



# Seahorse's MAGICAL Sun Sequences

How all children (and sea creatures)  
can use yoga to feel positive,  
confident and completely included

Michael Chissick  
and Sarah Peacock



# Guidance for Teachers, Professionals and Parents

## About this book

I wrote this book to give teachers, educators and parents the tools to enable *all* children to be included in the Sun Sequence, irrespective of any impairment.

The book contains five stories that each contain a specific sequence, reflecting the needs of four different groups of children.

**The Starfish Brothers** is suitable for children aged 3–5 years old in kindergarten, nursery, elementary or primary school. It is also suitable for older children, who may find other sequences too challenging at the moment.

**Eel's Story** is suitable for children in wheelchairs or children who find it difficult to stand.

**Crab's Story** is suitable for the majority of children on the Autism Spectrum.

**Octopus's Story** is suitable for older children (6–11 years old) who may find standing difficult or who may be going through a temporary problem, for example a broken leg.

**The Starfish Brothers Return** is suitable for the majority of 'able-bodied' children aged 6–11 years old.

Each story has the same format and storyline. This makes for good anticipation and reinforcement when children are practising their reading. The idea is that you dip into the story that most suits the needs of the children or child in front of you.

## What is the Sun Sequence?

The Sun Sequence, also known as Sun Salutation or Salute to the Sun (Surya Namaskar), is one of the most popular and essential parts of any yoga lesson, whether children's or adult's. Put simply, it is a series of flowing yoga postures.

One of the objectives of the sequence is to move the spine in a variety of ways to increase flexibility. If you've tried it, you will know that it exercises the whole body. Some people use it as their wake-up morning routine; others as a bedtime solution to help sleep. If you are short of time, it can act as a whole session.

## Sequences that are tried and tested

I have taught the children's Sun Sequence in every possible situation that you can imagine. That includes children with the most challenging and severe physical needs, children across the autism spectrum, children with intense emotional and behavioural needs, early years children and the whole range of mainstream primary. Over the years I have developed four sequences that will ensure that every child is included. Those four sequences have formed the basis of this book.

All four sequences have been tried, tested and developed in schools for nearly two decades – so you know they will work.

## How to use this book

If you are a teacher in a school, the idea is that you choose the story (and therefore sequence) that is most appropriate to the children you are teaching so that everyone is included.

Similarly, if you are a parent, choose the story (and therefore sequence) that is most appropriate to your child or children's needs.

Whether you are a parent, educator or both, I suggest that you work on *one* story at a time. Read the story, or have your child or children read the story. When you come to the part when Seahorse teaches the Sun Sequence, jump in and do it three times. When you come to the part when one of the characters is going to lead, encourage one of the children or your child to lead. Again, I suggest that you work on the same chapter for a while to make sure that the sequence is well and truly learnt before you move on.

The posters of each sequence show you how to practise the individual postures. Simply copy what you see. They are straightforward and simple. Children's yoga is not about perfection in the posture. You'll forgive me if I shout that again loudly from the rooftops: *Children's yoga is not about perfection in the posture.*

## Who is Seahorse for?

The *Seahorse* stories are aimed at children from 3–11 years old. However, stories like this defy age. The sequences themselves are suitable for children from 3–11 years and beyond, into adulthood. *Seahorse* is also a teaching resource for primary and elementary school teachers, head teachers, teaching assistants and people in the field of special needs who may have little or no knowledge of yoga. *Seahorse* is a *must-have* for children's yoga teachers, saving them hours of planning.

This yoga storybook is also for parents who are looking for a fun and engaging story to teach their children yoga and help them cope with issues that include inflexibility, self-esteem, disabilities and the complex sensory issues that come with autism.

## The benefits of Sun Sequences for children

The Sun Sequence has been the most engaging activity in my yoga lessons since I began to teach yoga to children. Apart from the fact that children love them, sequences are highly effective in children's lessons for several reasons:

- Children enjoy the security of the structure that sequences bring – they feel more secure knowing what is coming next.
- Sequences demand concentration and co-ordination.
- They provide opportunities for children to step up and lead the class.
- Children enjoy the flowing body movement.
- It is a more invigorating way to practice yoga compared to isolated postures.
- Some children find sequences easy to remember and can teach them to friends and family members.

