

THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY

THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY

by Ezra Jack Keats

Themes: Religion, Humility

Grade Level: K-2

Running Time: 7 minutes, iconographic

SUMMARY

THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY, told as a tale set to music, is the simple story of a boy with a drum who feels he has nothing to offer the baby Jesus. Others come from far and wide to offer gifts, and the boy, standing at the end of the line of visitors, feels unworthy, with nothing to offer.

Finally, the boy suggests that he can play for the baby Jesus on his drum. The boy soon recognizes that this gift is as worthy a gift as the others. The mood of this film, suggested by the music and language, offers children a warm wonderful look at the meaning of giving.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will explore religious beliefs.
- Children will investigate the meaning of giving.
- Children will learn about the reasons for the Christmas holiday

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book, THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY, with children. Then ask:

- Who has everyone come to see in the story?
- What kinds of things are they bringing to the baby Jesus?
- Why are they bringing him gifts?
- What kinds of animals appear in the story?

- Who is at the end of the line, waiting to see baby Jesus?
- Why does the boy with the drum feel sad?
- What special gift does the boy give the baby Jesus at the end of the story?
- How does the boy feel about his gift?

Talk with children about the Christmas holiday. Explore the ways children who celebrate this holiday enjoy Christmas with their families. Then tell children the Christian story of the birth of Jesus. Explain that this is the religious belief of some people, and that this Christian story is the basis for the film they are about to see.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the way the story of The Little Drummer Boy was told as a song. Play the recording of The Little Drummer Boy. Encourage children to try and recall the pictures they saw as they listen. Then play another recording for children that is also a story set to music. Have children listen carefully, then draw pictures that tell the story they have just heard.

Supply a drum and other musical instruments that children can use in the classroom. Have children pretend that it is the birthday of one of the children in the class, and that their gift to that person will be a simple recital. Then help children play simple rhythms to accompany a simple nursery rhyme or song they are familiar with. Later, have children exchange instruments so that they have the opportunity to explore playing a variety of these.

Help children understand it is not the size or cost of a gift that is important, but the meaning behind the gift. Talk with children about the gift the drummer boy gave baby Jesus. Ask:

- How was this gift different from the other gifts the baby Jesus received?
- How do you think the baby Jesus and his mother felt about receiving this gift?
- Was this an expensive gift?

Have children consider the ways they can offer “gifts” to parents and friends, even when a particular occasion is not being celebrated. Ask:

- What kinds of things can you do for your parents or friends that will not cost money and that they would appreciate?
- How would you feel about giving these kinds of gifts?
- How do you think your parents and friends would feel about these gifts?

Sing other songs characteristic of the Christmas holiday. Talk about other religious holidays occurring this time of year. Learn some Hanukkah songs. Play a Hanukkah game like dreidel.

Other videos about Christmas available from Weston Woods include:

The Clown of God by Tomie dePaola

Max’s Christmas by Rosemary Wells

Morris’s Disappearing Bag by Rosemary Wells

The Night Before Christmas by Clement Clarke Moore, ill. by Ruth Sanderson

Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto, ill. by Ed Martinez

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ONE ZILLION VALENTINES

ONE ZILLION VALENTINES

Book by Frank Modell

Themes: Valentine's Day/Friendship

Grade Level: K - 3

Running Time: 6 minutes

SUMMARY

Marvin and his friend Milton know that in order to get a valentine, you have to give one. So they make a zillion—and have enough to give away, enough to sell, and even a special one to share with each other.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about Valentine's Day
- Children will explore the idea of giving and receiving
- Children will exercise their creative thinking skills

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Discuss the things children enjoy about Valentine's Day. **Ask:** What is your favorite thing to give on this special day? What do you enjoy receiving? Have children take turns guessing about the origin of Valentine's Day. Then share some information about the beginnings of Valentine's Day, including the idea that it began with the ancient Roman feast of Lupercalis and later was associated with the feast day of two Roman martyrs, both of whom had the name of Saint Valentine.

Collect and share a wide variety of valentines with children, including old fashioned valentines, humorous valentines, and hand-made valentines. Have children take turns choosing their favorite valentine from the collection and explaining their choices to their classmates. **Ask:** Where have you seen some of these valentines? Which do you think were the most difficult to make? Which valentines make you feel the happiest?

Share the book *One Zillion Valentines* with children. **Then ask:**

- What kind of a person was Marvin? Milton?
- How are Marvin and Milton similar? How are they different?
- How do you think the people in the neighborhood felt about Marvin and Milton after they distributed the valentines? How do you think Marvin and Milton felt about distributing them?
- What special thing did Milton do for his friend Marvin at the end of the story? How do you think this made Marvin feel?

