

Classroom Connections & Additional Activities

1. Gather a collection of chairs and pretend Rosa and her relatives are shopping. Try out all the chairs. **PE**
2. Working in small groups, sort and classify a handful of coins. Discuss. **MATH**
3. Using squares of fabric and fabric crayons, or paper and crayons, create designs and patterns students would use on a chair for their mothers/grandmothers/friends. Use picture borders from the story for ideas. Option: sew the squares together into a quilt. **ART**
4. Plant marigold seeds six to eight weeks before Mother's Day as a gift for mother or grandmother. **SCI**
5. List students' hopes for the world. Illustrate and send to your local newspaper. **SS** **ART**

A Chair for my Mother

Vera B. Williams
1982
New York: Mulberry Books

HOPE
USA
Reading Time: 6 minutes

CONCEPTS

Hope
Love
Loyalty

SUMMARY

When a fire destroys their apartment and its contents, Rosa, her mother and grandmother are left with nothing but each other. Kind relatives and neighbors pitch in and donate household items. Rosa's family begins the task of diligently saving money to buy a big comfortable chair for their new apartment. They work together to make the dream they share come true. This tale of a hardworking, loving family and a caring community provides a vivid message of hope. Bright, cheerful illustrations bring the story to life.

OBJECTIVE

The student will be able to define and discuss hope, love and loyalty as they apply to this story. The student will be able to identify individual and family hopes and wishes.

After the Story

A Chair for my Mother

DISCUSSION

1. What terrible thing happened last year to Rosa and her family? How did their neighbors help them start over? Why didn't Rosa's family give up? (They had hope.)
2. In the story what is Rosa doing to help her family buy a new chair? Why didn't she use the money to buy a toy for herself? What are other family members doing to help?
3. When has someone helped you get something you needed? Can anyone tell us about a project or plan your family is working on together? How are you helping?
4. What hopes do we have for our classroom this year?

ACTIVITIES

1. Make a large circle or a silhouette of your head. Pretend you can see inside it. What hopes are there? Encourage students to think about hopes that are not material objects. Draw some of your hopes. Older students or adult volunteers may write students' hopes below the pictures. Share and display.
2. Play charades. Take turns acting out a hope you have for yourself, your family, the school, or the world while other students guess.
3. Save for something special. Plan a party for parents or volunteers, or save pennies to give to a local charity. Set a goal and ask children to contribute a couple of pennies each week. Save the pennies in a container until the goal is met. Talk about hope for and anticipation of achieving your goal.

WRAP-UP

In My Heartwood Journal, draw a picture of what you would do for your family if you saved a jar of money.

EXTENSION

1. Ask someone at home to tell you about a time when they didn't give up hope and got through something that was very hard.
2. Find out how your family was able to make a hope come true – perhaps a vacation trip, a purchase of something for the home, or preparation for a special event.

VOCABULARY

tips
change
velvet