

IN THE SMALL, SMALL POND

IN THE SMALL, SMALL POND

by Denise Fleming

(Henry Holt and Company)

Themes: Animals, Growth and Change,
Nature and Seasons

Grade Level: preK-1

Running Time: 5 minutes

SUMMARY

Based on a Caldecott Honor Book, this program is a visual poem to nature. The pictures are in bright, bold colors. The few words appear as part of the art. But what words they are! Children will love how the words and pictures wiggle, waddle, shiver, quiver, sweep, scoop and splash. The poem begins with tadpoles and follows the gradual changes of the seasons from the viewpoint of the frogs. It ends with the frog safely hibernating for the winter. Nature comes alive with beautiful close shots of plants and animals, the play of words on the page and all the sights and sounds of a small pond.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a visual poem about life in a pond.
- Children will match action words (verbs) to actions seen in pictures.
- Children will identify animals that live in or around ponds.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Show students the cover of the book or video, and ask them to discuss the title and art. Have them identify the two characters on the cover, a child and a frog. Explain that the child stands for them, the viewers, and that most of the program will show life from the frog's point of view. What is a frog's life like, up close? Ask students what they think they will see. Encourage them to pay close attention to the program to discover if their ideas were correct.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Review the story, from the viewpoints of both the frog and the child, who stands for the viewer. What sights and sounds did the child see in the small, small pond? What was the frog was doing and seeing in each scene?

Connect the story to science by introducing the words "habitat" and "environment." On the chalkboard, list other animals and plants the frog saw. Notice and list the clues to the changes of the seasons. If possible, make a field trip to an actual small pond, and have children make similar lists of the animals and plants they saw.

Connect the story to reading and literature by having children memorize and then act out the poem. They'll have fun making all the animal actions, while at the same time learning the importance of using colorful verbs in good writing.

Connect the story to art by having children play with similar art techniques. (Denise Fleming created the illustrations by pouring colored cotton pulp through hand-cut stencils.) Cotton pulp is available at art supply stores and can be colored with classroom powder paints. The pulp can be used with or without stencils. After the pulp dries, the art can be further enhanced with watercolors, crayons, colored pencils or markers.

Other videos and films about nature and the environment available from Weston Woods include:

JOHNNY APPLESEED by Reeve Lindbergh,

illustrated by Kathy Jakobsen

GOOSE by Molly Bang

MISS RUMPHIUS by Barbara Cooney

OWL MOON by Jane Yolen, ill. by

John Schoenherr

TIME OF WONDER by Robert McCloskey

THE UGLY DUCKLING by Hans Christian Andersen, ill. by Jerry Pinkney

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GOOSE

GOOSE

by Molly Bang (*Scholastic*)

Themes: Adoption, Animals, Families, Feelings, Self-Esteem

Grade Level: PreK–2

Running Time: 6 minutes

SUMMARY

This simple tale has many moments of strong emotion, beginning with the storm that blows a goose egg out of its nest and down a woodchuck's hole. The illustrations, in vivid dark colors, accentuate the young goose's feelings: though she is adored by her new family, the goose feels different, and so goes off to find her own way in the world. Her loneliness leads to a terrible fall from a cliff—and she learns she can fly! The story ends with the young goose flying home to her woodchuck family.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a story about imaginary animals.
- Children will identify and discuss the emotions of love for family, feeling different, loneliness and fear.
- Children will identify and express pride in learning new skills.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Show students the cover of the book or video, and ask them to discuss the title and art. Encourage them to identify what is unusual about this particular goose—it has just hatched, and it is surrounded by furry animals, not other geese. Ask for ideas about how the goose might have gotten there, and encourage students to pay attention to the story to see if their ideas were correct.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Go back over the story scene by scene and discuss the goose's feelings at each turn of the tale. Talk about what made the goose feel good (being hugged by her family, playing, flying) and what made her feel bad (being alone, being afraid). Encourage children to act out the goose's feelings by retelling the story in the form of mime or dance.

Connect the story to writing by encouraging students to retell the story from a different point of view. For example, students might choose the woodchuck who, at the end of the tale, is taking a ride on the goose's back. Or encourage students to imagine what would happen if this goose found her mother, the goose who lost an egg in a

storm years before.

