

The Sneetches Teacher's Guide

This Teacher's Guide was developed to help you enjoy your upcoming trip to the performance of a short play based on Dr. Seuss' *The Sneetches* on November 10, a free field trip with a workshop component for first-grade students, sponsored by The Greenville Arts Council.

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Reading Illustrations
Language Arts Connection

Teaching Tolerance
Social Studies Connection

The Elements of Theatre
Language Arts Connection

Rhyme Time!
Language Arts Connection

Theatre Etiquette Guidelines

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Introduction

This Teacher's Guide was designed to help you and your students not only prepare for your upcoming field trip to see *The Sneetches*, but to extend this arts experience throughout your curriculum. We have taken special care to point out connections to specific competencies with the lessons outlined in this packet.

Reading Illustrations

Language Arts Connections:

Students will explore how illustrations contribute to the telling of a story.

Teaching Tolerance

Social Studies Connection:

Students will explore ideas of social justice and fairness and learn how to appreciate differences.

The Elements of Theatre

Language Arts Connection:

Students will use the nonverbal communication to reinforce their comprehension of vocabulary and stories.

Rhyme Time!

Language Arts Connection:

Students will identify rhyming words and patterns in the story and create their own pairs of rhymes with story elements.

Theatre Etiquette Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to help you prepare the students to view live theatre and understand the important role of the audience.

We hope this guide will help you in integrating this experience into the valuable work you do everyday in the classroom. Thanks for taking the time to look through it.

Reading Illustrations

http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-k-2/Reading_Illustrations.aspx#Instruction

Explore how illustrations contribute to the telling of a story by creating illustrations to accompany text, and then creating text to accompany illustrations. Students will explore picture books (without words) and discuss the specific elements of the illustrations that "tell" the story. They will learn to "read" illustrations as they look at the ways in which pictures reveal information about the characters, setting, and plot of a story. (Ages 4-7)

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- create illustrations to accompany text.
- "read" a variety of illustrations for information.
- convey elements of a story such as character, setting, and plot through illustration.
- identify techniques and/or symbols used by illustrators to convey information.
- critique their own illustrations.
- participate in a variety of independent literacy-building activities.

Engage

1. Read aloud a short excerpt from a storybook of your choosing. Do not share the story's illustrations, but instead, have students listen carefully, and then create an illustration to go with the text.

2. Allow students to share their illustrations. Have students explain why they chose to depict what they did, and how the picture correlates with the story they just heard. Explain that pictures, or illustrations, are an important element of storybooks, and they can help us understand the elements of the story, including the characters, setting, and plot. Point out that illustrations can also provide valuable clues when one gets "stuck" on a word one doesn't understand.

Build Knowledge

1. Explain that just as listening to a story creates a picture in our minds, looking at a picture can create a story in our minds. Show students a sample illustration from a large picture book of your choosing, preferably one that is unfamiliar to students. Cover up the text so that the students are focused on the illustration.

2. Discuss with students which elements of the story they can discern simply by looking at the picture. Can they identify who the characters are and what they might be like? What about the setting? Where or when might the story take place? What season is it? Can they describe the action that is taking place? Can they guess what one or more of the characters is feeling and/or thinking? Flip to the next page, again covering up the text.

Based on the second illustration, see which ideas about the storyline seem to be correct. Can students discern something more about the storyline? What elements of the illustrations are most helpful in figuring out information about the story? Discuss specific techniques the illustrator used to "tell" the story. If students are having trouble coming up with specific techniques, point out facial expressions on characters, actions, body language, gestures, or clothing that help reveal information about the characters or action of the story.

Apply

1. Explain that some books rely entirely on pictures to tell a story. Divide the students into groups of 2-3. Distribute a picture book to each group. Allow them to flip through the picture book to discern the characters, setting, storyline of the book. Have a reporter from each group to briefly share the plot of

the story with classmates, along with one of the illustrations that most helped them to understand the story and why.

2. Have each student draw a picture, or series of 2-3 pictures that tell a story. Their picture should reveal the characters, setting, and some part of the action of the story. You may wish to have students use ReadWriteThink's interactive Story Map as a graphic organizer for their story elements. Students can choose from a character, conflict, setting or resolution map.

(<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/storymap/index.html>) Character and setting are most appropriate to this lesson. The story map can then be used to create the picture. Students should then exchange pictures with a partner and have the partner guess the elements of the storyline. Distribute copies of the Storyline Elements handout so students know what to discuss as they look through peer illustrations. (<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/multimedia/LessonPrintables/grade-k-2/Reading-Illustrations/Story%20Elements%20Worksheet.aspx> -- open with Adobe Reader if you have difficulty)

Reflect

1. Have students share whether their partner correctly guessed the elements of the storyline. If not, what part of the story did they have a hard time understanding?

