

SCAREDY SQUIRREL AT NIGHT

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By Mélanie Watt

Grades: PreK-3; Ages: 4-8

Themes: Animals and Pets, Humor, Growth and Change

Runtime: 11 minutes

COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SUMMARY

One of children's favorite characters, Scaredy Squirrel, is back with a new set of fears to face. In this new story by Melanie Watt, Scaredy Squirrel forces himself to stay awake all night, for fear of the various scary things that could visit him in his dreams. Armed with an arsenal of sleep-fighting tools, including counting the stars and scrapbooking, Scaredy Squirrel manages to stay awake night after night. But in the days, he suffers the consequences of his lack of sleep. He is sleepy, confused, grumpy, and slow to react. Then he learns something truly alarming, all of his dreams are about to come true! Will Scaredy Squirrel be able to outwit his nightmares, or will they get him?

OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze the changes in Scaredy Squirrel from the beginning of the movie to the end of the movie.
- Students will determine the lesson that Scaredy Squirrel learns in the movie.
- Students will build a theory about Scaredy Squirrel's character by studying his character traits through three different stories.
- Students will discuss the benefits of getting enough sleep.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Read a nonfiction book about sleep to students. Create a chart entitled, "Why Sleep is Important". Encourage students to listen for information to add to the chart. After reading discussion questions:

- What happens to the body when we sleep?
- What happens when we don't get enough sleep?
- What are some things that can help us get to sleep?
- What are some things that people do when they are tired?

Tell students that they are going to see a funny movie about a squirrel who is scared to go to sleep. Encourage them to think about times that they didn't want to sleep, and why, as they watch the movie.

Begin a character study on Scaredy Squirrel. Show the movies, or read the books, **Scaredy Squirrel** and **Scaredy Squirrel Makes a Friend**. Tell students that some ways that we learn about characters are by things that they do and things that they say. Introduce a graphic organizer, such as a web or a T-chart, and encourage students to watch and listen for things that the pigeon does and says. Record these on the organizer. Then, talk with children about what they learned about the pigeon based on things he says and does. Add to the character study after watching **Scaredy Squirrel at Night**. Create a bulletin board with pictures of Scaredy Squirrel, on which children write a sentence or paragraph that describes him from the class discussions.

Frontload some vocabulary from the movie. Introduce the following words and give students definitions and a visual anchor or example to ground their understanding: **reflexes, hallucinations, decoy, molasses**.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Common Core Connection Activities - CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.SL.1:

Use a T-chart to compare contrast how Scaredy Squirrel changed from the beginning of the book to the end of the book. Label one side of the T-chart "Scaredy Squirrel in the Beginning" and the other side "Scaredy Squirrel at the End". Guiding questions:

- How can you describe Scaredy Squirrel at the beginning of the story? What are some adjectives that you can use?
- Do Scaredy Squirrel's fears change from the beginning to the end of the story? Why or why not?
- How does Scaredy Squirrel's life change?
- What are some adjectives you can use to describe Scaredy Squirrel at the end?

After the T-chart is complete, discuss with students how Scaredy Squirrel solved his problem of being afraid to go to sleep.

- Did Scaredy Squirrel's plan for keeping his bad dreams away work? Why or why not?
- What did Scaredy Squirrel learn?

Common Core Connection Activities - CCRA.W.3:

Culminate the previous discussion with students drawing and or writing a personal narrative about a time when they didn't want to go to sleep. Teach or review the

elements of a personal narrative, such as zooming in on a small moment, using experiences from one's own life, and developing characters through actions, thoughts, feelings, and dialogue. Use *Scaredy Squirrel at Night* as a mentor text for these lessons.

Common Core Connection Activities - CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.SL.1:

Return to the character study that was started in the Before Viewing Activities. Revisit the graphic organizer that students started and add details about Scaredy Squirrel from *Scaredy Squirrel at Night*. Lead a discussion to guide students in creating theories about Scaredy Squirrel. Questions to consider:

- How is Scaredy Squirrel the same/different in each story?
- What does Scaredy Squirrel learn in each story?
- What does Scaredy Squirrel do in each movie that is similar?
- What is different about Scaredy Squirrel in each movie?
- How would you expect Scaredy Squirrel to act in other stories?

Have students share what they do before going to bed. How do they wind down? Do they have a set bed time? Give students an opportunity to share their bedtime routines with each other. Then, show them a picture chart of your bedtime routine. This may include pictures of brushing teeth, reading a book, listening to music, cuddling a pet, drinking water, taking a bath, and putting on pajamas. Provide these same pictures for students to cut out and glue onto a piece of construction paper, in the order of things that they do before bed. Emphasize that students don't have to use all of the pictures, and encourage them to draw pictures of their own, if their routine includes something different. Send their bedtime routine posters home to help students remember the importance of winding down and getting a good night's sleep.

Introduce children to different lullabies from around the world. Teach these songs during community meeting time or during social studies. Show students where on the map or globe the lullaby originates, and include photos of that place. Extend the learning by highlighting any specific sleep facts such as: where do people sleep, do people from this culture sleep together or on their own, and are there any special sleep rituals practiced by this culture.

MORE NIGHTTIME STORIES FROM WESTON WOODS:~

- **Don't Let the Pigeon Stay up Late** – by Mo Willems
- **Fox Went out on a Chilly Night** – by Peter Spier
- **Good Night, Gorilla** – by Peggy Rathmann
- **Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site** – written by Sherri Duskey Rinker, illust. by Tom Lichtenheld
- **Goodnight Moon** – written by Margaret Wise Brown, illust. by Clement Hurd
- **How do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight?** – written by Jane Yolen, illust. by Mark Teague
- **In the Night Kitchen** – by Maurice Sendak
- **Kitten's First Full Moon** – by Kevin Henkes
- **Voyage to the Bunny Planet** – by Rosemary Wells

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