

FLOSSIE & THE FOX

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By Patricia McKissack, ill. by Rachel Isadora (Dial)

Themes: African-American Culture, Problem Solving

Grade Level: 1 - 3

Running Time: 14 minutes, iconographic

SUMMARY

In this story, a young girl named Flossie is sent on an errand by her grandmother. A fox has been scaring a neighbor's chickens, and they are too frightened to lay eggs. Flossie's grandmother asks her to carry a basket of eggs through the woods to the neighbor's house. On her way to the neighbor's house, Flossie meets the fox. The fox tries, in many different ways, to convince Flossie that he is truly a fox. Each time the fox gives Flossie a good reason why he is a fox, Flossie comes up with another good reason why he might not be a fox, since she's never ever seen one. The end of the story finds Flossie safely arriving at the home of the neighbor.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about African American culture
- Children will explore problem-solving techniques
- Children will learn about folk tales.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Explain to children that not only do people in different countries speak different languages, but in our own country there are many different accents and variations of the English language. Tell children the English language is spoken in a way they may or may not have heard before. This is the rich language of the rural South. Show children on a map, the southeastern portion of our

country. Encourage children to discuss how language sounds similar to and different from their own.

Share the book *FLOSSIE & THE FOX* with children. Ask: Would you like to live where Flossie lives? Why? Why not? Does Flossie live in a warm or cold place? How can you tell? What other kinds of animals might live near Flossie's home? What would be your favorite things to do if you lived in Flossie's neighborhood?

Tell children to pay careful attention to the music. Explain that the music will change when the fox talks, when Flossie talks, when Flossie walks through the woods, etc. Later, after viewing, ask children: How did the music in the beginning of the story make you feel? What kind of music did you hear when Flossie went skipping through the woods? How did the music change when the fox was crying and upset? What kinds of sounds did you hear when Flossie was sitting by the brook? How did the music change when Flossie met the cat? the squirrel?

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk about the ending of the story with children. Then ask: Do you think Flossie really knew that the fox was a fox all along? Why do you think she kept telling the fox that she didn't believe him? What might have happened if Flossie showed the fox that she was frightened of him? Do you think that the way Flossie solved the problem of the fox was a good way? What else could Flossie have done to be safe from the fox? Do you think Flossie's grandmother should have sent her into the woods with the eggs? What else could Flossie's grandmother have done to get the eggs to the neighbor?

Talk with children about different kinds of animals that make their homes in the woods. Encourage children to pay attention to the animals and their coloring as they meet them. Have children note the ways the animals' coloring is similar to their environment. Later, talk with children about the ways animals use camouflage to keep themselves free from harm.

Explain that a folktale is a traditional story passed down orally from one generation to another. Have the children each tell a story that their parents or grandparents have told them.

Give children an opportunity to dramatize the story of *FLOSSIE & THE FOX*. Assign children the roles of Flossie, Big Mama, the fox, and the cat. Encourage children who take on the characters of Flossie and Big Mama to experiment with the language as well. Repeat the dramatization until each child in the group who wants an opportunity to participate has had the chance to do so.

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