Connect the story to science and nature by noticing details about how woodchucks live. Have students identify the skills that woodchucks have and geese do not, and vice versa. Compare the homes of geese and woodchucks. Notice the elements of the environment, such as the forest and river, that are shared with other animals.

Connect the story to geography and art by having students draw imaginary maps of the goose's journey.

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

ANTARCTIC ANTICS by Judy Sierra, ill. by Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey
CLICK, CLACK, MOO
COWS THAT TYPE by Doreen Cronin, ill. by Betsy Lewin
I, CROCODILE, by Fred Marcellino
IN THE SMALL, SMALL POND by Denise Fleming
POSSUM MAGIC, by Mem Fox, ill. by Julie Vivas
RIKKI~TIKKI~TAVI by Rudyard Kipling, ill. by Jerry Pinkney
THE UGLY DUCKLING, by Hans Christian Andersen, ill. by Jerry Pinkney
WINGS: A TALE OF TWO CHICKENS, by James Marshall

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WAITING FOR WINGS

WAITING FOR WINGS

by Lois Ehlert

Themes: Animals, Growth and Change, Seasons and Nature

Grade Level: preK–3 (ages 3-8)

Running Time: 7 minutes

SUMMARY

This program is a single poem in celebration of the butterfly's life cycle, illustrated with bold, brightly colored drawings that help build suspense and create excitement. The poem begins with butterfly eggs and follows the eggs as they hatch to caterpillars. We then see different kinds of caterpillars cover themselves with hard cases, hibernate and emerge as butterflies. Beautiful butterflies then head for a brilliant garden, where they feed on nectar until it is time to lay their eggs. After the end of the poem, the book contains a short science section, with paintings of common North American butterflies, facts about how and what butterflies eat and tips on how to grow a butterfly garden.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a visual poem about nature.
- Children will identify the stages in the life cycle of a butterfly.
- Children will identify common North American butterflies and flowering plants.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Read the title of the program out loud and ask children to speculate on what it means. Have children share what they already know about butterflies. If someone speculates that caterpillars are the ones

who are waiting for wings, suggest that everyone listen very carefully to see if that's where the title comes from. With very young children, you might also want to define a few key words from the poem: eggs, caterpillar, case and nectar.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Ask children to recall the life stages of the butterfly as described in the poem. Replay the program to check if children remembered correctly. As you replay, point out visual details that might have been missed on the first viewing, especially what is happening to the various kinds of butterflies.

Connect the story to science by introducing the words life cycle, metamorphosis and habitat. Have children relevant sections of their science textbooks that show life cycles of butterflies and other insects. Then replay the program, this time without the sound. Challenge children to give scientific descriptions of how eggs turn into butterflies. Using the butterfly identification sections of the book (after the poem) compare the art to photographs in nature guides. If possible, raise caterpillars in the classroom so that children can observe the process in detail. Make arrangements with a local nature museum, botanical garden or commercial garden center in order to introduce children directly to plants that attract butterflies, including the flowering plants that are featured in the program. After children learn to identify some plants common to your area, have them find and identify similar plants in the neighborhood of your school. If possible, have children plant and care for a small butterfly garden.

Use the art in the program to motivate children to

use similar techniques. Have them make garden and butterfly pictures by cutting out shapes from colored paper, gluing them on white backgrounds, then shading the paper shapes with water colors, markers and colored pencils. For butterflies, leaves and flowers, show children how to fold paper in half before cutting, to achieve symmetry in the design.

For an amusing outdoor activity, challenge children to play a butterfly game. To play, you need a piece of chalk, an open playground area, and a whistle. The object of the game is to see how many butterflies can fly inside a "garden" without touching each other. Draw a fairly small chalk circle (about 12 feet across) to represent a garden. Inside the circle, draw several clusters of flowers, each cluster about 1-2 feet across. Show children how to pretend they are butterflies by flapping their arms and hopping from cluster to cluster. Players can rest their arms when they are on flower clusters, but must flap their arms and fly to another cluster when they hear the whistle. Have them line up and enter the garden one at a time, until the circle is full. If two players touch, they are both out of the game and a new butterfly can fly in.

Other videos and films about seasons and nature available from Weston Woods include:
IN THE SMALL, SMALL POND, by Denise Fleming
IN THE TALL, TALL GRASS, by Denise Fleming
TIME OF WONDER, by Robert McCloskey

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