

BLUEBERRIES FOR SAL

Blueberries for Sal

by Robert McCloskey (Viking)

Themes: Families/Relationships

Level: Grades K - 2

Length: 9 minutes, iconographic

Summary

BLUEBERRIES FOR SAL, the film, is true to the book, Blueberries for Sal, by Robert McCloskey. The story concerns a little girl, named Sal who goes out blueberry picking with her mother. At the same time Sal and her mother are blueberry picking, a mother bear and her cub are out hunting for blueberries to eat and fill themselves up for the winter.

As the story continues, little Sal, and the bear cub, both lose track of their mothers as they stop and eat blueberries. Sal finds herself following the mother bear and the bear cub follows little Sal's mother. When the mother bear and Sal's mother realize who is really behind them, they run away in search of their own children.

The end of the story finds the bear and bear cub, and little Sal and her mother, safely back together again.

Blueberries For Sal is the heartwarming story of the love between a parent and child-- be that parent and child human or animal!

Objectives

- . Children will explore parent-child relationships
- . Children will investigate the differences between child and adult behaviors
- . Children will learn about the importance of following safety rules

Before Viewing Activities

Talk with the children about the kinds of activities they enjoy with their parents. Ask: What are your favorite things to do with you mom/dad (caregiver)? When you do something together do you each do something different or do you do exactly the same thing? What kinds of things do you like to do with your parent in the summertime? wintertime? Explain that in the film they are about to see, children will meet a little girl named Sal who goes blueberry picking with her mother. Encourage children to watch carefully in order to see the ways that the little girl and her mother go about picking blueberries differently.

Show the children pictures of both mother and baby animals. Discuss the differences and similarities between the adult and baby animals. Then ask: What kinds of things can adult animals do that baby animals can't? How do you think the mothers care for their babies? If the animals wanted to have some fun, what kinds of things do you think the mother and baby animals might do together? Explain to children that the book, Blueberries For Sal, is about a bear and her cub, as well as a little girl and her mother. Encourage children to watch the ways the mother cares for her cub. Later, ask: How is the way the mother bear cares for her cub like the way Sal's mother cares for her?

Share the book, Blueberries For Sal, with children. Then ask: Why did Sal's mother want to bring the blueberries back home after picking them? What did Sal do with the blueberries she picked? Why were the bears eating as many blueberries as they could find? What do bears do in the winter? How did Sal get separated from her mother? How did the cub get separated from its mother? What did Sal's mother, and the mother bear, do when they turned around and saw that what was following them was not their child? How do you think they felt? How do you think Sal, her mother, the bear and the bear cub felt when they returned home?

After Viewing Activities

Discuss with children the way Sal and the cub were separated from their mothers. Ask: What might have happened if Sal and the bear cub were not lucky enough to find their mothers? What do you do when you go somewhere with one or both of your parents to make sure you do not get lost? What would you do if you did get separated from your parents? Emphasize to children the importance of staying close to parents when visiting places that are unfamiliar.

Ask children if they have ever had a fruit picking experience like Sal's. (If possible, take children along on a fruit expedition as an educational and enjoyable field trip. Explain to children that fresh fruits are not only delicious by themselves but can be used in many different kinds of recipes. Then supply blueberries (fresh if possible) that children can use to cook up a delicious blueberry cobbler or blueberry pie in the classroom. Be sure to print the recipe on the chalkboard and help children to follow along as they cook up their special treat.

Let children have some fun with estimating. Fill a pail with marbles and have children pretend that they are the blueberries picked by Sal and her mother in the story. Have children guess how many marbles are in the pail. Record children's individual estimates. Then have children count the marbles to see which class member made the closest estimate. Continue the activity by having the child whose estimate was closest to the actual amount of marbles fill the bucket once again with his/her desired amount of marbles and continue the activity.

Other book based films and videos about family outings are available from Weston Woods. These include: MAKE WAY FOR DUCKLINGS by Robert McCloskey PICNIC by Emily Arnold McCully STORY ABOUT PING by Marjorie Flack, illustrated by Kurt Wiese NOT SO FAST, SONGOLOLO by Niki Daly OWL MOON by Jane Yolen, illustrated by John Schoenherr

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