

Interdisciplinary Ideas

LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Find similes and metaphors in the story. Explain their meanings. Write other similes and metaphors the author could have used.
2. Write or tell about a real adventure you had with a grownup.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Working in pairs or small groups, plan a trip in a covered wagon. List what you would need to take and why you would need those items. Make another list of dangers you might face. Report to class and compare lists.
2. Research other trails used by settlers and explorers in the West. Draw maps and display.

MUSIC

Invite someone who plays a guitar or fiddle to visit your classroom. Ask him or her to play songs that might have been sung around the campfire by wagon train travelers. Learn to sing some of the songs.

ART

Make a diorama showing a wagon train on the prairie as it might have looked to Lewis and Papa. Write a short paragraph explaining your diorama.

Lewis and Papa

Barbara Joosse
1998
San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books

LOVE
USA
Historical Fiction
Reading Time: 10 minutes

CONCEPTS

Love
Courage
Respect
Hope

SUMMARY

In this gripping story about growing up, readers share the journey of a father and son on the Santa Fe Trail in the 1800s. As Papa and Lewis seek their fortune, they find more than wealth and adventure. Love and tenderness, courage and dreaming strengthen the father-son relationship. Van Zyle's rich paintings help keep the story in the mind and heart of the listener long after reading.

OBJECTIVE

The student will be able to define and discuss love, courage, respect and hope as they apply to this story. The student will recognize that sometimes love and tenderness require acts of courage.

After the Story

Lewis and Papa

DISCUSSION

1. Why did Papa take Lewis on the trip? Why did Lewis' mother agree to let him go with Papa? What were Lewis' feelings as they planned the trip?
2. What were some of the dangers on the trail? How did Lewis react to each one? What did Lewis learn from Papa at these times?
3. When Big Red died, what did Lewis feel he had to do? Why? How did Lewis and Papa help each other?
4. Think of the meaning of the word "fortune." At the end of the story Papa and Lewis had a "real fortune." What was it?
5. In your life who makes you rich because of their love for you? Whom do you make rich because of your love and caring?

ACTIVITIES

1. On the world map locate the Santa Fe Trail and place a story pin at Santa Fe, New Mexico.
2. Think about a time you shared problems or hard times with someone in your family. How did you help each other? Write a paragraph about that time and share with the class if you wish.
3. In groups of three or four, choose a scene from the story. Write expanded dialogues and act out for the class. Example: conversation between Mama and Papa when they decide Papa and Lewis should make the trip.
4. Pretend you are Lewis and write a letter home to Mama or your sister.

HOME CONNECTION

1. Tell about the Big Red episode in the story. Talk about the death or loss of a loved pet in your family. Share the story with your class if you wish.
2. Ask a family member to tell you about an adult who made a difference in his or her life while growing up.

JOURNAL

1. Create four entries Lewis might have written in his journal. Write about the joys and hardships of the journey, other people in the wagon train or his feelings at the end of a day. Be imaginative; for example, include drawings, maps or items he might have collected.
2. Imagine that you live in the 1800s. Write a paragraph telling why you would or would not want to take a journey on the Santa Fe Trail.
3. List three ways others have demonstrated love for you. On the opposite page write three ways you have demonstrated love for others.

VOCABULARY

bulge
calico
nimble
prairie schooner

crevice
running meat
buckled