

# THE CLOWN OF GOD

## THE CLOWN OF GOD

By Tomie de Paola (Harcourt)

Themes: Italian Culture/ Religion/ Christmas

Grade Level: K-3

Running Time: 10 minutes, animated

### SUMMARY

THE CLOWN OF GOD takes place in the Italian town of Sorrento, where a young boy begs for bread and juggles for pleasure. When a group of wandering entertainers comes to the boy's town, the boy begs to be included in the show as a juggler. Soon the boy is introducing the show with his juggling and pleasing crowds wherever he performs.

Time goes on and the boy grows older. At one point in his travels, the young juggler meets two brothers of a religious order who tell him that his work is the work of God. As the juggler, now elderly, decides to "go home" by journeying to the monastery where he can live out his days. Once there, he arrives in time for the celebration of the birthday of the Christ child. As a gift, the juggler performs for the child, who is seen in a picture on the lap of his mother. The child appears sad to the juggler and the juggler determines to make him happy. When the juggler finishes his performance, his heart stops beating. The brothers who come and find him discover that the Christ child is now pictured with a smiling face, holding one of the juggler's golden balls.

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about religious beliefs.
- Children will explore Italian culture.
- Children will understand the importance of hard work and perseverance.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book THE CLOWN OF GOD with children. Locate Italy on a map. Show the children how far it is from where they live. Then ask...

- How are the people's clothing in the story differ-

ent from the clothing we wear now?

Study the character of the boy juggler. We know many things about him.

(Answers: He is poor, loves to juggle, happy at first, a good juggler.) Have the children draw pictures of him as he was young or old. Talk with children about jugglers they may have seen as part of circus or carnival acts. Ask:

- What was the juggler juggling?
- Did the juggler ever miss?
- How did you feel watching the juggler perform?
- Would you like to be a juggler? Why? Why not?

Have children who are familiar with other languages share some simple words and phrases with their classmates. Then encourage children to listen carefully to the words and accents used in the story to explore the differences between the Italian language and their own.

Encourage children to listen carefully to the background music, particularly the music used at the end of the story. Later, ask:

- What kind of music do you hear as the juggler is busy performing for people?
- What kind of music do you hear as the juggler walks to the monastery?
- What kind of music do you hear inside the monastery?
- How does the music make you feel?

Provide several small plastic balls that children can use to practice juggling while at recess. Ask:

- Was it easy to juggle? Why? Why not?
- What were the children who were watching you doing?
- How do you think you would feel about juggling in front of a large audience?
- What helped the juggler in the story get better and better at juggling?
- What might have happened if he simply gave up when the man who ran the show said that he could not perform with them?
- How do you think he felt about performing for

crowds of people?

- How do you think he felt when he heard the applause?

Have children recall what the brothers told the juggler when he met them. Explain that people have many different kinds of religious beliefs, and, the beliefs of the brothers in the story are just one of them. Have children who care to share their own religious beliefs with others in the group. Encourage children to think about the ways their own beliefs are similar to, and different from, their classmates.

Ask children to describe skills that they have developed over time. (Children may be taking piano lessons, dance lessons, learning to bicycle ride, play sports, etc.). As children share their knowledge of these activities with their classmates, ask:

- How well did you do this when you began learning?
- What has helped you to improve?
- How do you feel when you do this well?
- Did you ever feel like giving up?
- What made you decide to keep trying/
- Are you glad you kept trying? Why?

As children respond to these questions, emphasize the importance of hard work and perseverance when learning a new skill.

Other videos and films about Christmas available from Weston Woods include:

**MAX'S CHRISTMAS** by Rosemary Wells  
**MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG** by

Rosemary Wells

**THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS** by Clement Clarke Moore, illustrated by Ruth Sanderson

**THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS** by Robert Broomfield

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Then cut out objects representative of the winter holidays from felt in groups of one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven and twelve. For example, you might cut out four Christmas ornaments, seven Menorahs, eight Christmas stockings, two dreidels, etc. Have children take turns placing the groups of objects on the felt board beside the appropriate numerals. (If you do not have a felt board, you can print the numerals on a chalk board and have children draw holiday objects of their choice beside the numerals.)

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Other videos and films about holidays available from Weston Woods include:

- CHICKEN SOUP WITH RICE** by Maurice Sendak  
**THE CLOWN OF GOD** by Tomie de Paola  
**THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY** written by Katherine Davis, Henry Onorati, Harry Simeone & illus. by Ezra Jack Keats  
**MAX'S CHOCOLATE CHICKEN** by Rosemary Wells  
**MAX'S CHRISTMAS** by Rosemary Wells  
**MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG** by Rosemary Wells  
**THE PILGRIMS OF PLIMOTH** by Marcia Sewall  
**ZLATEH THE GOAT** written by Isaac Bashevis Singer & illus. by Maurice Sendak

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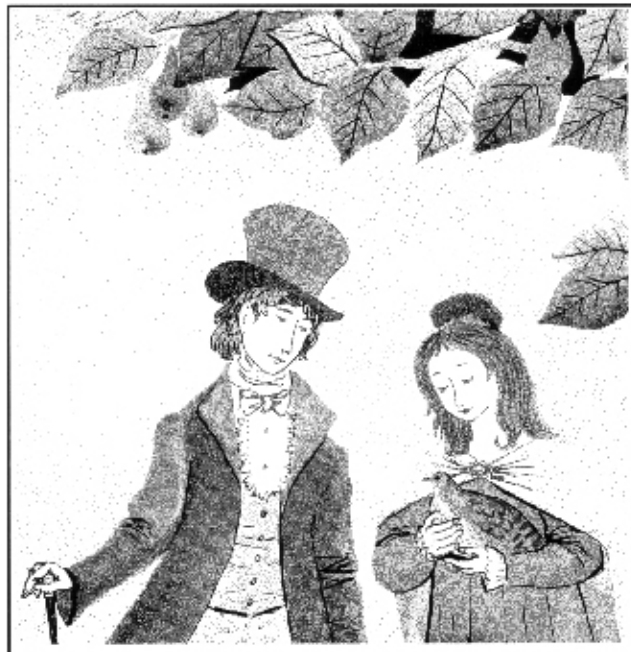
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From the book *The Twelve Days of Christmas* © 1965 by The Bodley Head, illus. by Robert Broomfield (Bodley Head)

Video/Film Curriculum Guide - 121

for

# THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

*Themes:* Songs/Holidays/Counting

*Grade Level:* Pre-K-3

*Running Time:* 6 minutes, iconographic

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## SUMMARY

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THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS is a delightful retelling of the familiar holiday song. Children will enjoy following along with each verse of this story and counting the various symbols and people representative of the holiday season.

