

THE SELFISH GIANT

THE SELFISH GIANT

by Oscar Wilde, ill. by Gertraud & Walter Reiner

Themes: Fairy Tales, Seasons

Grade Level: K-2

Running Time: 14 minutes, animated, B&W

SUMMARY

This is the story of a giant who returns to his home after many years to discover that children have been using his garden to play in. This upsets the giant, who erects a wall to keep the children out. The cold winter refuses to give in to the brilliance of spring without the children. One day, the giant notices sunshine coming in through his window. He discovers that children have crawled through a hole in the wall, entered the garden and climbed into the trees, making them blossom. In the farthest corner of the garden, the giant notices one little boy who is crying because he cannot climb up into a tree. The giant helps the boy up and discovers that his life is much more pleasant this way. The children once again enjoy the garden and springtime fills the giant's yard. The story ends with the passing of the elderly giant, who lies under a tree in his garden covered with blossoms.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about the joys of sharing.
- Children will explore the seasons.
- Children will investigate the meaning of

friendship.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book, *THE SELFISH GIANT*, with children. Then ask:

- Why do you think springtime always came to the giant's garden when the children played there?

Talk with children about the seasons. Ask:

- Which season is your favorite? Why?
- What kinds of weather do you enjoy most?
- What kinds of things do you do outdoors in the summer? winter? spring? fall?
- What colors do you see during each season?
- What are some of the signs you see that tell you that spring is on the way? That winter is coming? That summer is almost here? That fall is arriving? (Ask children who live in areas where seasonal changes are not dramatic to describe the subtle changes that occur.)

Have children describe the kinds of things they like to share with their friends and family. Ask:

- How do you feel when you share these things?
- How do you feel when others share with you?
- What can you do if a friend wants to use something of yours that is very special and important to you?
- What are some good ways to deal with sharing problems?

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Supply twigs or tongue depressors, sheets of posterboard, crayons and paste that children can use to create the giant's garden. Have children paste the twigs/tongue depressors onto the posterboard to create four separate squares, each representing the giant's garden during a different season. Help children label each section of the garden summer, winter, spring and fall. Have children use their crayons to draw within each square what the garden might look like during each season.

Have children perform a dramatization of the story, *THE SELFISH GIANT*. Children can paint a large garden scene on kraft paper to use as a backdrop. Attach cotton balls to a triangular piece of construction paper, attach string to the paper and let the "giant" wear it as a beard. Encourage children representing the children in the story to describe the many different signs of spring they see as they romp and play in the giant's garden.

Discuss the ways the children in the story felt about the giant in the beginning and at the end of the story. Ask children what kinds of things they think the giant and the children in the story enjoyed doing together once they got to know one another.

Other videos about seasons available from Weston Woods include:

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