

THE LITTLE RED LIGHTHOUSE AND THE GREAT GREY BRIDGE

THE LITTLE RED LIGHTHOUSE AND THE GREAT GREY BRIDGE

by Hildegard H. Swift and Lynd Ward

Themes: American History, Communities, Feelings, Growth and Change, Self-Esteem

Grade Level: K-6 (ages 5-12)

Running Time:

SUMMARY

Buildings, bridges and boats come alive in this appealing tale of a little red lighthouse that guards the shoreline of New York City. Nature comes alive as well, speaking to the lighthouse and the boats through the river and the fog. With the help of the man who comes every night, the lighthouse stands proud as it speaks with flashes and foghorns. Then a huge change takes place. Workers come and built a great gray bridge that towers over the lighthouse. After a flashing light is mounted at the very top of the bridge, the lighthouse feels very, very small. It takes a series of accidents – a boat smashing on the rocks, the lighthouse keeper arriving late – to teach the lighthouse that its light still has to keep shining.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a fictional story about New York City.
- Children will appreciate how people work together to protect each other.
- Children will understand that their own contributions are important.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Introduce the title of the program and ask children what a lighthouse is. Encourage them to reason from the word itself to its definition. Ask children to think of a place in nature where there might be both a bridge and a lighthouse. After someone

thinks of a river, explain that this story takes place in a famous big city that is located on a river. Have them guess the city, then watch the program to see if their guesses were right.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Ask children to recall and discuss how the lighthouse felt at different points in the story. Use the feelings of the lighthouse as a way to discuss their own feelings when big changes happen and they don't understand what's going around them. Share your own feelings about being in situations when you suddenly feel very, very small, such as driving on a huge, choked expressway. Encourage children to state the lesson the lighthouse had learned by the end – that its light was still important. Share and discuss ways in which every person's "light" is important. If you used the expressway example, discuss the need for every driver to stay alert for the safety of all.

Because the lighthouse, boats and bridge talk in flashes, hoots, and other sound effects, this story lends itself especially well to re-enactment. Children will enjoy playing these unusual parts. Use a "story theater" approach and follow the words exactly to increase appreciation for the story's literary qualities. Challenge dramatic skills with sentences such as, "A thick fog crept over the river and tried to clutch the boats one by one."

Connect the story to geography by having students locate the places mentioned in the story: Hudson River, New York City, Lake Tear-in-the-Woods, and Albany. Study a map of Manhattan to locate Riverside Drive. Then find the place where Riverside Drive meets a bridge that crosses the Hudson River. Locate the lighthouse at the foot of the [TAPPAN ZEE or GEORGE WASHINGTON] Bridge.

Connect the story to history, science, and technology by focusing on the art in the program. Encourage students to do research on steamboats, especially along the Hudson and other American rivers. Discuss the changes in transportation that made the great grey bridge necessary. Ask students to prepare timetables or time lines showing important dates in transportation technology.

Connect the story to social studies by focusing on the "lighthouses" in your own community. This is a good opportunity to examine your local transportation, water supplies, fire and police departments and other community institutions. Older students can research the local history of these institutions and look for buildings that, like the lighthouse, are left over from earlier eras.

Other related videos about American History available from Weston Woods include:

SO YOU WANT TO BE PRESIDENT? by Judith St. George, ill. by David Small
MARTIN'S BIG WORDS by Doreen Rappaport, ill. by Bryan Collier
GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOTHER by Jean Fritz, ill. by Dyanne DeSalvo-Ryan
JUST A FEW WORDS, MR. LINCOLN by Jean Fritz, ill. by Charles Robinson
WHO'S THAT STEPPING ON PLYMOUTH ROCK? by Jean Fritz, ill. by J.B. Handelsman
SHH! WE'RE WRITING THE CONSTITUTION by Jean Fritz, ill. by Tomie dePaola
AND THEN WHAT HAPPENED, PAUL REVERE? by Jean Fritz, ill. by Margot Tomes
JEAN FRITZ: SIX REVOLUTIONARY WAR FIGURES by Jean Fritz
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA, BEN FRANKLIN? by Jean Fritz, ill. by Margot Tomes

CALL 800-243-5020 TO ORDER THESE AND OTHER WESTON WOODS VIDEOS!

This guide may be photocopied for free distribution without restriction

MILLIONS OF CATS

Millions of Cats

by Wanda Gag (Coward-McCann)

Themes: Animals/Pets/Values

Grade Level: K-2

Running Time: 11 minutes, iconographic

Summary

MILLIONS OF CATS is about an elderly man and woman who are lonely. The woman tells her husband that a cat would make her happy. The man searches for one cat and, much to his surprise, comes to a hill covered with "hundred of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats." He looks for the prettiest cat to bring home. Each time he chooses one, he sees another that looks prettier and decides to bring that one home too. By the time the man arrives back home, he has all the cats with him.

The woman is overwhelmed by the number of cats and says that they can keep only one. Meanwhile, the cats fight among themselves as to which is the prettiest, the one to be kept by the man and woman. Eventually, one lone scraggly cat is left. The man and woman bring the cat into the house and care for it. The cat becomes as beautiful to its owners as the others.

Objectives

- Children will learn about the importance of caring for one another
- Children will investigate values
- Children will explore the importance of self-esteem

Before Viewing Activities

Share the book Millions of Cats with children. Then ask: Why did the man have such a hard time deciding which cat to bring home? Do you think this was a good way to choose? Why/Why not? How did the cats feel when they had to choose among themselves who would stay with the man and woman? How do you think the man and woman felt as they watched the cats quarreling?