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## OBJECTIVES

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- Children will explore the Christmas holiday.
- Children will reinforce skill in counting.
- Children will enjoy a story set to music.

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## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

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Share the book *The Twelve Days of Christmas* with children. Then ask:

- Which of the girl's twelve gifts did you like best? Why?

Have children share their Christmas, Hanukkah or other winter holiday traditions with their classmates. Tell children to describe the different ways they decorate homes and prepare for the holiday, the ways they formally celebrate the holiday, the kinds of foods their families prepare and the different feelings they have during this special time of year. Encourage children listening to ask questions of each child describing his/her holiday traditions.

Familiarize children with the song, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. Have children sing the song while accompanying themselves with rhythm band instruments. Later, have children form groups of twelve. Have each child in each group represent one of the gifts the person in the song receives. Sing the song again with each group of children. As each gift is mentioned, have the child representing that gift play his/her band instrument.

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## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

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Have children draw pictures of a special gift they would like to either give or receive during the holiday season. When finished, have children share their drawings and the reasons for their choices with their classmates.

Encourage children to bring objects/foods from home that are part of their holiday traditions and share them with their classmates. You may also want to invite parents, grandparents or guardians to school to share some holiday stories with children.

Cut out the numerals one through twelve from pieces of felt. Place the numerals in a vertical column at the left of your felt board.

# THE THREE ROBBERS

The Three Robbers  
by Tomi Ungerer (Antheum)  
Themes: Scary Stories  
Grade Level: K-2  
Running Time: 6 minutes, animated

## Summary

The Three Robbers is the story of three men who roam about at night frightening and stealing from people. Each night, the robbers would carry their stolen loot to their cave in the mountains.

One night, the robbers stop a carriage, only to find nothing to steal except one very unhappy little girl who is delighted to be carried away. Eventually, the robbers snatch up all of the abandoned, unhappy children and use their stolen money to buy a castle where they could all live together.

As time passes, the children grow to adulthood and build homes around the castle. The story ends with an entire village being created around the castle of the three robbers. The villagers, all former abandoned children, erect three tall towers in honor of their three foster parents--the three robbers.

## Objectives

- Children will enjoy the mystery and suspense of a scary story
- Children will investigate their own feelings regarding what they consider to be appropriate and inappropriate behavior
- Children will explore the different ways people demonstrate caring towards one another

## Before Viewing Activities

Share the book, The Three Robbers, with children.

Then ask:

Since the robbers didn't think about spending the money they stole, why do you think they wanted to do it in the first place? Do you think their feelings about stealing changed at the end of the story? Why? Why not?

Talk with children about scary stories they are familiar with. Ask: What was it about the stories that made them seem so scary? How did you feel while you were listening to/reading/watching the story? As children watch, encourage them to think about the ways the music, colors, and quick-paced action contribute to the scary feeling of the story.

Play a variety of musical pieces for children. Include in your selections music that creates a suspenseful or frightening mood. As children listen to each piece, have them describe the way the music makes them feel.

## After Viewing Activities

Have children perform a dramatization of the story of The Three Robbers. Supply paper hats and capes cut from both red and black construction paper, ropes and blankets which can be used to create tentlike structures to represent the robbers' cave and the cattle, and a large box filled with coins and jewelry cut from construction paper. Provide art materials such as pieces of flat and cylinder-shaped cardboard, boxes of various sizes, and other appropriate materials that

children can use to make a pepper-blower, blunderbuss, and axe. Also have children work together to paint a village scene, with three tall towers, on a large sheet of kraft paper. Invite other classes to watch your colorful, scary rendition of The Three Robbers!

Talk with children about the activities of the robbers. Ask: Was it right for the robbers to take the abandoned children? Why? Why not? How do you think the robbers felt about the children? How do you think the children felt about the robbers? If you were one of the abandoned children that the robbers took, how would you have felt about the robbers? What do you think you might have chosen to do when you grew up?

Discuss the different ways the robbers showed caring toward the children and the ways the children showed the robbers that they cared for them when they grew up. Ask: How do you know when someone cares for you? What do you do to let other people know that you care for them? Allow children to use some class time to write a note to someone they care for.

Other book based films and videos that are scary stories are available from Weston Woods. These include: A DARK, DARK TALE by Ruth Brown  
GEORGIE by Robert Bright  
KING OF THE CATS by Paul Galdone  
TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH-WOMAN written by Barbara Walker and illustrated by Michael Foreman  
THE TRIP by Ezra Jack Keats  
WHAT'S UNDER MY BED? by James Stevenson  
WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE by Maurice Sendak

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# TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH-WOMAN

Teeny-Tiny and the Witch-Woman

by Barbara Walker (Pantheon)

Themes: Halloween

Grade Level: K-9

Running Time: 14 minutes, animated

## Summary

TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH-WOMAN is a Turkish folktale based on a theme very similar to that of Hansel and Gretel. The story concerns three brothers who are told not to venture into the woods in order to avoid the wrath of the wicked witch who lives there.

One day, the boys take a chance, against the wishes of the youngest brother, Teeny-Tiny, and find the home of the witch. The older brothers, Big-One and In-the-Middle, willingly go inside. Teeny-Tiny follows reluctantly behind.

Once inside, the witch offers them a meal and a bed for the night. Teeny-Tiny suspects that this witch is indeed the witch they were warned about. That night, Teeny-Tiny resists sleep. When the witch calls to the boys to see if they are asleep, Teeny-Tiny tells the witch that he needs one thing after another before he will be able to sleep.

Eventually, Teeny-Tiny asks for water from the well. He sees the witch leave her magic soap, needle, and knife behind before she goes out to collect the water. Teeny-Tiny wakes his brothers, warns them about the evil witch, and the three escape with Teeny-Tiny snatching the witch's three magical objects on the way.

The end of the story finds Teeny-Tiny using the magical objects to keep the pursuing witch away from himself and his brothers. Teeny-Tiny and his brothers return safely home, never again to venture into the forest which is the home of the evil witch.

## Objectives

- Children will learn that being young does not mean being

less intelligent or creative than those who are older

- Children will investigate the importance of listening to one's own thoughts and feelings
- Children will explore problem-solving techniques

## Before Viewing Activities

Share the book Teeny-Tiny and the Witch Woman with children.

Then ask:

What kind of boy was Teeny-Tiny (possible answers - he was scared, brave, smart, small.) Have the children write a simple character study, and draw a picture.

