objects found at home or common words used in family settings. This book was created by four Somali families from Seattle through a partnership between Somali Family Safety Taskforce, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Public Library, and Seattle Housing Authority.



**Suggested ages** 0-10

**Reading tips** Consider inviting a Somali parent at your school to help you read and explain the book.

See [pronunciation - video](#)

Read news articles describing the creation and launch of the book:

Seattle Times: [Why a group of Seattle mothers and children came together to write their own alphabet book](#)

South Sound Emerald: [Local Somali Community Bands Together to Create Children’s Book](#)

## Before reading

- Point out Somalia on a map.
- What are your thoughts about the picture on the cover page?
- Start with a picture walk and flip through the pages. What do you see? What do you know already? (Could assign pages and have each person be an expert or introduce their page)
- Explain the title - Baro Af-Soomaali – means “Learn Somali”
- Point out the back cover of the book and tell the story of how the book got made. (Use the news stories above to help)
- What are things that are "traditional"? What does the word “transitional” mean? What are items that you use in your house right now? There are some things that may not seem familiar to you. What do you think that's about?
- Do we have any students from Somali that would like to help me share this book with the class?

## Introduction

This book has pictures and illustration of common things found in the house or common words in Somali used in family settings. There will be things you recognize right away and things that you may not have seen before. This book will help us see and learn that there are many ways we go about our daily lives. What does the word, “different” mean to you? Is “different” good or bad?

## After reading

Do you have any of these items in your home?  
Has anyone ever been to Africa?  
Who learned something by reading this book? What did you learn?  
What are some uses of the items in the book? What questions do you have?  
What did you learn about the Somali alphabet? How is it the same and how is it different than the English alphabet?

## Related activities

**Art:** Create their own Saab from nature. Create their own fan. Create their own Tusbax. Create their own broom. (use paper plates, paper strips on yarn, cornstarch or glue or things found in nature)

**Dramatization:** Give children cutout images of each items in the book. Allow them to play with it and use the word in a sentence?

**Drawing:** Draw items that are from their culture that are not in this book.

**Writing:** Write a story from one item you drawn

**Other:** Make a small paper booklet and have students make their own book and decide what symbol each letter of the alphabet represents using items from their home or culture. Children can choose to use the English alphabet or another language of their choice.