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the different kinds of mail they receive. Encourage them to describe either their favorite item that arrived via mail, or something they'd wish to receive in the mail. Review the mailing process with children. If possible, visit a post office where each step of the mailing process can be described and shown. Have children write notes to their parents or family members and actually stamp and mail them.

Provide construction paper, scissors, paste, crayons, markers, and glitter that children can use to create their own valentines to give to friends or family members. As children work, emphasize that each valentine is special in its own way. When finished, talk with children about their reasons for creating their valentines as they did. Encourage them to describe the things they especially like about their creations.

Collect books of poetry, including Valentine's Day related verse, from your school or local library and keep them in a handy place where children can enjoy them at their leisure. Then share some simple rhymes appropriate for valentine's day with children. Encourage

children to share their opinions about the rhymes. Then provide paper and pencils children can use to write or dictate valentine rhymes of their own.

Remind children of the many different kinds of giving and receiving activities that took place in the story. **Then ask:**

- How do you feel when you give someone a gift?
- How does it feel to receive a special gift from someone?
- How does it feel to receive a gift that is hand made?
- What is your favorite kind of gift?
- Does a gift have to be an object? What other kinds of gifts can you give and receive?

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

- **GIVING THANKS**
by Chief Jake Swamp, illus. by Erwin Printup, Jr.
- **IN THE MONTH OF KISLEV**
by Nina Jaffe, illus. by Louise August
- **MAX'S CHOCOLATE CHICKEN**
by Rosemary Wells
- **MAX'S CHRISTMAS**
by Rosemary Wells
- **MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG**
by Rosemary Wells
- **SEVEN CANDLES FOR KWANZA**
by Andrea Davis Pinkney, illus. by Brian Pinkney
- **THE CLOWN OF GOD**
by Tomie dePaola
- **THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS**
by Clement Clarke Moore,
illus. by Ruth Sanderson

SAM AND THE LUCKY MONEY

SAM AND THE LUCKY MONEY

Book by Karen Chinn, illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright & Ying-Hwa Hu

Themes: Chinese Culture/ Decision Making

Grade Level: K-3

Running Time: 11:00

SUMMARY

This Chinese New Year, Sam's parents tell him that he may spend his "lucky" money on anything he wants. When he arrives at the festivities in Chinatown, he is tempted by many nice things. But a homeless man without shoes or socks helps Sam decide on the best way of all to spend his "lucky" money.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn Chinese customs and celebrations.
- Children will explore decision making.
- Children will investigate the value of money.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book *Sam And The Lucky Money* with the children. Then ask:

- What did Sam's grandparents give him to use during the Chinese New Year celebrations?
- Who did Sam meet during the festivities?
- What did Sam decide to do with his money at the end of the story?
- How do you think Sam felt as he left Chinatown at the end of the day?

Talk with the children about the different ways they celebrate the New Year. Encourage them to compare and contrast their own celebrations with

those of the Chinese New Year. Ask:

- Which of Sam's New year traditions would you like to try?
- Which of your own traditions would you like to share with Sam?
- What special foods do you have that you would like to introduce to Sam?

Collect library books that describe the Chinese New Year, sharing pictures, photographs and information with children. Plan a Chinese New Year celebration in your own classroom.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the decision Sam made to share his money with the man in need. Ask:

- What would you do if you had seen the same man on the sidewalk?
- What kinds of things can you do to help those who have less than you do?
- How do you feel when you help others?
- How do you think others feel when they know they are being cared for?

Explain to children that rice is very important to the diets of Chinese people. Investigate some rice dishes and cook up a rice recipe with the children. See if you can find a recording of some traditional

Chinese music and have children listen as they enjoy the rice dish.

If possible, invite a guest knowledgeable in Chinese customs and traditions to the classroom to share this information with the children. Encourage children to ask questions of the visitor.

Have children work together to paint a mural of a Chinese dragon. Encourage children to make the dragon as colorful and fanciful as possible. When dry, supply art materials such as pom poms, glitter, crepe paper, ribbon, etc. that children can attach to the dragon to make it even more dramatic.

OTHER VIDEOS AND FILMS ABOUT CHINESE CULTURE AVAILABLE FROM WESTON WOODS

INCLUDE:

THE FIVE CHINESE BROTHERS, by Claire Huchet Bishop, illustrated by Kurt Wiese
THE STORY ABOUT PING, by Majorie Flack
TIKKI TIKKI TEMBO, by Arlene Mosel, illustrated by Blair Lent

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