Talk with children about their favorite fairy tales. Ask: Why are these stories your favorites? If you could be one of the characters in the story, which would you be? Why? What is the scariest fairy tale you ever heard? Which fairy tale had the happiest ending?

Find a version of Hansel and Gretel and share it with the children. Explain that different countries have different versions of fairy and folk tales. (For example, Cinderella is retold in China, France, Africa and Germany.

## After Viewing Activities

Talk with children about the fence made of bones, the trees that looked like people, and the witch's house whose windows and doors appeared to make a sad or frightening face. Then supply art materials that children can use to create their own witch's house in the deep, dark woods. You might include popsicle sticks, pipe cleaners, dried leaves, corrugated cardboard, toothpicks, and pieces of styrofoam among the supplies offered to children. Later, display children's creations on a classroom table.

Encourage children to think about the ways Teeny-Tiny

used his head to solve various problems he was confronted with. Ask: Why did Teeny-Tiny climb the tree when he and his brothers were in the forest? Why did Teeny-Tiny keep asking the witch for food and drink after he went to bed? Why did Teeny-Tiny ask the witch to bring him water from the well? Why did he take the magical objects?

Help children understand that Teeny-Tiny listened to his own thoughts and fears concerning the witch, and that this is what, in the end, saved him and his brothers. Encourage children to try and recall fears or other strong feelings they may have had about something or ideas they had that were important to them. As children talk, stress the importance of listening to, and developing a respect for one's own feelings and thoughts.

Other book based films and videos that are folktales are available from Weston Woods. These include:  
THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES by Nadine Bernard Westcott  
KING OF THE CATS by Paul Galdone  
MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS by John Steptoe  
STONE SOUP by Marcia Brown  
THE STONECUTTER by Gerald McDermott  
A STORY, A STORY by Gail E. Haley  
TIKKI TIKKI TEMBO written by Arlene Mosel and illustrated by Blair Lent  
WHY MOSQUITOES BUZZ IN PEOPLE'S EARS written by Verna Aardema and illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon  
Scary Stories on video are:  
GEORGIE by Robert Bright  
KING OF THE CATS by Paul Galdone  
THE THREE ROBBERS by Tomi Ungerer  
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# THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

## **The Star-Spangled Banner**

by Francis Scott Key, illustrated by Peter Spier  
(Doubleday)

Themes: American History, Flags, Francis Scott Key, National Anthem, Patriotism

Grades: PreK – 6

Running time: 12 minutes

## **SUMMARY**

This is the story of the American victory during the war of 1812, set to the song created by Francis Scott Key. Detailed illustrations accompany the words of our national anthem.

The American flag, flying high over Fort McHenry, is shown in all its glory, reminding Americans of the battles fought and won to create the free nation that we are today.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Children will become acquainted with the national anthem.
- Children will learn that our flag is a symbol of freedom.
- Children will enjoy seeing a familiar song come alive.

## **BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES**

Share the book *The Star-Spangled Banner* with children.

Then ask:

Where have you seen the American flag? What does it mean to you?

Show children an American flag. Discuss the meaning of the stars and stripes. Then supply twigs, kraft paper, crayons, and string that children can use to create their own American flags. Have children use the twigs to represent flag poles. The string will be used to attach the paper flags to "poles." Later, play some marching music. Have children wave their flags as they march in time to the music.

Give children an opportunity to sing a chorus of the "Star-Spangled Banner." After singing, have children talk about the meaning of the lyrics.

## **AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES**

Help children understand that the flag is a symbol of freedom. Encourage children to think about other symbols they may be familiar with. You can offer help by asking children what they think of when they see McDonald's golden arches, or what a police officer's badge makes them think of. Then give children an opportunity to create their own symbols with construction paper, scissors, glue and crayons. When finished, let children describe what their symbols represent to their classmates.

Talk with children about the places they have seen the American flag. Then show children photographs or illustrations of government buildings, monuments or school grounds, where the flag is flown. Encourage children to be on the look-out for this national symbol as they travel from place to place.

Attach an illustration or drawing of the American flag to a bulletin board or classroom wall. Then have children describe the flag and the things it makes them think of. Have children write their thoughts about the flag in the form of simple poems. (Younger children can dictate their poems to you.) Display children's poetry on the bulletin board or wall surrounding the flag.

Other videos about American History are available from Weston Woods. These include:

**THE PILGRIMS OF PLIMOTH** by Marcia Sewall

**SHH! WE'RE WRITING THE CONSTITUTION** written by Jean Fritz and illustrated by Tomie De Paola

**SO, YOU WANT TO BE PRESIDENT?** by Judith St. George, ill. by David Small

**WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS?** written by Jean Fritz and illustrated by Margot Tomes

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# SEVEN CANDLES FOR KWANZAA

## SEVEN CANDLES FOR KWANZAA

By Andrea Davis Pinkney

Themes: African American Culture/Holidays

Grade Level: K-3

Running Time: 12 minutes

### SUMMARY

Kwanzaa is a seven day festival during which time millions of families of African American descent rejoice in their ancestral values. This book follows the sequence of Kwanzaa week, showing how one family celebrates their faith and unity.

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about African American culture and traditions.
- Children will learn about the celebration of Kwanzaa.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the different ways they celebrate winter holidays with their families.

Encourage children to share symbols of these holiday celebrations (Menorahs, wreaths, tree ornaments, candles, etc.) with their classmates. Then ask:

- What special things do you do to celebrate the holiday?

Share the book SEVEN CANDLES FOR KWAN-

ZAA with children. Then ask:

- What does the holiday Kwanzaa celebrate?
- What do the candles in the kinara represent?
- How is Kwanzaa similar to, and different from, the holidays you celebrate with your family?

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the ways the family members worked together to celebrate Kwanzaa. Ask:

- How do you think the family members felt during this holiday?
- If you were one of the family members, what would you like to do to help?

Have a Kwanzaa feast in the classroom. Gather up recipes for traditional African foods, including collard greens and roasted yams. Let children work together, under adult supervision, to make some of these recipes. Invite other classes to come in and enjoy the Kwanzaa feast. Supply strips of colored construction paper and glue that children can use to weave their own mkeka or placemats that can be used during the feast. If possible, find colorful shawls, beads, and head pieces children can use to dress in traditional garb for the feast.

Invite someone who celebrates Kwanzaa to come to your classroom and describe the Kwanzaa celebrations with children. Ask the person to bring the

kinara and candles used in the celebration as well as any other symbols of the holiday that will help give children an "inside look." Encourage children to ask questions.

