

BADGER'S PARTING GIFTS

Author: Susan Varley

Publisher: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard/HarperCollins

Teachers are advised to be sensitive to the needs of individual students when viewing this program. Death is a difficult subject for people of all ages. Psychologists often suggest introducing the topic to younger children through a book about the death of a pet or other animal. However, losing a pet can be traumatic for a child.

This episode might be added to a collection of materials intended to promote discussion in the event of a death that affects the class (or school) as a whole. It is suggested that the school counselor or members of the Crisis Team be included in the decision to view it.

Teachers are encouraged to alert parents about the content of this program and invite them to continue the discussion of these highly personal issues at home.

THEME:

Even though a loved one—human or animal—may no longer be with us, we have special memories that will stay with us forever.

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

In a touching story about friendship, beloved old Badger dies, and his friends are overwhelmed by their loss. In time, however, they comfort themselves remembering personal moments as well as the good times they shared with their pal. LeVar shares memories and feelings about his late grandmother, and joins some young friends who have created artwork in honor of their loved ones. Then a dancer with The Alvin Ailey's Dance Company shares how the founder's spirit is still present.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Talk about how telling stories about Badger helped the animals feel better after his death.

Badger described the end of his life as going down a "Long Tunnel." Discuss with students how Badger knew he didn't have long to live.

Pose the question, "Do our lives follow any kind of cycle?" Discuss the students' responses. Ask them if there are other cycles of life that are important to us.

Invite students to share any special memories they have about a loved one who is no longer living.

Based on ideas from the program and from their own lives, ask students how we remember people (e.g., photographs, objects, events, places, stories, foods, activities they did together, and so on).

Ask students what their individual "gifts" are – i.e. those talents they have that they could teach others.

Badger made a difference in the lives of his friends. Ask students to identify people in their lives who make a difference. Extend the discussion to include ways in which they can make a difference in the lives of others.

CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Revisit the story and chart what each animal received as a "gift" and why it was viewed as such. Across the top of the chart, write the headings for three columns: Badger's Friends, The Parting Gifts, How the Gifts Made a Difference. Brainstorm with students to complete the chart.

With the assistance of the library media specialist, identify people no longer living who have left behind tremendous gifts. Be sure to include individuals whose gifts represent a wide variety of areas, such as music, art, literature, humor, inventions, science, civil rights, etc. (For example, Martin Luther King, Jr., Harriet Tubman, Dr. Seuss, Thomas Edison, Walt Disney, Maria Tallchief, and others.) Locate short biographies of these people and have students do research about their contributions. Share their findings on a bulletin board by having them write the person's name and her/his gift(s) on paper cut in the shape of a wrapped gift. Students might also add a hand-drawn portrait or a scanned photograph or picture of the person.

Have students write "I remember..." poems about a special person or animal (living or not) in their lives. Each line of the poem begins with the words "I remember," and it is typically unrhymed. Encourage students to take their poems home to share.

Study the life cycles of familiar plants, such as an apple tree or pumpkin. Give students construction paper circles divided into four equal parts. Have them draw the sequence of the plant's life cycle in the sections of the circle. For example, the seed is first, followed by the plant with leaves and flowers, followed by the fruit, and finally the plant dies leaving the seed behind to start a new plant. Have students label the process taking place in each picture.

Different cultures honor people and celebrate the lives of those who have passed away through holidays and special events. With the assistance of the library media specialist, have students locate information about these special days in countries around the world. For example, the characters in *A Gift for*

Abuelita, a review book for this episode, prepare for *Días de Los Muertos*, the Days of the Dead, in Mexico. In the United States, we remember loved ones on Memorial Day. Other possibilities include Anzac Day in Australia, the Qing Ming Festival in China, Obon in Japan, Easter in Russia, Yom Ha-Shoah in Israel, Purim in the Jewish religion, and Wesak among Buddhists. Some holidays honor soldiers who have died in wars, such as Veteran's Day in the United States and Remembrance Day in Canada. Have students prepare simple fact cards about these occasions. On the fact card, have them write the name of the special day, when it is celebrated, why it is celebrated, and one activity in which people participate as part of the celebration. Display the fact cards along with a map of the world by using a length of yarn to connect the card to the country.

RELATED THEMES:

families
the elderly/old age
dance
food chain
seasons

RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:

Program #28—Feelings
Program #82—The Wall
Program #130—The Carousel

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Susan Varley is a native of Blackpool, England. She works as a graphic designer and illustrator. *Badger's Parting Gifts* is the first book she has written and illustrated for children.

BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:

THE GRANDAD TREE
by Trish Cooke, illus. by Sharon Wilson (Candlewick)

A GIFT FOR ABUELITA: CELEBRATING THE DAY OF THE DEAD
by Nancy Luenn, illus. by Robert Chapman (Northland)

THE TENTH GOOD THING ABOUT BARNEY
by Judith Viorst, illus. by Erik Blegvad (Atheneum)

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:

I HAVE AN OLIVE TREE
by Eve Bunting, illus. by Karen Barbour (HarperCollins)

EVERETT ANDERSON'S GOODBYE

by Lucille Clifton, illus. by Ann Grifalconi (Henry Holt)

JIM'S DOG MUFFINS

by Miriam Cohen, illus. by Lillian Hoban (Greenwillow)

I HAD A FRIEND NAMED PETER

by Janice Cohn, illus. by Gail Owens (Morrow)

BIGMAMA'S

by Donald Crews (Greenwillow)

NANA UPSTAIRS AND NANA DOWNSTAIRS

by Tomie dePaola (Putnam)

A DOG LIKE JACK

by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan (Holiday House)

THE HICKORY CHAIR

by Lisa Rowe Fraustino, illus. by Benny Andrews (Scholastic)

GRANDPA'S SLIDE SHOW

by Deborah Gould, illus. by Cheryl Harness (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

BLUEBIRD SUMMER

by Deborah Hopkinson, illus. by Bethanne Andersen (Greenwillow)

LEO THE MAGNIFICAT

by Ann M. Martin, illus. by Emily Arnold McCully (Scholastic)

ALVIN AILEY

by Andrea Davis Pinkney, illus. by Brian Pinkney (Hyperion)

BONESY AND ISABEL

by Michael J. Rosen, illus. by James Ransome (Harcourt)

A LITTLE BIT OF ROB

by Barbara J. Turner, illus. by Marni Backer (Albert Whitman)

OLD PIG

by Margaret Wild, illus. by Ron Brooks (Dial)

THE LONG SILK STRAND: A GRANDMOTHER'S LEGACY TO HER GRANDDAUGHTER

by Laura E. Williams, illus. by Grayce Bochak (Boyd's Mills)

RUDI'S POND

by Eve Bunting, illus. by Ronald Himler (Clarion)

GHOST WINGS

by Barbara M. Joose (Chronicle)

Badger's Parting Gifts. Badger's Parting Gifts. Susan Varley. Download (djvu, 2.87 Mb) Donate Read. The tale of a dependable, reliable and helpful badger who realises that his old age will soon lead to death. His friends learn to come to terms with his death in an enchanting tale. With full colour illustrations throughout. Year: 1994. Language: english. Pages: 32. ISBN 10: 0006643175.