2. Discuss the hardest and easiest parts of telling a story without words. Allow students five minutes to go back and add to or revise their pictures as needed.

Language Arts

2. The student will apply strategies and skills to comprehend, respond to, interpret, or evaluate a variety of texts of increasing length, difficulty, and complexity.

a. The student will use text features, parts of a book, text structures, and genres to analyze text.

(DOK 2)

1) Text features – titles, illustrations, **headings, graphs**, etc.

3) Text structures – sequential order and **description**

*b. The student will understand, infer, and **make simple predictions.** (DOK 2)*

1) Answer and **generate** who, what, when, where, why, and how questions.

2) Answer and **generate** questions about characters, settings, and events.

3) Make simple inferences based on information from narrative and/or informational text.

4) Identify the main idea of a simple story or topic of an informational text.

5) Make a prediction about narrative or informational text and confirm or revise the prediction.

6) Use key words in text to justify prediction(s).

*c. The student will recognize or generate an appropriate summary or paraphrase of the events or ideas in text, **citing text-based evidence.** (DOK 2)*

1) Retell a story including characters, setting, and important events.

2) Retell the correct sequence of events in narrative and/or informational text.

3. The student will express, communicate, or evaluate ideas effectively.

b. The student will compose a description of a person, place, or thing. (DOK 3)

1) Compose drawings/visual images and orally describe.

2) Compose oral and written descriptions of a familiar person, place, or thing.

*c. The student will compose a narrative with a **beginning, middle, and end.** (DOK 3)*

1) Compose retellings/stories with a beginning, middle, and end.

2) Compose drawings/visual images to tell stories with a beginning, middle, and end.

Teaching Tolerance

<http://www.tolerance.org/activity/anti-racism-activity-sneetches>

In this early grades activity, students learn about unfair practices in a simulation exercise and then create plans to stand up against discrimination. (Grades 1-2)

Perspective

Before conducting this activity, educators may want to discuss historical information about racism and diversity issues. In the story *The Sneetches*, written by Dr. Seuss, yellow bird-like creatures take students on an adventure where green stars become the symbol of discrimination and privilege. After reading the story aloud, let students participate in the following activities that can be adapted with or without the story.

A special note on the simulation activity: The simulation exercise included here can help children understand the emotional impact of unfair practices. The follow-up activity on discrimination helps ensure that students understand that the goal is to change those practices, not the characteristics that make us different from one another.

Objectives:

Students will experience discrimination and develop a sense of fairness and equity.

Students will apply literature to real life experiences.

Students will become empowered to take responsibility for their environment.

Suggested Procedures

Read *The Sneetches* aloud. Make a class list of class privileges, i.e. lining up first, extra points for tasks, homework passes, extra center time. Divide the class into two groups by assigning students odd/even numbers. Half the class wears a green star or dot, using paper or a washable marker. The group with green stars/dots is granted the privileges on the class list. Allow an extended time for all students to have time in each group; those privileged with stars and those without stars or privileges.

Students discuss *The Sneetches* and students' experiences in small groups:

How do the Star-Belly Sneetches look? How do the Plain-Belly Sneetches look?

How is the language different for plain and Star-Belly Sneetches?

When you were without a star, how did you feel about classmates with stars?

What kinds of things do we use as "stars" that make people feel special?

What makes you feel like a Plain-Belly Sneetch, a Star-Belly Sneetch?

What feelings did you have during the class activity?

What lessons did you learn?

List three actions you will take to help everyone feel like they belong.

Small groups share reflections and action ideas with the whole class. Building on the action ideas from small group discussions, the class should brainstorm and make a list of suggestions for ending discrimination in the class or school, e.g. stop teasing. Discrimination can be defined as "unfair treatment of a person or a group." Challenge the class to put their class list into practice and work to end discrimination.

Assist students in pairing with a classmate that is outside their usual circle of friends. The pairs become "Fairness Teams" for several days and keep a journal of ways that they -- or others they observe -- help end discrimination. Allow a brief time each day for teammates to share their experiences and discuss journal entries. After several days, the whole class meets and discusses the journal entries. Each Fairness Team reflects on what they learned about putting an end to discrimination. Encourage students to set goals for extending the activity to their homes and communities.

