

HARRY AND THE DIRTY DOG

HARRY THE DIRTY DOG

by Gene Zion, ill. by Margaret Bloy Graham

Themes: Bath Time, Pets, Problem-Solving

Grade Level: PreK – 2

Running time: 9 minutes

SUMMARY

A dog named Harry hates bath time so much that he hides his scrubbing brush in the backyard and runs away from home. As Harry roams the city, he discovers lots of ways to get dirty. In fact, Harry gets so dirty that when he finally does return home, his family does not recognize him. In a final attempt to tell them that he is really Harry, he digs up his brush in the backyard and jumps into the bath.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about pet care
- Children will explore problem-solving strategies
- Children will investigate ways that we make judgements based on physical appearance

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about pets they have, or wish to have at home. Then ask:

- How do you decide who cares for your pet?
- What is the hardest part about caring for your pet?
- What do you enjoy most about your pet?

Share the book HARRY THE DIRTY DOG with children. Then ask:

- How do you think Harry's family felt when

Harry ran away?

- Was Harry playing safely when he left home? In what ways was Harry unsafe?
- What are some of the things your parents make you do that you don't want to?

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Supply sheets of manila paper and crayons. Have children draw pictures of their favorite pets. Below the pictures, or on separate pieces of paper, have children write about the ways they would care for these pets. (Have younger children dictate their ideas about caring for pets and print them, exactly as dictated, on separate pieces of paper.) Display the pictures, along with children's writings or dictations, on a classroom wall.

Discuss the way Harry tried to solve his bath time problem at the beginning of the story. Ask:

- Was running away a good idea? Why? Why not?
- What else could Harry have done besides run away to help solve his problem?

Then present the children with a number of hypothetical problems. You might ask:

- Imagine that your mom or dad served something you didn't like for dinner. What would you do? Encourage children to consider as many solutions as they can for each problem they come up with.

Remind children about how the family in the story did not recognize Harry because of his physical appearance. Then talk with them about the physi-

cal differences between them. Mention differences in hair color, eye color, clothing, etc. Show children pictures of a variety of people who are physically different in many obvious ways. Include pictures of elderly people, young people, people dressed differently, people of various races. As you show children pictures, ask them if there is anything they can tell about the people, just by looking at the pictures. As you discuss the pictures, help children understand how we make judgements simply by physical appearance. Then consider the fairness of those judgements.

Have children create their own "clean machines." Have them work individually or in small groups, with classroom blocks, big snap-together blocks, or other building/construction materials to create a machine that cleans people, animals or objects. When finished, give each child or group of children a chance to describe the way their machines work to the others in the group.

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