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About the Guide

This Winslow Press Teacher Guide has been designed to aid the classroom teacher by offering enrichment activities and discussion materials to complement *Tell-A-Bunny*. These activities can help students to better understand and enjoy the story as well as assist teachers in implementing strategies and experiences that support their district's learning standards for language arts.

We start with a story synopsis, then provide story-related discussion topics (to sharpen critical thinking and creative problem solving skills), vocabulary words, cross-cultural activities and independent study ideas. All of the above cover a wide range of language arts skills development and meet the needs of multiple learning styles. The final part of the Guide lists additional resources (books, museums, reference materials, related Internet Web sites) for both teachers and students.

These Teacher Guides were developed to support the New York State Learning Standards for English Language Arts and should therefore support the highest standards in the country. The Standards can be downloaded from the New York State Education Department's Web site at <http://www.nysed.gov/rscs/stds/contents/.html>. If you have questions about specific standards applied to these activities, please call Winslow Press at 1-800-617-3947 or email me at MissLucy@winslowpress.com.

We hope this Teacher Guide will be a useful and positive part of your teaching experience!

Sincerely,

Diane F. Kessenich
*Chief Executive Officer
and Publisher*

Story Synopsis

Tell-A-Bunny shows just what can happen when, as in the children's game "telephone," a message gets scrambled as it is passed from one bunny to another. When Sunny wants to throw a surprise party for Earl, she sets in motion a chain of events that results in a real surprise for her.

Critical Thinking and Creative Problem-Solving Skills

A. Questions

Knowledge: How do you keep in touch with your friends? Do you use the telephone? Email? Letters or notes?

Comprehension: Why is it important to make yourself clearly understood when you leave a message?

Application: If you were going to plan a party, how might you make sure your friends knew just what to bring? How would you make sure they came on time?

Analysis: What sort of help might you need to throw a party? What might you ask others to get or do for the party?

Synthesis: What might you do to avoid being misunderstood?

Evaluation: Why might listening be as important as speaking when it comes to getting a message straight? How could asking questions help?

Critical Thinking and Creative Problem-Solving Skills

B. Discussion

Tell-A-Bunny is both a fun look at what can happen when communication misfires and a heart-warming story about how good friends can have a great time despite everything. This book gives an opportunity to open discussions about the need for expressing oneself clearly, telling time, and joyfully bringing pleasure to our friends.

- **Speaking clearly**

Sunny really wants to surprise Earl with a party, but as one friend after another passes on the news her instructions change completely. Talk with students about ways simple misunderstandings can snowball into bigger problems. What steps can we take to head off these misunderstandings? Encourage students to see that asking questions when a request seems odd or vague is a good way to clarify the matter. Talk about how being willing to ask questions is a helpful skill in daily life, and can also help school work go more smoothly.

- **Telling time**

The difference between AM and PM is a basic misunderstanding in the story. Show students a clock, and discuss what they know about this aspect of telling time. How many know the difference? Why is it so important to be clear about AM and PM?

- **Careful planning**

Explain that throwing a party can be a lot of work. What sort of party or event might you like to organize? How would you plan to make sure it came off smoothly? How might

Critical Thinking and Creative Problem-Solving Skills

writing things down, like Sunny does, help you plan your event? Would it be a good idea to discuss your plans with a friend? Why?

- **Consideration for others**

The characters in *Tell-A-Bunny* wind up having a great time despite the mix-up. Help students to see that just as Sunny and the others are all good friends, and whether the party happens in the morning or the evening what matters most is being together and making Earl happy on his birthday. Discuss how good friends can form a kind of community, just like a school or neighborhood, in which love for each other and mutual respect can help clear up the problems that come from misunderstandings. Ask: Have you ever done something special for a friend on his or her birthday? How did it make you feel? Why do you think doing things for others makes us feel good?

