

A Chair for My Mother Unit Study

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Social Studies Lessons

Family

The extended family in this story is around and helpful in many ways: the grandpa giving them a rug, aunt and uncle letting them live with them for a while, the other aunt made curtains, the cousin brought over a stuffed bear. Talk about your extended family; look at pictures of them. If they don't live close, maybe you could write them a letter or call them.

Character Trait: Saving Money

Being able to save money is a good character trait to have and a great habit to establish when children are young. Find a large jar (or small if you want something small and want to accomplish your goal more quickly) and decide as a family what you would like to save some money for. Put away all the change you find in the jar and see how fast it adds up.

Being Charitable

The neighbors in this story are very charitable and willing to give. Help your children and look for opportunities when you can be charitable. The girl's cousin brought her own stuffed bear for the daughter to have.

Character Trait: Helpfulness

On the first page it says that the girl helps her mom at the diner. What jobs does she do? She helps peel onions, fill ketchups, and replenish salt and pepper shakers. What jobs does your child do? Discuss the different chores with your student and encourage him to be helpful this week!

Language Arts Lessons

Literary Connections

The grandmother in the story compares herself to Goldilocks. Why? Read or tell the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* with your child. This is a fun story to act out as well. Try out different chairs in your house: which are most comfortable? Are there any that are too big? Too small? Too hard? Too soft? Which chairs are

just right? Another fun book about chairs is called *Peter's Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats. It talks about how Peter gets too big for his chair, and finally decides it's okay to give it to his baby sister.

First Person

This story is written in first person. Talk about how it is the girl telling the story, and it happened to her. Think of some events that happened to your family and help your child tell it in first person.

Math Lessons

Money

This story is all about saving money, and it is a great opportunity than to practice counting money. Depending on the age of your child, you could discuss the difference between the coins, the names of the coins, and value of the coins.

For a young child, you could simply count pennies, or practice sorting them. As your child becomes more familiar with money, nickels and dimes make a great opportunity for teaching counting by 5's and 10's.

Make coin rubbings. Tape some coins to the table and color over them with the side of a peeled crayon; You may want to make one for each denomination-- penny, nickel, dime, and quarter. You may even want to make a half-dollar rubbing, if you have one.

If you have lots of coins, sort them and put them in paper wrappers like the mom and daughter did in the story. How many pennies fit into one wrapper? Nickels? Dimes? Quarters?

Sizes

Along with your discussion about *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, there is the great opportunity to talk about size comparisons with your younger child: big, medium, small.

The Papa Bear has a big bed, big bowl of porridge, and a big chair. The Mama bear has a Medium bed, a medium bowl of porridge and a medium chair. The baby bear has a small bed, a small bowl of porridge and a small chair. Find items that you have around the house and group them into categories (big, medium, small).

You may even want to have your child try drawing the same object three times (one small, one medium, and one big); use a simple object such as a piece of candy, ice cream cone, or house (or whatever your child wants to draw!).

Art Lessons

Caldecott Medal

Does your child recognize the Caldecott Medal on the front cover? If you've talked about Caldecott Medals before it might be interesting to see if they notice it on their own. Do you own any books with the Caldecott Medal? Pull them out and read them together.

Borders

The pages in this book have fun borders all around them. Take time to notice them; are the borders appropriate for each page? Look closely at the border on the page where the fire engines are at their house- they are flames. The next page shows wilted or dead flowers in the border. What other fun things do you find in the borders? Draw a picture, and draw a border around it that fits the picture.

Science Lessons

Fire Safety

A Chair for My Mother is a great opportunity to discuss Fire Safety with your kids. Talk about the firemen, and how their job is to put out fires, rescue people and help keep us safe.

I like to introduce fire safety to my children with this book since they family isn't home when the fire happens--it's not quite as scary to the little ones as some other books.

Fire Safety Rules to teach young children

- 1: Teach children to never play with matches or lighters
- 2: If your clothes are on fire- STOP, DROP and ROLL.
- 3: If there is smoke in the house- crawl on the floor to get out- the cleanest air is close to the ground.
- 4: Know the emergency numbers to dial- 9-1-1. Also children will need to know their address in order for the dispatcher to send help. Teach them their address. This is sometimes easiest for young children if you make it into a song. Sing your

address to the tune of "Mary had a Little Lamb" or "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"

5: Have working smoke alarms and check the batteries in them often

6: Have a plan of escape, and practice it so you and your children know what to do in case of a fire.

Bible Lessons

Good Neighbors

The neighbors in the story all show their support to the family. They give them things that they no longer need. Talk about the story of the Good Samaritan; talk about how Jesus wants us to be good neighbors to all around us.

Field Trip Ideas

Fire Station to talk about fire safety

Department store to "try out" all the chairs

Bank to talk about money

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