

A SICK DAY FOR AMOS MCGEE

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Ages: 5-8; Grades: K-3

Themes: People at Work, Manners, Friendship, Animals and Pets

Running Time: 10 minutes

SUMMARY

Amos McGee is a dedicated zookeeper. He regularly visits his friends, the elephant, the tortoise, the penguin, the rhinoceros and the owl. When he wakes up one day with a cold, his friends wait and worry about him all day. Finally, they take matters into their own hands and set off to pay Amos a visit. Students will enjoy the role reversal of the characters, and teachers and parents will appreciate the messages of friendship and caring.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will differentiate between fact and fiction.
- Students will identify ways to be good friends.
- Students will make text-to-self connections.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Discuss friendship with the students. Ask students if they have ever had a friend who has really helped and supported them in a tough time. Have students share their experiences with a partner. After sharing, have each partner share the story told to him/her by the other student. Tell students that they are going to see a movie about a zookeeper who supports his friends all the time. Encourage them to watch and listen for ways that the friends show their support in return to the zookeeper.

Review with students the difference between fact and fiction. Explain that fiction tells about things that are imaginary, or make-believe, while facts are things that happen in real life. Tell the students that they will be watching a movie about a zookeeper and his responsibilities. Encourage students to think about what things happen in the movie that are facts, and what things happen that are fiction. Guiding questions:

- Could that event happen in real life? Why or why not?
- Is that a realistic event?

Follow up in After Viewing Activities.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Follow up on the Before Viewing Activity differentiating between fact and fiction. Make a Fact/Fiction T-chart. Review events from the movie with students and discuss whether they are real or make-believe. Alternatively, write events from the movie on sentence strips and work with the students to sort the strips on the T-chart. Ideas for the sentence strips:

- Amos McGee eats porridge and tea for breakfast.
- Amos McGee takes the bus to work.
- Amos McGee plays chess with an elephant.
- Amos runs races with the tortoise.
- Amos read stories to the owl.
- Amos woke up sick.
- The animals visit Amos at his house.

Discuss kindness and caring with students.

Guiding questions:

- In what ways did Amos show kindness to the animals at the zoo? Why do you think he acted this way?
- What are some ways that you show kindness to people around you?
- What was the effect of the way that Amos treated the animals? How did they act towards him? Why do you think they acted this way?
- Have you ever repaid a kindness like the animals did for Amos?
- What can you do in the future to show kindness to others?

After students have shared with partners and the whole group, culminate the discussion by creating a “Kindness Tree”. Make a bulletin board display of a bare tree, with cut-out leaves that students can draw on, or a teacher can write on. Include ways that students will show kindness to others. Alternatively, students can make leaves that recognize others that have been kind to them. Set a goal to get the tree full of leaves.

Introduce text-to-self connections. Tell students that a text-to-self connection is when you can relate to one of the characters or events in a book or movie. Give students some examples of a way that they can relate to one of the characters in *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*. Show students hand motions to go along with making a text-to-self connection. Have them hold their hands up like a book, then point to themselves, then clasp their hands together to show a connection. Then, ask students to make their own text-to-self connections with the movie.

Invite students to share their connections with each other. Close by having students draw a picture of their connection and complete the sentence: “I connect to _____ because...”

OTHER RELATED TITLES FROM WESTON WOODS:

Bear Wants More, by Karma Wilson, ill. by Jane Chapman
Bink & Gollie, by Kate DiCamillo and Alison McGhee, ill. by Tony Fucile

Crazy Hair Day, by Barney Saltzberg

Do Unto Otters (A Book about Manners), by Laurie Keller

Great Joy, by Kate DiCamillo, ill. by Bagram Ibatoulline

The Lion and the Mouse, by Jerry Pinkney

The Other Side, by Jacqueline Woodson, ill. by E.B. Lewis

Wallace’s Lists, by Barbara Bottner & Gerald Kruglik, ill. by Olof Landström