Talk with children about the kinds of gifts they might make for one another as Kwanzaa presents. Emphasize the fact that during Kwanzaa, the gifts that are exchanged are homemade. Later, supply art materials children can use to make simple gifts for one another. As children exchange gifts, have them discuss the reasons why their gifts are appropriate for their friends.

### Other multicultural videos and films available from Weston Woods include:

HOT HIPPO written by Mwenye Hadithi and illustrated by Adrienne Kennaway

MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS by John Steptoe

A STORY-A STORY by Gail E. Haley

THE VILLAGE OF ROUND AND SQUARE HOUSES by Ann Grifalcone

WHY MOSQUITOES BUZZ IN PEOPLE'S

EARS written by Verna Aardema and illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon

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# SAM AND THE LUCKY MONEY

## SAM AND THE LUCKY MONEY

Book by Karen Chinn, illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright & Ying-Hwa Hu

Themes: Chinese Culture/ Decision Making

Grade Level: K-3

Running Time: 11:00

## SUMMARY

This Chinese New Year, Sam's parents tell him that he may spend his "lucky" money on anything he wants. When he arrives at the festivities in Chinatown, he is tempted by many nice things. But a homeless man without shoes or socks helps Sam decide on the best way of all to spend his "lucky" money.

## OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn Chinese customs and celebrations.
- Children will explore decision making.
- Children will investigate the value of money.

## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book *Sam And The Lucky Money* with the children. Then ask:

- What did Sam's grandparents give him to use during the Chinese New Year celebrations?
- Who did Sam meet during the festivities?
- What did Sam decide to do with his money at the end of the story?
- How do you think Sam felt as he left Chinatown at the end of the day?

Talk with the children about the different ways they celebrate the New Year. Encourage them to compare and contrast their own celebrations with

those of the Chinese New Year. Ask:

- Which of Sam's New year traditions would you like to try?
- Which of your own traditions would you like to share with Sam?
- What special foods do you have that you would like to introduce to Sam?

Collect library books that describe the Chinese New Year, sharing pictures, photographs and information with children. Plan a Chinese New Year celebration in your own classroom.

## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the decision Sam made to share his money with the man in need. Ask:

- What would you do if you had seen the same man on the sidewalk?
- What kinds of things can you do to help those who have less than you do?
- How do you feel when you help others?
- How do you think others feel when they know they are being cared for?

Explain to children that rice is very important to the diets of Chinese people. Investigate some rice dishes and cook up a rice recipe with the children. See if you can find a recording of some traditional

Chinese music and have children listen as they enjoy the rice dish.

If possible, invite a guest knowledgeable in Chinese customs and traditions to the classroom to share this information with the children. Encourage children to ask questions of the visitor.

Have children work together to paint a mural of a Chinese dragon. Encourage children to make the dragon as colorful and fanciful as possible. When dry, supply art materials such as pom poms, glitter, crepe paper, ribbon, etc. that children can attach to the dragon to make it even more dramatic.

## OTHER VIDEOS AND FILMS ABOUT CHINESE CULTURE AVAILABLE FROM WESTON WOODS

### INCLUDE:

**THE FIVE CHINESE BROTHERS**, by Claire Huchet Bishop, illustrated by Kurt Wiese  
**THE STORY ABOUT PING**, by Majorie Flack  
**TIKKI TIKKI TEMBO**, by Arlene Mosel, illustrated by Blair Lent

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# THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

## THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Book by Clement Clark Moore, © 1997

Theme: Christmas

Grade Level: Pre-K - 2

Running Time: 7:00

## SUMMARY

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS is Clement Clark Moore's well known story in verse of the magic of seeing Santa at work on Christmas Eve.

## OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about Christmas traditions.
- Children will enjoy a story written in verse.

## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the Christmas holiday. Encourage those who celebrate the holiday to describe some of their holiday traditions. Then ask:

- What is your favorite part of the Christmas holiday? Why?
- When you think of Santa Clause, how do you imagine him?

Share the book *The Night Before Christmas* with children. Then ask:

- What magical things did Santa do that real people could never do?

## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Have children talk about the feelings of the different characters in the story.

Ask:

- How do you think the children felt just before they went to sleep?
- How do you think Santa felt about delivering presents on Christmas Eve?
- How do you think the reindeer felt when they finally finished delivering presents?
- Play a game of "What's In The Stocking?" Cut out a Christmas stocking shape from red construction paper for each child in the group. Tell children to think about things they might want to put in the stocking to help make the world a better place. You might suggest a soft teddy, so that everyone would have something to hug; a tree, so that the world would be filled with beauty; food, so that no one would ever go hungry. When children have finished filling their stockings, arrange them on a classroom wall under the title "Peace On Earth."
- Talk about the rhythm and rhyme in the story. Then give children an opportunity to create their own story in rhyme. Offer a beginning sentence, such as: "The winter morning was chilly and cold....." Have a child in the class offer the next rhyming line. Print the story on

the board as it unfolds. Continue until each child in the class has had an opportunity to contribute to the story. Later, print the story and display it on a classroom wall. Have children draw illustrations to accompany the story and display them along with the story.

. Encourage children to share some of their Christmas traditions with everyone in the group. They might bring in a Christmas stocking that is hung on their mantle each year, show photos of Christmas celebrations held in their homes, have a parent come in to mix up a simple holiday treat. Also, encourage children who do not celebrate Christmas to tell about a holiday that is special to them.

OTHER VIDEOS AND FILMS ABOUT CHRISTMAS AVAILABLE FROM WESTON WOODS INCLUDE:

- THE CLOWN OF GOD by Tomie dePaola
- THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY by Katherine Davis and Henry Onorati & illus. by Harry Simeone and Ezra Jack Keats
- MAX'S CHRISTMAS by Rosemary Wells
- MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG by Rosemary Wells
- THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS by Robert Broomfield

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# MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG

## MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG

By Rosemary Wells (Dial)

Themes: Feeling Small/Sibling Rivalry

Grade Level: Pre-K-1

Running Time: 6 minutes, animated

### SUMMARY

MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG takes place in Christmas morning, when a young child named Morris, his two older sisters, and his older brother open their Christmas presents. Morris's siblings receive gifts that include a chemistry set, a beauty set and a hockey set. Morris receives a stuffed bear.

As the day moves on, Morris becomes increasingly upset because everyone thinks he is too young to enjoy his siblings' toys. Eventually, Morris unwraps one last present under the tree and discovers a disappearing bag inside. Whatever Morris puts inside the bag disappears, and Morris soon discovers that he can enjoy his siblings' toys without being seen. He can even make his siblings disappear, so that he can play without being bothered! The end of the story finds Morris's brother and sisters pleading with Morris for a chance to use the disappearing bag, while a tired and satisfied Morris falls fast asleep.

