Making books that have hidden surprises—flaps to lift up, shapes to pop open, tabs to pull—adds zest to children’s storytelling and artwork. Pop-ups in particular have an enduring appeal for kids—of all ages! And pop-ups that form “talking mouths” are especially compelling. This format is great for science units on animal habitats and life cycles, for a lesson on dialog or for writing a biography or autobiography.

**Materials & Tools**
- Medium weight paper, any color; 24 lb. paper is a good choice, sturdy but not too thick for children to fold.
- Scissors, writing & drawing supplies.
- Optional: glue sticks and notions like googly eyes, collage material, etc.

**Step By Step**
Constructing a pop-up mouth entails making one cut through the crease of a folded page, and then folding triangles around the cut.

You can cut a pop-up mouth into a page that’s simply been folded in half, as these diagrams illustrate. Or, you can cut a mouth into a valley fold of an accordion book or into any fold of a single-sheet booklet. Here are the steps:

- Fold a piece of paper in half lengthwise.
- Make one cut, starting at the fold.
- Crease the paper on both sides of the cut into triangles; then fold both triangles back and forth until they move easily.
- Flatten the triangles, then prop up your folded paper so that it looks like a tent.
- Put your finger on the top triangle and push it into the tent. Do the same thing with the bottom triangle.
- Fold the “tent” around the open pop-up and press it flat.
- Now every time you open and close your paper, the triangles will look like a talking mouth.
What to Do With Mouth Pop-Ups

Frog Life Cycle or Habitat Narratives
• Color your triangles green and draw the body of a frog around them.

• Draw a speech balloon so you can write down what your frog is saying.

• Give it a tongue so it can catch flies.

• Create a whole pond habitat around your frog. If you construct your frog on the last fold of a long accordion, you’ll have room to draw frog eggs and tadpoles, plus more space for writing.

• By using all the folds in an accordion book, you’ll have room for more frogs! A four-panel accordion has three valley folds for pop-ups.

Stories About Birds
• Color your triangles yellow and draw the body of a bird around them. Add a nest.

• Is your bird a baby, waiting for food? Is your bird an adult, sitting on eggs? Add some illustrations and some text to let your readers know what’s going on.

Talking Heads
• Your triangles can be mouths for people, too. Draw a self-portrait around your triangles.

• Use speech balloons to tell your readers about yourself.

Fierce Beasts
• Try changing the shape of the cut you make.

• A zigzag will produce a ferocious-looking mouth, full of sharp fangs. A curvy cut will look like luscious lips.

POP-UPS ON THE WEB
How to make pop-ups:

For lots of Robert Sabuda pop-ups, from basic to dazzlingly sophisticated, visit Simple Pop-Ups You can Make at http://robertsabuda.com/popmakesimple.asp.

Here’s a list of web sites where you can link to online exhibitions of pop-up books, both historical and contemporary examples: http://www.popupbooks.net/main.html.