Vocabulary

Selected Vocabulary Words and Phrases

Ask children to select a word they find particularly “delicious”—whether for the sound of the word or some other reason—from the following list of words from *Tell-A-Bunny*. Tell them they can find a word to be delicious whether or not they know its meaning. Then have them write a brief sentence saying why they like the word, and what they think it means. Help students look up their words so they can use them in sentences. **ELA Standards: 1.2**

banquet	soccer ball
chopped	squeezed
diced	telephoned
grumbled	tiptoed
hiccup	tomorrow
music	Yummy Tummy
sliced	

Cross-Curricular Activities

1. ART: Make Your Own Book

a) Have students examine the illustrations in *Tell-A-Bunny*. Explain that they are made from a collage of bits of paper, plastic, felt and other materials. Tell them the bunnies themselves are cut from an ordinary grocery bag, and that they too will make a book with characters and scenes cut out from two-dimensional materials they find themselves.

b) Pair off students to brainstorm together about the plots for their stories. Suggest they keep their stories simple—8 to 12 pages for the finished book, with as little as one line of text per page. Explain that the most important thing is to write a story that works well with illustrations. It can be as silly or as funny as they want it to be. Then ask them to enlist their parent's help in finding scrap paper and other material that can be cut and glued down to create a similar affect to the one Nancy Elizabeth Wallace achieved in *Tell-A-Bunny*. **IRA/NCTE Standards: 5, 6, 12**

2. LANGUAGE ARTS: Write an Invitation

This activity can be done in conjunction with the art activity above. Ask students to imagine they are throwing a party for a friend and must create an invitation for it. Remind them that they must include all the information that their friends will need to attend the party: time and date, location, directions and so on. Students might also consider including suggestions about gifts and what to wear. **IRA/NCTE Standards: 4, 5, 12** **ELA Standards: 1.2**

3. MATH: Party Planning

a) Homework: Tell students that planning a party can require some math. Now that they are going to plan their

Cross-Curricular Activities

own party, and will have to figure out just how much they need of everything.

b) List the following party items on the board: forks, spoons, cupcakes, party hats, party favors, punch, and invitations. Randomly assign each student with a number of guests to invite, between 6 and ten. Assuming each guest will need two cupcakes and three cups of punch, how many of each item will students need to obtain? NOTE: for students with math savvy this exercise could be made more demanding by assigning prices to each item and providing them with a budget.

4. DRAMA: Tell-A-Bunny Read Aloud

Have your class do a dramatic reading of *Tell-A-Bunny*. You read the narration yourself, or assign a narrator (but bear in mind it will require an adept reader). Assign students by lot to play the parts of Earl, Sunny, Gloria, Libby, Mugsey, Baxter, and Lottie. Explain that the narrator will read the parts of the text that don't call for someone to speak.

IRA/NCTE Standards: 12 ELA Standards: 2.2

5. MATH: AM or PM?

a) Explain that one way of keeping track of time does not use AM or PM. Instead, hours are counted from 1 to 24. In this system, one o'clock AM would look like this: 01:00. One o'clock PM would look like: 13:00.

b) Get ready to write the following numbers on the board: 03:00, 10:00, 17:00, 05:00, 21:00, 15:00, 09:00, 18:00, 07:00 and 20:00. Tell them that as you write each number they will clap their hands if it is a PM number and stand up if it is an AM number.

Cross-Curricular Activities

6: SOCIAL STUDIES: *Scherenschnitte*: The German Art of Paper cutting

Explain to students that in Germany paper cutting is art form with its own name and technique. Have students research a report that tells what *scherenschnitte* is and how it is done. Your students may wish to create simple, captioned illustrations to accompany their reports. For a simpler project, obtain the books on this subject listed in our bibliography, or find similar ones and guide students through the more basic techniques. Then have them create cut-paper art rather than a report. Another alternative might be to have students research *origami*, the Japanese art of paper folding, as books on this popular subject are more commonly available. **ELA Standards: 1.1**

7: SCIENCE: Make Your Own Telephone

a) This is a classic activity that is both fun and instructive. You'll need paper cups—enough for as many pairs of students as you can put together—and a good-sized ball of string. Pair off students and have them assemble string-and-cup telephones by poking a small hole in the bottom of each cup and knotting the string so it holds firmly. Ask them to back up to create a separation of about 20 feet. The exercise works best indoors where background sound can be reduced to a minimum, but depending on the size of your class this exercise may require a larger space than your classroom. The tauter the string is between the cups the better the result will be.

b) Explain that some students will be “sending” and others “receiving.” Ask the students sending the message to speak into the phone in a normal voice, and have the receiving students write down the message as they hear it. Then have each pair check the accuracy of the message and switch roles. Make clear that the telephones they use everyday

Cross-Curricular Activities

operate according to the same principle as the paper cup. As the bottom of the cup vibrates, it sends that vibration down the string, which causes the receiving cup to vibrate in the same way. As the vibration moves in waves through the air, it creates a sound identical to the original one—twenty five feet away!

