

The Moon and Us

Companion Text: If You See the Moon, by Zia Wells
Subject Area & Grade Level: Language Arts, 1st Grade

Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of a story plot through creative retelling
- Examine characters' actions from multiple perspectives
- Practice listening skills through improvisation

Pre-Reading

Ask students, "Have you ever woken up in the morning and not been sure for a moment whether what you were dreaming about was real or not?" Explain that the story you are about to read is a dream that seems real, and ask students to pay close attention to the plot as you read.

During Reading

Read the story once through without stopping. Then, break students up into small groups of at least 4 people each and have the groups spread out around the room. In each group, have students count off 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 if you need it, and assign roles as follows: 1s: Nimbu, 2s: Cirra, 3s: the moon, 4s & 5s: the townspeople. Tell students that we will be acting out scenes from the story after we read it again, and they will each get to play their number's role. Read the story a second time.

Post-Reading

Tell students that they are now going to reenact the story scene by scene. Explain that you will read a section of the story, and then stop to let them act it out in their groups. The goal is not necessarily to use the exact same words that are used in the story, but to convey the main ideas by improvising dialogue. Tell students that they can mime, but are to use no props or write anything down. Members of each group not involved in the scene should listen closely and point out any inconsistencies between the story as it is read and the story as it is acted out. All groups should perform simultaneously and should stop when you clap your hands three times (or ring a bell, or whatever other attention signal you have devised in your classroom).

Read the story for the third time, stopping at logical points every 4 to 5 pages, or more or less often, depending on the number of scenes you have time to allow students to improvise.

