

Interdisciplinary Ideas

LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Write a personal narrative about a time you or someone you know caught an animal or insect. Explain how it was caught, who cared for the animal, and what happened to it.
2. Write a brief paragraph comparing Neville's way of playing crab racing (at the end of the story) to the Crab Man's way.

ART

1. Find pictures of hermit crabs online or in science books. (Keyword: hermit crabs images) Draw crabs in their natural habitat. Use the picture as a cover for your fact sheet about crabs (Science Activity #1).

2. Look at other children's books Cedric Lewis has illustrated. (See back cover for a list.) Compare different styles he uses and discuss why you think he is an award-winning artist.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Jamaicans depend on tourists for jobs and money. Make lists of pros and cons for this source of income.
2. On a world map locate other Caribbean islands. Pick up brochures from a travel agency about the islands and find out why these islands are good vacation spots. Present information to the class.

SCIENCE

1. With a partner, investigate hermit crabs. (Keyword: hermit crab kids) Write a list of facts about hermit crabs.
 2. The author notes that hermit crabs benefit the environment by recycling and cleaning up. Find out about other animals that are scavengers. (Keyword: scavengers animals kids)
- * Visit www.heartwoodethics.org and choose Teaching Heartwood, Culture Keys, for supplemental cultural information.

The Crab Man

Patricia E. Van West
1998
New York: Turtle Books

COURAGE
Jamaica
Realistic Fiction
Reading Time: 6 minutes

CONCEPTS

Courage
Respect

SUMMARY

This thought-provoking story deals with personal values and the courage to act on them. A Jamaican boy must choose between earning money for his family and protecting animals from cruelty. Cedric Lucas' beautiful pastel illustrations clearly show the contrasts between posh hotel life and poverty.

OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to define and discuss courage and respect as they apply to this story and will develop understanding of stewardship, or responsibility to care for animals and the environment.

After the Story

The Crab Man

DISCUSSION

1. Why does Neville collect and sell crabs in the beginning of the story? Before he goes through the gates of the hotel, does he know what the man is doing with the crabs? Discuss the chain of events that causes him to change his mind about collecting crabs to sell for money.
2. What are Neville's feelings when he runs away from the Crab Man? What character traits does he show when he flees? What beliefs give him the courage to do the right thing?
3. How does Neville's mother react when he tells her his story? Which Heartwood attributes does she express? Explain.
4. Do you think Neville will find another way to earn money? Why or why not?
5. Think of a time you or someone you know did the right thing. Talk about why it took courage.

ACTIVITIES

1. Locate Jamaica on the world map and place a story pin.
2. In pairs, share times when you didn't go along with something a friend was doing because you felt it was wrong. Tell how you found the courage, or how you will next time (see Wrap Up #2).
3. Working in small groups, list animals used for sport, fashion, entertainment, or medical research. Discuss how they must be cared for so they are not abused.
4. Brainstorm and/or research online to create a list of natural resources of Jamaica and other Caribbean islands. How and why would Jamaica want to protect these resources?

EXTENSION

Retell the story at home. Ask family members to share a time they protected an animal in danger. Talk about why people protect animals.

WRAP-UP

1. Write about courage and respect in the story. Give explanations and evidence to support your statements.
2. Extend Activity #2. Write a paragraph about how you will show courage by not going along with friends when their actions go against your beliefs about what is right.

VOCABULARY

dart
grove
tourists

peer
habitat
larva