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will investigate feelings associated with being very young.
- Children will learn about sibling relationships.
- Children will explore the Christmas holiday.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG with children.

Discuss children's family members. Ask:

- How many brothers and sisters do you have?
- How old are they?
- What kinds of things do they do that you may do when you are older? (If children do not have older siblings, or have no siblings at all, encourage them to think about what they are looking forward to doing as older children.)
- How do you feel about having to be older to do these things?

Ask children to consider how it might feel to be invisible. Ask:

- If you could make yourself invisible, what would you do?
- Where would you go?
- Would it be fun to be invisible? Why? Why not?
- How could you be helpful to others if you were invisible?

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Bring a variety of brightly wrapped packages into the classroom. Place an object inside each one. Have children ask questions about the contents of each box. See if children can identify the objects inside the packages by listening to your answers to their questions. Hang an old sheet or blanket in the classroom to act as a curtain. Have children close their eyes as one child quietly goes behind the curtain. Then have children open their eyes and give them clues about the person behind the curtain. (You might describe the child's hair

color, identify the first letter of his/her name, describe something particularly wonderful about this person, etc.)

See if children can identify the child who "disappeared" behind the curtain from your clues.

Talk with children about the kinds of activities they enjoy with their siblings. Then ask:

- What happens when you are playing with your siblings and you don't agree on something?
- What helps you solve your problems with your siblings?
- How do you feel when you and your siblings are not getting along?
- How do you feel when you and your siblings are having fun together?
- What kinds of things do you share with your siblings?
- What things are just for you?
- What things do your siblings have that you wish you could have too?
- What do you like best about the Christmas holiday/Hanukkah holiday?

### Other videos and films about sibling rivalry available from Weston Woods include:

JOHN BROWN, ROSE & THE MIDNIGHT CAT  
written by Jenny Wagner & illustrated by Ron Brooks  
MAX'S CHOCOLATE CHICKEN by Rosemary Wells  
NOISY NORA by Rosemary Wells  
PETER'S CHAIR by Ezra Jack Keats

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# IN THE MONTH OF KISLEV

## In the Month of Kislev

by Nina Jaffe, illustrated by Louise August (Viking)

Themes: Hanukkah, Greed

Grade Level: K-3

Running Time: 11 minutes, iconographic

### Summary

This is the story of a Polish community preparing for the celebration of Hanukkah. One day, the children of a poor family stop under the window of a wealthy family in town, and thoroughly enjoy the aroma of potato pancakes cooking in the kitchen.

The children do this each day, until the owner of the house discovers them under his window. Angrily, the owner brings the children and their parents to the local Rabbi and insists on being paid by the family for the enjoyment the children have been getting from smelling the potato pancakes.

The story ends with a wise and creative solution to the problem offered by the Rabbi.

### Objectives

- Children will learn about Hanukkah.
- Children will explore concepts such as sharing, kindness and generosity.
- Children will investigate the meaning of family life.

### Before Viewing Activities

Share the book In The Month of Kislev with chil-

dren. Discuss new words like menorah and latkes with children. Then ask:

- What kinds of holidays do you celebrate at home?
- What is (would be) your favorite part of the Hanukkah celebration?
- What other solutions might the Rabbi have suggested for the problem between the families of Mendel and Feivel?

Have children in the group take turns describing their own winter holiday celebrations. Encourage children to bring objects from home which are symbolic of their holidays to school and share them with the group.

Explain that holidays are a time when our senses come alive. See if children can describe the different objects, foods, experiences that appeal to their senses of taste, touch, sight, and sound during their favorite holidays.

### After Viewing Activities

Use the following recipe to cook up a batch of potato pancakes for children to enjoy:

#### Potato Pancakes

#### Ingredients:

- 4 pounds potatoes
- 2 eggs
- 2/3 cup chopped onion
- 6 tablespoons flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons of salt

1/2 cup butter/margarine (makes about 16 latkes)

1. Wash and pare the potatoes. Shred the potatoes to make about eight cups. Drain.
2. Beat eggs until thick. Add potatoes, onion, flour, and salt.
3. Melt butter in large skillet. Form potato mixture into patties. Place patties in skillet. Cook patties on each side, about five minutes for each batch of patties.

Talk with children about the attitudes of Feivel and his family, and how their feelings changed at the end of the story. Ask children to think about times when they may have been treated unkindly, or experienced the anger of someone. Encourage children to talk about how this felt, and then to consider what people can do to show greater kindness toward one another. Discuss the music in the movie and how it "flavored" the viewing experience.

Other videos and films about Hanukkah and other holidays available from Weston Woods include:

CHICKEN SOUP WITH RICE by Maurice Sendak

THE CLOWN OF GOD by Tomie de Paola

MAX'S CHOCOLATE CHICKEN by Rosemary Wells

MAX'S CHRISTMAS by Rosemary Wells

MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG by Rosemary Wells

ZLATEH THE GOAT by Isaac Bashevis Singer, illustrated by Maurice Sendak

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# MAX'S CHRISTMAS

## MAX'S CHRISTMAS

By Rosemary Wells (Dial)

Theme: Holidays/Siblings/Christmas

Grade Level: Pre-K-1

Running Time: 5 minutes, animated

### SUMMARY

MAX'S CHRISTMAS is a charming tale about a little boy named Max and his older sister Ruby. It's Christmas Eve and Ruby gets Max ready for bed so that Santa can come down the chimney with his holiday gifts. As Ruby helps Max prepare for bed, the little boy is full of questions about Santa- who is coming? where is he coming? when is he coming? When Max asks why he can't see Santa, a frustrated Ruby answers "Because!"

Ruby finally gets Max into bed, only to have the little boy climb out, sneak downstairs, and wait by the fireplace for Santa. When Santa arrives, Max begins with his questions again. Santa eventually says it is time for him to go, and for Max to go sleep. When Max asks "Why?" and Santa answers "Because!"

Santa leaves his hat, along with the presents, and flies up the chimney. Ruby comes downstairs and sees Max, covered by a bulging, bumpy blanket, and wearing Santa's hat. Ruby asks why the blanket is so bumpy, and as she pulls it off Max discovering the Christmas packages as Max answers, "Because!"

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about the Christmas holiday.
- Children will explore bedtime rituals.
- Children will explore sibling relationships.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book MAX'S CHRISTMAS with the children.

Then ask:

- How did Max feel on the night before Christmas?
- How do you feel?
- Would you like to see Santa Clause? Why? Why not?

