

DRUMMER HOFF

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By Edward R. Emberley & Barbara Emberley (Simon & Schuster)

Themes: War/Peace

Grade Level: Pre-K-3

Running Time: 6 minutes, animated

SUMMARY

DRUMMER HOFF is introduced with the peaceful chirping of birds and fluttering of butterflies. Drummer Hoff enters the scene beating his drum. The next person to appear is Private Parriage, pushing the carriage of a cannon. The narrator says, "Private Parriage pushed the carriage, but Drummer Hoff fired it off."

Soon after, different military men enter carrying additional pieces of the cannon. Each time the phrase is repeated "...but Drummer Hoff Fired it off." Finally, after many different people have added their parts of the cannon, Drummer Hoff does his job. The story literally ends with a bang, the firing of the cannon. The final scene shows a variety of birds and insects making their homes in and around the fired cannon. This simple yet powerful film tells the dramatic story of war in a way that is manageable for young children: Peace is still best.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will explore the concepts of war and peace.
- Children will investigate the idea of division of labor.
- Children will learn to follow sequences of events.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book DRUMMER HOFF with children. Then say: Drummer Hoff was part of a team that fired off a cannon.

- Which character's job would you like to have? Why?
- Which job do you think is the most important? Why?

Explain that without each character doing his job, Drummer Hoff could not have fired off his cannon.

Cite other examples:

- Baking an apple pie: without any one of the ingredients for the dough or for the filling, there would be no delicious apple pie at the end.

Play a team sport so children will get the idea of teamwork.

Give children a sequence of three directions to follow. For example, say "First, walk to the chalkboard, then go back to your desk (table) and take out a pencil." Draw a picture of a person. Encourage children to listen carefully in order to follow your directions in the order that they have been given.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Have children recall the names of the military characters. Then try this activity to help children gain skill in rhyming. Assemble a group of the following objects and place them on a table top: comb, brush, pear, shoe, hat. Then give five children in the group the following names: Captain Bear, Admiral Bat, Colonel Mush, Sergeant Foam, and Drummer Blue. Have these children select the objects from the table top that rhyme with their assigned names. Continue the activity by arranging new objects on the table top and assigning to

children names that rhyme with the objects.

Ask children to describe what they feel to be the differences between war and peace times.

- When and how did you learn about war?
- How do you think people feel during war time?
- What do you think is the most frightening thing about war?
- What other things can people do to resolve their problems besides going to war?

Offer children the following hypothetical situations to dramatize as a way of helping them build skill in problem solving and to emphasize that there are options to fighting and quarreling. Have children work in pairs. The remaining children in the group will offer suggestions to the performers to resolve the problems.

"Two brothers are arguing about who is going to have the last ice cream from the box in the freezer."

"Two friends are quarreling about who is going to decide the rules for a board game."

"Two sisters are arguing about who is going to sit in the front seat of the car when mom drives them to the store."

Other videos and films about the concepts of war and peace available from Weston Woods include:

THE BEAR & THE FLY by Paula Winter
HERE COMES THE CAT! Written by Frank Asch & illustrated by Vladimir Vagin
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