

A VERY BRAVE WITCH

A Very Brave Witch

By Alison McGhee, illustrated by Harry Bliss

Ages 4-8

Themes: Halloween, Feelings, Diversity, Friendship, Humor, Magic, Pets

SUMMARY

In this delightful production, students will meet a very brave witch who ventures out to meet the most feared type of creatures - humans. On Halloween night, the little witch summons her courage and goes to find out what humans are all about. She has done her research and knows that most humans are afraid of flying and don't wear pointed hats. But the biggest difference is that humans are not green. While older witches cringe in fear, the brave little witch flies right into a group of human trick-or-treaters and, because of her bravery, makes a friend. This production will not only entertain students, but will help them to see the benefits of not judging people solely on appearances.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will make text-to-self connections.
- Students will identify reasons for befriending people who are different from them.
- Students will create diversity collages.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with students about things that they are afraid of.

Guiding questions:

- Are there any animals that you are afraid of? Why?
- Are there any places that you are afraid of? Why?
- What kinds of Halloween costumes scare you?
- Have you ever had to be very brave before? When? What happened?

After students have had time to share their experiences, tell them that they are about to watch/listen to a program about a witch who is afraid of humans. Tell them that she has to be very brave when she accidentally runs into one. **Ask students:**

- Why would a witch be afraid of humans?
- How do you think the witch was brave when she met a human for the first time?

Tell students to watch/listen carefully to see if their predictions are right.

Start a list with students entitled, "We are alike because..."

Guide students through brainstorming a list of reasons that all people are alike. Help them get started by focusing on physical characteristics, such as: two eyes, nose, two ears, walk on two legs, etc. As students get going, ask:

- What are feelings or emotions that humans experience?
- What kinds of things do all humans need to survive?
- If a human, or person, looks different from you or people that you know, does he/she still have the same needs and feelings as you?
- Why is it important to treat everyone with respect and kindness, no matter what they look like?

Encourage students to watch/listen for ways that the witch and the little girl are respectful and kind to each other, even though they are different from each other.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Cut out pictures from magazines that show different types of animals, plants, and non-living objects. Mix the pictures up and have students sort them by like features. Students can work in groups to sort pictures into living/non-living, eyes/no eyes, can move/can't move, etc. After students practice sorting with different guidelines, have them sort into animal/non-animal piles, keeping humans in a separate pile from other animals.

Talk with students about how humans are similar to other animals and how they are different. Use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast humans and animals. Relate this to the program by telling students: "Even though the little witch and the little girl seemed very different, they found out that they could still be friends. People share many similarities, which make us unique and unlike any other creatures on the earth. It is important to respect and recognize our differences and similarities." Finally, have students glue the pictures of different types of people onto construction paper, as a collage.

Revisit the Venn Diagram and the brainstorming list from the Before Viewing Activity. Create a bulletin board with the students' collages and title it: "We may look different, but we all..."

Complete the sentence with the students' ideas. Guide students in making text-to-self connections. Partner up all the students in the class. Have them start by making a list of ways they are different. Next, have them make a list of ways they are the same. **Guiding questions:**

- What sports do you enjoy playing, if any?
- What is your favorite food?
- Do you have any brothers/sisters?
- What country did your ancestors or family come from?
- What holidays do you celebrate?
- Do you have any pets?

After students have made their lists, take photos of each pair of partners. Glue each picture onto a piece of construction paper. Have students copy their lists below their pictures. At the bottom, students should complete the sentence: "Most importantly, we are friends because..."

Discuss the differences between fiction and nonfiction with students. Explain that fiction stories are make-believe or imaginary. Explain that nonfiction stories are real and contain facts about real life. Ask students whether they think *A Very Brave Witch* is fiction or nonfiction and why. After students have determined that the program was fiction because it had witches in it, brainstorm a list with students of ways to determine if a book is fiction. The list could include: talking animals, magic, make-believe creatures, characters that don't exist in real life, a setting that doesn't exist in real life, and animals acting like people.

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