

PIERRE

Pierre

by Maurice Sendak (Harper)

Themes: Manners/Humor/Music

Grade Level: PreK-1

Running Time: 6 minutes, animated

Summary

Pierre is the make-believe story of a boy who, to every question answers, "I don't care." For example, when Pierre's parents ask him to go somewhere with them, Pierre's response is, "I don't care."

One day, when both of Pierre's parents have given up hope and leave him at home, a lion comes along and asks Pierre if he would mind if he gobbled him up. When Pierre replies, "I don't care," that is precisely what the lion does. Pierre's parents return to find the lion in Pierre's bed, with Pierre inside the lion's stomach.

Pierre's parents take Pierre to the doctor, where the boy is shaken out of the lion's stomach and shaken up enough to change his whole attitude. From then on, Pierre's motto becomes "Care!"

Objectives

- Children will investigate family relationships
- Children will learn about the importance of good manners
- Children will explore the concept of fantasy and reality

Before Viewing Activities

Share the book Pierre with children.

Then ask:

Do you ever answer "I don't care" when someone asks you something? Why?

Why do you think Pierre changed his mind at the end of the story and decided to care?

Talk with children about their relationships with family members. Ask: How do the people in your family show that they care for one another? What do you do when you want to be especially nice to someone in your family? What do you do when you're angry with your parent (s) or brothers/sisters? How do you feel when you're not getting along with people in your family?

Discuss the different things children care about. Ask: What are the most important things to you? Why? How do you show that you care for people, your pets, or your special things? What do you think your life might be like if you didn't care about anything?

After Viewing Activities

Have a special "good manners day" in the classroom. On this day, have children make an extra effort to say "please", "thank you", "excuse me", etc. At the end of the day, talk with the children about how this day felt, and how it was different from other days. Have children work together to decide what kinds of changes they might want to make in their classroom based on their experience of "good manners day."

Ask children to retell the story of Pierre by changing his attitude from "I don't care" to "I care." Ask: If Pierre told his mother that he cared each time she said something to him or offered him something, what kind of day do you think they might have together? What kind of day might Pierre have had with his father? Encourage children to describe the different ways Pierre and his parents might have made the most out of an ordinary day, simply by having a positive attitude.

Talk with children about fantasy and reality. Will a lion really come and eat you up if you say "I don't care?" Make up a story about a person who always says, "I hate spinach" or "I hate ice cream." What fantastic thing could happen to him/her?

Other book based films and videos about manners are available from Weston Woods. These include:

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THE LITTLE RED HEN by Paul Galdone
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