Share other books about Christmas with children. If children celebrate this holiday at home, have them bring to school some of their homemade decorations or other symbols of Christmas they might have. Encourage children to describe these items, and their family's Christmas traditions, to their classmates.

Talk with children about other winter holidays they celebrate with their families. Encourage children to describe their holiday celebrations to others in the group.

Ask:

- How does your family prepare for the holiday?
- What is your favorite part of the holiday?
- What other things does your family do together to make the holiday special?

Discuss children's bedtime routines. Encourage them to talk about the things they do every evening, including the health care routines they follow before going to bed. Have children compare their own rituals to those that Max and Ruby follow. Ask:

- Which of the things that Ruby helps Max do before bed do you do at home?
- Who helps you?
- What might happen if you forget to do some of these things?

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Discuss the Christmas stockings children saw in the story.

Then play a game of "Guess What's Inside the Stocking." Provide a large sock. Have children close their eyes and place an object into the sock. Have children open their eyes and take turns reaching into the sock and, without looking, feel the object. See if children can identify the object simply by feeling it. Continue the game by placing different objects in the sock.

Talk about how people around the world celebrate Christmas in Scandinavia, France, Spain, etc. using books about Christmas from the library.

Suggest this as a story starter: One Christmas Eve I couldn't sleep so I sneaked downstairs. There before my eyes was...

Talk with children about the relationship between Max and Ruby in the story. Ask:

- How do you think Ruby feels about caring for Max?
- How do you think Max feels about being cared for by his sister?

Encourage children to describe their own sibling relationships, including how they feel about being cared for by older siblings.

### Other videos and films about winter holidays available from Weston Woods include:

CHICKEN SOUP WITH RICE by Maurice Sendak

THE CLOWN OF GOD by Tomie de Paola

THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY written by Katherine Davis, Henry Onorati and Harry Simeone & illustrated by Ezra Jack Keats

MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG by Rosemary Wells

THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS by Robert Broomfield

ZLATEH THE GOAT written by Issac Bashevis Singer & illustrated by Maurice Sendak

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# MAX'S CHOCOLATE CHICKEN

Max's Chocolate Chicken

by Rosemary Wells (Dial)

Themes: Easter/Sibling Rivalry

Grade Level: Pre K-2

Running Time: 5 minutes, animated

## Summary

Max's Chocolate Chicken is a charming story about Max, a curious little rabbit, who spies a chocolate chicken in the birdbath left by the Easter Bunny. Max's sister Ruby, who tends to be a bit bossy, tells Max that whoever finds the most eggs in the egg hunt is entitled to the chocolate chicken. As Max looks about for eggs, he becomes easily distracted by the mud puddles, acorns, and objects he finds on the ground. Meanwhile, Ruby diligently goes about her business of finding eggs.

When it becomes clear that Ruby will find more eggs than Max, Max runs to the birdbath, snatches the chocolate chicken, and begins feasting on its tail and wings. The story ends with Max popping out of his hiding place, only to discover, to his amazement and Ruby's, that the Easter Bunny has replaced the chocolate chicken in the birdbath.

## Objectives

- Children will explore Easter holiday traditions
- Children will learn about the advantages of being inquisitive
- Children will investigate sibling rivalry

## Before Viewing Activities

Share the book Max's Chocolate Chicken with children.

Then ask:

Why do you think Max had a hard time hunting for eggs? What would you do with acorns, a shovel, and a mud puddle?

Discuss the Easter holiday with children. Encourage children who celebrate the holiday to share their traditions with their classmates. Children might want to bring items from home representative of the holiday to share with their classmates.

Talk with children about egg hunts they may have participated in. (If children have not been involved in egg hunts, discuss other kinds of scavenger hunts they may have experienced.) Ask: How did you feel when you discovered the eggs (objects) hidden here and there? How did you know when to stop looking? What did you do with the eggs (objects) that you found? Later, cut out eggs from sheets of construction paper and hide them in the classroom. Supply children with paper bags and have a classroom paper egg hunt!

## After Viewing Activities

Try some egg dying experiments with children in

the classroom. Supply hard boiled eggs that children can dip into food coloring and enjoy as a special treat at snack or lunch time when dry. You can also boil onion skins or berries and have children dip their eggs into the water for a "naturally dyed look."

Arrange to have an outdoor scavenger hunt to help children explore nature and to gain skill in classifying. Begin by having children collect as many round objects as they can find within a given time limit. When you return to the classroom, help children draw a large circle on their individual sheets of poster board. Have children glue the round objects within the circle to create a collage. Later, instruct children to look for objects representing other categories, such as rough objects, smooth objects, brown objects, etc.

Encourage the children to think about the differences between the personalities of the two characters Max and Ruby and how their character traits influenced the way they behaved during the egg hunt. Talk about older and younger siblings, and sibling rivalry.

Other book based films and videos about sibling rivalry are available from Weston Woods. These include:

JOHN BROWN, ROSE AND THE MIDNIGHT CAT by Jenny Wagner, illustrated by Ron Brooks  
MORRIS' DISAPPEARING BAG by Rosemary Wells  
NOISY NORA by Rosemary Wells

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# BY THE LIGHT OF THE HALLOWEEN MOON

## BY THE LIGHT OF THE HALLOWEEN MOON

From the book by Caroline Stutson © 1993

Theme: Halloween

Grade Level: Pre-K - 2

Running Time: 6:00

### SUMMARY

This is a cumulative story started by a black cat trying to catch a little girl's toe one spooky Halloween night.

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will share their Halloween experiences.
- Children will become acquainted with the rhythm and rhyme of cumulative poetry.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about Halloween Ask:

- What kinds of costumes do you like to wear for Halloween?
- What is your favorite thing about Halloween? What is your least favorite thing about the holiday?
- What kinds of feelings do you have on Halloween night?

Share the book *By The Light Of The Halloween Moon* with children. Then ask:

- What did you think might pop up to tickle

the little girl's toe?

- How did the different things that appeared make you feel?
- Why do you think the girl continued to sit there while her toe was tickled by these

things?

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Have children think about the music and rhythm of the story. Ask:

- How did the music make you feel?
- How would the story have felt if the words didn't rhyme?

Supply costumes and props children can use to dramatize the story of "By The Light Of The Halloween Moon." You can use several chairs turned backward or a long bench for the bridge, and have children work together to paint a moonlit night scene on a large piece of cardboard or a large white sheet for a backdrop. Encourage children to perform their dramatization of the story for other classes. (You might even serve up some special Halloween treats to the audience during show time!)

Remind children of the fiddle the girl played in the story. Then play a variety of fiddle music for children to enjoy in the classroom. As you play different selections ask:

- How does the music make you feel?
- How is the music different from the sounds you hear from a piano? a drum?