Also, sequences are:

- remarkably simple, fun and easy to learn
- easily adaptable for everyone
- usable practically anywhere
- genuinely yoga based.





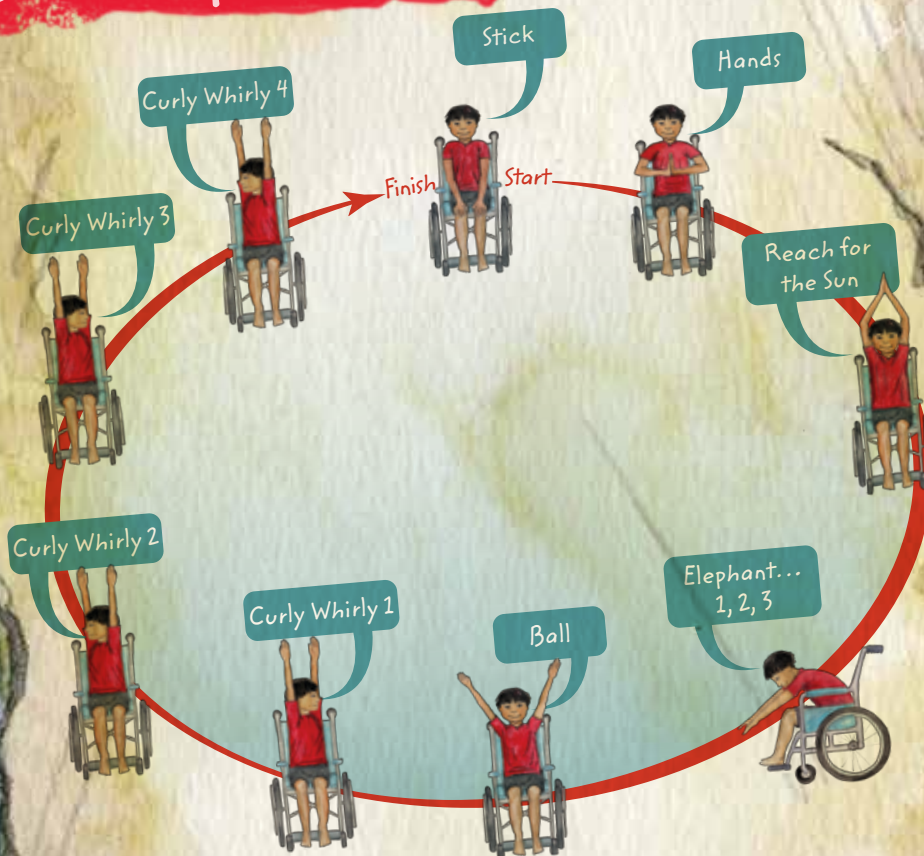


# Seahorse's Yoga Sun Sequences

Seahorse glided easily in and out of the colourful coral.  
Above her head a ball of golden sunshine glowed brightly,  
lighting up the sea.

Seahorse was very happy. She thought to herself,  
“Who can I help today?”

# Sun Sequence: Wheelchairs







“Thank you and goodbye!” said Eel as he wheeled himself away silently and easily across the seabed.

Seahorse watched him disappear over the horizon, until all that was left was a bright glow above his head.

A wide smile swept across her face as she glided easily in and out of the coral. Seahorse was happy and ready to deal with whatever the sea-day had to bring. She thought to herself, “Who else can I help today?”









# Octopus

Octopus leaned against the coral to catch his breath. It wasn't easy getting around in the sea on crutches. He was tired and fed up.

“What happened to you?” asked Seahorse when she spotted Octopus.

“I broke six legs competing in the pole vault in the Ocean Olympic Games,” Octopus replied. “I was certain that I was clear of the bar when my pole snapped in two and I tumbled head over legs onto the judge. He was not pleased, and nor was I. Now I am fed up because I enjoy sports and competing. With six broken legs what can I win?”

“Octopus,” said Seahorse, “I will teach you the Sitting Sun Sequence.”