

# “CHARLIE NEEDS A CLOAK”

“Charlie Needs a Cloak”

by Tomie dePaola (Simon & Schuster)

Themes:Animals/Clothes/Folktales

Level: Grades K - 2

Length: 8 minutes, animated

## Summary

CHARLIE NEEDS A CLOAK, is the story of a shepherd, named Charlie, whom everyone says needs a new cloak. The story begins with a brief description of the way cloth is made, from shearing sheep to carding wool to spinning yarn to weaving the cloth, and, finally, to sewing the cloth together.

We then follow Charlie as he works to make a cloak for himself. Each of the steps described above is included in this humorous and interesting story of Charlie's efforts to make a cloak. Children should have clear understanding of the process by which woolen clothing is made at the end.

## Objectives

- Children will understand that woolen clothing comes from the wool of sheep
- Children will learn about the process of making woolen clothing
- Children will appreciate the fact that we get many of our foods and material goods from animals

## Before Viewing Activities

Share the book *Charlie Needs A Cloak* with children. Bring in variety of articles of clothing made from wool. Give children an opportunity to explore the ways the clothing looks, smells, feels. Then ask: Where do you think the wool that was used to make these things came from? Help children understand that the wool came from the wool of sheep.

Visit a farm where children can see sheep before they are sheared. Encourage children to touch the sheeps' wool and describe the way it feels. As children observe the other farm animals, have them compare the animal's body coverings to the wooly coat of the sheep. Later, explain to children that the story they are about to see concerns shearing sheep for their wool in order to make clothing.

## After Viewing Activities

Have children work together to dramatize the process of making clothing from sheep's wool. Supply a large piece of cardboard cut out in the shape of a sheep. Let children glue cotton balls to the cardboard sheep to represent the sheep's woolly coat. Then provide children with a pair of scissors that they can use to dramatize shearing, two large pots for washing and dyeing the wool, a brush to represent carding, a bench or group of chairs pushed together to represent a spinning wheel,

small potholder looms that can be used to represent larger looms, needles, thread, thimbles and scraps of cloth children can use to represent sewing. When children have completed their dramatizations, ask: What part of the process of making wool was the most fun? Why? What was the hardest part? Emphasize to children that modern equipment now makes the process of making clothing from the wool of sheep much easier and more efficient.

Let children experiment with making their own natural dyes. Boil some onion skins, blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries in the classroom. Supply lengths of white yarn and white cotton fabric scraps that children can try to dye.

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