Later, offer children a variety of household objects that can be used to imitate the sounds of various instruments (an egg beater, a tin pie plate and wooden spoon, pot lids, etc.) Let children experiment

with making different kinds of music with these homemade instruments.

Read other cumulative poetry to children, such as: *This is the House that Jack Built*. Then give them the opportunity to create their own

verses (you might want to suggest a Halloween theme). Children can dictate their poems to you as you print them on pieces of manila construction paper. Let children illustrate their poetry. Display the poems in an area where they can be enjoyed by children and parents alike.

OTHER VIDEOS AND FILMS ABOUT HALLOWEEN/ SCARY STORIES AVAILABLE FROM WESTON WOODS INCLUDE:

- *A DARK, DARK TALE* by Ruth Brown
- *JACKIE TORRENCE: TWO WHITE HORSES* by Jackie Torrence
- *TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH-WOMAN* written by Barbara Walker and illus. by Michael Foreman
- *THE THREE ROBBERS* by Tomi Ungerer
- *WHAT'S UNDER MY BED?* by James Stevenson
- *WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE* by Maurice Sendak

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# GIVING THANKS, A NATIVE AMERICAN GOOD MORNING MESSAGE

## **GIVING THANKS**

Book by Chief Jake Swamp ©1995

Theme: Native Americans/The Environment/Thanksgiving

Grade Level: Pre K - 2

Running Time: 7:00

## **SUMMARY**

This story is based on the "Thanksgiving Address," a Native American message of peace and thankfulness for all the blessings of the earth.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To help children recognize all the things there are on earth to be thankful for.
- To introduce children to Native American culture.
- To help children appreciate the diversity of our nation's people.

## **BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES**

Talk with children about the many things the natural world provides us with each day, including the sun to warm us, trees to provide shade, rain to fill reservoirs and provide drinking water, etc. Encourage children to describe the different kinds of things the earth gives them that they are thankful for.

*American Good Morning Message* with children. Then ask:

- Why do you think the Native Americans call the thunder "Grandfather," the sun "Brother" and the moon "Grandmother"?
- How do you think the author of this book felt about the earth? How does this story make you feel about the earth?

## **AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES**

Have the group work together to paint a large mural showing the things we all can be thankful for. As children work, stress the idea that some of the most wonderful, and important things we have been given on earth are free for all to enjoy. When finished, display the mural on a classroom wall or bulletin board. Have children invent a title for their mural and display the label alongside the mural.

Take a walk outdoors with children. Encourage them to notice the green color of the grass, the different shapes of the clouds in the sky, the feeling of the rocks they might pick up from the ground, the sound of crunching leaves under their feet. Talk about the wonders of the natural earth, its colors, shapes, and textures. Mention the foods that grow from the soil,

with the water crops need and relief for ourselves from heat and humidity. When you return indoors, have children draw a picture, or write about one object of nature in detail.

Have children work together to make a meal and invite another class in to enjoy it. As children enjoy the meal, talk about the pleasures of inviting friends to share in the meal and the fun of working together to create it. Encourage children to talk about the differences among themselves, and how this diversity help to make the meal, and the partaking of it, more enjoyable. At the end of the meal, have children take turns describing what they feel thankful for about this event.

## **OTHER VIDEOS AND FILMS ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS AVAILABLE FROM WESTON WOODS INCLUDE:**

- OWL MOON by Jane Yolen and Illus. by John Schoenherr.
- HIAWATHA by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, illus. by Susan Jeffers
- TIME OF WONDER by Robert McCloskey
- HOT HIPPO by Mwenye Hadithi, illus. by Adrienne Kennaway

Share the book *Giving Thanks, A Native* and the weather conditions that provide us

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# GEORGIE

Georgie  
by Robert Bright (Doubleday)  
Themes: Halloween/Home Sweet Home  
Level: Grades K - 2  
Length: 6 minutes, iconographic

## Summary

This is the tale of a nice ghost named Georgie who lives in the attic of a home belonging to elderly Mr. and Mrs. Whittaker. Georgie is comfortable here with his routine of coming down the creaky stairs every evening and opening the squeaky door to the Whittakers' parlor. These sounds signaled to the Whittakers that it was time to go to sleep, signaled to the pet cat that it was time to go prowling, and signaled to the owl outside that it was time to begin whooping.

One day, Mr. Whittaker repairs the creaky stair and squeaky door. This leaves poor Georgie without a purpose! He decides to find another house to haunt but has no luck. Eventually, while Georgie visits an old cow barn and freezes during the cold winter, the owl comes to Georgie to tell him that the board on the Whittakers' stair and the hinges on the parlor door are once again creaking and squeaking. Good news for Georgie! Georgie flies home at once and everyone in the Whittaker house settles back into their happy routine.

## Objectives

- Children will learn to appreciate home and family members
- Children will explore their fears
- Children will investigate those things that contribute

to the mood of scary stories on Halloween

## Before Viewing Activities

Share the book *Georgie* with children. Talk with children about the things that make them think of Halloween. As children discuss Halloween celebrations and the mood of the event, ask: What is the scariest part of Halloween? What do you like most about it? What was your favorite Halloween costume?

Discuss children's home routines. Ask: When is your bedtime? What do you do before bedtime? What do you do when you wake up in the morning? What happens when you get home from school each day?

## After Viewing Activities

Supply children with art supplies that they can use to create their own version of *Georgie* and the Whittaker home. Include pieces of tagboard, white and black construction paper, scissors, crayons, and paste. Later, have children share their artwork and retell the story of "Georgie" to their classmates.

Remind children of the peace and contentment *Georgie*, the Whittakers, the cat, and the owl felt with their nightly routine in the beginning. Then talk with children about their own family members and pets. Ask: What do you like most about being part of your family? What is your favorite time with your family? What other things do you do together? How would you feel if your favorite times together were disturbed? As children discuss these questions, help them to appreciate those everyday experiences that happen in families to make family members feel a sense of

belonging and contentment.

Have children think about what might have happened if *Georgie* had stayed in the house after Mr. Whittaker repaired the stair and door hinges. Ask: What other things could *Georgie* have done to be important to the family? Have children dictate or write their own *Georgie* stories based on this idea.