Social Studies

2. Acquire the characteristics to be a responsible citizen. (C, H, E)

- c. Explain why certain civic responsibilities (e.g., *protocol* such as manners, obeying rules, courteous public behavior and studying historical figures, etc.) are important to the child, family, and school.
- d. Recognize responsibilities of the individual (e.g., respect for the rights and property of others, tolerance, honesty, compassion, self-control, participation in the democratic process, work for the common good, etc.).

The Elements of Theatre

What is different about the experience of listening to a story and the experience of reading a story? What techniques can an actor or narrator use to show the meaning of the words in the story? What clues from the text can you use to develop a character's voice? How can you use your body to communicate the character's feelings?

Using a story everyone is familiar with such as the *The Three Little Pigs*

- Assign each person a portion of the story.
- Read the story for clues. Have them make decisions about the ways they can use voice and body to tell the story and to develop each character.
- Have them practice their choices. Do they work? Are there changes that they need to make to tell their story more effectively?
- Try those changes.

Read *The Sneetches* and look at the illustrations that accompany each part of the story. Start with one illustration such as where one group is proud and the other is ashamed. Have the students practice imitating the gestures and facial expressions of each group. (You can also search for "Sneetches" on google.com under images to find several options of images you use.) Use this technique to reinforce vocabulary words related to the way each group is feeling. Call out a word from a list of feelings and ask students to make a facial expression and bodily gesture to communicate their comprehension of that word. Allow students to give feedback and to refine the expressions and gestures. Brainstorm a list of other feeling words and have students act each out without making any sounds. Then practice communicating the same feelings but with voice changes. Have the students say "My name is _____ _." in voices that communicate different feelings. If you have a list of feeling vocabulary words the class is studying, write each word on an index card and have students draw one card out of a bag. This can be done in small groups or individually. Instruct them not to tell anyone what word they picked but to say "My name is _ _." in a voice and with gestures to communicate the feeling on the card. Have the other students in the class guess which feeling the student is communicating.

Discuss beginning, middle, and end and select an image to represent each part of the story. Call for volunteers to act out each image. Let them practice and posing like each image. Arrange the groups of actors in the front of the room but not in the correct order. Have the rest of the class determine which part of the story each group is representing and then put them in the correct order.

Language Arts

2. The student will apply strategies and skills to comprehend, respond to, interpret, or evaluate a variety of texts of increasing length, difficulty, and complexity.

a. The student will use text features, parts of a book, text structures, and genres to analyze text. (DOK 2)

- 1) Text features – titles, illustrations, **headings, graphs**, etc.
- 3) Text structures – sequential order and **description**

b. The student will understand, infer, and make simple predictions. (DOK 2)

- 1) Answer and **generate** who, what, when, where, why, and how questions.
- 2) Answer and **generate** questions about characters, settings, and events.
- 3) Make simple inferences based on information from narrative and/or informational text.
- 4) **Identify the main idea of a simple story or topic of an informational text.**
- 5) **Make a prediction about narrative or informational text and confirm or revise the prediction.**
- 6) **Use key words in text to justify prediction(s).**

c. The student will recognize or generate an appropriate summary or paraphrase of the events or ideas in text, citing text-based evidence. (DOK 2)

- 1) **Retell a story including characters, setting, and important events.**
- 2) **Retell the correct sequence of events in narrative and/or informational text.**

d. The student will analyze, interpret, compare, or respond to increasingly complex literary and informational text, citing text-based evidence. (DOK 3)

- 1) Interpret text through moving, drawing, speaking, acting, or singing.
- 2) Make connections between self and text or **text and text** after sharing text or reading text independently.
- 3) Compose visual images based on text.
- 4) Identify favorite passages.

Health

4. Analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health. (M, PH, CH)

a. Identify factors that contribute to individuality.

5. Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health. (M, PH, F)

- a. Describe the difference in verbal and nonverbal communication.
- b. Demonstrate attentive listening skills to build and maintain healthy relationships.
- c. Explain how nonverbal communication impacts the feelings of others.

Theater

2. Act by assuming roles and interacting in improvisations. (Creating/Performing)

- a. Develop body awareness and spatial perception through movement and pantomime.
- b. Develop expressive use of voice.
- d. Use skills in pantomime, tableau, and improvisation to create characters and to demonstrate their feelings, relationships, and environments.

(Strategies: Students practice speaking in different voices (high and low pitch). Imitate different voices demonstrated by the teacher or other students. Students read sentences or poems as different characters might say them (e.g. a witch, a giant, a news announcer, a robot).)

Rhyme Time!

