

A DARK DARK TALE

A Dark Dark Tale

By Ruth Brown (Dial)

Themes: Suspense

Level: Grades K - 3

Length: 4 minutes, iconographic

Summary

A DARK DARK TALE takes the viewer through a dark moor, to a dark wood, to a dark house, and on and on until a dark box is discovered in the corner of a dark cupboard. The eerie music and the dark colors of the journey from the moor to inside the castle work to hold children in suspense until they finally discover what is inside the dark box--a mouse! The surprise ending is a welcome relief to the tension of this exciting story. A wonderful experience to share with children at Halloween time, or anytime!

Objectives

- Children will begin to appreciate suspense in a story
- Children will think about the ways music and color contribute to creating mood.
- Children will try to think critically

Before Viewing Activities

Share the book *A Dark Dark Tale* with children. Talk with children about scary stories they may be familiar with. Encourage children to share these stories with classmates.

Ask children if they have ever been in a dark room or building. Ask: How did it feel to be inside the room/building? What kinds of things did you think about? What was most frightening about being there? What would make you feel better about being in a dark place? How do you feel on Halloween night?

Talk with children about what they think a castle would look like inside. Ask: How do you think a castle would be different from your own home? How many rooms do you think a castle would have? What would the kitchen look like? the bedrooms? What would you like most/least about living in a castle? Give children an opportunity to draw their own castles and describe them to their classmates.

After Viewing Activities

Give children an opportunity to recreate the ending to *A Dark Dark Tale*. Ask: What other things might have been in the box in the corner of the cupboard? How would this make children watching feel? Help children to write or dictate their own versions of *A Dark Dark Tale*. Later, have children illustrate their stories and display them on a classroom wall for everyone to enjoy.

Talk with children about the background music and other sounds they heard. Ask: How did the music make you feel? How would you have felt differently about the story if the music was light and happy? What sounds did you hear that made the

story seem scary?

Play a variety of instrumental pieces on your classroom record player or tape recorder. Include light, happy music; low, sad sounding tunes; slow, dreamy music; bold, brisk marching band music. As children listen, encourage them to describe the way each musical piece makes them feel.

Encourage children to think critically by helping them recall all of the elements that contributed to the scary mood. In addition to the music, have children think about other changes that could be made to make it a light, happy story or a quiet bedtime story.

Other book based films and videos appropriate for the Halloween season or anytime a scary story would be enjoyable are available from Weston Woods. These include:

GEORGIE by Robert Bright

JACKIE TORRENCE: TWO WHITE HORSES by Jackie Torrence

KING OF THE CATS by Paul Galdone

TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH-WOMAN written by Barbara Walker and illustrated by Michael Foreman

THE THREE ROBBERS by Tomi Ungerer

THE TRIP by Ezra Jack Keats

WHAT'S UNDER MY BED? by James Stevenson

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE by Maurice Sendak

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

This guide may be photocopied for free distribution without restriction