Other book based films and videos about Halloween and Home Sweet Home are available from Weston Woods. These include:

Halloween:

A DARK DARK TALE by Ruth Brown  
TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH WOMAN written by Barbara Walker and illustrated by Michael Foreman

THE THREE ROBBERS by Tomi Ungerer

THE TRIP by Ezra Jack Keats

WHAT'S UNDER MY BED? by James Stevenson

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE by Maurice Sendak

Home Sweet Home

THE COW WHO FELL IN THE CANAL written by Phyllis Krasilovsky and illustrated by Peter Spier

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOON by Frank Asch

JOEY RUNS AWAY by Jack Kent

MADLINE AND THE GYPSIES by Ludwig Bemelmans

MOON MAN by Tomi Ungerer

PANAMA by Janosch

THE SELKIE GIRL written by Susan Cooper and illustrated by Warwick Hutton

THE STORY ABOUT PING written by Marjorie Flack and illustrated by Kurt Wiese

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# A DARK DARK TALE

## A Dark Dark Tale

By Ruth Brown (Dial)

Themes: Suspense

Level: Grades K - 3

Length: 4 minutes, iconographic

## Summary

A DARK DARK TALE takes the viewer through a dark moor, to a dark wood, to a dark house, and on and on until a dark box is discovered in the corner of a dark cupboard. The eerie music and the dark colors of the journey from the moor to inside the castle work to hold children in suspense until they finally discover what is inside the dark box--a mouse! The surprise ending is a welcome relief to the tension of this exciting story. A wonderful experience to share with children at Halloween time, or anytime!

## Objectives

- Children will begin to appreciate suspense in a story
- Children will think about the ways music and color contribute to creating mood.
- Children will try to think critically

## Before Viewing Activities

Share the book *A Dark Dark Tale* with children. Talk with children about scary stories they may be familiar with. Encourage children to share these stories with classmates.

Ask children if they have ever been in a dark room or building. Ask: How did it feel to be inside the room/building? What kinds of things did you think about? What was most frightening about being there? What would make you feel better about being in a dark place? How do you feel on Halloween night?

Talk with children about what they think a castle would look like inside. Ask: How do you think a castle would be different from your own home? How many rooms do you think a castle would have? What would the kitchen look like? the bedrooms? What would you like most/least about living in a castle? Give children an opportunity to draw their own castles and describe them to their classmates.

## After Viewing Activities

Give children an opportunity to recreate the ending to *A Dark Dark Tale*. Ask: What other things might have been in the box in the corner of the cupboard? How would this make children watching feel? Help children to write or dictate their own versions of *A Dark Dark Tale*. Later, have children illustrate their stories and display them on a classroom wall for everyone to enjoy.

Talk with children about the background music and other sounds they heard. Ask: How did the music make you feel? How would you have felt differently about the story if the music was light and happy? What sounds did you hear that made the

story seem scary?

Play a variety of instrumental pieces on your classroom record player or tape recorder. Include light, happy music; low, sad sounding tunes; slow, dreamy music; bold, brisk marching band music. As children listen, encourage them to describe the way each musical piece makes them feel.

Encourage children to think critically by helping them recall all of the elements that contributed to the scary mood. In addition to the music, have children think about other changes that could be made to make it a light, happy story or a quiet bedtime story.

Other book based films and videos appropriate for the Halloween season or anytime a scary story would be enjoyable are available from Weston Woods. These include:

GEORGIE by Robert Bright

JACKIE TORRENCE: TWO WHITE HORSES by Jackie Torrence

KING OF THE CATS by Paul Galdone

TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH-WOMAN written by Barbara Walker and illustrated by Michael Foreman

THE THREE ROBBERS by Tomi Ungerer

THE TRIP by Ezra Jack Keats

WHAT'S UNDER MY BED? by James Stevenson

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Talk with children about the kinds of things that frighten them. Ask:

- What do you do to help yourself feel better when you are frightened?
- What would you tell a friend who was feeling scared?
- If you were one of the children in the story, what would you do to make yourself feel comfortable and fall asleep?

See if children can remember some of the things that frightened the grandfather when he was a boy (grandfather clock, cats jumping on garbage can lids, moths fluttering about, etc.) Then have children create their own scary stories. Have them include in their stories some animals/objects whose sounds contribute to the frightening, suspenseful feeling of the stories.



Other videos and films that are slightly scary available from Weston Woods include:

**A DARK DARK TALE** by Ruth Brown

**GEORGIE** by Robert Bright

**KING OF THE CATS** by Paul Galdone

**TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH-WOMAN** written by Barbara Walker & illus. by Michael Foreman

**THE THREE ROBBERS** by Tomi Ungerer

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From the book *What's Under My Bed?* © 1983 by James Stevenson (Greenwillow)

Video/Film Curriculum Guide - 299

for

## **WHAT'S UNDER MY BED?**

*Theme:* Scary Stories

*Grade Level:* K-2

*Running Time:* 8 minutes, animated

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## SUMMARY

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WHAT'S UNDER MY BED? is the story of two children who are told a rather scary bedtime story by their grandfather before being tucked into bed.

The creepy feeling stays with the children as they lie in bed and begin worrying about the night sounds they hear. When one of the children decides to look under his bed, he accidentally steps on the pet dog lying beside the bed. With this final fright, the children scurry downstairs to their grandfather.

The grandfather tells the children a story about a very scary night he spent at his own grandparents' house when he was a boy. The story ends when the frightened boy is given a bowl of ice cream by his grandparents. When the grandfather's story is over, the children agree that ice cream is just the remedy they need, too.

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## OBJECTIVES

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- Children will explore their own fears.
- Children will enjoy a suspenseful story.
- Children will investigate sound and its sources.

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## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

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Share the book *What's Under My Bed?* with children.

Then ask:

- What kinds of sounds do you hear at night?
- What do you do when you hear sounds that frighten you?

Talk with children about their bedtime routines. Ask:

- What special things do you do before going to sleep?

- If you enjoy reading or listening to stories, which books are your favorites?
- What kinds of things do you have in the room you sleep in to help you feel comfortable at night?

Encourage children to discuss scary stories they may be familiar with. Ask:

- How did reading/listening to/watching these stories make you feel?
- What made the story seem scary?

As children watch, have them make special note of the ways the music, sound effects and shadows add to the scary effect of the story.

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## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

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Have children close their eyes and listen carefully to the sounds they hear in the classroom. See how many different sounds children can name. Then take a walk outdoors and have children listen carefully for the outdoor sounds they hear. Later, allow children to tape record a variety of sounds and see if their classmates can identify them.

Supply a variety of objects children can experiment with to make sounds. Include rubber bands which children can stretch and pluck, combs that children can run their fingers along, glass bottles filled with varying amounts of water which children can tap, rulers which children can hang over the edge of a table and twang. Also encourage children to search for classroom objects to use in unusual ways in order to create interesting sounds.