

Big Red Barn

Book by Margaret Wise Brown

Unit study by Christa Stepien

Social Studies

Farm Animals

This story takes place on a farm. What kind of animals live on a farm? Help your student make a list. You could write the names and she could add illustrations.

Farmers

What kinds of chores does a farmer have to do? What evidence of this can you find in the pictures? (harvesting corn, mucking stalls, collecting eggs, bailing hay, milking cows etc.)

Language Arts

Vocabulary:

Great: meaning “big” (This is also used in Goodnight Moon.)

Scarecrow: describe what it is, and show your student the picture. They might be familiar with it from The Runaway Bunny.

Art

1. Find the butterfly on each page spread.
2. Find the big & little things. Which is big and which is little? (horses, cows, piles of hay) Find big and little things throughout your house.
3. Look at the sunset picture. Can your student identify the animal silhouettes? Discuss why this is more difficult without color and details. If desired, make your own silhouette. Stand against paper on the wall and use a light to shine on the person. Trace the shadow and cut out the image.

Math

Counting

Count flowers in the field. Count the eggs. Are there ten? Count the kittens and puppies. Explore the concept of more and less in comparing kittens and puppies.

Science

Weathervane

What is a weather vane used for?

If your student is ready, discuss the compass directions. If it is windy, go outside and see if you can figure out which way the wind is blowing.

You can make a simple weathervane, if interested.

Materials: Straw, Paperclip, Dowel, Tape, Pin, Note Card, Scissors.

Step 1: Straighten a paperclip. Then, make a small loop in the middle of it.

Step 2: Cut a vertical slit in one end of a straw. It should be 1 or 2 inches in length.

Step 3: Cut a small triangle out of a note card. Stick it into the slit so that it is positioned like an arrow flight. Put some tape over the connection to strengthen it.

Step 4: Use a pin to poke a hole through the straw somewhere near the center. Slide it onto the paperclip. It should rest on the loop in the middle of the paperclip.

Step 5: Tape the paperclip onto a dowel so that it is facing straight up. Push the dowel into the ground so it will stand straight up.

Reflection

Look at the reflection of the moon in the water. Does your student know what it is without you telling them? If your student is interested, explore reflections in a glass or bowl of water.

Animal Sounds and Animal Babies

Various animals live on the farm. Does your student know what sounds each of the animals make?

Notice the families on the farm (point out the mothers and babies). What different names do mothers and babies have?

When the animals are in the barn at the end of the book, which animals are nursing their babies? Which animals do not nurse their babies? You may wish to mention to your student that all mammals (can) nurse their babies.

Additional Ideas

- Visit a farm
- Go outside at night to look at the moon
- Make a big red barn out of paper with doors that open. Find pictures of farm animals in a magazine and let your child cut and paste them in the barn.

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