Discuss the meaning of the words “characters” and “setting.” Ask students to listen for the characters and setting in the story you will read. Read the story *The Sneetches*. Ask students to name the characters in the story. What is the setting? (You may need to re-read a particular section to them that talks about the beach.)

Point out how Dr. Seuss made up an imaginary word for the name of the characters so it would rhyme with the setting (Sneetches/beaches). Review rhymes and practice with a few familiar word families (sit, hit, fit.) Ask the students to come up with another setting (place) for a story (lake, field, school, etc.) and let them make up some rhyming words to see if they can come up with a name for a character for a story in that setting. You may want to try your school name or some other proper nouns to see if they can come up with something as silly-sounding as Sneetches. Then have the students think of something that can happen in the story and practice coming up with pairs of lines that rhyme. You can provide a simple line structure with your character like “The beebuls went to the mall, because they wanted to see _____.” Ask the students to fill in the blank with words that rhyme with mall. Let the students give you more settings to replace the word “mall” and continue the pattern with them coming up with words that rhyme with each setting to fill in the blank. This can also be put to music if you like. If so, you can talk to the students about writing lyrics.

Language Arts

1. The student will use word recognition and vocabulary (word meaning) skills to communicate.

a. The student will apply knowledge of concepts about print. (DOK 1)

4) Identify dialogue in connected text.

b. The student will apply knowledge of phonological and phonemic awareness. (DOK 2)

(Phonological and phonemic awareness skills are oral skills. Once the skills are paired with print, they become phonics activities.)

1) Identify and produce rhyming words orally that include consonant blends and digraphs (e.g., flat/splat, trap/snap, sing/ring).

c. The student will use word recognition skills. (DOK 2)

1) Generate the sounds from all the letters and letter patterns (including consonant blends, consonant digraphs, short and long vowel patterns), and blend those sounds into recognizable words.

Examples: Consonant blends: /fl/, /tr/, /sl/, /sm/, /sn/, /bl/, /gr/, and /str/

Consonants digraphs: /sh/, /wh/, /ch/, /th/, /ng/, /ck/

Short vowel patterns: CVC = pat, sit, mug

Long vowel patterns: CV=me, be, no

CVCV(final e)=make, hide, cute

3) Read words derived from common word families (e.g., -it, -at, -ite, -ate).

4) Begin to use common spelling patterns to make new words (e.g., make, take, lake, cake, etc.).

Theatre Etiquette Guidelines

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Please share the following with your students before their trip to the theatre.

Unlike television and movies, theatre is an art that thrives on the participation of the audience. Audience reactions and responses can be heard by the performers and have a direct effect on the quality of the entire performance. The following are guidelines to help new theatergoers understand the importance and responsibilities of being a good audience member. Appropriate audience behavior ensures a good experience for everyone.

Be orderly and prompt. Safety is the primary concern. Please respect other audience members and the theatre building by entering and exiting in an orderly fashion. Please, no running, pushing or horseplay. It is best to arrive fifteen minutes early, as latecomers can disrupt the performers and the audience. Please visit rest rooms before or after the performance.

Read. A playbill is often provided to inform you about the play, production and actors that you are about to see. Reading it before the lights dim will provide you with a deeper understanding of what you see and hear on stage.

Listen and observe. There is so much to hear (dialogue, music, sound effects, and voice inflection) and so much to see (costumes, props, set design, lighting effects, and architecture of the theatre). Unlike videos, you cannot rewind if you miss something. When the lights dim before the show begins, it is the audience's cue to stop talking and begin listening.

Unplug. Please turn off or silence all electronics and anything that beeps: cell phones, cameras, watches, pagers, etc. If you are with a person who has a hearing aid that emits a high pitch please politely alert him/her to silence it. Inappropriate noises are forbidden as they distract both the actors and the audience. Even whispering to your neighbor is considered an inappropriate distraction.

Please, don't feed the audience. Food and gum are not allowed inside the theatre. Katherine Hepburn, a great stage and screen actress, once stopped a Broadway performance when she heard an audience member crinkling a candy wrapper! Eating and drinking, while permitted in movie theatres, is extremely distracting to live performers.

Laugh out loud. Positive audience sounds are encouraged. You may freely and honestly respond to the performance by laughing, applauding, crying, and expressing any other forms of appreciation and emotion. And, by all means, please do participate if asked by the actors to contribute a verbal response.

Think. Think about your theatre experience during and after the performance. How does the material apply to your life? Are there lessons to be learned? Would you make the same decisions as the characters in the circumstances given? Did the performance inspire you? Are you happy, angry, bored, or encouraged by what you saw? Think it through and talk about it with others after the show.