Why did the cats leave the one cat that was left alone? How do you think the cat felt about being the only one left? What did the man and woman do to make the cat, and themselves, happy?

Invite children to imagine that the numbers of pets in their homes were increased by hundreds or thousands. Ask: Where would you keep all of your pets? How would you care for them all? How do you think your pets would feel about having so many other animals around them? Give children an opportunity to draw pictures of "hundreds of pets, thousands of pets, millions and trillions and billions of pets" in their households.

After Viewing Activities

Talk with children about the way the man made his decision about which cat to bring home. Ask: How would you have decided which cat to bring home? Then give children an opportunity to draw pictures of their family members and share the pictures with the class. As children share their pictures, encourage them to talk about the things they like most about their family members. Then ask questions such as: Would you still like those things about your mom if her hair was brown instead of blonde? Would you

still like those things about your brother if he were shorter? Would you still like those things about your sister if she wore shoes that you didn't like? Through this method of questioning, help children see that it is a person's feelings and behaviors, rather than physical characteristics, that make them special.

Ask children: How do you think the cat felt about herself before the man and woman chose to keep her? How do you think the cat felt after the man and woman cared for her? Then help children make simple "All About Me" booklets. Have children draw pictures in their booklets, or fill them with pictures cut from magazines that will help others learn more about how they feel, what they like, what they dislike. Later, give children an opportunity to share their booklets with the class. Ask: How do you feel when you help your friends to know more about you? What is the most important thing for them to know about you? How does it make you feel to know more about your friends? Why?

Other book based films and videos that explore self-esteem are available from Weston Woods. These include:

THE CATERPILLAR AND THE POLLIWOG by Jack Kent
CORDUROY by Don Freeman
THE MOST WONDERFUL EGG IN THE WORLD by Helme Heine
THE UGLY DUCKLING written by Hans Christian Andersen and illustrated by Svend Otto S.
WHISTLE FOR WILLIE by Ezra Jack Keats
THE WIZARD by Jack Kent

CALL 1-800-243-5020 TO ORDER THESE AND OTHER WESTON WOODS VIDEOS!

This guide may be photocopied for free distribution without restriction

ANDY AND THE LION

ANDY AND THE LION

By James Daugherty

Themes: Animals, Make Believe, Fables, Friendship

Grade Level: K-2

Running time: 10 minutes, Iconographic

SUMMARY

ANDY AND THE LION is the story of a boy named Andy who searches the library for a book about lions. Andy is so interested in lions that he cannot put the book down. Before bedtime, Andy's grandfather tells him an amazing lion story and Andy dreams about lions all night long.

When Andy wakes the next day and leaves for school, he meets a lion along the way. The lion has a thorn stuck in its paw and Andy manages to pull it out. Andy and the lion part as friends. When a circus comes to Andy's town, Andy goes, of course, hoping to catch the lion act. When one of the lions jumps out of its cage and leaps toward the audience, right in Andy's path, Andy feels his days are numbered. But lo and behold! Andy and the lion recognize one another! This is the same lion that Andy helped by removing the thorn from its paw!

Andy and the lion rejoice and Andy protects the lion from the on-coming crowd of people who are prepared to capture it. The next day Andy and the lion lead the townspeople in a parade along Main Street and Andy is awarded a medal for bravery. The story ends with Andy returning the book about lions to the library, pulling the lion on a leash behind him.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about lions and their behavior.
- Children will explore the concepts of gratitude and friendship.
- Children will learn about the value of books.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book ANDY AND THE LION with children. Talk with children about lions. Explain that lions are members of the cat family and that they have been known as the "king of beasts." Tell children that lions still roam the wide open African plains but that they are good targets for hunters. Have children discuss those places where they may have seen lions (zoos, circuses) and describe their physical characteristics.

Discuss children's favorite books. Ask:

- Where do you go to find your favorite books?
- What is it about your favorite stories that interests you?
- Are your favorite stories about things that are real or imaginary?
- What other ways can you find out about the things you discovered in the books?
- Do you think your friends would like the books that are special to you as much as you do? Why? Why not?

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Visit a library with children. Before your visit, have children determine what they are most interested in knowing about. Help children find books on these subjects during your library visit. When you return to the classroom,

have children make their own books by stapling pieces of manila construction paper together. Have children dictate their own stories to you and print them in children's books. Allow children to create illustrations to accompany their stories and display them in the classroom for all to enjoy.

Talk with children about the gratitude the lion felt for Andy after Andy removed the thorn from its foot and the friendship that existed between Andy and the lion. Ask:

- Who are your special friends?
- How do you feel about them? Why?

Supply paper plates, construction paper, yarn, crayons, scissors and paste that children can use to create paper plate faces that represent their special friends. When children have completed the project, have them share their creations with their classmates and describe the reasons why their friends are special to them.

Help children write a simple fable about a larger animal and a smaller animal. Explain that a fable is a story in which animals speak. Often a fable has a message.

Other videos from Weston Woods about animal fables or friendship fables include:

DOCTOR DE SOTO by William Steig

THE BEAST OF MONSIEUR RACINE by Tomi Ungerer

THE CATERPILLAR AND THE POLLIWOG by Jack Kent

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOON by Frank Asch

CALL 1-800-243-5020 TO ORDER THESE AND OTHER WESTON WOODS VIDEOS!

This guide may be photocopied for free distribution without restriction