Independent Study

To help facilitate independent study, we have provided a starting list of ideas as well as Special Project Planning Sheets to help children get started. Some areas of interest may include the following: **IRA/NCTE Standards: 7, 8**
ELA Standards: 1.2

- Birthdays in other countries
- Proper phone manners
- Origami: Japanese paper art
- How telephones work
- The invention of the telephone
- Party ideas

Resources for Further Exploration

(Note: More resources, games and activities can be found on Tell-A-Bunny's home pages here at www.winslowpress.com.)

Books

- Carle, Eric. *The Secret Birthday Message*. New York: Harper Trophy, 1986. A secret coded message directs Tim to his birthday gift. Readers help the boy hunt for his surprise.
- Carle, Eric. *You Can Make A Collage: A Very Simple How-To Book*. Palo Alto: Klutz, Inc.: 1998. A guide from author/illustrator Eric Carle. Younger children will need some help with the text.
- Chukovsky, Kornei. *Telephone*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996. Translated by Jamey Gambrell. Illustrated by Vladimir Radunsky. A nonsense poem about a man whose animal friends keep his phone ringing non-stop with strange requests.
- Rich, Chris. *The Book of Paper Cutting: A Complete Guide to All the Techniques—With More Than 100 Project Ideas*. Asheville, NC: Lark Books, 1994. Paper cutting techniques of different countries and cultures, complete with patterns and suggestions. Teachers may find this book useful; younger children will need help with the text and techniques.
- Schlapfer-Geiser, Susanne. *Scherenschnitte: Designs and Techniques for the Traditional Craft of Papercutting*. Asheville, NC: Lark Books, 1997. Edited by Carol Taylor. This history of the ancient art of paper cutting, featuring numerous illustrations, samples and a gallery, may be helpful to teachers who want to introduce the topic to their classes.
- Wallace, Nancy Elizabeth. *Rabbit's Bedtime*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1999. A little bunny gets ready to go to sleep, recounting all the good things about the day.

Resources for Further Exploration

Web Sites

Boardman's Birthday Party Ideas

www.boardmanweb.com/party/

Fun party ideas kids can really use.

Q&A

www.parenting-qa.com

This site is geared to parents who want some ideas for throwing successful birthday parties for children. Obviously it could also be of use in helping students plan their own parties.

Billy Bear's Birthday Party

www.billybear4kids.com/holidays/birthday/party.htm

This site offers still more kid-friendly notions for fun things to do at birthday parties.

Birthday Parties

www.kidsparties.com/traditions.htm

A Web site presentation of birthday traditions from around the world. Could be a springboard for class or individual projects on this topic, or as social studies extension.

The Rabbit Habit

www.rabbithabit.org

Students can go here to learn about rabbit rescue. The site provides a potential opportunity for your class or school to adopt a rabbit, together with the support information you would need to care for it.

The House Rabbit Society

www.rabbit.org/

Another rabbit rescue site that emphasizes care, feeding, and housing of rabbits.

Resources for Further Exploration

Museums

The Vintage Telephone Equipment Museum

7000 East Marginal Way South
Seattle, Washington 98108
(206) 767-3012

Open Tuesdays from 9 AM to 2 PM. and by appointment on other days.

A museum of telephone history. The museum provides the history of the telephone. Exhibits start with a model of Alexander Graham Bell's first 1876 attempt at creating a communications device and precursor of the modern phone that we all take for granted today. Automated displays and special exhibits permit hands on participation. A self guided tour is available as well as guided tours provided by the volunteers.

www.scn.org/tech/telmuseum/

Cyber Telephone Museum

This Internet museum offers cool pictures of historic phones that could serve as a jumping-off point for art activities. Each photo is hyperlinked to a history of the particular phone, including the year it was made. While the text is fairly sophisticated, students may enjoy drawing the phones or creating their own "historic phones" with found materials.

www.cavejunction.com/phones/index2.html