

FEATHERS

By Heather Forest

Second Grade

Outcome:

Children will experience the character education values of kindness, responsibility, and decision-making. Students will write to promote a connection between the spoken and written word. Personal experiences will enhance each student's writing piece. Students will increase vocabulary when certain words from the story are selected, identified, and described by utilizing synonyms and verbs.

Materials:

Vocabulary worksheet
Verb Story Map worksheet

Introductory Activity:

Teacher prints Vocabulary worksheet and provides each student with one word. Students are not to share their word with other students. Give students a short time to reflect on their word and then ask them to define their word. Students are not to reveal the actual word or use it in their description. Students will not know that rumor, humor, and justice are the only words distributed.

Descriptions and synonyms are recorded on the board next to each student's name. Teacher stops after receiving descriptions from half of the class and asks students to hypothesize about a developing pattern. Teacher continues recording the remaining descriptions on the board. After all descriptions are recorded, teacher indicates that only 3 words were distributed and described. Teacher reveals all three words at this time and emphasizes the likelihood that not everyone interprets these words in exactly the same context. Personal experiences deepen our knowledge base.

Teacher Reading of Story:

Ahead of time, teacher lists words from the story that might be difficult to comprehend. Students discuss these words before hearing the story and listen for these words within the context of the book. Teacher should read the entire story without stopping to discuss difficult words. Continuity provides for opportunities to visualize a beginning, middle and end to the story.

BUILDING COMPREHENSION:

Checking Comprehension:

- Who does the main character blame for carrying forth her words?
- Can you take back your words?
- Where does she take the pillow?
- What is the woman's crime?
- How was the rabbi wise?

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Characterization:

- How can you tell if someone is happy or sad? (facial expression, attitude, posture, position in space)
- Based on the facial expressions of the main character, describe how she feels about her actions.
- Do you think her feelings change at any point during the story?
- Identify where her change in facial expression correlates with a change in her feelings.
- Compare and contrast the main characters expressions with those of the village people. Why do you think they often differ? (Their attitudes towards her actions appear to be very different.)
- Using the pictures, provide adjectives to describe different characters moods and personalities based on their body language.

Predicting Outcomes:

- Do you think the woman expects to be forgiven by the village rabbi?
- Based on the illustrations in the book, can you predict when this story might have taken place?
- When the rabbi assigns the woman her task, do you think she assumes it will be difficult or easy to accomplish?
- Do you think the woman and the rabbi have similar views of the task?
- Based on the woman's ability to complete the task, do you think she has learned a valuable lesson? Can you predict whether you think she will speak unkind words again?

Drawing Conclusions:

- Now that you have met the woman and the rabbi, how would you describe them?
- What was the task that the rabbi assigned to the woman? Was this a realistic task that could be effectively accomplished?
- Did the rabbi get his point across to the woman? Do you think he could have made the same point by using only his words, or was an assigned task required?
- This story is based on a traditional folktale. What parts of the story do you think might change as it is shared from family to family and culture to culture?

Sequencing:

The woman's personality goes through a series of changes as the story progresses. Can you identify a beginning, middle and end to the story and compare these sections of the story to the woman's personality? Identify the setting, problem and solution and retell them as they were presented in the book

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Follow Up Activity:

- Ask why it was difficult for the girl to collect all of the feathers that came out of the pillow.
- Highlight the comparison of our words and actions to the feathers that floated through the air.
- Were her words misinterpreted? Why or why not?
- Do we share similar views on things that are done in jest?
- Does humor always involve a positive experience?
- Do our own personal opinions and experiences effect how we view certain situations?
- Give students the option to choose between two different writing activities.
 - Instruct students to write a poem about rumor, humor or justice and how this word can be misconstrued. Poems may or may not rhyme and should be at least 5 lines long.
 - Instruct students to write a paragraph about a time when their words or actions were misunderstood. Teacher may provide examples to help students think of their own personal experience.
 - Saving a seat at lunch for your best friend may appear to be a harmless decision, but ultimately someone's feeling will be hurt and they will feel excluded.
 - Excluding classmates from special activities, games, and birthday parties.

Extension Activities/Centers:

- Math – measuring and comparing the lengths of different bird feathers in inches and centimeters.
- Spelling- add spelling words that reflect values illustrated in this book
 - forgiveness, lesson, actions, gossip, solution
- Science- research and write a report on feathers and their benefit to animals.
- Language Arts – Use the Verb Story Map worksheet and have students use verbs to create a Verb Story Map. Have students use these words in sentences.

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Vocabulary

humor

rumor

justice

humor

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justice

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Name _____ Date _____

Verb Story Map

